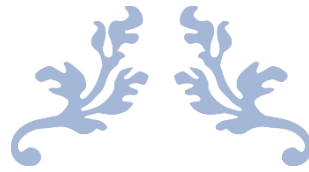




THE APPLE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL, DUBAI



APPLE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

INCLUSION POLICY

CELEBRATING DIFFERENCES



GUIDING PARAMETER

The Apple International School is a dedicated member of society and works towards achieving the vision outlined by the leaders of Dubai. A guiding parameter in striving towards an inclusive society is the following message of **H.H. Sheikh Mansoor bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al**

Maktoum, Chairman of the Higher Committee for the Protection of the Rights of People of Determination.

“...Inclusive society; one that grants people of determination their full rights on an equal basis with others. Dubai believes that people of determination are valuable members of our community who continuously have to strive to overcome the various environmental, social, and systemic barriers to seize opportunities, achieve their aspirations, and succeed in life. Dubai seeks to ensure that everyone fairly obtains their full rights and can thrive in an inclusive environment affording them choices of accessible, affordable, and quality services. In addition, we must all aim to raise the community’s general awareness towards the importance of including people of determination as empowered and effective contributors to society. Together, we will eliminate the sense of pity and charity, and replace it with empowerment and respect for all.”

Message about the initiative, “My community, a city for all.”



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AIS VISION-

Aspiring for our students to be creative, emotionally intelligent, and empathetic life – long learners and global citizens.

AIS MISSION-

We empower our students to be self-aware and grounded individuals who contribute positively to a happy, inclusive, and caring community. We aim for the students to be 21st-century learners who can proactively create opportunities for themselves and others in a versatile global setting.

As defined by the UNICEF, ***'Inclusion is not about inserting persons with disabilities into existing structures, but about transforming systems to be inclusive of everyone.'***¹ Thus at The Apple International School we try to adapt to the diverse needs of different learners. We greatly value the individuality of all children. We believe that each child is a creation of God Almighty and we welcome each child to our institution with warmth and dignity. This policy helps to ensure that the school promotes the individuality of all our children, irrespective of ethnicity, religion, nationality, attainment, age, disability, gender, or background.

We offer a broad and balanced curriculum and have high expectations for all our children. The achievements, attitudes, and well-being of all our children matter. This is in line with the KHDA inclusion framework guidelines which define the purpose of inclusive education as follows:

"Every day, in every classroom, all students, including those identified as experiencing special educational needs and disabilities, will learn and achieve in a safe, supportive, engaging, and appropriately challenging common learning environment. Within such a setting, their personal, social, emotional, and academic needs are fully met."³

AIS INCLUSION POLICY

This policy and information is based on

- The statutory requirements laid out by Dubai Inclusive Education Policy Framework (2017) and Implementing Inclusive Education: A Guide for Schools Creating the capacity for change
- Federal Law 2006
- Dubai Law 2014 (no.2)
- Executive Council Resolution No. (2) of 2017 – Regulating Private Schools in the Emirate of Dubai

including Article 4 (14), Article 13 (16), Article 13 (17), Article 13 (19), Article 23 (4) In line with the inclusive education framework launched by KHDA, the Apple International School upholds the following principles at the heart of its inclusion policy and actively works towards inculcating them in the ethos of the school.

AIS INCLUSION VISION

Together, Educate every student for lifelong success.

AIS INCLUSION MISSION

To create a self-sustained school community where everyone is welcome, cherished, and empowered to be themselves positively.



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CORE VALUES FOR INCLUSION AT AIS

- Resilience
- Excellence
- Empathy
- Global Mindedness
- Independence

MISSION OBJECTIVES

AIS is an inclusive school. We make all efforts to remove the barriers to learning and participation that can hinder or exclude individual pupils or groups of pupils. This means that equality of opportunity must be a reality for all our children. We make this a reality through the attention we pay to the different individuals and groups of children within our school. The curriculum is a key part of planning a program that meets the specific needs of individuals and groups of children.

The overarching mission of the school is to create an Inclusive educational community that focuses on the following broad areas.

- To forestall, value, and support diversity and learner differences - Openhearted, kind, deferential, and safe learning environments create a sense of belonging for all learners and their families.
- To set high prospects for all learners - Creating a culture of high expectations begins with an accessible curriculum and meaningful and relevant learning experiences. Educators and families operate on the awareness that, with the right instructional support, every learner can achieve at par with their potential.

Inclusion is not just about learners with special needs. It is an attitude and approach that embraces diversity and learner differences and promotes equal opportunities for all learners.²



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- To Understand learners' strengths and needs - Profound data is gathered and shared at all levels of the system—by teachers, families, and schools—to understand and respond to the strengths and needs of individual learners.
 - To reduce barriers within learning environments - All education partners come together to recognize and reduce barriers within the curriculum, the learning environment,
 - and/or instruction that are intrusive to students' ability to be positive learners and to participate in the school community.
 - Capacity building - School leaders, teachers, specialist professionals, families, and community partners have continuing opportunities, relationships, and resources that foster, augment and renew their understanding, skills, and abilities to create accommodating and responsive learning environments. Capacity building takes place at the personal and school levels.
 - Shared responsibility - All education partners, including school leaders and board of governors, families, and partner agencies, are committed to the alliance and are committed to the success of all learners.
-

STRATEGIC GOALS

The AIS aims at achieving the following goals to attain the desired vision of the school.

1. To devise a rigorous and accurate identification process for the students of determination – including the SEN, Medical disabilities, English as an additional language (EAL), and Gifted and talented (G&T).
2. To provide appropriate and relevant adaptation, accommodation, and modifications of curriculum and instruction in school to cater to the needs of all children.

3. To ensure that personal attention is provided to students of determination and teachers to make the learning effective and in achieving their potential attainment.
4. To devise a periodic and thorough system of monitoring and reviewing the progress of all students of determination.
5. To identify the needs, aspirations, and learning profiles of a different group of students based on standardized testing like; CAT-4, PASS, and KHDA wellbeing survey.
6. To modify the lessons, curriculum, and enrichment provisions to respond to the needs and/or opportunities identified by such assessment results.
7. To create close collaboration between all stakeholders i.e. the student of determination, other identified groups of students, G&T, teachers, specialist staff, parents, inclusion champion, and other senior leaders of the school to achieve the shared good of providing an opportunity for all.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC GOALS

Identification Process

Students of Determination

The identification process for students of determination at The Apple International School is thorough and based on objective assessment tools. It is also prompt in providing support and intervention as required. The following diagram summarizes the procedure.



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Phase I: Pre - Referral

First Instance Report

Prompt intervention

SST Preliminary Investigation

Independent findings

SST Meeting I

Interventions proposed - 2 weeks

Review and moving forward

Case classified as support and reinforcement

OR

Case classified for referral.

Phase II - Referral

MET Meeting I

Case reported to Parents and The specialist centre for assessment -1 week

MET Meeting II

Assessment results and diagnosis discussed

IEP Formulation

2 weeks

MET Meeting III

IEP finalisation and implementation commencement

Phase III - Review and Monitoring

MET Meetings

Quarterly or pre-decided meetings with all the stakeholders for review of the IEP

Continuous support both in-class and in pull-out sessions monitored

Gifted and Talented

The school led by the inclusion team identifies the various gifts and talents of students across different phases. We ensure that the identification of students' abilities is prompt and accurate to ensure that effective interventions are put in place swiftly to maximize the student's learning in school. Following are the four domains of human ability, which are pivotal in guiding the identification of G&T.

- intellectual abilities
- creative abilities
- Socio-affective abilities
- sensorimotor abilities

The school identifies student abilities via different channels. A summary of them is listed below.

1. ***Identification through CAT 4*** The inclusion department screens the CAT 4 data for identifying any areas in which any child may be excelling and then further triangulates the same with teachers and academic performance in major exams.
2. ***Identification through referrals.*** During the year teachers, parents and other members of the school can refer to any student for gifted and talented traits. The teachers are also provided with training sessions for the same. The inclusion team, in partnership with teachers, uses a suite of tests and checklists designed for investigating specific abilities. The following screening tools are used:
 - a. South Australian Spelling Test
 - b. <https://www.psy-ed.com/wpblog/gifted-assessments/> (for the parents-online free test)
 - c. <http://www.testmycreativity.com/> (online creativity test)
 - d. <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/teachers/teachingresources/diversity/saylerteach.pdf> (Year FS-KS1)
 - e. https://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/curriculum-development/major-level-of-edu/gifted/guidelines-on-school-based-gifted-development-programmes/selection_11-eng.pdf (Checklist for year 3-11)
 - f. Progress tests for specific area testing in guiding curriculum compacting can be done by selecting the test from the complete book of IQ tests by Philip Carter.

Note: parents can refer their children online by going on the following link

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1UT23tga_dYnfFEtw021K3W1mX2-tGlk8Mv1IElgVEf8/edit



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A special group of students

The data of PASS, CAT-4, and other continuous testing scales, inform the school's teaching practices and guide the differentiated learning in classrooms. These assessments lead to identifying any potential learning, emotional or social needs that are addressed by the school using various creative programs.



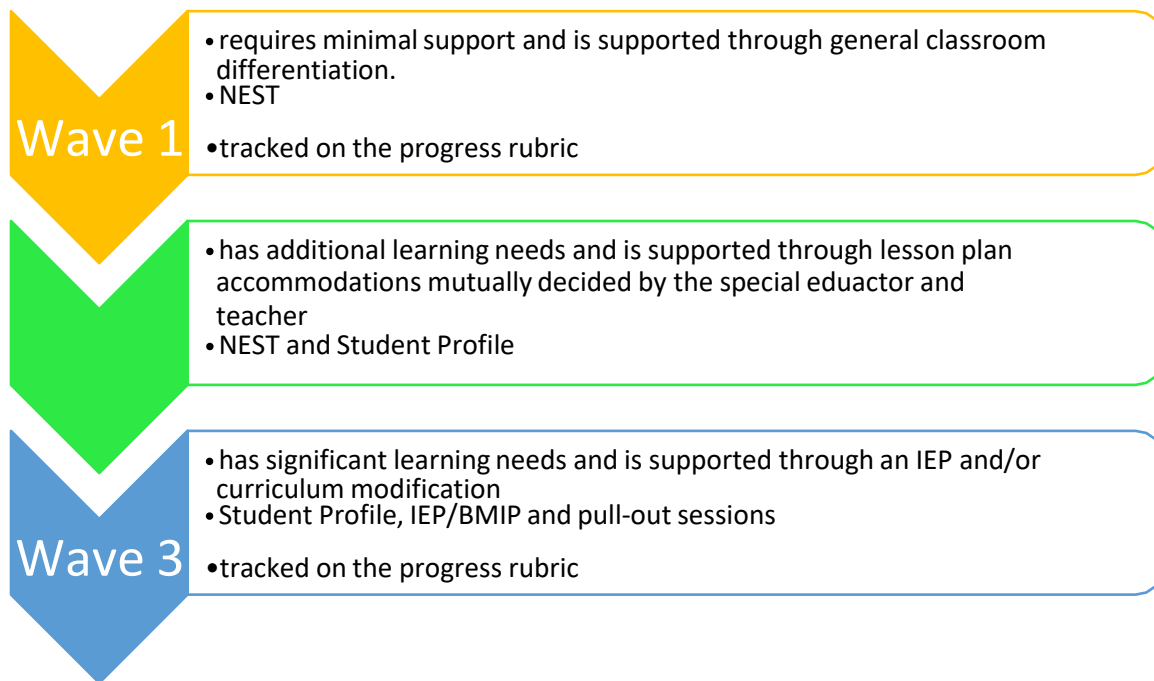
Categories of disability and barriers to learning

The following framework is based upon the UAE unified categorisation of disability. It provides schools with an important structure to support the identification of students of determination.

Common barriers to learning	Categories of disability (aligned with the UAE unified categorisation of disability)
Cognition and learning	1. Intellectual disability (¹ including Intellectual disability - unspecified) 2. Specific learning disorders 3. Multiple disabilities 4. Developmental delay (younger than five years of age)
Communication and interaction	5. Communication disorders 6. Autism spectrum disorders
Social, emotional and mental health	7. Attention Deficit Hyper Activity disorder 8. Psycho - emotional disorders.
Physical, sensory and medical	9. Sensory impairment 10. Deaf-blind disability 11. Physical disability 12. ² Chronic or acute medical conditions

Provisions for students of determination

The following diagram illustrates the graduated levels of support for the students of determination.



Besides the above-mentioned levels of support, the Apple International School recognizes learners who may have barriers to learning due to English as an additional language. Hence, they are supported as EAL Learners via the SEEDs program. SEEDs – Speak, Enact, Engage and Discuss – the program is a comprehensive program developed at AIS to develop the language skills of students with EAL.

Specialist Team

The Apple International School has a dedicated and competent team of Inclusion Department that provides support to the learning process and attainment of the students of determination.

The team consists of:

1. Principal and school leaders are responsible for effective communication of the vision of inclusion, ensuring the engagement of the entire school community. They conduct a school-wide review of current practices to highlight examples of best practices to grow further and to identify areas that require targeted improvement. They ensure that all staff receives the support they require so that inclusive approaches to teaching and learning



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are embedded within their practice. They ensure that recruitment and induction processes prioritize inclusive practices as a key component of professional roles.

2. Governor for Care and Support – Is a BOD representative who is in close contact with the inclusion team. He/ She holds the designated school-based inclusion support team accountable for the development and implementation of an appropriate inclusive education improvement plan.
3. The Inclusion Champion IC– the IC leads the implementation of the inclusion policy at all levels of the school. He/she is a key advocate for the inclusion of students of determination. The inclusion champion is a positive communicator, a knowledgeable educator, and a skilled practitioner with a passionate belief in the value of inclusive systems of education. The inclusion champion plays an important role in promoting ideas and modeling practices that support the development of inclusive attitudes and approaches.
4. The leader of provision for students of determination (SENCO) - holds deep knowledge about barriers to learning experienced by students, the associated challenges for teachers, and the impact on learning, development, and outcomes. The leader of the provision plays a crucial role in supporting classroom teachers to identify and develop specific approaches in the classroom so that every student is empowered to succeed.
5. Support Teachers - The support teacher is identified as a competent teacher who demonstrates high levels of skill and ability in applying inclusive approaches within their teaching practices. They support another teaching in implementing more inclusive classrooms through thorough differentiation in classrooms.
6. Learning Support Assistant and Special Educators - work in collaboration with classroom teachers so that students of determination are successfully included in the classroom environment alongside their peers. The school allows for parents to appoint individual LSAs parents for supporting students with diagnosed needs if deemed necessary.

7. The school counselor SC – the SC is responsible for supporting the provisions who have emotional and social needs.
8. Partnering Specialist organization –The Apple International School works with two specialist organizations for teacher development and student support programs at the school, including on-site therapies.

• Extension of the Team

1. Admin. Manager - collaborates and looks after the healthy inclusion of our diverse student body and staff.
2. Happiness Officer – looks after inclusion in extracurricular activities.
3. Section Heads – Supporting the teachers and students in day-to-day matters.
4. Registrar -Admission and Screening Support.
5. Head Boy and Head Girl - Student Members representatives for voicing the feedback of the student body.
6. Parent Members – a representative group of the parents for voicing feedback from the parent body.
7. Academic Leaders – for supervising the right provisions for the students of determination and works closely with the inclusion champion.
8. School Doctor – The school medical team under the Doctor’s leadership works for the well-being of students with medical conditions and chronic illness.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

A comprehensive monitoring system is in place to monitor the attainment of students of determination continuously. These are measured against the IEP goals set for each child.

These include-

1. IEP/BMIP tracking
2. Learning Skills Progress mapping



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3. Periodic MET meetings of review
4. Periodic meetings with the parents.
5. Academic Result Analysis

RESOURCE ALLOCATION AND SPECIAL PROVISIONS

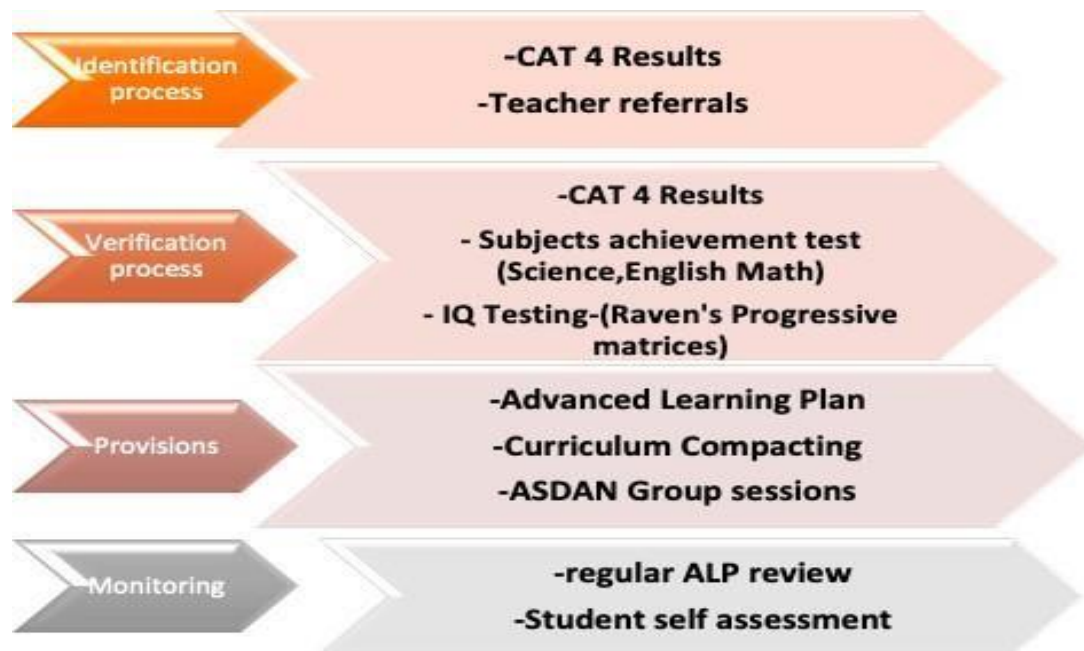
The school makes sure the following areas of provisions are in place for the students of determination.

1. Physical access - The school has made provisions in toilets for students with physical disabilities. The support staff is also made available to the students who may need support in moving around.
2. Personalized resources - The Inclusion team specialist along with the teachers make available the resources to the students of determination that enhance the learning like; physical manipulatives, modified worksheets, assistive technologies, and other teaching aids.
3. Apps and iPad - The school identifies relevant and helpful applications for students of determination and is made available to them during and after class.
4. NEST program. The school runs a support group for students with additional learning needs or emotional needs. These programs are in line with research-based intervention programs.
5. SEEDs program – The school runs a periodic program in the early years for students with EAL as a barrier to learning. This program supports their learning of the language and hence their achievement in academics and social domains.
6. On-Site Therapies – The school offers on-site therapies (behavior, language, and occupational) on the school premises, in partnership with the specialist organizations. Certified therapists conduct these therapies for the students of determination. This is offered at discounted prices compared to the original rates and transparency is maintained by the school.

7. ASDAN – The school offers ASDAN courses for students of determination in phase 3 and phase 4 of the school. These are courses with alternative qualification routes, which provide future pathways for students to work on.

GIFTED AND TALENTED PROGRAMME

The Apple International School ambitions for providing a holistic program for gifted, talented, and abled learners. A graduated identification process is the first step in this process. The following flow chart highlight important steps in this process.





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The A’GATE – Apples’ Gifted and Talented Program- consists of the following enrichment activities;

1. Enrichment Classes – During the club lessons the gifted and talented students get the opportunity to enhance their talents and interest by taking part in the enrichment classes. These include 3D printing, green screen projects, Arduino-based robotics, microarray.
2. MOOCs – The gifted students are also advised and supported by the school in completing courses online to learn beyond the curriculum.
3. Teacher-A-Day – Through this program, the students get the opportunity to teach a topic of their choice in some other classes so that they may develop confidence.
4. Mentoring Program – The students undertake to mentor whereby they work with a working professional from the field they aspire to take later on.
5. Advanced Learning Plans – The wave 3 gifted students are provided specific provisions in class through an Advanced Learning Plan which involves curriculum compacting where appropriate.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

At the Apple International School, we believe in learning to be a continuous process. Therefore, the teaching and specialist staff undergo various training and workshops throughout the year to enhance their understanding of different aspects of inclusion in education. These are conducted by the Inclusion department as well as a specialist from outside school.

PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

At the Apple International School, we believe in strong collaboration between all stakeholders and parents are the heart of this. Parents are a firm pillar of the education system. Therefore, we make sure that their opinions and suggestions are taken into account. We, therefore, meet with the parents using School the following avenues.

1. Regular interaction via the Heart – to – Heart group
2. Parent meetings on a need basis.
3. Open – houses on pre-decided intervals, usually once each term.
4. Coffee mornings with the principal – once a month
5. PEP for parents – positive parenting sessions for parents.

6. Counseling for parents – individual meetings for students at-risk of falling short of their potential.
7. Mindscapes – a monthly edition of newsletters themed around general parenting strategies.

Modified Assessments

Apple International offers concessions and modifications to students with Special Needs and Disabilities during major assessments. The concessions and modifications of exam papers will be extended only to students with a formal diagnosis report generated within three years of the exam date. A child can only avail of up to 4 concessions, from the following list, during an examination.

1. 25%-50% extra time.
2. Supervised rest breaks – extending up to 10 minutes total. The breaks can be taken twice during one test.
3. Separate Invigilation room.
4. Read aloud (the questions to be read aloud by the invigilator or the student himself)
5. Prompter facility. (The invigilator on duty will prompt the student to stay on task)
6. Word Processor (to be provided by the parent).
7. Reading Pen (to be provided by the parent).
8. Visual aids, for example, magnifying glasses

In case of acute needs, confirmed through a formal diagnosis, a child may also be given a modified paper. Modified papers will have rephrased questions with visual hints, but the difficulty of the question will be the same as a regular paper. The child may get modified paper only in the subjects he/she needs it in and not in all subjects. In case a child benefits from a modified paper the same will be reflected in the subject comments on the report card. The final right to provide the above-mentioned facilities to a child remains with the school.



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Footnotes:

1. Children with Disabilities. Ending Discrimination and Promoting Participation, Development and Inclusion, Program Guidance Note, UNICEF, 2007
2. <https://education.alberta.ca/inclusive-education/what-is-inclusion>
3. *KHDA inclusion policy and framework page 9*

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Dr Jinto Sebastian

Principal

The Apple International School, Dubai

Reviewed Annually

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