



SPECIAL NEEDS POLICY

Special Needs Policy

CA aims to help all students develop:

- The ability to gather, organise and analyse information and apply it to problem solving and making decisions;
- The self-discipline to work independently and the confidence to work collaboratively;
- The ability to recognize the similarities and differences in individuals and cultures which lead to mutual benefits;
- The adaptability to change by recognizing opportunities for learning and growth throughout their lives.

Philosophy

Inclusiveness is essential to our mission. According to Article 2 of the *United Nations Declaration of Human Rights*, “Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms (...), without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status”¹. Therefore, all students are welcome to apply to our school. However, all applications will be carefully studied as accepting students will depend on several factors such as vacancies, the student’s needs and the ability of the school’s resources in addressing those needs.

The best learning takes place in an environment that promotes care and concern for the welfare of others. All members of the school community are encouraged to pursue excellence and are recognized for their achievements. All people within the school community – staff, parents, administration– continue to learn alongside the students we

¹ UN General Assembly (1948), *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*

teach. Students develop both intellectual and social skills in order to become critical and creative thinkers, achieve their personal best, and mature into responsible adults.

Special Education Needs Policy Goals

Goals of the CA SEN Policy:

- To adhere to laws regarding Exceptional Student Education;
- To ensure that the special needs of our students are identified early, assessed, and provided for;
- To clarify the expectations of all stakeholders;
- To identify roles and responsibilities of stakeholders;
- To assist all students in accessing all elements of the school curriculum.

CA as well as its stakeholders acknowledge that:

- Students have different educational and learning needs, abilities, and goals;
- Students gain knowledge and skills at different rates and through different means;
- All students are unique and have the ability of learning;
- Despite CA welcoming all students, specific needs will be previously discussed and considered so that each student gets the best possible support.

Special educational needs

This refers to candidates with individual special educational needs, who might require special arrangements. Candidates who require special assessment arrangements may display the characteristics of one or more of the following special educational needs.

Specific learning issues, language and communication disorders:

- Significant issues in reading, writing, spelling or manipulating numbers associated with issues in processing symbolic language (for example, problems interpreting music notation, dyslexia, dyscalculia);
- Speech and language issues characterized by communication problems (for example, aphasia, dysphasia, articulation problems);
- Physical and sensory conditions;
- Physical disabilities include a wide range of conditions that are not always immediately obvious, but affect mobility;
- Sensory issues: hearing—embraces an extensive range of hearing loss from mild to profound and can present communication difficulties; visual—includes difficulties with either the structure or function of the eye, affecting vision;
- Medical conditions - The most common being: congenital heart disease, epilepsy, asthma, cystic fibrosis, hemophilia, sickle cell anemia, diabetes, renal failure, eczema, rheumatoid disorders, allergies, leukemia and other cancers.
- Mental health issues - A wide range of conditions that can affect a person's state of mind, ranging from psychotic conditions, such as schizophrenia and manic depression, to eating disorders, anxieties and emotional distress caused by circumstances in a candidate's life.

- Technical language - This refers to terminology specific to the subject being tested. It may be the target of the assessment and must be known by the candidate to understand fully the subject

Procedures

- The department provides services for students with special educational needs, including gifted students.
- Students are admitted to school after they complete an admission assessment to measure his overall level in academics, cognitive and motor skills.
- Parents must provide any necessary doctors' report in addition to a general psychological report and standardized assessments to pronounce the needs of the student.
- Students may be referred to the SEN department by the parents at the admission time or by the teachers in the middle of the academic year.
- The purpose of the SEN department is to support inclusive education, where all students are granted equal opportunities to attend a regular school and have their educational needs met.
- The SEN department strives to combat stereotypes about children with special educational needs.
- By integrating special needs students inside the classrooms, the school sets a model for the students to accept differences and hence reach the ultimate IB goals, to be open minded, respectful, and caring.
- The school follows all regulations regarding IB support for students with special educational needs, (extra time, amanuensis, use of computer, etc.)

Support offered to the SEN students

- All IB students will be offered a comprehensive programme that enhances their communication, social, self-management, research and thinking skills.
- Ideally, students will be fully integrated with their peers inside and outside the classroom.
- Students will be the centre of education, with an **inquiry and concept-based learning** approach.
- Differentiation is to be considered by the teachers to attend students' learning styles and needs.
- Students will be assessed regularly (**formative and summative** assessments). The IB coordinators will create internal calendars with formative and summative assessments. These calendars will be available to all stakeholders.
- Communicating with the parents regarding the child's progress is vital. Parents will be constantly given guidelines and recommendations to follow up with their child at home.

The plans offered for special needs students will be tailored to their needs based on communication and collaboration between staff members, students, and parents.

1. **Consultative Support:** Teachers are offered advice and guidance from members of the learning support team on how to meet the needs of either an individual or groups of pupils.
2. **Directed Study Time:** Pupils are provided with additional support in literacy, Mathematics and Science.
3. **Classroom and Test Adaptations, Modifications and Accommodations:** Students with special educational needs might have different learning styles, strengths and challenges. Accommodations and modifications are types of adaptations that are made to the environment, curriculum, instruction, or assessment practices in order for students with learning difficulties and needs to be successful learners and to

participate actively with other students in the general education classroom and in school-wide activities.

4. **Special Arrangements:** A Special Arrangement can be used for pupils whose educational needs can undermine their progress and performance in both class work and assessment situations.

Specific Roles and Responsibilities

SCHOOL

The school will provide guidance to students with special education needs to help them make informed decisions concerning their progress.

1. The school, along with the Exceptional Student Services of Leaders International College, will raise staff awareness of the needs of our exceptional students. Teachers will be trained and guide how to deal with those needs.
2. The school will provide resources for the implementation and continuation of the Special Education Needs Policy.
3. Exceptional Student Services personnel, school guidance counselors, and support facilitators will provide updates and host meetings for reviews.

LEARNING SUPPORT TEAM

1. Influencing whole teaching and learning policy and practice to ensure aspects of inclusive teaching.
2. Identifying and adopting the most effective teaching approaches for students with additional educational needs.
3. Ensuring that all staff in the school have sufficient knowledge, skills, support and advice to teach students with additional educational needs effectively.

4. Liaising with and giving advice and training to fellow teachers.
5. Overseeing pupils' records.
6. Liaising with the parents.
7. Promoting staff awareness on inclusion.

IB COORDINATOR

1. The IB Coordinator will contact the IB with information regarding students' accommodations in assessment, requesting special conditions.
2. The IB Coordinator will work collaboratively with faculty to support students with special education needs.
3. The IB Coordinator will provide examination accommodations as needed once they have been approved by the IB.
4. The IB Coordinators will maintain discretion and confidence regarding the administration of special education needs services.

FACULTY

1. Differentiating and matching teaching approaches to address student's diverse needs.
2. Collaborating with the learning support team to decide the action required to assist the pupil to progress.
3. Working with the learning support team to collect all available information on the pupil.
4. Developing constructive relationships with parents.
5. Developing a respectful understanding of students' general differentiating learning attributes and working collaboratively to overcome them.

PARENTS

1. Parents will play an active role in their child's education.
2. Parents will have knowledge of their child's entitlement within the school district policy.
3. Parents will communicate to the school all information and documentation regarding their child's special education needs.
4. Parents will communicate with the school regarding any changes in their child's special education needs.
5. Parents will provide documentation needed for IBO accommodation requests.
6. Parents will make request for needed child studies and services from the school or school district in a proactive manner.

STUDENTS

1. Students will be proactive in asking for assistance from the school administrators, faculty, and staff.
2. Students will be an active participant in classes and meetings.
3. Students will follow all CA policies and procedures.

NOTE: This document should be read in conjunction with all other school policies – Admission Policy, Assessment Policy, Language Policy and Academic Honesty Policy.
This policy will be reviewed every academic year in consultation with the staff.

References:

International Baccalaureate Organization (2018), *Diploma Programme assessment procedures*
International Baccalaureate Organization (2015), *Diploma Programme: from principles into practice*
International Baccalaureate Organization (2016), *General regulations: Diploma Programme*

