



ST. MARY'S *Catholic High School, Dubai*

SEND INCLUSION POLICY

2026-2027



ST. MARY'S *Catholic High School, Dubai*

SEND INCLUSION POLICY

St. Mary's Catholic High School believes that each student has individual and unique needs; however, some students require more support than others to achieve their full potential. We have high expectations & want all students to feel that they are a valued part of our school community, as part of our commitment to help every child realise their full potential.

We acknowledge that a significant proportion of students will have special educational needs at some time in their school life and it is the collective responsibility of all teachers and stakeholders within school to address these needs and provide for them. Many of these students may require help throughout their time in school, while others may need a little extra support for a short period to help them overcome more temporary needs. If these students are to achieve their full potential, we must recognise this and plan accordingly.

The school aims to provide all students with strategies for dealing with their needs in a supportive environment to give them meaningful access to the curriculum. Provision for students with special educational needs is a shared responsibility across the whole school. It is each teacher's responsibility to support students identified with SEND (SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS & DISABILITIES) category in his/her class, and to be aware that these needs may be present in different learning situations. All staff members are responsible for helping to meet an individual's special educational needs and for following the school's procedures for identifying, assessing and making provisions to meet those needs.



This policy was developed by the Student Support Services Department (SSSD) and reviewed by a group of people including the school SENCO, Special Educators, Counsellors, Governors, Principal, Vice Principal, Subject Leaders, Teachers and Parents of students with SEND and Staff of St. Mary's Catholic High School, Dubai.

The Senior Leadership Team delegates one senior leader to take particular interest in Special Educational Needs to take a strategic overview of the provision of SEND. In addition, the school has appointed a Governor for Inclusion who will report matters regarding SEND to the Governing Body and an Inclusion Champion who will raise awareness regarding inclusion among the entire school community.



MISSION



Mission & Vision

We serve with compassion to develop a deep sense of integrity, mutual respect and tolerance within the Marian family so that the uniqueness of each person is celebrated, allowing them to holistically develop as successful learners and responsible citizens.

VISION

At St. Mary's Catholic High School, our vision for SEND inclusion within the Marian family is to nurture confident, self-aware and independent learners who recognise their strengths and develop a positive self-concept. Rooted in compassion, mutual respect and a strong sense of belonging, we equip students of determination with the academic, social, and emotional and life skills needed to participate meaningfully in society and advocate for themselves. Our inclusive practice extends beyond school, preparing students for further education, employment and adult life, where they continue to contribute positively with dignity, confidence and purpose.

GENERAL OBJECTIVE

The school aims to provide timely, flexible and appropriate support to students who experience barriers to learning, as well as those who demonstrate advanced abilities, whether due to an identified special educational need, a temporary difficulty, or exceptional potential. Through inclusive practices, targeted intervention and enrichment, and collaboration with families and staff, the school seeks to ensure that all students can access the curriculum, make progress from their individual starting points, and develop confidence, independence and a positive sense of self as learners.

At St. Mary's Catholic High School, we aim:

To provide effective opportunities for all students by responding to students' diverse learning needs, setting suitable learning challenges and overcoming barriers to learning.

Enable every student to experience success by equipping him/her to achieve their full potential.

Ensure that the holistic development of each student is supported, promoted, encouraged and celebrated.

To achieve our aim, a member of the Senior Leadership Team leads SEND provision and is responsible for the strategic planning and outcome of SEND students.

At St. Mary's Catholic High School, the Student Support Services Department provides structured and individualised support to students through informal screening, classroom observations, and targeted teaching programmes. Support may include one-to-one or small group sessions, alongside classroom-based strategies that provide academic progress, wellbeing and independence. Curriculum-related targets are developed collaboratively with subject teachers to ensure consistency between intervention and classroom learning. Through this co-ordinated approach, students are supported to reach their individual potential.

GUIDELINES FOR THE DEPARTMENT

- To follow the guidelines laid down by **Ministry of Education and relevant UAE legislation including Federal Law No. 29 of 2006, concerning the rights of people of Determination.**
- To work in partnership with the students, parents/carers, school staff, and relevant external agencies to support students learning and wellbeing.
- Where a student is identified as having special educational needs, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) will be developed and tailored to the student's individual needs. Realistic and achievable targets will be set, and the IEP will be reviewed regularly in collaboration with the students, parents, teachers and relevant support services.
- To promote self-esteem, confidence and independence by setting appropriate, independent and meaningful learning targets
- Class teachers will use a range of differentiation and adaptation strategies including scaffolding, to provide effective learning opportunities for all students.
- To include students within the classroom environment, wherever and whenever practicable and to use available resources appropriately and efficiently to support inclusive practices.

With an increasing focus on expanding support for students with disabilities, the government of the UAE has introduced legislative frameworks to guide all institutions working with students of determination. The following laws and regulations inform and guide the schools inclusive practices.

The government of Dubai has issued Law No. (2) Of 2014, concerning the Protection of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the Emirate of Dubai. This law outlines the right of persons with disabilities to access education, be treated with dignity, be protected from abuse and exploitation, and be supported to participate fully and effectively in society.

Further legislations include:

Article 4 (14) – KHDA has the authority to establish rules and standards required to facilitate enrolment and integration of students with disabilities in Private schools.

Article 13 (16) - Private schools must not discriminate on grounds of nationality, race, gender, religion, social class or special educational needs or disabilities.

Article 13 (17) - Private schools must admit students with disabilities in accordance with terms of educational permit; the rules adopted by the KHDA, and the relevant legislation in force.

Article 13 (19) - Private schools must provide all supplies required for conducting educational activity including devices, equipment, furniture and other supplies which the KHDA deems necessary for Student with Disabilities.

Article 23 (4) - Private schools must have and implement a clear and transparent Student Affairs Policy that is approved by KHDA. This policy must provide a special needs friendly environment, academic program appropriate for students with disabilities.

ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS TO PROMOTE INCLUSION:

At St. Mary's Catholic High School, we strive to encourage an inclusive atmosphere to promote independent learning in all our children. In order to optimistically meet the needs of those of our students, who have different needs from the vast majority of students, we:

- Give due consideration to every application for admission with professional care, in order to ensure both that each individual applicant's needs can be met and that the school is able to meet the learning needs of all our children.
- Identify and describe the inclusive access needs of our students in a timely and effective manner with the full co-operation of the families and appropriate professionals.
- Provide support in the classroom that matches the needs of the students.
- Monitor and track progress of all students with their diverse learning needs.
- Use a variety of teaching and assessment styles in our classrooms to cater for diverse learning needs.
- Maintain regular communication with the parents to ensure optimal collaboration between school and home.

We welcome students with diverse learning needs whose academic, personal, social and emotional needs can be met by the school or where the resources can be adapted or readily obtained to meet the needs.

CATEGORIES OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS & DISABILITIES

Table 1 - Categorisation for students with a formal diagnosis

Main diagnosed category as per the UAE unified classification system	Sub-Category as per the UAE unified classification system	Additional Information
1. Intellectual Disability	1.1 Intellectual Disability	▶ Mild ▶ Moderate ▶ Severe
	1.2 Unspecified	▶ Mild ▶ Moderate ▶ Severe
	1.3 Global Developmental Delay	
	1.4 Neurocognitive Disorders	
2. Communication Disorders	2.1 Language Disorders	▶ Receptive ▶ Expressive ▶ Both receptive and expressive
	2.2 Speech Sounds Disorder	
	2.3 Fluency Disorder	
	2.4 Social Communication Disorder	
	2.5 Unspecified Communication Disorder	
3. Autism Spectrum Disorder	3.1 Autism with Intellectual Disability	▶ Level 1 ▶ Level 2 ▶ Level 3
	3.2 High Functioning Autism	▶ Level 1 ▶ Level 2 ▶ Level 3
4. ADHD	4.1 Combined presentation	
	4.2 Predominately Inattentive presentation	
	4.3 Predominantly Hyperactive/Impulsive	

5. Psycho-Emotional Disorders		▶ Depression ▶ Bipolar Disorder ▶ Anxiety Disorders ▶ Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder ▶ Obsessive Compulsive Disorder ▶ Oppositional Defiance Disorder ▶ Conduct Disorder ▶ Selective Mutism ▶ Intermittent Explosive Disorder ▶ Eating Disorders ▶ Personality Disorders ▶ Tourette Syndrome ▶ Other
6. Specific Learning Difficulties	6.1 Dyslexia	
	6.2 Dysgraphia	
	6.3 Dyscalculia	
	6.4 Scholastic Skills	
7. Visual Impairment	7.1 Total Blindness	
	7.2 Partially Sighted	
	7.3 Low Vision	▶ Mild ▶ Moderate ▶ Severe
8. Hearing Impairment	8.1 Deafness (hearing loss greater than 90 decibels)	
	8.2-Hearing Impairment (hearing loss ranging from 26 to 90 decibels)	▶ Mild ▶ Moderate ▶ Severe

9. Deaf-Blind Disability	9.1 Deaf-Blind	
10. Physical Disability		▶ Cerebral Palsy ▶ Muscular Dystrophy ▶ Spina Bifida ▶ Amputation/Limb Differences ▶ Spinal Cord Injury ▶ DCD / Dyspraxia ▶ Brittle Bone Disease ▶ Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis. ▶ Musculoskeletal Deformities ▶ Other
11. Multiple Disability		When selecting Multiple Disabilities , also select two or more additional main and sub-categories that coexist and result in complex needs requiring highly individualised support and consistent specialist input.

Steps to complete the categorisation for identified students of determination without a diagnosis (barrier identification)

- ▶ **Step 1:** Identify the learner's main barrier as identified through a comprehensive school-based assessment.
- ▶ **Step 2:** Select the Main Barrier and Barrier Sub-Category.
- ▶ **Step 3:** Where available, complete the additional information which indicates the level of support or specific barriers.

Table 2 – Categorisation for identified students without a diagnosis (barrier identification)

Main Barrier	Barrier Sub-Category	Additional Information
1. Thinking and Learning Needs	General learning needs across subjects	▶ Learns with some extra support (can follow most learning with adjustments and guidance) ▶ Learns with regular support (needs frequent adaptations and help across subjects) ▶ Learns with high levels of support (requires ongoing, personalised support in most areas of daily academic life)
	Early developmental needs in more than one area (under age 5)	▶ Learns with some extra support (can follow most learning with adjustments and guidance) ▶ Learns with regular support (needs frequent adaptations and help across subjects) ▶ Learns with high levels of support (requires ongoing, personalised support in most areas of daily academic life)
	Memory and thinking needs due to illness or injury	▶ Learns with some extra support (can follow most learning with adjustments and guidance) ▶ Learns with regular support (needs frequent adaptations and help across subjects) ▶ Learns with high levels of support (requires ongoing, personalised support in most areas of daily academic life)

2. Communication and Speech Needs	Language needs	▶ Understanding language ▶ Using language ▶ Both understanding and using language
	Difficulty making speech sounds clearly	
	Stammering or stuttering	
	Social use of language difficulties	
	Other or unclear speech and language needs	
3. Social Communication and Interaction Needs		▶ Needs little or no support (independent most of the time, but benefits from some help) ▶ Needs regular support (daily support in several areas) ▶ Needs high levels of support (consistent help across most areas of academic life)
4. Attention and Focus Needs	Difficulties with both attention and high activity	
	Difficulties mainly with attention and focus	
	Difficulties mainly with high activity and impulsive behaviour	
5. Social, Emotional and Behavioural Needs		▶ Low mood or sadness ▶ Strong mood swings ▶ Worry and anxiety ▶ Difficulties after traumatic events ▶ Repetitive or obsessive behaviours ▶ Strong refusal or defiance

		▶ Not speaking in some situations ▶ Sudden angry outbursts ▶ Difficulties with eating and food ▶ Personality or behaviour challenges ▶ Tics or involuntary movements and sounds ▶ Other
6. Learning Difficulties in Specific Skills	Reading difficulties	
	Writing difficulties	
	Difficulties with maths and number skills	
	General academic learning difficulties	
7. Vision Needs	Low vision	▶ Some difficulty seeing details ▶ Significant difficulty seeing clearly ▶ Very limited visual clarity
8. Hearing Needs	Hearing loss	▶ Some difficulty hearing sounds ▶ Frequent difficulty following speech ▶ Unable to hear most speech
9. Physical and Movement Needs		▶ Movement and posture needs ▶ Ongoing muscle weakness ▶ Coordination and motor planning difficulties ▶ Fragile or brittle bones ▶ Ongoing joint problems ▶ Missing or differently formed limbs

		▶ Loss of movement due to spinal injury ▶ Bone or joint differences (e.g. curved spine, clubfoot) ▶ Other
10. Multiple and Complex Needs		Select this category when two or more barriers co-exist, resulting in highly individualised support and consistent specialist input. Record each relevant barrier category alongside this selection.

COGNITION AND LEARNING

- Intellectual Disability (including intellectual disability – unspecified)
- Specific Learning Disorders
- Multiple Disabilities
- Development Delay (Younger than five years of age)

COMMUNICATION AND INTERACTION

- ✓ Communication Disorders
- ✓ Autism Spectrum Disorders

SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL HEALTH

- ✓ Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
- ✓ Psycho-emotional Disorders

PHYSICAL, SENSORY AND MEDICAL

- ✓ Sensory Impairment
 - ✓ Deaf-Blind Disability
 - ✓ Physical Disability
 - ✓ Chronic and Acute Medical Conditions
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According to the KHDA framework, which is based upon the UAE Unified Categorisation of Disability, a child will be included in Special Educational Needs Programme if he/she has the following:

TYPE OF NEED	DESCRIPTION (Aligned with the UAE Unified Categorisation of Disability)
Cognition and Learning	
1. General Barriers to Learning (Intellectual Disability)	Intellectual disability is a disability characterised by significant limitations in both intellectual functioning (reasoning, learning, problem-solving) & in adaptive behaviour, which cover a range of everyday social and practical skills.
1.1. Mild Intellectual Disability (Mild Barriers to Learning)	Students who experience mild barriers to learning will have below average cognitive functioning & are likely to make slower than expected progress over time. This will cause these students to attain below expected levels (two to three years below) in most areas of the curriculum.
1.2. Moderate Intellectual Disability (Moderate Barriers to Learning)	Students who experience moderate barriers to learning will have significantly below average cognitive functioning and are likely to make very slow progress over time. This will cause them to attain significantly below expected levels in most areas of the curriculum (three to five years below), despite appropriate interventions.
1.3. Severe Intellectual Disability (Severe Barriers to Learning)	Students who experience severe learning barriers will have very low cognitive functioning and are likely to make very small, incremental steps of progress over time. This will cause them to attain significantly below expected levels in most areas of the curriculum and possibly at an early years/primary level, despite appropriate interventions.

2. Multiple Disabilities (Multiple Barriers to Learning)	A student who experiences a number of severe barriers to learning, such as a sensory disability and a physical disability, may be identified as having a multiple disability. Students are identified with a multiple disability when severe barriers caused by more than one type of disability, disorder or condition are present.
3. Developmental Delay (Barriers with Typical Development)	There are many different types of developmental delays in infants and young children. These include problems with language or speech, vision, movement/motor skills, social and emotional skills and thinking/cognitive skills.
3.1. Global Developmental Delay (Global Developmental Barriers)	Young children who experience global developmental barriers have difficulties progressing in most developmental domains. Particular barriers to learning may include delays in motor skill; delays in speech and language, which may impact a child's ability to understand; delays in cognition, may make it difficult for a child to pay attention; delays in social/emotional development may present as the child being unable to answer questions or have difficulty engaging in short conversational interchanges; difficulties in managing their emotional responses; delays in their ability to fulfil daily living (adaptive functioning) activities.
3.2. Specific Developmental Delay (Specific Developmental Barriers)	Children who are delayed in one specific area in development (whilst other areas develop at the expected rate), experience specific developmental barriers.
4. Specific Learning Disorder (Specific Barriers to Learning)	A specific learning disorder is a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using spoken or written language. The disorder may manifest itself in an impaired ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell or understand mathematical calculations.

4.1. Dyslexia (Specific Barriers with Reading)	Some students who experience specific barriers with reading, despite expected or above expected levels of cognitive ability, may be diagnosed with dyslexia. Particular barriers to learning include difficulties with remembering what is seen or heard; identifying sounds in words and putting things in sequence (e.g. information, letters, stories; numbers, the days of the week, the months of the year); reading speed, understanding what is being read; following directions; personal organization; spelling, copying words and numbers from a book or board; recalling the names of words or objects.
4.2. Dysgraphia (Specific Barriers with Writing)	Some students who experience specific barriers with writing, despite expected or above expected levels. Of cognitive ability, may be diagnosed with dysgraphia. Particular barriers to learning may include written presentation with a mixture of upper/lower case letters, irregular letter sizes and shapes, and unfinished letters; difficulties with using writing as a communication tool; reduced quality in the content of their written work due to the high levels of effort needed to complete the writing process; unusual writing grips, odd wrist, body and paper positions, which may result in discomfort while writing; repeated mistakes; excessive erasing may be evident as may a misuse of lines and margins; poorly organised writing on a page; a student may struggle with organising their ideas, sentence and/or paragraph structure and have limited expression of their ideas; reluctance to complete writing tasks or a refusal to do so.

4.3. Dyscalculia (Specific Barriers with Mathematical Concepts)	Some students who experience specific barriers with mathematical concepts, despite expected or above expected levels of cognitive ability, may be diagnosed with dyscalculia. Particular barriers to learning may include an inability to conceptualise number, number relationships and outcomes of numerical operations (estimating); difficulties with computation, direction, mental mathematics, money, reading and writing numbers; remembering sequences like, rote counting, rules and formulae; understanding the concept of time, the ability to apply time management strategies and time management; weaker ability to comprehend mechanical processes as they often lack ‘big picture’ thinking; poor sense of direction; personal organisation.
4.4. Specific Barriers with Coordination (Dyspraxia)	To find drawing and writing difficult Some students who experience specific barriers with physical coordination, despite expected or above expected levels of cognitive ability, may be diagnosed with dyspraxia. Particular barriers to learning may include difficulty coordinating their movements, perceptions and thoughts; difficulty running, jumping, hopping and catching a ball in physical activity; physically managing themselves in the classroom; the student may bump into and drop things; and tend; difficulty maintaining an erect posture, either when sitting or standing; experiencing high levels of fatigue due to the effort needed for physical control and movement; difficulties with writing, due to posture and position challenges

Communication and Interaction

5. Communication Disorders (Communication Barriers)	A communication disorder is impairment in the ability to receive, send, process, and comprehend concepts or verbal, nonverbal and graphic symbol systems. A communication disorder may be evident in the processes of interpretation, hearing, language, and/or speech.
5.1. Expressive Language Disorder (Specific Barriers with Verbal Expression)	Some students who experience significant barriers expressing themselves using verbal language may be diagnosed with an expressive language disorder. Students' understanding of language is likely to be at a significantly higher level than their ability to communicate with the spoken word.
5.2. Receptive Language Disorder (Specific Barriers with Understanding Verbal Language)	Some students who experience significant barriers understanding verbal language may be diagnosed with a receptive language disorder.
5.3. Global Language Delay (General Barriers with Language)	Students who experience significant barriers with using and understanding verbal language may be diagnosed with a global language delay. These students may experience a combination of barriers to learning as described in the sections above (expressive and receptive language disorders).
5.4. Speech Fluency Disorder (Speech Barriers with Speech Fluency)	Students who experience persistent barriers with speech fluency (stuttering) may be diagnosed with a speech fluency disorder.

5.5. Speech Sounds Disorder (Specific Barriers with Speech Sounds)	Most typically developing students will be able to say all expected speech sounds by eight years of age. Students who do not say sounds by the expected age should have their hearing checked to ensure that they are hearing the sounds/words correctly. Students with persistent barriers with making speech sounds may be diagnosed with a speech sounds disorder.
5.6. Social Communication Disorder (Barriers with Social Communication)	Students who experience significant barriers with social communication may be diagnosed with a social communication disorder. These students experience difficulty using language in social situations but are not impaired in their understanding of word structure, grammar, or in general cognitive ability.
6. Autism Spectrum Disorder (Barriers with Social Interaction, Communication, and Flexibility)	Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a complex developmental condition that involves persistent challenges in the areas of social interaction, communication, and restricted or repetitive behaviour/s.
6.1. Autism Spectrum Disorder- Level 1 (Mild Barriers with Social Interaction, Communication, and Flexibility)	Students who consistently struggle to initiate appropriate social interactions and find it difficult to respond to others in an expected or successful manner may be diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder (level 1).
6.2. Autism Spectrum Disorder- Level 2 (Moderate Barriers with Social Interaction, Communication, and Flexibility)	Students who experience significant and persistent difficulties initiating appropriate social interactions and find it difficult to respond to others in an expected or successful manner may be diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder (level 2).
6.3 Autism Spectrum Disorder- Level 3 (Extremely Complex Barriers with Social Interaction, Communication, and Flexibility)	Students who experience extremely complex barriers with verbal and non-verbal social communication skills may be diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (level 3).

Social, Emotional and Mental Health

7. Psycho-Emotional Disorders

(Emotional and Psychological Barriers)

7.1. Depression

(Significant barriers with feeling positive and motivated)

Students who experience persistent feelings of hopelessness and inadequacy, typically accompanied by a lack of energy and interest in life, may be diagnosed with depression.

7.2. Bi-polar Disorder

(Signification and persistent barriers regulating mood)

Students who experience significant shifts in mood, energy, thinking, and behaviour; moving from experiencing highs of 'mania' on one extreme, to the lows of depression on the other, may be diagnosed with bi-polar disorder. More than just a fleeting good or bad mood, the cycles of bipolar disorder last for days, weeks, or months. Unlike ordinary mood swings, the mood changes of bipolar disorder are so intense that they interfere with the student's ability to function.

7.3. Oppositional Defiance Disorder

(Significant Barriers with being cooperative and staying calm)

Students who experience frequent and significant barriers to being cooperative and calm may be diagnosed with Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD).

Particular barriers to learning may include uncooperative, defiant, and hostile patterns of behaviour, particularly toward authority figures; frequent temper tantrums; excessive arguing, especially with adults; frequent questioning of rules/defiant behaviour; blaming others for their mistakes or negative behaviour; low levels of self-esteem and emotional resilience; difficulty forming and sustaining positive relationships with both peers and adults; this may impact; negatively upon their ability to reach their academic potential and puts them at risk of developing additional emotional health difficulties.

7.4. Obsessive/Compulsive Disorder (Barriers with managing thoughts and compulsions)	Students who experience barriers managing obsessions and compulsions may be diagnosed with Obsessive/compulsive disorder. These students constantly experience unwanted thoughts, images or impulses that are difficult to suppress. This causes them great stress and worry (obsessions) and as a result, they display repetitive, ritualised actions in an effort to manage the anxiety they experience (compulsions).
7.5. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) (Barriers dealing with trauma and arousal)	Students who experience, witness or hear about a traumatic event may be severely and intensely affected emotionally, socially and/or physically. These students may experience barriers with dealing with trauma and arousal and may be diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder.
8. Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder (Barriers with attention and self-regulation)	
8.1. ADHD- Inattentive Type (Barriers with maintaining focus and attention)	Some students who experience significant barriers with maintaining attention and focus may be identified with the inattentive type of ADHD. Students with this type of ADHD are likely to be less disruptive and active in the classroom than those who have the hyperactive-impulsive type.
8.2. ADHD- Hyperactive Type (Barriers with managing hyperactivity and impulsivity)	Some students who experience significant barriers with managing hyperactivity and impulsivity may be identified with the hyperactive type of ADHD.
8.3. ADHD- Combined Type (Barriers with focusing attention and managing hyperactivity)	Students who experience considerable barriers with attention and managing hyperactivity may be identified with the combined type of ADHD. They will display a combination of behaviours described for both the inattentive and hyperactive types of ADHD (above).

Physical, Sensory and Medical

9. Sensory Impairments (Barriers with using the senses)	A sensory impairment refers to a loss of vision or hearing that cannot be corrected by using lenses or through devices such as hearing aids.
9.1. Visual Impairment (Barriers with Vision)	Students who experience barriers with vision that is not corrected by using lenses may be diagnosed with a visual impairment. Barriers with vision will occur across the range of intellectual abilities and associated difficulties are in a continuum that ranges from mild to severe.
9.2. Hearing Impairment (Barriers with Hearing)	Hearing impairment, whether permanent or fluctuating may be identified when it adversely affects a student's educational performance. Typically, hearing loss is categorised as slight, mild, moderate, severe or profound, depending on how well an individual can hear the frequencies that are commonly associated with speech.
10. Deaf-Blind (Barriers with seeing and hearing)	Deaf/blindness is a combination of sight and hearing loss and is sometimes called dual-sensory. Impairment. Usually, affected students will not experience a complete absence of hearing or vision, but both senses will be reduced enough to cause difficulties with everyday activities. An individual who is deaf blind is Likely to require significant and substantial specialist support, need support to ensure mobility, use alternative and augmentative communication system and require access to adaptive technology and equipment.

11. Physical Disability (Barriers with physical movement)	The key issue to be considered when identifying a physical disability is mobility; the ability of a person to move around in their environment. Physical disability ranges from mild to severe and for some students mobility is significantly impaired. Some specific examples include muscular dystrophy, cerebral palsy or spina bifida.
11.1. Muscular Dystrophy (Barriers with muscle size and strength)	Students who experience barriers relating to serious muscle wasting or weakness may be diagnosed with muscular dystrophy.
11.2. Cerebral Palsy (Barriers with posture, movement and coordination)	Students who experience serious barriers with their posture, balance and ability to move, communicate, eat, sleep and learn may be diagnosed with cerebral palsy. Those affected may experience uncontrolled or unpredictable movements, muscles can be stiff, weak or tight and in some cases, have shaky movements or tremors.
11.3. Spina Bifida (Barriers with leg movement)	Students with spina bifida may experience a range of difficulties in their use of their legs and spine because of weak muscles and associated nerve damage. These problems may include a curved spine (scoliosis), abnormal growth or dislocation of the hip, bone and joint deformities, muscle contractures and other orthopaedic concerns.
12. Chronic or Acute Medical Conditions (Medical Barriers)	Students with chronic or acute medical needs will experience significant barriers to learning because of reduced strength, alertness, stamina or concentration and they are identified as having a special educational need.

SUPPORT OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS & DISABILITIES

IDENTIFICATION

The special educational needs and/or disabilities of students may be identified prior to admission or may become apparent at any stage during their time at school. Identification may arise, following concerns raised by a class teacher or tutor, a parent/ carer, the student themselves or any other concerned individual. Early identification is essential, as timely support and intervention, lead to more effective outcomes for students. In order to identify students who may be experiencing barriers to learning, the school follows a structured identification process, which includes the following steps:

- At the beginning of the academic year, teachers receive guidance and training on identifying students who may require additional support, in line with SEND procedures.
 - A referral form is completed by the class teacher or subject teacher when concerns about a student's learning, behaviour, or wellbeing are identified.
 - Teachers are provided with a comprehensive checklist outlining possible areas of concern to support accurate and consistent identification.
 - Based on teacher feedback, a designated member of SSSD team will be assigned to follow up on the referral.
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1. The assigned specialist conducts classroom observations to gain an overall understanding of the students needs. This may include classwork, notebooks and internal assessment outcomes, as well as considering the student's performances in relation to curriculum expectation and relevant standardised screening tools, where appropriate.
 2. Parents are informed of concerns and contacted for consent if the findings indicate the need for additional support or further action.
 3. Upon receiving a referral, the school conducts an internal screening process to better understand the schools learning needs. This screening is based on a review of the students' academic performance and may include samples of classwork, assessment results, high frequency word lists, hand-writing observation, and appropriate standardised screening tools for reading, spelling and phonics.
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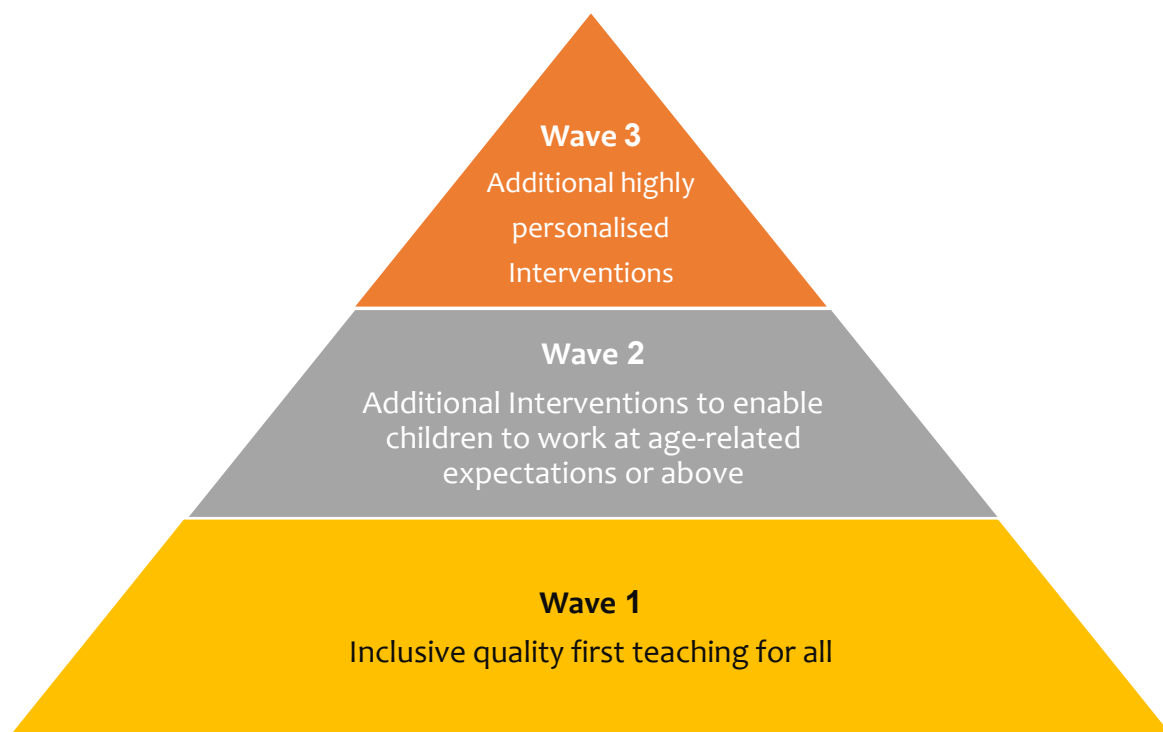
The school does not conduct formal diagnostic assessment, where the findings indicate the need for further evaluation; parents are advised to seek an assessment from a licensed and certified external professional, such as an educational or clinical psychologist.

If parents have already obtained an external assessment report, they are encouraged to engage in an ongoing dialogue with the school and the SENCO. Input from parents, the students and teaching staff is considered carefully to determine appropriate support and intervention strategies.

Based on recommendations from an Educational or Clinical psychologist, an IEP is developed collaboratively with teachers, parents and the student where appropriate.

DIFFERENTIATED LEVELS OF SUPPORT

WAVES OF INTERVENTION MODEL:



Levels of support vary for each student under the SEND program depending on their specific need. The school follows the Waves of Intervention Model for easy identification of what kind of support is provided for each student.

Wave 1

Students provided with wave 1 level of support will benefit from differentiated work and an inclusive learning environment in a regular classroom.

Wave 2

Students provided with wave 2 level of support will receive differentiated instruction in a small group setting with others with similar needs in addition to regular classroom instruction.

Wave 3

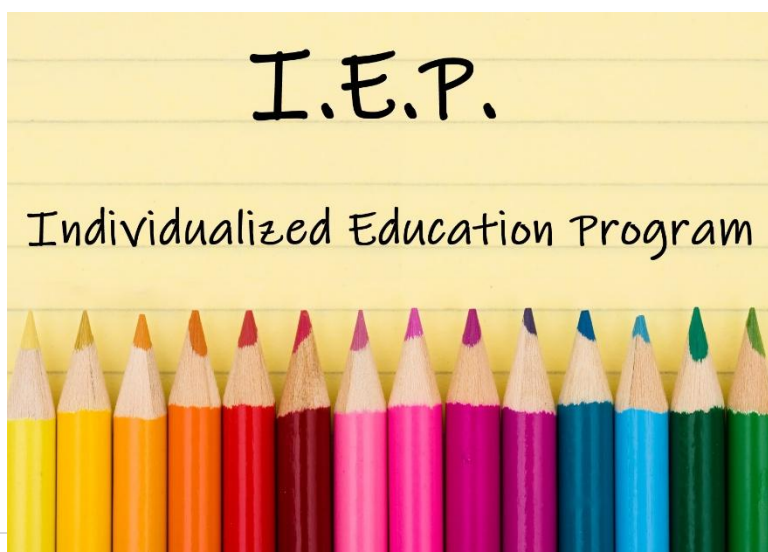
Students provided with wave 3 level of support will receive one to one intervention sessions. An IEP is developed for individual intervention sessions and specific IEPs pertaining to each subject, which is used in the classroom. The student also receives special accommodations for example extra time during class tests and internal and external exams.

HEAD START READING PROGRAM – (WAVE 2- Group Support)

Students who have not achieved the appropriate Year 1 reading abilities at the time of admission and new entries (Grade 2-4) who are identified in their classrooms with reading difficulty are referred to the department. They will be taken through a simple assessment of reading grade-appropriate words and sentences. Students who fail to read with automaticity and fluency are then taken through a systematic reading programme after getting consent from the parents.

INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLAN

An Individual Education Plan (IEP) is a structured planning document that outlines student achieves identified learning, differentiated teaching strategies, support and adjustments required to help identified targets. The IEP serves as a clear print for the child's special and developmental targets with the school.



Each IEP will focus on up to three to four key individual targets which may be addressed through one-to-one support and/or classroom-based intervention.

- The student's present level of performance and current performance indicators
- Annual goals an hourly will be measured and reported.
- Short term curriculum objectives
- Differentiated/adaptive strategies to be implemented in the classroom.
- Behaviour management strategies, where required.
- Review timeline.
- Success and/or exit criteria.
- Assessment and review of targets

The objectives of the IEP are to support students in accessing broad-based curriculum and to enable them to make meaningful progress through the National Curriculum by:

- a) Assessing, reviewing and monitoring the individual needs of the student at least twice per academic year and documenting through the IEP.
- b) Setting achievable and realistic targets using a 'small steps' approach
- c) Working in partnership with student, parents or guardian, school staff and external professionals such as educational or clinical psychologist, where available.
- d) Providing access to appropriate resources and promoting independence, wherever possible.
- e) Offering classroom-based support across a range of learning activities as appropriate.
- f) Encourage positive learning behaviour through motivation, self-esteem and concentration.
- g) Monitoring students who may have temporary medical, emotional or social needs.
- h) Using a positive reinforcement system such as praise, stickers, certificates or special mentions.
- i) Offering counselling support when required.

MONITORING AND REVIEWING IEPs

IEPs are reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure strategies remain relevant and effective. Formal reviews are conducted twice a year, in line with the school's academic cycle (September-January and February-May). Progress is shared with parents and relevant staff and targets are adjusted based on student needs and progress.

GUIDANCE FOR PARENTS

The school recognizes the vital role that parents and guardians play in supporting their child's education. Parents are encouraged to share their views and concerns regarding their child's progress with the class teacher and the special educational needs coordinator (SENCO), ensuring open communication and collaborative decision-making.

Parents are supported through individual guidance sessions and recommended home-based strategies, which are documented within the IEP where required. The school may seek input from external professionals to support parent understanding and student development.

EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

Emotional support is provided in the primary and secondary sections by the counsellors in the respective sections. The support aims to help students develop self-understanding, planning, decision-making and coping strategies for personal academic challenges.

Identification of student's needs can come from the teacher, parent, concerned adult in the student's life or the student himself/herself. The counselling sessions are held with confidentiality, in line with school safeguarding and child protection policies.

Counselling support within school may be delivered through individual and group sessions.

The Special Education Needs Coordinator works closely with class teachers, the school doctor and the school counsellor to ensure that appropriate support is provided and that students' academic, emotional and social development is monitored.

RECORD KEEPING - SPECIAL NEEDS FOLDER

The Student Support Services Department maintains a confidential file for each student identified as having special educational needs. These records are securely stored within the department and are regularly reviewed.

Each student file includes the following documentation:

- Student information sheets including
 - Name
 - Class and Class teacher
 - Age and Nationality
 - Parents / Guardian contact number/email
 - Reason for referral
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1. Student Profile outlining provisions, modification, accommodation and classroom strategies.
2. Parents/Guardians Consent Form.
3. Educational Psychologist's Report and/or School Assessment Report, where available.
4. Medical reports from Paediatrician or Psychiatrist, if applicable.
5. Current I.E.P
6. Previous IEPs (filed separately)
7. Term Assessment Reports
8. End of Year Report
9. Records of parent and staff meetings.
10. Teacher or teaching assistant notes relating to behaviour or concerns.
11. Sample of student work (worksheets, notebook).
15. Behaviour intervention records, where applicable
16. Communications log.
16. Curriculum gaps summary

In addition, each teacher working with the special educational needs student requires a working profile that includes the student's profile, IEPs, accommodations, classroom strategies, records of their academic progress and differentiated learning materials.

MEDICAL INFORMATION

The school medical record is updated as and when information comes into school clinic. Any major changes are passed on to the School Counsellor/Special Educator straight away. A medical diagnosis or a disability does not necessarily imply SEND. It is the child's educational needs rather than a medical diagnosis that must be considered. However, medical conditions may have a significant impact on a child's experiences and the way they function in school and if not properly managed could hinder their access to education. Therefore, consultation and open discussion between the child's parents, the school, the school doctor or the child's GP and any specialist services providing treatment for the child will be essential to ensure that the child makes maximum progress.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

THE ROLE OF THE SUPPORT TEAM

-  Head of Student Support Services/SENCO
-  Special Educator (Secondary school)
-  Special Educator (Middle school)
-  Special Educator (Primary school)
-  Counsellor (Secondary school)
-  Counsellor (Primary school)
-  Learning Support Assistants

The agreed role of the special needs team is to support the work of class teachers by providing targeted and appropriate support to students who experience special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), whether on along- or short-term basis.

The specialist staff work collaboratively with class teachers to support the early identification, assessment and monitoring of student's needs. Teachers are provided with appropriate guidance, intervention strategies and reasonable classroom accommodations to enable students with SEND to access the curriculum effectively.

Parents meeting will be regularly held to share the progress, discuss concerns and ensure consistent support between home and school.

THE ROLE OF THE GOVERNING BODY:

The governing body has important statutory duties towards students with Special Needs as outlined below. The Governor for Inclusion regularly provides updates on all matters regarding SEND to the governing body.

The governing body will ensure that:

- SEND provision is an integral part of the school improvement and development plan.
 - Appropriate provision is made for students with SEND
 - All staff members are aware of their responsibilities in identifying and supporting students with SEND.
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- Students with SEND are included in school activities alongside their peers, wherever it is practicable and compatible with their needs and the efficient education of other students.
- Parents are notified when the school makes special educational provision for their child.
- Parents are kept informed about SEND matters and are encouraged so that they can play a major part in school self-review.
- Appropriate staffing and funding arrangements are established and reviewed to support SEND provision.
- The quality and effectiveness of SEND provision are regularly monitored.
- The governing body and the school as a whole are involved in the development, implementation and review of this policy.

THE PRINCIPAL IS RESPONSIBLE FOR:

- The management of all aspects of the school's work, including provision for students with SEND.
- Working closely with the Governor of Inclusion on all updates with regards to SEND.
- Working closely with the SEND personnel within the school.
- Ensuring that the implementation of this policy and the effects of inclusion policies on the school as a whole are monitored.

THE HEAD OF STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES/SENCO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR:

- Overseeing the day-to-day operation of this policy.
 - Ensuring consistent and whole school approach to SEND provision.
 - Liaising with and advising teaching and support staff.
 - Training staff to identify students with SEND.
 - Training teachers on different kinds of strategies useful for SEND.
 - Supporting and guiding learning support assistants in their work with the SEND child.
 - Monitoring of classroom practices and effectiveness of support strategies
 - Facilitating the carrying out of assessments as appropriate to the individual needs.
 - Coordinating the provision for students with SEND.
 - Overseeing individual support plans and reviewing the effectiveness
 - Liaising closely with parents to ensure shared understanding and partnership.
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- Liaising with external agencies, arranging meetings, and acting as a point of contact between agencies, teachers and parents.
- Maintaining and monitoring SEND records on the school management system.
- Assisting in the monitoring and evaluation of progress of students with SEND through the use of school assessment information.
- Contributing to staff professional development
- Managing learning support assistants within the SSS Department.

TEACHERS' RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE:

- Being familiar with the school's procedures for the identification and assessment of, and supporting of students with SEND.
- Collaborating with the SSS Department to identify the appropriate actions required to assist the student to progress.
- Contributing relevant information to support assessment and planning
- In collaboration with the SSS Department to contribute to the development of Individual Support Plans for SEND students.
- Ensuring the lesson plans include the targets from the IEP for the SEND students.
- Ensuring students with SEND are included in the classroom learning through reasonable adaptations.
- Providing daily support and monitoring progress within the classroom setting.
- Developing positive and constructive relationships with parents.
- Contributing to the development of the school's SEND policy.

ROLE OF THE LEARNING SUPPORT ASSISTANTS:

- Supporting the delivery of targeted individual or small group programmes as directed.
 - Maintaining records of students' progress and areas of concern.
 - Working collaboratively with teachers and the SSS Department to support student wellbeing.
 - Being familiar with this policy and school procedures for SEND.
 - Providing feedback to teachers on student engagement, progress and responses to strategies.
 - Supporting students with SEND in an appropriate and inclusive manner, under the guidance of the SSS Department.
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THE CURRICULUM

DIFFERENTIATION/ADAPTATION

It is recognised that many students have complex and interrelated needs. Students are therefore not categorised or labelled; instead, support is planned in response to individual strengths, needs and learning profiles.

Differentiation and adaptation are implemented within the classrooms by:

1. Using a multi-level approach, with tasks matched to students individual.
2. Breaking complex tasks down into more manageable parts, across the curriculum.
3. Careful consideration of each student.
4. Providing a balance of practical, oral and written activities.
5. Making use of digital technologies and assistive tools where available.
6. Building on student's strengths and interests.
7. Modifying of worksheets and learning materials when necessary.
8. Recognising and responding to varying attention spans and concentration levels.
9. Praising and enhancing self-esteem.
10. Setting clear realistic and achievable targets.
11. Effective use of additional staff and Community Service Volunteers for greater classroom support.

Appropriate accommodation within the framework of the curriculum will be provided. Do not change what is taught; rather they may involve adjustments to the learning environment, presentation materials, or the use of equipment that enables students with SEND to access learning and demonstrate their understanding. Differentiation of learning activities within the curriculum framework will help us meet the learning needs of all children.

A modified curriculum changes to what a student is expected to learn and with appropriate adjustments to assessments methods. This level of provision is considered for students who are unable to access learning at the same pace or depth as their peers, despite reasonable support and accommodations.

The National Curriculum Inclusion Statement emphasises the importance of providing effective learning opportunities for all students and highlights three key principles for inclusion:

- Setting suitable learning challenges
- Responding to students diverse needs
- Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups.

ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

The Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) notifies the Examinations Officer of those students who are eligible for access arrangements in public examinations in accordance with board regulations. Parents are informed about the approved access arrangements in advance.

AT RISK REGISTER (WAVE 1)

Students who do not have a formal diagnosis or identified SEND category may be supported through the At-risk register (Wave 1). Teachers are provided with practical classroom strategies to support their students and help bridge gaps in learning. Community service workers will also give appropriate support in the classroom. Specialist staff from the department will work with the student providing support within the classroom and in separate individual sessions.

Necessary guidance is provided to parents in order to support the child at home.

PARTNERSHIPS

WITH PARENTS (ALL THOSE WITH PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY)

The school actively encourages all parents to support their child's learning through positive attitudes, effective communication and shared responsibility. However, all staff should be aware of the pressures a parent may be under as a result of their child's needs.

To promote effective communication, the school will:

- Acknowledge and value parental knowledge and expertise in relation to their child.
 - Focus on the students' strengths as well as areas requiring additional support.
 - Recognise the personal and emotional investment of parents and be aware of their feelings.
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- Ensure parents understand procedures and are supported while contributing to discussions and planning their contributions and are given documents to be discussed.
- Provide information and guidance for the parents to access key skills to help ensure their child's success.
- Respect differing perspectives and seek constructive ways of reconciling different differences.
- Be mindful of parents own needs, including disability, communication, or language barriers.
- Recognise the need for flexibility in the timing and structure of meetings.

We aim to inform parents as soon as a child is identified as potentially having SEND. This ensures that they are fully involved in the decision making for their child, understand the purpose of any interventions or programme of action, and are aware of available support services.

Counsellors/Special Educators and class teachers communicate both informally/formally to parents in school, may send an email or make a telephone call.

Parents also have a responsibility to communicate effectively with professionals to support their children's education. They should:

- Communicate regularly with their child's school and alert them to any concerns they have about their child's learning or provision.
- Support learning at home to help their child achieve their full potential.

PARTNERSHIP WITH STUDENTS

The school is committed to providing positive student involvement in decisions related to their learning and development. Students are encouraged to share their views, strengths and concerns, as these perspectives provide valuable insight into their experiences and support needs. From an early age, students with SEND are involved, at an appropriate level in discussions about their IEPs, including target setting and review processes where appropriate student's views are recorded and considered as part of planning and evaluation.

This approach supports the development of the self-awareness, confidence, self-esteem and self-advocacy, ensuring that each student's achievements are recognised and valued.

PROCEDURE FOR EXPRESSING CONCERNS

Parents and carers are encouraged to raise any concerns regarding their child's learning, wellbeing or support needs in a timely manner. In the first instance, concern should be discussed with the class teacher, special educator or school counsellor.

If concerns are not resolved at this stage, parents may escalate the matter by contacting the SENCo. Where necessary, concerns may be further referred to the Principal to ensure that appropriate action and support are implemented.

RESOURCES

The school provides a range of resources to support inclusive teaching and learning. Structural reading resources and a headstart reading program are used to support students who require additional literacy and phonics-based support. Students are identified through admission interviews, informal screening and ongoing classroom observations. The program is delivered by Special Educators in small group settings and uses differentiated teaching approaches informed by a range of learning styles, including visual, auditory, and reading/writing and kinesthetics (VARK) strategies.

Additional resources are available to support language development, fine motor skills, visual perception and emotional regulation. These include flash cards, educational and word-based games, letter blocks, peg boards and hands-on materials. The school also provides access to a calm corner or low sensory space for students who require support to regulate their emotions, reduce anxiety and re-engage with learning in a safe and supportive environment. The school is equipped with a medical examination room and dedicated resource spaces where a small group or 1 to 1 support sessions, counselling and parental meetings or consultations may take place. Classrooms, particularly in the primary section, are resourced to support differentiated learning, with guidance and support available from the SENCo, Special Educators, Subject Leaders and Support Staff.

THE USE OF INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

ICT is used to support inclusive teaching and learning to improve access to the curriculum for all students. Students may use their own devices to access online learning platforms such as Active Learn, and other digital resources that support classroom learning. Educational online tools and applications are also used to reinforce key skills, including numeracy and problem-solving, during targeted small-group or one to one support sessions. The use of ICT supports differential learning, engagement, independence and confidence, while promoting inclusive and accessible learning opportunities.

Students are encouraged to bring their devices for optimum use of online resources as in the Active Learn platform. The school has invested heavily in being equipped to be a well-connected centre of learning. Educational online games are used to further develop mathematical skills in the individual one-to-one sessions.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The success of the school's SEND policy and provision is evaluated through school self-evaluation and reporting activities such as:

- Monitoring classroom practice by the SENCO, Special Educators, Counselors and Subject Coordinators to ensure that inclusive strategies are consistently implemented.
 - Analysis of individual students tracking data through SIMS and assessment outcomes.
 - The school profile, which contains the required information about the Student Support Services Department.
 - An annual SEND review, which evaluates the impact of provision, identifies areas of development and informs future planning.
 - The school improvement plan, which is used for planning, evaluating and monitoring provision in the school.
 - Collection and review of feedback from parents and staff through both formal and informal channels.
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REVIEWING THE POLICY

St. Mary's Catholic High School is committed to continually improving engagement with parents, carers and families of students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Through collaborative working, the school aims to raise aspirations and expectations for all students with SEND.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Student Support Services Department (which includes Governor, SENCO, Parents of SEN students, support staff and teaching staff, and the Senior Leadership Team).

STUDENT AFFAIRS POLICY AS RELATING TO SEND CONCERNS

As mentioned in the St. Mary's Catholic High School Dubai, Admissions Policy, we strive to encourage an inclusive atmosphere to promote independent learning in all our children.

In order to optimistically meet the needs of those of our students, who have different needs from the vast majority of students, we:

- Give due consideration to every application for admission with professional care, in order to ensure that each individual applicant's needs can be met and that the ability of the school to meet the learning needs of all our students is not compromised.
- Identify and document the inclusive access needs of our students in a timely and effective manner, in partnership with the families and appropriate professionals.
- Provide support in the classroom that matches the students identified needs.
- Monitor and track the progress of students with diverse learning needs.
- Uses a variety of teaching and assessment strategies to cater for diverse learning needs.
- Maintains regular and open communication with parents to strengthen collaboration between school and home.

The school welcomes students with diverse learning needs whose academic, personal, social and emotional needs can be met within the schools existing provision.

PROVISION AND SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS WITH SEND

The school ensures that all students including those with special needs are provided with the following:

- A learning environment that is compatible to the needs of individual students. In order to achieve this, there is an assessment of needs conducted at the time of admission and followed through appropriately.
 - The child – centered approach ensuring that students are at the heart of decision-making regarding provisions at school.
 - Acknowledging that the key to success at school depends on the effective communication between all stakeholders involved in the child’s education. This is therefore an important feature of the support provided.
 - Regular meetings focused on reviewing progress are scheduled into the school year with all key individuals working with SEND students.
 - Evaluation of intervention programmes are also embedded regularly into the academic year.
 - Appropriate accommodation is provided for internal assessment conducted in school. This is extended to students who will be appearing for their Pearson Edexcel exams in Years 11 and 13.
 - Training of all staff members, who work with students with SEND ensuring best practice with the school’s capacity.
 - Teachers are aware of the importance of addressing the child individually.
 - There is a focus on appropriate teaching and learning style for the child. The class environment is focused to encourage learning with suitable stimulation and a fairly distraction free environment.
 - Clear behavioural expectation with an understanding that certain behaviours may be linked to underlying needs and are managed through appropriate strategies.
 - Positive reinforcement and acknowledgement of appropriate behaviour wherever possible.
 - Clear communication of high expectations to students with SEND, appropriate to their individual abilities.
 - Support to ensure success can be in the form of one-to-one tutoring from our dedicated trained staff or community service workers.
 - All SEND students have a key worker; key workers are members of the Student Support Services Team. Key workers work closely with the student throughout the academic year. They will play a role in many aspects of the student’s school life, including academic support and pastoral support
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or referral for the same. The key worker plays a vital role in sustaining an important link between school and home and often they will have regular contact with teachers and parents/carers to ensure that all provision is appropriate for their SEND student.

- The school has strict policies regarding bullying, attendance and behaviour around school. These policies are followed and maintained by all members of staff.

TRANSITION AND PREPARATION FOR NEXT STEPS

- When students reach the point of transition from school, we will ensure that they are prepared for their new environment. The school provides the students with several opportunities throughout the year to meet with admissions officers from a range of universities from several countries around the world. Campus visits for universities based in the UAE are planned and help the students to familiarize themselves with university settings.

This policy should be in conjunction with St. Mary's Catholic High School's Counselling Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Admission Policy.

Finally, the school ethos as reflected in the mission statement encourages and celebrates the individual and unique achievements of the students.

Review Date :	September 2026
Next Review Date:	August 2027