

Dubai Schools Inclusion Policy

2024 - 2025



مدارس دبي
DUBAI SCHOOLS
البرشاء
AL BARSHA



Dubai Schools

Inclusion Policy

2024-2025

Document review box and latest revision				
Revision Number	Date	Person Responsible for updating	Signature	Date of Next Review
1	12 September 2024	Ben Viljoen	<i>B Viljoen</i>	June 2025

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1. The DS Vision, Mission and Core Values

Vision:

The vision for Dubai Schools is to:

- Be a beacon and exemplar of academic quality;
- Prepare and inspire students to contribute positively to a rapidly changing world;
- Instill critical thinking skills, provide global perspective and context;
- Underpin respect and appreciation of the core cultural values of honesty, loyalty, perseverance, and compassion;
- In partnership with families, Emirati students will achieve success in their day-to-day studies and be prepared for tomorrow's national, environmental and global challenges.

Mission:

To be a Beacon of Academic Excellence

Combining an inquisitive teaching approach and future-focused skillset delivery, we work hand-in-hand with the community to nurture students to become independent and empathetic learners. We offer an American education that will be guided by Arabic principles and Islamic values which will foster future-ready graduates, driven by pride and tolerance Core Values:



Trust
Empathy



Academic
Excellence



Collaboration
Inclusion



Cultural
Preservation



Future
Ready



2. What is Inclusion?

The Dubai Inclusive Education Policy Framework (2017, p. 10) describes Inclusion as:

“Educating all students, including students identified as experiencing special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), in a common learning environment. In such settings, all students have access to quality instruction, intervention and support, so that they experience success in learning. Inclusive education providers create a culture of collaboration, in a landscape of mutual respect and equality for all. All students are given opportunities to be successful learners, to form positive social relationships with peers, and to become fully participating members of the learning community”.¹

“Inclusive education is not a project or an initiative. It is the progressive development of attitudes, behaviors, systems and beliefs that enable inclusive education to become a norm which underpins school culture and is reflected in attitudinal, organizational and pedagogical discussion and decisions”.²

Within DS, the above two statements resonate with all our core values as well as the core values of Taaleem wherein the organization strives to be pioneering, professional, nurturing and spirited. The school also follows an American Curriculum based on the New York State Education Department – NYSED, leading to an American high-school diploma. This curriculum focuses on empowering and inspiring students across a variety of abilities and backgrounds. The curriculum will nurture all to become empathetic and self-driven students who will embody personal values of responsibility, tolerance and pride. This is also in line with the Council of International Schools Code of Ethics.³ DS wholeheartedly believes that successful and quality Inclusion provides all our students with the best chance for personal success while considering their wellbeing. The teaching and supporting of students of determination is a whole school responsibility and requires effective communication, and collaboration between all parties to ensure success.

¹ Inclusive Education Policy Framework (2017, p.10)

² Inclusive Education Policy Framework (2017, p. 38)

³ <https://www.cois.org/about-cis/code-of-ethics>



3. Legislation and Guidance within the UAE

For the purpose of this policy all information will be based on statutory requirements and guidelines discussed in the following documents:

- a) [United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities \(UNCRPD\)](#)
 - b) [Federal Law No. \(29\) of 2006](#) - The first law in the UAE to protect the rights of people of determination. The law provides for equal care, rights and opportunities for people of determination in education, health care, training and rehabilitation and aims to ensure their rights and provide all services within the limits of their abilities and capabilities.
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- c) [Dubai Law No. \(2\) of 2014](#) - Concerning Protection of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the Emirate of Dubai.
 - d) [The Dubai Inclusive Education Policy Framework \(2017\)](#) - which aims to provide information about the procedures and standards necessary for the improvement of inclusive education provision.
 - e) [Implementing Inclusive Education: A Guide for Schools](#) – Creating the capacity for change.
 - f) [Executive Council Resolution No. \(2\) of 2017](#) – Regulating Private schools in the Emirate of Dubai. With specific reference to:
 - [Article 4 \(14\)](#) – The KHDA will have the duties and powers to establish the conditions, rules, and standards that are required to facilitate the enrolment and integration of Students with disabilities in private schools.
 - [Article 13 \(16\)](#) – A private school must treat its students equitably and not discriminate against them on grounds of nationality, race, gender, religion, social class, or special educational needs of Students with disabilities



- **Article 13 (17)** – A private school must admit students with disabilities in accordance with the terms of its educational permit, the rules adopted by the KHDA, and the relevant legislation in force
- **Article 13 (19)** – A private school must provide all supplies required for conducting the Educational activity, including devices, equipment, furniture and other supplies which the KHDA deems necessary, such as the supplies required by Students with disabilities
- **Article 23 (4)** – A private school must have and implement a clear and transparent student affairs policy that is approved by the KHDA. This policy must provide a special needs friendly environment and academic programmes appropriate for students with disabilities in accordance with the rules and conditions determined by the KHDA and the concerned Government Entities in this respect.

4. Aims and Implementation

DS aims to provide all students with the opportunity to achieve their best academically, emotionally and socially through:

- a) Providing high quality learning that is tailored to the individual student to enable the acquisition of skills, knowledge and concepts relevant to their future.
- b) Promoting an ethos of care, mutual respect and support, where effort is valued, and success celebrated.
- c) Enabling students to become active, responsible, independent and caring members of the school and wider international community.
- d) Promoting wellbeing and a healthy lifestyle.



5. Meeting Diverse Needs

At DS we recognize that to achieve our aims we must actively seek to recognize and meet the very diverse needs of our students by:

- a) **Monitoring the achievement and well-being of all our students and the quality/nature of the learning opportunities they are offered.**
- b) **Tracking each student's academic, social and emotional progress and using the resulting knowledge to plan provision for the individual or groups of students.**
- c) **Correctly identifying and then seeking to overcome potential barriers to students' learning or their full participation in school life**
- d) **Developing and deploying our resources to best reflect the various levels of need experienced by students.**
- e) **Taking care to ensure that vulnerable students, including those with identified additional or Special Educational Needs (SEND) or Disabilities are appropriately supported.**
- f) **Sharing any concerns, we may have regarding a student with their parents or carers and then seeking to work together with them, for the good of the student.**
- g) **Liaising closely with professionals from other student services or external agencies involved in the care and support of students.**
- h) **Ensuring that schools have access to appropriately qualified and experienced staff.**
- i) **Providing teaching and non-teaching staff with the support and training they need in order that their work promotes the best outcomes for each student.**

6. Potentially vulnerable groups

There are several identified groups of students and families for whom this policy is particularly pertinent:

- a) **Students of Determination (Students with Special Educational Needs, also known as**



SEND).⁴

- b) English Language Learners (ELL) who are unable to communicate fluently or learn effectively in English and who often come from non-English-speaking homes and backgrounds.⁵
- c) Students who are Gifted & Talented (G&T) or Highly able. ⁶
- d) Students who might be subject to abuse or harassment, for whatever reason or may be at risk for significant harm.⁷
- e) Students whose family are in crisis or under great stress.⁸
- f) Students with poor attendance and/or punctuality
- g) Students who are at risk of disaffection and exclusion from school
- h) Students who have a temporary high-level need⁹

7. Promoting and Supporting Inclusion

7.1 Parents / Carers

At DS we believe that the support of the parent is crucial for inclusion to be successful and tailored to the individual needs of the student. Parents are responsible for:

- a) Disclosing any formally identified barriers to learning that may have been previously identified in order to assist the school to put appropriate support in place. An application also needs to be accompanied by previous academic reports, provision plans, individual education plans, or any other documents that may be relevant.

-
- b) Communicating with the class / specialist teacher and reporting concerns relating to Inclusion to the SEN Lead.

⁴ See DS SEND Policy

⁵ See DS ELL Policy

⁶ See DS G&T Policy

⁷ See DS Child Protection Policy

⁸ See DS Counselling Policy

⁹ See Taaleem Positive Handling Policy



- c) **Taking** an active part in the development of their child's **Individual Education Plan**.
- d) **Implementing strategies within the home that have been shared by the school to ensure consistency.**

7.2 DS School Governing Board

The School Governing Board plays a critical role in prioritizing the provision of systematic support for the development of an inclusive school and system of education. They are responsible for:

- a) A commitment to inclusion evident in the representation and engagement of key stakeholders such as parents and students.
- b) Supporting the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to deliver the vision, mission, strategic priorities and values of DS and Taaleem and are also responsible for monitoring the performance of students and staff across school in accordance with agreed policies, procedures and school action plans.

7.3 Governors for Inclusive Education

The Taaleem Head of Inclusion and Wellbeing, Dubai supports in terms of governance, as does a parent governor for Inclusion who sits on the school advisory board (SAB). Those within these roles are responsible for ensuring that DS provides outstanding school leadership and management, practices that promote achievement of personalized educational outcomes for all students. The Governors for inclusive education support the governing board to:

- a) Set strategic direction through a clearly-stated inclusive vision and ethos.
- b) Hold the designated school-based inclusion support team accountable for the development and implementation of an appropriate inclusive education improvement plan.



- c) Monitor the overall educational performance of the school through clear inclusive education outcomes and impact measures.

7.4 Role of the School Principal and Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

The Principal and Senior Leadership Team will be committed to:

- a) Promoting inclusion within DS at all levels.
- b) Ensuring that inclusion will be standing agenda items across meetings at all levels. This will ensure inclusive practice is embedded at DS through all policies, systems and practices.
- c) Ensure that recruitment and induction processes prioritize inclusive practice as a key component of professional roles.

7.5 Inclusion Support Team

The Inclusion Team assists the school leaders in working towards a vision of inclusive education in practice. This team includes school staff with specific roles in promoting, developing, and assisting in the implementation of inclusive education. For DS this includes the Taaleem Head of Inclusion and Wellbeing, DS Head of Inclusion, G&T Lead, ELL Lead, support teachers, learning support assistants, SLT and MLT, the school nurse, and the facilities manager.

7.6 Head of Inclusion:

The Head of Inclusion plays a key role (in partnership with other senior leaders and middle leaders) in monitoring, advising, evaluating and planning for the development of inclusive practice and provision across the school. Specific responsibilities include:

- a) Alongside the Principal and members of the Inclusive Support Team, upholding and reviewing the Strategic Inclusive Education Improvement Plan,



- b) Reviewing the implementation and effectiveness of evidence-based programs of intervention for individual and small groups of students,
- c) Supporting and monitoring (including performance management) the work of the Inclusion Team and ensure that they are appropriately placed (through provision mapping),
- d) Working alongside teachers to observe, assess and identify special educational needs
- e) Working collaboratively with other in-school specialists, such as therapists, counsellors or psychologists, to promote student learning, development and wellbeing,
- f) Providing advice and guidance to both teachers and parents,
- g) Promoting high expectations of student learning and achievement,
- h) Supporting the development of relevant and meaningful learning activities,
- i) Facilitating collaborative meetings to promote the development of individual education plans,
- j) Monitoring and supporting classroom teachers in the development and implementation of specific strategies to lower barriers to learning,
- k) Maintaining the register in consultation with other staff.
- l) Organizing professional development opportunities for staff.

7.7 Support Teacher

The role of the Support Teacher includes the following:

- a) Working collaboratively with parents.
- b) Developing and involving all stakeholders in the creating of the Individual Education Plans.
- c) Working with and supporting the Inclusion Support Team as well as external providers relating to Inclusion.
- d) Supporting teachers in observing, assessing and identifying special educational needs in the school.



- e) Supporting teachers in ensuring student progress through forming positive and professional partnerships and then to engage them in personalized professional development programs around particular areas of development.
- f) Implementing evidence-based programs of intervention for individual and small groups of students.
- g) Helping to maintain the respective support registers.
- h) Working with external providers relating to Inclusion.

7.8 Class Teachers / Subject Specialists

Classroom teachers and Subject Specialists are responsible for the learning, progress and outcomes of all the students in their classroom and should work collaboratively with parents, support teachers, learning support assistants and specialists. Their main roles include:

- a) Assessing, evaluating, and reporting on students' progress
- b) Providing a safe, welcoming, and motivating environment for learning
- c) Working closely and in parallel with other professionals
- d) Planning whole class, group, and individual instructions and delivering them
- e) Incorporating any needed modifications and accommodations to maximize their students' achievement
- f) Taking part in the development of the Individual Education Plan and its progress review
- g) Implementing goals set in the Individual Education Plan
- h) Managing information about students and communicating this information to parents and other relevant personnel
- i) Supervising and coordinating work with the LSAs
- j) Promoting student interactions with their peers



7.9 Learning Support Assistant

Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) work in collaboration with classroom teachers so that students are successfully included in the classroom environment alongside their peers. It is important to note that ultimately the classroom teacher is responsible and accountable for the **impact and outcomes** of the students' educational program. LSAs also work in close collaboration with the Support Teachers, making the bridge between the students and the classroom environment.

LSAs at DS are used differently across separate phases of the school (depending on classroom and student need) and can be divided into school funded LSA or parent funded individual LSA (or Individual Learning Support Assistant - ILSA). Their specific responsibilities will differ according to the individual context of each LSA (whether 1:1, in class push-in support or small group pull-out support), but will broadly include:

- a) Providing individual or small group support to specific students
- b) Promoting independence in all aspects of school life
- c) Promoting access to targeted support outside of the classroom
- d) Working on differentiated activities with groups of students
- e) Developing social/emotional skills
- f) Working with teachers to monitor the progress of students
- g) Supporting intervention or therapy sessions.

7.10 School Counsellor

The Counsellor has a key role in promoting and supporting inclusive practice at DS, some of which include:

- a) Observing and engaging with any students who may be vulnerable, liaising with teachers or senior staff regarding any concerns.



- b) Being the point of contact and supporting all students, including new students as required.
- c) Helping to devise ways of best supporting the students he/she works with.
- d) Observing the well-being of students within social settings and spending time within classes or in conference working with individual students.
- e) Working alongside staff and students to promote positive relationships for all students throughout the school day; including where necessary break and lunchtimes.
- f) Undertaking individual or group work with students whose behavior gives cause for concern.
- g) Taking a supporting role in working alongside external family support agencies.

For more in-depth information on the roles of the School Counsellors at DS please see the DS Counselling Policy.

7.11 School Nurses

The school nurse has a key role in promoting and supporting inclusive practice at the school. Briefly some of the tasks relevant to inclusion include:

- a) Keeping health records
- b) Informing SLT of medical conditions which impact on learning.
- c) Promoting healthy lifestyles
- d) Ensuring students are sun safe
- e) Ensuring the Health and Safety of all students under the care.

8. Personalizing the Curriculum

In some cases, the curriculum itself may pose a barrier to students achieving their full potential. When this is the case:



- a) School leaders and teachers are responsible for ensuring that the curriculum; in its narrow and broadest senses, is personalized to match the needs of the students who attend the school is working towards developing alternative frameworks that may be utilized to support students' needs.
- b) School leaders ensure that the principles of inclusion are applied to all activities with which students engage in at school or on educational visits; this includes the variety of ECAs.
- c) All members of the school community are expected and encouraged to adopt behaviors which support the school's inclusive ethos.

9. Admissions

In terms of school admissions, in line with the Dubai Inclusive Education Policy Framework (2017), supported by Dubai Law No.2 (2014) and The Executive Council Resolution No.2 (2017):

- a) No student will be refused access in terms of admissions to DS due to their experience of disability.
- b) Registration of students of determination who are siblings of existing students will be prioritized.
- c) Those students of determination with severe and profound needs that cannot be met in a school will be supported in connecting with, and accessing, educational and therapeutic provisions in special educational centers or centers for students of determination.

During admission appropriate assessments will be conducted to further understand what support will need to be put in place to reduce / remove the students' barriers to learning. Additional information may also be sought from parents, previous schools and external professionals where appropriate.¹⁰

¹⁰ See Admission Policy



10. The School Inclusion Register

The School Inclusion Register is an important record of students and their current levels of support within the school. It provides teachers and the Inclusion Team with up-to-date information that informs them of the context of classes and the support that students require. It is important that:

- a) Students who are identified by the school as struggling with barriers relating to SEND, AEN and/or Highly Able or Gifted and Talented are entered on to the schools' inclusion register. Parents must be notified, and the register must at all times be up to date.

- b) The register will be formally reviewed three times a year during which an evaluation of whether the student is reaching his or her full potential will be made. Progress will be monitored closely to ensure that students have a full range of opportunities to grow and develop their potential.
- c) The register will also be amended in addition to the above as needed.

11. Parental Engagement

DS firmly believes in developing a strong partnership with parents and that it is only through such a partnership that students with barriers to Inclusion will be provided with holistic support in order to be fully assisted in achieving to their full potential. Parents possess unique information regarding their children that can assist in identification as well as during the continued provision of support. Thus, at DS we strive to:

- a) Ensure parents / carers feel welcome in the school with the knowledge that they and their children are supported. This is enhanced through the school's "open door" policy, offering informal chats when necessary and formal discussion by appointment.



- b) Have full and open consultation with parents / carers with their concerns being recorded and acted upon.
- c) Ensure that parents are always fully aware of the support their child is receiving.

12. Working Partnerships with External Agencies

DS recognizes the important contribution that external support services make in assisting to identify, assess, and provide recommendations and support for students. Thus, the Head of Inclusion will keep an updated list of suitable external agencies for student referral in order to improve the provision of quality care and support to both students and parents. A referral will always be in the best interest of the child and collaboration between the school and external agencies in-school is essential. Whenever considered necessary and appropriate students requiring support may be referred to:

- a) Educational psychological services
- b) Speech therapists
- c) Physiotherapists
- d) Occupational therapists
- e) Hearing impairment services
- f) Visual impairment services
- g) School clinic
- h) Other groups or organizations relating to support

13. Staff Development and Training

DS makes use of local staff training and whenever possible supports staff to attend local courses and conferences. The Inclusion team also provide regular additional training to all staff and parents.



14. Students Transferring to Another School

Should a student wish to transfer to another school, the school is responsible to pass school records on to the next placement and engage in verbal liaisons to ensure that a student's transfer is successful. Any external agency reports require the express permission of the parents/carer before being shared. This is critical to ensure that the student with barriers to their learning receives continuity in terms of their support to continue to enable them to achieve and progress to their full potential.

15. Premises / School Grounds

DS strives to be as inclusive as possible. Collaboration between the Facilities Manager and the Heads of Inclusion ensure that a plan is in place to continue to develop the school facilities.

16. Complaints

Complaints regarding the provision of inclusive practices will be taken seriously and every effort will be made to resolve the complaint within the school. The Head of Inclusion will discuss any complaint with those involved and inform the School Leadership Team where appropriate. Parents/carers must be kept informed regarding the complaint procedure.

17. Monitoring and Review

School Principals and Heads of Inclusion will monitor the effectiveness of this policy on a regular basis and, if necessary, make recommendations for further improvements.

