



مدارس الظهران الأهلية
Dhahran Ahliyya Schools

Inclusion Policy

Inclusion Policy Committee Members

Directors

Supervisors

Teachers

Students

Parents

DAS Mission

Inspired by the principles of Islam, the mission of Dhahran Ahliyya Schools is to empower each student to be a compassionate, thinking, lifelong bi-lingual learner who makes a positive difference, locally and globally.

DAS Vision

Our vision is to provide a world-class education with an Arab and Islamic identity through a pioneering learning community that is sustainable and socially responsible.

The International Baccalaureate's Mission Statement

The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programs of international education and rigorous assessment. These programs encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

The IB Learner Profile

Inquirers: We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.

Knowledgeable: We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.

Thinkers: We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyze and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.

Communicators: We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.

Principled: We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.

Open-minded: We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.

Caring: We show empathy, compassion and respect. We have a commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.

Risk-takers: We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.

Balanced: We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives—intellectual, physical, (spiritual) and emotional— to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.

Reflective: We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.

Purpose:

The main objective of the Inclusion Policy is to provide guidance to teachers, parents and school community on the learning support provided to students with learning difficulties or to students who are far behind grade level. This policy aims to promote the fact that the school honors the individuality of all our children.

Philosophy:

As per our mission, the Student Support Unit model at DAS is based on the philosophy of inclusion: In inclusion, students learn together. We honor diversity as it naturally contributes to building community. We believe in promoting students' abilities rather than their disabilities. Accordingly, our philosophy is to enable each student based on his or her individual needs with the skills and strategies needed to decrease the achievement gap between his or her current level of performance and the grade level expectations. In order to reach these goals, students must engage in positive learning experiences that emphasize academic, behavioral and personal commitments. We continuously work to remove the hurdles to learning and participation so we can provide equal opportunities for all our students.

Students with special needs have learning and/or psychological differences that call for special provisions to be made. Any student might have special needs at some time in their lives. Students will be considered to have a special need if:

- they have significant differences in learning compared to the majority of students of the same age (either greater difficulty or greater ease or different language background);
- they have a disability that prevents or hinders them from making use of the same educational facilities that are provided for other students of the same age;
- they have social and/or behavioral difficulties that negatively influence their learning or development.

Principles of Learning Support at DAS:

The four essential questions for guiding student learning in our school are:

1. What do we expect our students to learn?
2. How will we know they are learning?
3. How will we respond when they don't learn? –Intervention
4. How will we respond if they already know it?

The Student Support model at DAS is based on the principles that:

- All students can learn and have unique abilities, learning styles and interests. These differences are valued, as they add to the richness and diversity of our school.
- Learners respond best to instructionally appropriate strategies designed to develop their strengths and provide for their individual needs through differentiated instruction.
- Accommodations, both in the ways educators instruct and assess, are required in order for students with additional needs to learn and succeed.
- All students experiencing low achievement and/or learning difficulties are provided a collaborative platform which involves the students themselves, their teachers, parents and relevant support personnel.
- Individual action plans support students with low achievement such as in literacy and numeracy through providing curricula and teaching strategies that respond to students' needs,
- We respect the fact that students:
 - have different educational and behavioral needs, backgrounds, interests, and aspirations;
 - require different strategies for learning;
 - acquire, assimilate and communicate information at different rates and different ways;
 - need a range of different teaching approaches and experiences.

Aims of the Learning Support at DAS:

The aim of Learning Support is to optimize the teaching and learning process in order to enable students with learning barriers/difficulties to achieve expected levels of achievement in literacy and numeracy.

At DAS we promote the following whole-school approach:

- Identifying a child at risk as quickly as possible and take early action to meet their needs
- Planning strategically to improve accessibility to the school curriculum for all students
- Monitoring progress and reviewing goals regularly
- Working in partnership with parents by making regular contact to share progress
- Working in partnership with students to reach targets and goals
- Developing positive self-esteem and positive attitudes about school and learning in these students
- Providing supplementary teaching and additional support and resources for these students in literacy and numeracy
- Promoting collaboration among teachers in the implementation of whole-school policies on Learning Support for these students

1. Inclusion Model in the PYP:

Student Support Unit is a multi-tiered support system designed to address the needs of all students for academic concerns, at multiple levels. Support services are provided to students during the initial phase, through staff collaborative proactive planning for whole groups' instructions. This planning takes into account whole classroom data and provides for differentiated instruction for assigned groupings. Progress monitoring and continued differentiation is expected to improve student success in meeting the general classroom and school-wide expectations and standards. (It's important to note that DAS has another policy, namely the underachieving students' policy that addresses what to do when students are not learning)

A. Learning Support at DAS for students who have a Diagnostic Report:

At DAS the Student Support Unit (SSU) provides various forms of support for children who face barriers to their learning. The support is given to students who have learning needs that affect their ability to learn at the same rate as the majority of their peers and are not able to make progress in spite of in-class interventions and differentiated teaching. The type of support offered, throughout the school, is either push-in or pull-out. During push-in support the Student Support teacher gives students extra academic support and encouragement in their learning in small group activities. During pull-out support, the Student Support teacher will work with the student individually or in small groups with a specific learning need that cannot be supported in class.

All these students have a support plan with recommended accommodations and modifications as detailed in diagnostic reports from qualified specialists such as pediatricians, educational psychologists and diagnostic centers.

B. Learning Support at DAS for students who do not have a Diagnostic Report:

These are students who do not have a diagnostic report from a specialist, but who have been identified and referred to the Student Support Unit by their teacher. These students have not made progress in spite of in-class interventions and differentiated teaching provided for one academic semester at least. These students will be referred with their written plan to the Student Support Unit. These students are then informally assessed by the Student Support Unit and either supported with push-in or pull-out lessons. In addition, resources and strategies will be given by the SSU teacher to the classroom teachers to help support these students in class.

All these students have a support plan but will not receive any individual accommodations and modifications unless a diagnostic report from qualified specialists is provided.

C. Identification of Students' Learning Needs:

- Admissions screening process:

All students applying for admission to DAS will be assessed to determine current levels of performance in literacy and numeracy in accordance with the DAS Admissions Policy. By policy, DAS does not admit students who cannot be supported within the range of our resources.

- Identification of students in school and referral process (informally assessed in school):

In the event the student does not meet school expectations after differentiated instruction, and as evident by standardized test scores or classroom assessment process, or upon suspecting that a student may need additional support from the SSU, the classroom or subject matter teacher consults with SSU to express concern for student's performance. During this time the child is monitored, differentiated for, and strategies are documented by the teacher for one semester. Teacher informs the parent of his/her concerns about the student and sets a support plan. The individualized support plan (Tier 2) will be developed to assist the student in meeting classroom and school expectations. The plan is developed by using the Problem Solving Process, and implemented with integrity and fidelity. This plan is monitored for one semester. Results are evaluated every 8 weeks for educational decisions. During this phase, the team, including the regular teacher, SSU/support teacher/counselor/nurse, supervisor and parents, provide targeted interventions; monitors progress and adjust the interventions as needed. All interventions must be evidence based and data driven.

At the end of the semester, or as the data indicates, the team reconvenes to review available information and make further decisions. If the student has made acceptable progress, the team may continue the support plan, phase it out or discontinue the plan as per student need. At this time, the team may decide to conduct further targeted assessment to help with improving the support plan and continue to implement further interventions until the end of the school year.

If acceptable progress was not achieved, the team decides to move on to the next phase (Tier3) and conducts further assessment to determine additional educational needs. The evaluation team, which includes the teachers, the parents and the evaluator, determines what additional data they need and provides appropriate assessments to gather the data. The new information will then be used to develop an intensive plan.

In reviewing the evaluation results, the team develops an individualized intervention plan to support the student's needs. The plan may include small group and individualized instruction inside or outside the classroom. This plan is monitored closely by the SSU/Team and adjusted as needed with parent permission. The plan is reviewed regularly for progress and annually for continuation. The team uses all available data to decide whether the plan can be implemented with DAS available resources or not. In case the resources are not available to guarantee student success, the team will consider all DAS available options as per other existing policies.

2. Inclusion Model in the MYP:

In alignment with the DAS mission to empower each student to be a bilingual lifelong learner, a variety of support systems are in place to help all students meet their potential. It is important to first realize that our admission policy is rigorous in that we do not accept students with severe learning difficulties for who we know will not be able to cope or show much progress with our curriculum. Furthermore, the policy named "DAS procedures for following on student achievement in the Primary Grades" ensures that students moving up to the MYP have the skills and knowledge in place that will allow them to learn and thrive within a normal classroom environment.

In order to support our students, we focus a lot on cooperative learning groups and on differentiation. Furthermore, to support our students to be fully bilingual, all language teachers use data from standardized assessments (such as MAP and TALA) to create group action plans in addition to the individual goal setting sheets from the MAP assessment. Students are also placed and tracked in homogeneous classrooms for English language.

Online resources are an additional support provided for students to target their individual needs such as IXL, MAP skills, and other.

In some cases, in which students need further accommodations, the Student Support Unit consults with teachers and gives suggestions as to how to best meet the needs of the student through a variety of strategies. When a specific diagnosis is available, students receive accommodations in accordance to the policies set forth by the Saudi Ministry of Education Special Education Department.

3. Specialist Support Involving Professionals (Assessed by External Agency):

If a student is not making sufficient progress, the Student Support team may suggest a Professional Assessment at school or by an outside agency, according to the student's need based on the following:

- Little or no progress even when student is receiving Learning Support in school;
- Continued difficulty in developing literacy or numeracy skills;
- Sensory or physical problems which continue to affect learning.
- The Students Support Unit Supervisor meet with the parents to discuss the observation report and to suggest a Psychoeducational Assessment according to the progress and needs of the student.
- After diagnosis, the student will receive an appropriate support plan with specific learning and behavior targets to suit the learning needs of the child.

4. Psychoeducational Evaluations:

DAS has a team of trained professionals who are able to conduct Psycho Educational evaluations. These evaluations consist of extensive battery of standardized tests conducted exclusively with the student in question and require a sizable investment in time, effort and money. This extensive evaluation is usually reserved to students who show poor response to interventions, despite repeated attempts at many levels, and may require specialized conditions to succeed in the school.

At this time, and when a Psycho Educational evaluation is required, the parent is contacted by the evaluator to begin the process. At this time, the evaluator ensures informed consent and explains due process. (Link psycho-educational policy).

5. Roles and responsibilities of:

A. The Homeroom/subject Teacher:

- Creates and maintains an effective environment for learning where all students are accepted for their differences
- Builds on the strengths of each child, enhancing the student's self-esteem
- Responsible for classroom organization, learning strategies, resources and well-being of students
- Differentiates teaching to meet the needs of all students in his/her class
- Plans and collaborates with the Student Support teacher on a regular basis
- Shares unit planner, vertical map, horizontal map, UBDs, scope and sequence, and weekly lesson plans in advance with the Student Support teacher to facilitate in-class/out-of-class support sessions
- Records concerns and keeps a log of observations and interventions they have taken to help the student and follows up with plan accordingly before referring to SSU
- Makes sure all students are assessed and monitored regularly for progress
- Inputs all students' results from summative and standardized assessments on a shared data sheet across subjects for each grade level
- Meets with all parents once per semester and twice with students of concern
- Maintains frequent and positive communication with parents by sharing information pertaining to the regular program and extra support provided such as newsletters
- Discusses concerns about students in their class with supervisor if they have concerns about a student's academic performance, behavior, study/social skills, communication skills, as well as difficulties with gross and fine motor tasks to create a support plan

B. The Student Support Unit Supervisor:

- a. Raises awareness about special needs in the school generally and provides training as needed
1. Educates and informs parents and school staff about special needs and the nature of the educational

services that meet these needs and/or suggests attending related training provided outside the school.

2. Facilitates communication between the school and government institutions to increase understanding on both sides – DAS administrators understanding of government policies regarding students with special needs and government administrators understanding of DAS programs and services for students with special needs.
 3. Trains classroom/subject teachers and special educators on teaching strategies and classroom accommodations suitable for specific learning needs.
 4. Facilitates and plans for the professional development of the special education teachers through continuous training during the school year on teaching strategies related to students' special needs.
- b. Manages the day-to-day operation of the SSU
1. Develops and applies a system for individual student records, keeping them fully confidential while using their contents appropriately.
 2. Monitors the movement of students within the SSU system in school and provides periodic summaries to principals in this regard.
 3. Manages the time and work of the personnel of the unit and participates in the recruitment of new teachers.
 4. Schedules the SSU periods for each student and coordinates with other supervisors on the push-in and pull-out sessions along with the shared grade level meetings for the SSU teachers.
 5. Communicates and justifies needs for human and material resources for the SSU.
- c. Interfaces with the Accounting Department by taking the following steps
1. Sends a list of students' names who will be enrolled in the SSU, after having their parents' written approval, to the Accounting Department which will follow up and ensure the payment of the fees.
 2. At the end of each semester, sends to the Accounting Department a record of the students who received support through the SSU, showing the number of support periods in each semester so that they follow-up the payment of additional fees by parents.
- d. Guides planning and implementation of the SSU services
1. Supports classroom/subject teachers and educational supervisor in developing remedial plans for some students in class based on assessment results and suggest possible strategies.
 2. Guides and supports the special educator and the counselor in developing the intervention plan and behavior plan.
 3. Helps the special educator by suggesting teaching strategies compatible with the individual needs.
 4. Follows up on the implementation of the intervention plan and/or behavior plan by the special educator and the counselor and modifies it as necessary.
 5. In special cases, offers direct support for a number of students as needed (diagnosing, developing plans, teaching, assessing..... etc).
 6. Revises and gives teachers regular feedback on their lesson plans in the SSU.
 7. Attends classes in the SSU and gives teacher regular feedback on teaching methods and suggests strategies that can be used with students based on their needs.
 8. Participates in the evaluation process of the student support unit teacher and the school counselors.
 9. Meets with parents as needed to discuss student progress and concern. If needed will also request a psycho-educational assessment.
 10. Keeps cumulative records of students performance on standardized tests in the three major subjects (English, Arabic, and Math).
- e. Guides continuous and periodic assessments and leads in ensuring that decisions and plans are based on valid evidence and are in keeping with government and DAS policy
1. Coordinates and follows-up implementation and analysis of achievement tests in Arabic language for the elementary level as well as the Reading and Writing Readiness Scale at the KG level. In collaboration with the Research Unit, shows and discusses the results with classroom teachers and educational supervisors in order to take decisions and plan for the next semester or year.

2. Participates in discussion of screening and achievement tests in English for elementary (ex. MAP) to make use of them for planning support activities in English.
 3. Discusses the results of the standardized diagnostic tests with the special educators and/or counselor in order to identify the options of the educational services, inside and outside the school, that are compatible with the student's abilities, and presents the necessary recommendations for the classroom teachers and parents.
 4. Follows-up the results of the continuous and periodic assessment of the performance of students with special needs with reference to benchmarks and grade level expectations. Discusses the results with the classroom/subject teacher and the special educator and helps teachers in analyzing the reasons for possible inconsistencies between the results of continuous assessment and the results of periodic assessment and documents the agreement on appropriate next steps for teaching and assessing students.
 5. With the educational supervisor and the special educator, discusses the assessment accommodations and/or modifications recommended for particular students with special needs with a diagnostic report and submits them to the school principal for approval in accordance to what is applicable from the Ministry of Education Policies.
- f. Ensures coordination between the program teachers on one side and the classroom teachers, educational supervisors, counselors, school directors, parents, and others on the side
1. Coordinates the cooperation between the special educator and the student counselor to discuss with parents the intervention academic/ behavior plan, help them understand their child's needs and appropriate expectations of the SSU according to those needs, have their approval on the elements of the plan, and on cooperating with the school to implement it, in addition to having their written approval on paying the additional fees for the support periods.
 2. Attends and participates in the Monthly Guidance and Counseling Meetings, in order to discuss general issues about students' performance and to discuss the results of periodic assessment and provide suggestions for improvement.
 3. Acts as the link with any external agencies and other support agencies.
 4. Provides regular summaries for directors on the impact of the SSU Policy on the school and students along with keeping track of the percentages of students receiving support over the years.
 5. In the case of boys moving from the girls' side to the boys' side, the SSU Supervisor on the girls' side sends their complete files to the SSU Supervisor on the boys' side at the end of the year; they meet during the second week of the following year with the educational supervisor, the counselor, and the principal of the boys' side to discuss the individual needs of each student.

C. The Student Support Teacher:

- Coordinates and plans Student Support with the classroom/subject teacher on a regular basis.
- Plans lessons for pull-out and push- in support sessions and assigns homework if necessary.
- Screens and assess students to clarify the student's strengths and needs and some suggested recommendations and then discusses them with the classroom/subject teacher and the parents, and keeps these reports in the student's file.
- Develops and discusses the Intervention Plan with the SSU Supervisor for approval, and then shares it with the classroom/subject teachers in order to clarify the role of each party in the implementation of the plan.
- Cooperates with the classroom/ subject teachers (and SSU Supervisor when needed) to discuss the Intervention Plan with parents and have their approval on the items of the plan and on cooperating with the school to implement it, in addition to obtaining their signature on the form committing them to pay the additional fees for the support periods.
- Implements & modifies the Intervention Plan and follows up on its implementation by parents.

- Continuously assesses the student's performance so as to follow-up his progress through screening and progress monitoring tools to close the gap between student learning and grade level expectations, in cooperation with the classroom/subject teachers.
- Continuously and effectively communicates with the classroom/subject teachers, the SSU Supervisor, the student counselor, the educational supervisor, to discuss progress and concern of SSU students and share strategies.
- Maintains frequent and positive communication with parents by sharing information pertaining to Learning Support.
- Prepares reports clarifying the student's progress level at the end of each semester, then discusses it with classroom/subject teachers, the student counselor, the SSU Head, and parents and sends a copy of this report to parents.
- Keeps a record for each student that states the number of support periods he has actually provided during each semester.
- Provides support to students receiving Learning Support during in-class sessions, classroom/subject teacher planning for guidance.
- Keeps Learning Support records current and filed as appropriate.
- Suggests possible resources or strategies that could be used in support of the child, both in class and at home.
- Attend parent teacher conferences with homeroom/subject matter teachers.
- Contacts SSU supervisor for informal advice and further information if needed.

D. The Parents:

- Collaborate with teachers and participate in all meetings to discuss student progress, strength and weaknesses.
- Sign the SSU acceptance form signifying acceptance of their child receiving the additional support from the SSU and that they will fulfill the role assigned to them and will pay the additional fees required for intervention.
- Signify acceptance of conducting diagnostic testing, when needed, at school or take responsibility to conduct it outside school and providing the written report from the diagnostic center to the SSU Supervisor.
- Attend all meetings held to discuss the performance of their child.
- Fulfill their role as written in the intervention plan which includes the follow up on the homework provided by the SSU.
- Communicate on a continuous basis with the school to discuss the progress of their child with classroom/subject teachers, special educators and/or SSU Supervisor.
- Ensure that their child attends school regularly and punctually, avoiding absence except in case of illness.
- Encourage their child to attend support classes.
- Give the school the most current correct and full information about their child's health and any other matters that could influence his or her learning or behavior.
- Pay the down payment of the SSU fees before starting support in addition to the remaining fees at the end of each semester.

E. The Students:

- Participate in the development of the essential agreements in the SSU classroom and commits to following them.
- Attend support periods given outside the regular classroom.
- Participate, if possible, in the development of his/her intervention plan and goal setting and in the evaluation of his performance based on the written plan.
- Take responsibility of their learning by coming prepared and on time for the lesson, and by asking for support when they need help.
- Fulfill his or her role as specified in the intervention plan (completing class work and homework, bringing his or her materials to class).

Documentation

All referrals and interventions are documented in a student file (SSU electronic file). These documentations include:

1. Classroom work and performance data
2. Teacher plans to provide accommodations
3. Correspondence from parents, agency and other sources
4. Any other relevant information such as medical history, family history etc.

Confidentiality

All information about the individual students are protected and kept confidential. Only those working with the student can have access to such information. Parent permission and consent is needed to share the results of any psycho-educational assessment results conducted in or out of school.

Payments

Students, who participate in the SSU program, based on an individualized plan and as agreed upon by the team, including the parent, will pay for the service as per school policy. Payments are based on school policy as per payment chart. (See P chart).

The Accounting Department has the following responsibilities in regard to students with special needs:

- Follows-up the parents' payment of the first installment of the additional fees for support periods and requests payment in case of delay (based on the names of students who receive support with parents' approval). Support will start after the signature of parents on the form showing that they want the service and intend to pay for it.
- Follows-up and ensures that parents fully pay the additional fees at the end of each semester on the basis of the number of the support periods provided according to the list sent to them by the SSU Supervisor. If parents don't pay by the end of the semester, the Accounting Department will contact them through a written letter to inform them that support will no longer be provided.
- Sends to the SSU Supervisor in the second week of each semester, a list of the names of students who previously received support periods but have not settled their account with the school. The support provided for these students will be discontinued and other students may be taken in their place.

Policy Review

As an essential agreement, we will review the inclusion policy annually.

References Used in the development of this Policy

MYP : From Principles into Practice

www.ibo.org

www.inclusion.com

