



مدرسة امباسادور
AMBASSADOR SCHOOL
INSPIRE INQUIRE INNOVATE

AMBASSADOR SCHOOL

SPECIAL EDUCATION POLICY

2017-2018



Ambassador school's approach to Special Educational Needs

Ambassador School is dedicated to positive growth of its students in all areas of life. We believe that every child is unique and strive to provide a well- rounded educational program that is suitable for the diverse intellectual, social, emotional and physical needs of all our students.

Our Aim

We aim to create a nurturing and positive learning environment, where each student has easy access to a quality education and become independent, valued, competent, skilled members of the school as well as the wider community.

Our Objectives

- Work towards meeting individual student needs within the class and school environment by ensuring consistent whole school approach to identification and provision.
- Monitor and evaluate the student's progress, providing the appropriate information and records as part of this process.
- Raise attainment and progress for all students, regardless of their abilities.
- Follow a team approach with increased parental engagement
- Embrace inclusion for all pupils and ensure a policy of integration into all activities of the school.
- Comply with the UAE Federal Law 29(2006)

MOE and Federal Law definition of SEN

According to the Federal Law 29 (UAE), a Person with Special Needs is defined as: "Every person suffering from a temporary / permanent, full /partial deficiency or infirmity in his physical, sensational, mental, communicational, educational or psychological faculties to an extent decreasing the possibility of satisfying his ordinary requirements in the conditions of people without special needs." In line with Federal Law (2006) and Law No. 2 (2014), improving the education and outcomes of students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) remains a priority for U.AE.

Ministry of Education U.A.E. Special Educational Needs (SEN) categories

Specific Learning Disabilities

A specific learning disability means a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language spoken or written that may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or perform mathematical calculations and/or mathematical reasoning, including conditions such as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia.

The term does not include learning problems that are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities, of cognitive disability, of emotional disability, or of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage.

Physical and health related disability

This means physical and health problems which are chronic or severe in a manner that they lead to poor and limited functionality and adversely affect the educational performance of the student such as: (asthma, attention deficit disorder with hyperactivity, diabetes, heart disease, epilepsy, leukemia, cerebral palsy, renal failure, HIV, and head injuries etc.).

Visual Impairment

Visual impairment means impairment in vision that, even with correction, adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term visual impairment includes both partially sighted and blindness.

Hearing Impairment Including Deafness

Hearing impairment including deafness means impairment that, with or without amplification, adversely affects educational performance; may be permanent or fluctuating; may be so severe that the child is impaired in processing linguistic information through hearing, with or without amplification.

Speech and Language Disorders

Speech and language disorders means having a communication disorder such as stuttering, impaired articulation, language impairment, or a voice impairment that adversely affects a child's educational performance.

Autism Spectrum Disorders

Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), also known as Pervasive Developmental Disorders (PDDs), cause severe and pervasive impairment in thinking, feeling, language, and the ability to relate to others. These disorders are usually first diagnosed in early childhood and range from a severe form, called Autistic Disorder, through Pervasive Development Disorder Not Otherwise Specified (PDD-NOS), to a much milder form, Asperger's Disorder. They also include two rare disorders, Rett's Disorder and Childhood Disintegrative Disorder.

Emotional and Behavioral Disorders

An emotional and behavioral disorder means a condition exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree that adversely affects a child's educational performance: (a) an inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors; (b) an inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers; (c) inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances, (d) a general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression, and (e) a tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems. The term includes schizophrenia. The term does not apply to children who are socially maladjusted, unless it is determined that they have an emotional disturbance.

Intellectual Disabilities Intellectual disabilities, formerly called "mental retardation" means having significantly below average general intellectual functioning, existing along with deficits in adaptive behavior which are manifested during the developmental period and adversely affect a child's educational performance.

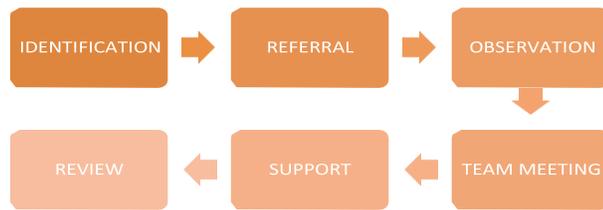
Inclusion Education

The concept of inclusion is based on the idea that students with disabilities should not be segregated, but should be included in a classroom with their typically developing peers. A student in an inclusion classroom usually needs only to show that he/she is not losing out from being included in the classroom, even if the student is not necessarily making any significant gains. The emphasis is on life preparation and social skills than on the acquisition of level-appropriate academic skills.

Pre Referral Plan.

Before a referral is made to determine a student’s eligibility for special education programs and services, students enrolled in regular education classrooms whose performance exceeds or does not meet expectations compared to their peers should be referred to the School Support Team who will develop an intervention plan to improve the student’s academic performance.

SEND PROCEDURE



SEND Procedure

Ambassador School has a continuous cycle of identification, assessing, planning, teaching and making provisions, which takes into account the individual needs of students. We recognize that the process is a continuum and cannot be dealt in isolation or in parts.

IDENTIFICATION

- During admission – parent referral or identified by teacher
- Identified by screening –Entry level test, CAT-4
- Identified in the class by teachers due to behavior or academic concerns

The following are some of the ways in which we identify a student with SEN

1. Parent may directly approach teacher or school administration during admission and Present the diagnosis and request for Learning Center services. (Parent referral)
2. Parents may choose to not disclose the child's condition. Subsequently, teacher may identify in class and get in touch with the Learning center. While being empathetic here, we help parents overcome denial. This may take few sessions for the counselor or special educator with parents.
3. Teachers may spot a child with SEN, parents may not be aware that their child has an additional need. In such situations we help parents understand and create awareness.(teacher referral)
4. We can also identify students with additional needs by the following tests employed in school.
 1. Entry Level Tests which are conducted at the beginning of term
 2. Observation of class grades
 3. IBT (International Benchmarking Test)scores

SEN Admission

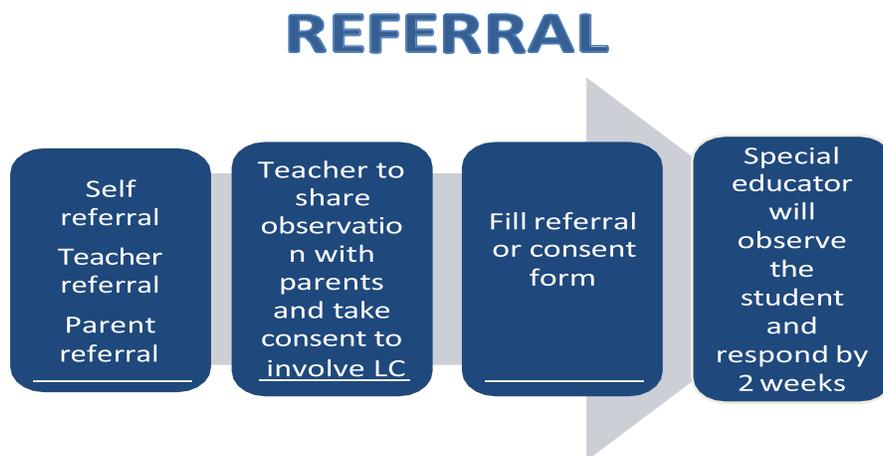
There are two ways in which we identify students with SEN during admission.

1. Parents approach the school and present a diagnosis of their ward. Initial interaction with the Learning Center team is arranged to assess and decide the next steps of intervention and appropriate placement.
2. If the student is facing challenges at the entrance test, then the admission team arranges an interaction with the Learning Center.

Whilst we endeavor to be fully compliant with the regulations stated in the Federal Law 29 (UAE), there may be certain extenuating factors that may influence admission decisions for SEN students at Ambassador school, such as, submission of the latest assessment documentation (less than 2 years), type and level of difficulty, expert's recommendations and type of support required and full disclosure of medical history

Some other factors that could influence admission of students with special educational needs are:

- Facilities/resources available in school to meet the child's specific needs
- Type/area of disability/ difficulty e.g. in cases of autistic children the level of autism may play a significant role
- Recommendations provided by the external medical experts
- Child's readiness to be included in the mainstream school
- Parental support and compliances to specific recommendations from school



Referral process

1. Teachers may notice problems in terms of academics or behavior.
2. Teachers will provide differentiated activities; make their observation, anecdotal notes for two to three weeks depending on the child's need.
3. Special educator/counselor can be consulted to confirm /clarify if there is a genuine problem before approaching the parents. Learning Center to respond within a week. Sometimes if requests are more Learning Center can take extend to two weeks. Requests are to be sent by email to SENCO.
4. If the problem is severe, class teacher will immediately email parents and call for a meeting with parents.
5. In this initial meeting with parent, teacher to include special educator or counselor based on need.

6. Teacher will fill in referral form and LC will get consent from parents to work with their child by signing the consent form.
7. After referral is placed, special educator or counselor will complete observation in two weeks. It may extend to three weeks depending on the caseload and student need.
8. Parent referral or self-referral will proceed for intervention by just signing in the consent form.

OBSERVATION

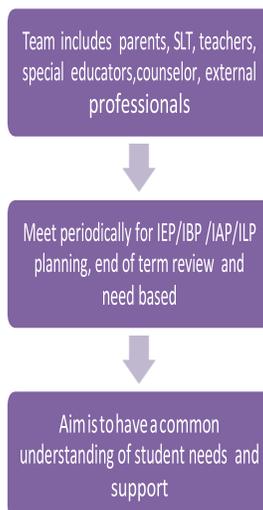


Observation

- Before we set out to provide intervention the student's level is determined by observation by the special educator, parent and teacher feedback.
- Special educator may conduct a functional assessment. The Learning Center has adapted checklists for learning difficulty, autism, ADHD and Grade wise curriculum expectation.

- The school may request parents for an assessment by external professionals for which this above mentioned checklist can be shared.

TEAM MEETING

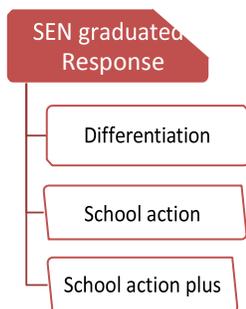


Team Meetings

- We recognize that for our special needs students to achieve their maximum potential, the key is to establish and build on successful partnerships with the team – Parents , SENCO, Special Educators,

Counselor, Learning Support Assistant, Teachers, SLT and external professionals

- We have scheduled meetings with the team for IEP (Individualized Education Plan)/IBP (individualized Behavior Plan)/ILP (individualized Learning Plan/IAP (individualized Action Plan) planning by two to three weeks at start of term and end of term review meeting.
- Scheduled meetings with teachers and SLTs are also held to ensure best support in classrooms.
- We work closely with parents and teachers by providing information on provisions and arrangements for special educational needs, including ways in which they can participate in the process.
- CPDs are conducted for staff on related topics.



Support to students with SEN

When a SEN student is identified, he/she is provided with appropriate additional support within and outside the classroom, as appropriate. The school follows **Graduated Response to SEN**- it recognizes that all children learn in different ways and can have different types and level of educational needs.

Class teacher and subject teachers are responsible for working with the student on a daily basis, with support from the Learning Center team.

Push in sessions

SEN students are also supported by Special Educators in the class and work closely with the teachers to initiate suitable teaching strategies, activities and class work to ensure progress of students with SEN.

Pull out sessions

Students who require more individualized attention will have a one-on-one session with respective special educator at the Learning Center. The session will focus on the Skills.

Support through SEN graduated response

1. Differentiation/SEN Alert

- This is a whole school approach which is already being followed in the school. Special educators will discuss with teachers and suggest ways to modify teaching styles, content/ material and assessment to suit each individual SEN student.
- Student will **not** be in the SEN register at this stage.
- However, parents will be informed and the student will be observed for a term before we decide the need for intervention.
- Suggestions, strategies, home program may be given as per need to parents.

2. School Action

- Student placed in School action may or may not have diagnosis.
- Student will be placed in the SEN register.
- Student will have IAP (Individual Action Plan) depending on the need.
- IAP (Individual Action Plan) is a document providing strategies to the teachers to work with the student.
- Suggestions for differentiation, modification and accommodation will be given.

3. School Action Plus

- Students with a diagnosis will be placed in School Action Plus.
- IEP (Individualized Education Plan) will be prepared which will provide detailed support for differentiation, modification and accommodation.
- Sometimes the student will need a modified curriculum.
- Push in or pull out session will be provided by the special educator as per need of student.

Behavior Intervention

Behavior intervention is provided by the counselor for those with challenging behavior. In the primary school an **Individualized Behavior Plan (IBP)** is provided which will provide strategies to handle the behavior. In the middle and senior school a **Behavior Contract** is worked along with the student. The A-B-C (Antecedent – Behavior – Consequence) and the frequency of challenging behavior are recorded to help plan the IBP.

ILP – Individualized Learning Plan (Secondary)

The middle and senior school students may have an ILP which aims to provide organizational and study skills. The special educator will coordinate the plan along with the student, parents and subject expert teachers.

Provisions

Provisions and exemptions may also be provided as per the need of the student. The following is the list of provisions available

- Modified curriculum – curriculum is simplified at the student’s level
- Modified assessment- tailored to concepts that the student has been taught
- Exemption from languages- second language from CBSE and Arabic from MOE.
- Learning Support Teacher (shadow) in class

Provisions (in lines of CBSE)

- Flexibility in choosing subjects.
- Separate question paper and questions in lieu of practical component.
- Separate seating during examination
- Exemption from third language-
- Additional time during examination
- Use of reader(only read out)
- Use of writer/scribe to write answer paper
- Use of calculator
- Use of computer/laptop to write exam
- Condone spelling error

REVIEW



Review

At the end of term, scheduled IEP/ IAP/ILP meeting with the team (parents, teachers, special educators, LSA) student progress is evaluated and goals are either reset or carried on for maintenance or new ones are introduced.

Tracking of goals

Student may have goals in the classroom environment to be handled by the teacher, TA, LSA or special educator depending on the need.

Weaning off Learning Center support Criteria

- Student may be weaned off support services if found to be making consistent progress in IEP goals and grade marks over a period of 3 terms.
- The aim is to make the student an independent learner and avoidance of prompt dependency.
- The cut off mark for goal achievement is 60% in class grades.
- The student may also be placed in the appropriate level according to the SEN graduated response – Moving from School Action to Differentiation, School Action to School Action Plus or vice versa
- However, they will be closely monitored for any regression and appropriate support will be provided by the team – parents, teachers and special educators.

Goals are tracked on a tracking sheet with the keys WT-Working Towards, ME- Met Expectation, EE- Exceeding Expectation by the respective personnel.

Support to teachers

Teachers are supported at three levels to ensure consistent and effective support to the students with SEN.

- Whole school CPDs are conducted at the beginning and end of term to impart knowledge on different categories of SEN that the teachers can expect in class and the SEN policy giving details on the intervention process.
- Grade wise teacher meeting along with the respective SLT are conducted to discuss and coordinate individual student's needs.
- Transition meetings are held during the beginning of academic year to handover student files and information is shared to help prepare the new teacher to welcome the student.
- Individual teacher – special educator meetings are held on a need basis other than the scheduled ones to help with any challenges like behavior, accommodation, modification or exam paper modification.
- LSA or shadow teachers are on an EDMODO group with the Learning Center team. This is a platform to share resources, discuss, train and share best practices.
- Scheduled SEN class observations are conducted to provide feedback and suggestions to teachers

Support to parents

We strongly advocate the role of productive parental involvement in the education of their child. Parents are welcome to get in touch with the Learning Center at any time other than the scheduled meetings.

Affinity is the creation of a platform where all parents can be actively involved in child development, so that it becomes a three way partnership – child, parent and educator.

'Affinity' is a step in this direction with the intent of meeting periodically to work towards the following objectives –

- To enhance the progress of students through better understanding of the processes implemented.
- To develop mutual support systems for the parents that will be facilitated by professionals in school.
- To share and seek information which will facilitate the development of the students we work with.

Policy reviewed and updated in April 2017

Signed SENCO & Principal

Next review April 2018