

## School Policy for People of Determination (POD)

### School Vision

For our students to be forward thinking leaders, equipped with competencies and positive attitudes that fulfil individual aspirations based on universal values, and to become socially responsible global citizens.

### School Mission

At GEMS United Indian School (UIS) our mission is for each student to:

- Impart desirable traits of integrity, punctuality, courtesy and cooperation
- Proudly preserve their cultural heritage while honouring the national identity and culture of the UAE
- Acquire a high standard of academic, social and personal competencies and skills
- Develop lively, enquiring minds with a drive to learn and strive for academic excellence
- Be critical thinkers and creative problem solvers
- Develop a strong sense of self-esteem and individuality, encouraged by self-reliance and independence
- Imbibe sound moral and spiritual values within the supportive and caring school community and society at large
- Be useful citizens who will contribute towards the environmental preservation of the societies in which they live

### Policy Rationale

This policy is written in conjunction with:

- Federal Law No. (29) of 2006 on the Rights of Persons with Special Needs,
- ADEK Private School Policy and Guidance Manual 2014-2015.
- The Ministry of Education's Guide School for All: General Rules for the Provision of Special Education Programs and Services 2010,
- Article (53) of the ADEK Organizing Regulations of Private Schools in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi (2013),

### Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge: Special Education Categories

ADEK: "*the term Special Educational Needs is used to describe any disability, disorder, difficulty, impairment, exceptionality or any other factor that may affect a student's access to learning and educational performance. These differences may be behavioral, emotional or related to specific aspects of learning.*"

The following list describes the categories of disability recognized as requiring additional or different approaches within schools operated by ADEK. These categories are recognized, defined and included in a Ministry of Education document entitled "*The Ministry of Education's Guide School For All: General Rules for the Provision of Special Education Programs and Services (2010)*" and ADEK "*Special Educational Policy and Procedures Handbook*".

- Intellectual Disability
- Specific Learning Disability (includes Dyslexia)
- Emotional and Behavioral Disorder (includes ADD and ADHD)
- Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Speech and Language Disorder
- Physical and Health Related Disabilities
- Visually Impairment
- Hearing Impairment
- Multiple Disabilities

- Gifted & Talented Students

## Aims

UIS is committed to meeting the educational needs of all students with mild or moderate SEN, and those who are deemed gifted and/or talented. We aim to:

- Develop all students to their full potential and valuing them equally
- Identify students with SEN at the earliest possible time in order to support their physical, social, emotional and/or intellectual development
- Ensure that there is a consistent, whole-school approach to the identification, support and teaching of students with SEN throughout the school
- Involving, where appropriate, students in their SEN provision
- Involve parents in a partnership of support by ensuring that they are made aware of the school's arrangements for SEN, involving them as soon as a concern has been raised, supporting them in their dealings with outside agencies, and involving them in the formulation and the review of their child's Individual Education Plans

## Our Provision for Students with SEN

Students with SEN have a learning need that requires special educational provision to be made for them which is additional to, or different from, the differentiated curriculum provision made for students in the classroom.

### **(i) Students with Formal Diagnosed Special Educational Needs**

Students who start their education in UIS with formal documentation of a specific diagnosis will be supported by an Individual Education Plan, produced by the SENCO, within the first month of their arrival in the school.

Where appropriate, students will be encouraged to participate in their own IEP process.

### **(ii) Students who do not have a Formal Diagnosed Special Educational Needs**

UIS recognises the importance of early identification and intervention. UIS undertakes a Graduated Approach to the identification, assessment and support of students with SEN. The approach recognises that there is a continuum of special educational needs and that, where necessary, increasing specialist expertise should be brought to bear on the difficulties that a child may experience.

#### ***Stage 1. Differentiation***

- The educational needs of the majority of students will be met in the classroom. The teacher tailors instruction to meet the student's individual needs.
- The teacher plans activities at the appropriate level to enable progress to be achieved.
- The teacher may differentiate the content, the process, the products or the learning environment and/or may use ongoing assessment and flexible grouping.

#### ***Stage 2. Initial Support Plan (ISP)***

- An Initial Support Plan (ISP) will be formulated for students requiring a higher level of differentiation or accommodation for academic, behavioural or social/emotional concerns.
- The ISP will include the student's area(s) of difficulty, the student's strengths and areas of need and any accommodations that are in place to assist the student's learning. There will also be a set of specific targets, each one accompanied by the teaching strategies that will be employed to support them.
- The ISP will be shared and approved by the parents
- The ISP will be reviewed on a termly basis, by the teacher, in consultation with the SENCO and the parent

- When an ISP review indicates that the student has reached expected levels academically or in behaviour, an exit letter will be sent by the SENCO to the parents. A meeting with the parents will then be arranged to share suggestions for supporting and maintaining the expected levels at home.
  - The class teacher and the SENCO will continue to monitor the student's progress.

### **Stage 3. Additional Support**

Where it is deemed necessary and appropriate, a student will receive additional support in-class or in small intervention groups.

### **Stage 4. Outside Assessment and an Individual Education Plan (IEP)**

Where the student does not, after an appropriate period of time, reach expected levels academically or in behaviour, or where the school believes that the student has an undiagnosed special educational need, the parents will be advised to seek outside, professional assessment. The resulting diagnosis will be supported by an IEP, written by the SENCO in consultation with the parents, the student's teachers and, where appropriate, the student.

### **(iii) Gifted and Talented Students and an Advanced Learning Plan (ALP)**

ADEK: Gifted and talented students may be significantly ahead of the majority of their peers in one or more of the following areas:

- those who show an exceptional ability. This might be in areas such as music, art or sport, or a less easily acknowledged talent such as leadership, creative imagination or social maturity.
- those pupils who possess a general academic learning ability which is significantly greater than those of their peers.
- It is recognised that some children may have dual exceptionality.
- 'All rounders' are children who are both gifted and talented.

In UIS, students who have been identified as gifted and talented will be educated with differentiated learning tasks and a challenging curriculum. They will be provided with appropriate advanced learning opportunities and experiences to develop their potential and to satisfy their learning needs through the development of an Advanced Learning Plan (ALP).

### **The Individual Education Plan**

An Individual Education Plan will be produced for all students who have formal documentation of a specific diagnosis from medical officers, educational psychologists, psychiatrists, speech therapists, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, hearing impairment services, visual impairment services or other medical consultants.

- The IEP will be written by the SENCO in consultation with the student's teachers, parents and, where appropriate, the student.
- The IEP will include the diagnosed area(s) of difficulty, the student's areas of strengths and needs and any accommodations and/or modifications that are to be put in place to assist the student's learning
- The IEP will include a set of specific targets and the teaching strategies to support these targets, additional to those that children will receive through the normal differentiated curriculum, which will support the student and enable the student to progress in their particular area(s) of difficulty.
- The IEP will be shared with all school staff who work with the child.
- The IEP will be reviewed termly as a working document.

### **The Advanced Learning Plan (ALP)**

An Advanced Learning Plan will be produced for students identified under our policy for Gifted and Talented students.

## UIS Accommodations and Modifications for a Student with SEN

In order to meet the educational needs of students with SEN, accommodations and modifications in teaching methods, learning materials, the learning environment and assessments/examinations may be necessary.

Accommodations are changes that do not alter the curriculum being taught such as use of audio equipment, use of computer, use of spell checker, allowing extra time in assessments/examinations etc. Modifications are changes that alter the curriculum being taught such as lower level readers, covering less material in class or in homework.

## UIS: Roles and Responsibilities

### The Principal

- The Principal regularly evaluates and monitors practice in admitting and providing services for children with SEN, and those who are identified as Gifted and/or Talented.
- The Principal provides adequate staffing, space and resources to aid the provision of SEN.
- The Principal recruits a SENCo, SEN teachers and support staff who are trained and skilled in supporting students with SEN.
- The Principal provides adequate training to all staff working with students with SEN
- The Principal works with all staff members to identify areas for development in special educational needs and contribute to the school's development plan.
- The Principal provides all students with the opportunity to access the full curriculum within the most appropriate setting
- The Principal is responsible for establishing a Learning Support Team (LST) at their school

### The Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO)

- The SENCO, with the support of the Principal and the Senior Leadership Team, takes responsibility for the day-to-day operation of the school's SEN Policy.
- The SENCO works closely with all staff to ensure the effective day-to-day operation of the school's SEN Policy.
- The SENCO maintains a register of all students who have a diagnosed SEN, an ISP or an ALP, and those who are being monitored.
- The SENCO monitors assessment data of all students in the school to track the progress of those students with SEN and to identify students who are not achieving academically at their level and may need intervention.
- The SENCO will meet with parents/guardians of SEN students prior to the beginning of each new school year and no later than within the first month of the school year to make arrangements to meet the individual child's needs.
- The SENCO liaises with the parents of students with SEN and includes them in the IEP process.
- The SENCO liaises with external agencies including medical services, educational psychology services and health services.
- The SENCO attends training courses, conferences and cluster meetings to ensure skills and knowledge are kept up-to-date.
- The SENCO ensures that the SEN Policy is monitored, reviewed and updated annually.
- The SENCO manages and works alongside learning support teachers and classroom assistants.
- The SENCO regularly reports back to the Principal and produces a written yearly report.
- Coordinating the provision and delivery of English as an Additional Language.

### Teaching Staff

- Teachers are responsible for accommodating, modifying and/or differentiating the curriculum for students who have a formal diagnosed SEN.
- Teachers are responsible for differentiating the curriculum for students who are not reaching expected levels academically or in behaviour.

- Teachers are responsible for bringing students who are not reaching expected levels academically or in behaviour to the attention of the SENCO.
- Teachers are responsible for ensuring that student progress reports clearly identify modifications and services a student is supported by, if they have moderate SEN, or are gifted and/or talented.

## Parents

- Parents are to meet with the SENCO prior to or within the first month of a new school year to discuss how to meet the individual needs of their child.
  - Parents must inform the school, prior to entry, that their child has a specific, diagnosed special educational need.
  - Parents must inform the school if their child develops any special educational needs at any time during their school career.
  - Parents must provide the school with all information and documentation relating to their child's diagnosed SEN.
  - Parents must work in partnership with the school to provide support for their child
  - Parents must attend meetings with the class teacher and/or the SENCO to discuss the educational and personal progress of their child.
  - Parents must attend meetings to participate in the formulation and review of their child's IEP.
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- Where appropriate, parents will be asked to provide extra support for their child.

## UIS IPRC:

The Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) meets and decides if a student should be identified as an exceptional pupil, and, if so, the placement that will best meet the student's needs. Once identified as an exceptional pupil, an IPRC review meeting takes place twice a year. Additional IPRCs can be scheduled upon the request of the school or the parent/guardian after the placement has been in effect for a period of three months.

An IPRC is composed of the SENCo, Principal, Vice-Principal, Supervisor, Class Teacher, Subject Teachers and parents.

The IPRC will:

- Decide whether or not your child should be identified as exceptional;
- Identify the areas of your child's exceptionalities, according to the categories and definitions of exceptionalities provided by the Ministry of Education;
- Decide an appropriate placement for your child. The Rainbow District School Board offers a full range of placement options: Resource support, self-contained special education class, self-contained special education school and provincial school placement for students with a learning disability or students who are deaf or blind.

## UIS: Staff Training and Support

The Principal will ensure that staff are kept well-informed of best practice and relevant developments with regard to teaching students with SEN. Appropriate training will be provided in-house for all class teachers through training sessions led by the SENCO or by invited outside experts. Opportunities for class teachers to share good practices and teaching strategies with each other will also be provided.

## Outside Agencies

UIS recognises the important contribution that external support services make in identifying, assessing and providing support for students with SEN. Although the school does not endorse any particular agencies, it will maintain a list of those agencies that provide quality support for students.

## **Monitoring and Review**

This policy will be monitored and reviewed annually by the Principal on behalf of the Board of Trustees.

*Lead Person: SENCO*

*Date Policy Agreed: November 2018*

*Date of Next Review: November 2019*

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