

TOWHEED IRANIAN SCHOOL (T.I.S)

Inclusion (SEN) POLICY

"Each student is unique in his own way and needs to be provided with a safe, caring and stimulating environment to grow and mature emotionally, intellectually, physically and socially. Educators demonstrate a commitment to teach all students and provide them with a safe and supportive environment to develop to their maximum potential based on their individual strengths and challenges."(United Arab Emirates. Ministry of Education. Special Education Dept. School for All. 2011)

Introduction

T.I.S. Inclusion Policy is a policy to promote the successful inclusion of students with Special Educational Needs (SEN) at Towheed Iranian School.

At TIS we seek to ensure that all those who are admitted to the school will be able to benefit from the rounded education provided and be happy within the school community. We recognize our responsibilities to embrace diversity and to work to overcome prejudice.

We have always aimed to provide a stimulating learning environment that is varied according to the age of the child and across the whole curriculum. We recognize that the curriculum is subject to imposed and developing change. Accepting that notion enables our students of different ability levels and staff to meet the challenges of education and other aspects of life.

T.I.S SEN provision

This policy is constructed in line with the requirements of the U.A.E. Ministry of Education SEN Policy (2011) and The I.R.of Iran Ministry of Education Inclusion policy, Guidance for implementing (2006). It also supports the IB requirements stated in(Diploma Programme , Candidates with assessment access requirements , March 2014).

School SEN specification

The provision for students with special educational needs in T.I.S is within the context of the MOE SEN policy (2011). Special education services are provided to students with special needs from kindergarten to 9th grade. But special arrangement are provided for the SEN students who meet the admission requirement of high school and IB diploma programme .

The majority of students having their needs met in the mainstream classes with support (Classroom Differentiation), while some students have integration opportunities within the Learning Support Class (LSC).

Definition of Special Needs

A Candidate With assessment access requirements

"A special need is any permanent or temporary need diagnosed need that could put a candidate at a disadvantage and prevent him or her from being able to demonstrate skills and knowledge adequately". Candidates with Special Assessment Needs , IBO ,(2011).

A candidate with assessment access requirements is one who requires access arrangements in assessment conditions to demonstrate his or her level of attainment. Candidates who require inclusive assessment arrangements may have learning support requirements due to one or more of the following disabilities or conditions . (Diploma Programme Candidates with assessment access requirements , July 2014)

The T.I.S. definition and categorization of Special Needs is based on M.O.E. (SEN Policy, 2011) , Iran M.O.E. Inclusive Policy (1986) and IB *Candidates with Special Assessment Needs*, (2011)which is summarized as the following :

- **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).

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

Physical and health related disability

- This means physical and health problems which are chronic or severe in a manner that they lead to poor and limited functionality and adversely affect the educational performance of the student such as: (asthma, attention deficit disorder with hyperactivity, diabetes, heart disease, epilepsy, leukemia, cerebral palsy, renal failure, HIV, and head injuries etc). Physical disabilities include a wide range of conditions that are not always immediately obvious, but affect mobility.

Sensory disabilities and issues

- Hearing – embraces an extensive range of hearing loss from mild to profound and can present communication difficulties;
- Visual impairments , includes difficulties with either the structure of function of the eye, affecting vision.
- Speech and language disorders, having a communication disorder such as stuttering, impaired articulation, language impairment, or a voice impairment that adversely affects a child’s educational performance.

Social, emotional and behavioural issues

- Includes: attention deficit disorder (ADD)/attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD); autistic spectrum disorders; withdrawn, depressive or suicidal attitudes; obsessive preoccupation with eating habits; school phobia; substance abuse; disruptive antisocial and uncooperative behaviour; and anger, frustration and violence.

- **Medical conditions**
 - The most common being: congenital heart disease, epilepsy, asthma, cystic fibrosis, haemophilia, sickle cell anaemia, 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.

Definition for Gifted and Talented

Gifted and Talented refers to having outstanding ability, or a great deal of willingness in one or more areas of intelligence, or creativity, or academic achievement or special talents and abilities such as oratory, poetry, drawing, handicrafts, sports, drama, or leadership capacity. More often the performance of the talented or gifted student is so exceptional or advanced that they require special provisions to meet their educational needs in the general education classrooms with support from special education teachers and resource room teachers.

The School's principles for its SEN provision

T.I.S aims to support its SEN students while encouraging integration in class and school activities. They will be offered full access to an extensive, balanced and suitable education, including an appropriate curriculum. Each student is given the opportunity to accomplish their personal best and to become a confident learner and they will have their views taken into consideration. Students with special educational needs are included with their peers wherever possible. We recognize that education is the responsibility of all staff. Moreover, parents have a significant role in supporting the student's education.

- T.I.S will offer a high quality education to all its students.
- T.I.S will work in partnership with parents / legal guardians in the best interest of the student.
- The process of identifying and addressing the special educational needs of students will be clear, transparent and consistent.
- Educational resources will be allocated equitably and used effectively and efficiently.
- We will recognize the right of students and young people to participate in decision making and will encourage student involvement in the process whenever possible.

The school's objectives for SEN provision

Objectives

- To manage resources to ensure all students' needs are met.
- To identify students as early as possible with special educational needs and disabilities and ensure that their needs are met.
- To manage resources to ensure all students' needs are met.
- To ensure the school facilities and physical adjustment meet the basic students' needs, especially the ones with physical disabilities.

- To ensure that students with special educational needs and disabilities join in with the activities of the school where appropriate.
- To ensure that all students make the best possible progress which will be monitored and reviewed regularly.
- To ensure parents are informed of their student's special needs and that there is effective communication and that a good partnership exists between parents and school.
- To ensure that students express their views and are fully involved in decisions which affect their education.
- To promote effective partnership and involve outside agencies when appropriate.
- To prepare and review Student Support Plans (SSP), Individual Education Plans (IEP) or Advance Learning Plan (ALP) for the students with special needs.
- To provide appropriate training for those involved in the implementation of the policy.

T.I.S. Student Support Team(SST)

T.I.S. Student Support Team (SST) is responsible for the school SEN provision. This team consists of:

- Principal
- Assistant Principals
- School counselor/ Psychologist
- SEN coordinator
- Academic advisor
- IB Coordinator
- School Nurse / Doctor
- Support Teachers for SEN

General responsibilities of the SST members are but not limited to :

- Identifying the SEN and their needs
- Guiding
- Preparing the related professional development and training for the teachers and staff
- overseeing the day-to-day operation of the SEN policy
- planning and supervising the special arrangement for the SEN based on their needs and the grade level . Special arrangement for the examinations and IB DP candidates will be stated in this document later .
- co-coordinating provision for the SEN
- ensuring there is liaison with parents and other professionals
- advising and supporting other practitioners in the school
- ensuring that appropriate SSPs , IEPs or ALPs, are in place
- coordinating Annual Reviews
- liaising with external agencies including the Therapy provision and Educational Psychology Services

School's admission arrangements for students with SEN

The admissions arrangements for students with SEN fall within the usual admissions procedures for all students.

Based on M.O.E. policy, special education services are provided to students with special needs from kindergarten to 9th grade.

For admission in high school and IB DP , if all the requirements are met by the candidate with special needs ,the academic advisor and IB coordinator should inform the candidate and his/her guardian about the IB rules and regulations and

even probable barriers and guide them in choosing the high school or DP program , subjects and streams .

Although the IB Organization is able to offer guidance on special needs, the school is responsible for carefully considering the options available to candidates and must be aware of any barriers that may deny access to any part of the Diploma Programme.

Information regarding the enrollment process and due dates for enrollment for a student with special needs is made available to parents and members of the community by school staff during the end of the first semester of the current academic year.

All of the kindergarten and grade one students and all the recognized SENs are evaluated through a set of tests to find how they are physically, mentally and emotionally ready for school . These tests are arranged and conducted by SST . This is very helpful for identifying the SEN students at early stage of education. After the identification, the planning process starts under the supervision of SST assigned members.

Students may not receive any special education services until after the SST completes a comprehensive evaluation, determines eligibility and holds an IEP.

The school's facilities for the provision for students with SEN

In addition to the IB requirements, T.I.S. provides a clinic with a full-time doctor and a qualified full-time nurse. We also have a full-time psychologist who guides students, teachers and parents. We have a complete sets of tests to help recognize the types of personality of our students (such as Rayvan test , ...) in order to provide future guidance for their professional, career-related options or special needs aids.

The school has a lift in order to facilitate access to every level, adapted doorways, ramps, curbs, toilets and classes equipped with technological resources.

Interventions / Programs

A range of strategies is employed to ensure that the school meets the needs of students with special educational needs. The SEN Coordinator will offer advice to class teachers regarding individual students.

There are some short and long term intervention programs running throughout the year, these include: in class or out of it in a small groups work for Individual Needs students, particularly during literacy and numeracy lessons .

T.I.S work with Occupational Therapists and Speech Therapists who support the students in school or privately outside of the school.

The school may request parents, under certain circumstances, to fund an Educational Assistant (EA) or Shadow teacher (ST) to support their child in his/her normal class and daily school life .(may be included depending on the parents understanding)

Inclusive assessment arrangements for high school and DP candidates will be the responsibility of IB coordinator or principal

Student Support Plans (SSPs) and Individual Education Plans (IEPs)

SSPs / IEPs and records of progress and reviews are kept with the class teacher and SEN Coordinator Towheed Iranian School follows guidelines on data protection, preserves confidentiality and gives parent/Legal guardians access to records.

As part of the process, 'progress' will be defined as:

- Closes the attainment gap between the student and their peers.
- Prevents the attainment gap growing wider.
- Is similar to that of peers starting from the same attainment baseline, but less than that of the majority of peers.
- Matches or betters the student's previous rate of progress.

- Ensures access to the full curriculum.
- Demonstrates improvement in self-help, self-regulation, social or personal skills.
- Demonstrates improvements in the student's behavior.

Where sufficient progress in relation to the SSP or IEP has not been made, a referral to the Educational Psychologist should be made after consultation with the parents.

DP Candidates with assessment access requirements

TIS Inclusion Policy aligns with IB policies , "The IB believes that all candidates should be allowed to demonstrate their ability under assessment conditions that are as fair as possible. Standard assessment conditions may put candidates with learning support requirements at a disadvantage by preventing them from demonstrating their level of attainment. Inclusive assessment arrangements may be authorized in these circumstances"(IB Diploma Programme , Candidates with assessment access requirements , March 2014)

All requests for inclusive assessment arrangements must be submitted using the online application in IBIS by DP Coordinators six months prior to an examination session(IB Diploma Programme , Candidates with assessment access requirements , March 2014.)

The following guidelines supplement the procedures for requesting special arrangements explained in the Handbook of procedures for the Diploma Programme.

2.1 Responsibilities of the school

2.1.1 Students with learning support requirements may need support and arrangements for both teaching and learning.

2.1.2 Although a number of inclusive assessment arrangements are available for students with learning support requirements, some subjects may pose difficulties for certain candidates. Careful consideration should be given to a candidate's choice of subjects.

2.1.3 In order to plan the access arrangements for a candidate, for both teaching and assessment, it is essential that the coordinator consults all teachers concerned at an early stage in a candidate's study of the Diploma Programme.

2.1.4 The inclusive assessment arrangements provided to a candidate must be planned in advance to give a candidate ample time to learn to use them effectively during classroom activities.

2.1.5 The inclusive assessment arrangements provided for a candidate must be carefully individualized, planned, evaluated and monitored. They should be based on current, and not past, requirements.

2.1.6 The inclusive assessment arrangements that are requested should be a candidate's usual way of working; the coordinator must ensure that a candidate is, or becomes, familiar with those arrangements.

2.1.7 All requests for inclusive assessment arrangements submitted by a coordinator must have the support of the head of school.

2.1.8 Before submitting appropriate documentation to the IB Assessment centre, the school must obtain consent from the candidate, provided he or she is at the age of consent in their country, or from the candidate's parent(s) or legal guardian.

2.1.10 The school is responsible for making all arrangements for approving and appointing a scribe, reader, prompter, practical assistant/aide or communicator.

2.1.11 The school is responsible for making all arrangements for assistive technology that may be used for a candidate's learning and assessment including speech recognition and reading software. The IB does not pay for the hiring or purchasing of equipment.

2.1.12 The school is responsible for ensuring that all equipment authorized for a candidate with assessment access requirements functions correctly and that there is a member of staff who is familiar with its use (for example, a Braille machine, computer software).

The inclusive assessment arrangements

Preparing the inclusive assessment arrangements as are stated in details in the (Diploma Programme , Candidates with assessment access requirements , March 2014) is the responsibility of the DP coordinator or the school principal . Based on the IB policy some of these arrangements are permitted in examinations without prior authorization from the IB Assessment centre but some of them require authorization.

School process for monitoring & evaluating its provision for students with SEN

T.I.S will continuously monitor and evaluate the working of this SEN policy by gathering information on the following aspects:

- Number of students with SEN, expressed as a percentage of the school roll, and any changes to the level of support they receive.
- The level of support students received and the amount of progress they make.
- The effectiveness of resources.
- The impact of training and new approaches to meeting individual needs.
- The identification of training needs.
- The impact and outcomes of the review process.

- The development of student participation.
- Relationships with parents.
- The impact of the Annual Review process on student progress.
- The success of involvement of external specialists and consultants.
- The effectiveness of accuracy of the inclusive assessment arrangements

Arrangements for consulting with staff, students and parents on the school Inclusion Policy

This draft policy will be made available to involved staff for their comments. It will also be presented to the School Council for further comments and ratification.

A copy of the final policy will be available to the parents , students and staff on the school website ,the school administration office (Admission department) and the school library .

The T.I.S SEN policy will be reviewed and updated in conjunction with the school development planning cycle and IB's.

This report will serve as a guideline for T.I.S SEN policy for the academic year 2014 – 2015 and is subject to change .

References :

- Diploma Programme , Candidates with assessment access requirements , March 2014).
- U.A.E . Ministry of Education SEN Policy, (2011)
- Iran Ministry of Education Inclusive Policy (2006)
- Meeting student learning diversity in the classroom, IBO , May 2013