



# Tehran International School

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Special Education Needs Policy 2020-2021



# IB learner profile

The aim of all IB programmes is to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world.

As IB learners we strive to be:

## 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 analyse 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, 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.

The IB learner profile represents 10 attributes valued by IB World Schools. We believe these attributes, and others like them, can help individuals and groups become responsible members of local, national and global communities.



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## **Introduction**

Tehran International School (TIS) is an advocate of inclusion and strongly believes in justice and equity in education for all students regardless of their limitations. The school believes that all students have a right to a broad, relevant and balanced education. TIS policies emphasize on effective screening to identify developmental disorders at the earliest possible stage. Moreover, tackling emotional and educational challenges is a prime concern. All students are well taken care of, provided with plenty of opportunities to accomplish their goals and objectives.

This document explains the steps taken by school to assure special needs students are taken care of in a respectful and professional manner making sure all students are included and no one is left behind.

## 1. Special Needs Definition

A student with Special Education Needs is a student who might display difficulties or conditions that are barrier to learning and therefore needs particular teaching strategies for classroom management and effective education. In other words, special educational needs are defined as a restriction in the capacity of the person to participate in and benefit from education on account of an enduring physical, sensory, mental health or learning disability, or any other condition which results in a person learning differently from a person without that condition. Students have special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

Students have a learning difficulty if they:

- Have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of students of the same age
- Have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for students of the same age in schools within the area of the local education authority.

It is essential that we respect diversity to ascertain each and every student no matter what their background and ability is, has been provided with a meaningful and relevant education. Being different is a fact apprehensible to most of us. Inclusion is an effort to ensure all learners including students with disabilities access school along with others and receive specially designed support and instruction which they need in order to succeed as learners and to achieve the required competence and skills. Students in need of special education deserve an elevated extent of resources to satisfy their needs with adaptable learning programmes which demonstrate both progression and coherence.

### 1.1 Special Needs Classification

There is a wide spectrum of special educational needs that are frequently inter-related and may arise from six different areas of disabilities including: Communication and interaction disorder, Cognition and learning disorder, Behavioural, emotional and social development disorder, Sensory and/or physical disorder, Medical health disorder, mental health disorder.

### Communication and Interaction Disorders

A communication and interaction disorder is any disorder that affects an individual's ability to comprehend, detect, or apply language and speech to engage in discourse effectively with others. It encompasses problems with social understanding and pragmatics. Pragmatics refers to using language in proper context. For example, it's important for children to develop the ability to use language differently when playing with, say, a younger child versus a teacher.

### Cognition and Learning Disorder

Learning disabilities are neurologically-based processing problems. These processing problems can interfere with learning basic skills such as reading, writing and/or math. They can also interfere with higher level skills such as organization, time planning, abstract reasoning, long or short term memory and attention. It is important to realize that learning disabilities can affect an individual's life beyond academics and can impact relationships with family, friends and in the workplace. Dyscalculia, dysgraphia, dyslexia are included in the learning disorder area.

### Behavioural, Emotional and Social Development Disorder

The evidence for this should include differing social situations, not just in the classroom i.e. in the playground, at the beginning and end of the school sessions and lunch time. The school has an initial monitoring system to identify unusual behaviour or excessive attention seeking as this can indicate a child with emotional problems or other syndromes. They include

- Emotional-obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD),
- Anxiety, depression, disruptive (oppositional defiance disorder (ODD),
- Conduct disorder (CD),
- Attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD)
- Developmental (speech/language delay, intellectual disability) disorders or
- Pervasive (autistic spectrum) disorders.

### Sensory and/or Physical Disorder

Sensory or physical needs, can occur for a variety of reasons, e.g. congenital conditions (some progressive), injury or disease. The important consideration in this area is the degree to which the difficulties impact on a student's ability to access educational opportunities.

These difficulties can be age related and may fluctuate over time period. Below is a list of disorder classification.

- Hearing Impairment (HI)
- Visual impairment (VI)
- Multi-sensory impairment (MSI)
- Physical disability (PD)

### Medical Health Disorder

A medical condition is a broad term that includes all diseases, lesions, disorders, or no pathologic condition that normally receives medical treatment. Common medical conditions include:

- Epilepsy
- Cystic fibrosis
- Renal failure
- Allergies
- Haemophilia
- Hypertension
- Diabetes

### Mental Health Disorder

Mental disorder is pattern that causes significant distress or impairment of personal functioning. Such features may be persistent, relapsing and remitting, or occur as a single episode. Many disorders have been described, with signs and symptoms that vary widely between specific disorders. This type of disorder can be classified into the following groups:

- Anxiety disorder
- Psychotic disorder
- Personality disorder
- Mood disorder
- Schizophrenia

### *1.2 Gifted and Talented Students*

Gifted students are those whose potential is distinctly above average in one or more of the following domains of human ability: intellectual, creative, social and physical. Talented students are those whose skills are distinctly above average in one or more areas of human performance. In order to make sure that gifted students are extended and challenged, special provision along with support from professional teachers is provided to meet students' needs.

## **2. Policies Related to SEN**

The school's policy in regards to SEN students includes but is not limited to the following:

- Provide sufficient opportunities to allow students to employ their full potential
- Identify SEN students through a precise assessment and monitoring.
- Revise school policies based on most up-to-dated protocols for SEN students
- Prepare Student Support Plan (SSP), Individual Education Plan (IEP) or Advanced Learning Plan (ALP) based on the students' needs
- Provide appropriate training for teachers and staff
- Monitor, review and analyse SEN students' progress frequently

## **3. Student Support Team**

TIS Student Support Team (SST) is solely responsible for the school SEN arrangement, planning and provision. The team consists of professional teachers and staff with valuable years of experiences in their fields. Our team consists of the following people:

- Principal
- School Counsellor
- Academic Advisor
- IB Coordinator
- School Nurse and Medical Practitioner
- Support teacher for SEN

### **3.1 General Tasks**

The following are a list of the general tasks that must be covered by SST:

- Identifying the SEN and their needs with the aim of planning to meet them in an appropriate and standard approach.
- Preparing the state-of-the-art professional development guidelines and arranging frequent training workshops for the teachers and staff.
- Conducting a regular performance analysis of the running SEN policy in a day to day bases with the main objective of using an intact SEN policy in the school.
- Planning and supervising the special arrangements for the SEN based on their requirements and grade level.
- Performing Coordination provisioning for the SEN



- Ensuring that there is a liaison to facilitate communication between parents and other professionals.
- Advising and supporting other practitioners in the school.
- Conducting and coordinating annual reviews in the school to ensure our SEN policy is intact and ideal for the students.
- Liaising with external agencies including the therapy provision and Educational Psychology Services to take care of the students' health conditions.

### *3.2 Special Planning*

All the progress records and reviews are securely maintained by the class teacher and the IB coordinator whom strictly follow the IB guidelines on data protection and confidentiality. The records are only allowed to be presented to parents or legal guardians.

Provided that not enough progress is observed, the school will consult with the parents directly. The school extends its support through preparing Student Support Plan (SSP), Individualized Education Plan (IEP) based on the students' needs. Furthermore, a referral letter made to an external educational psychologist is required and beneficial.

Also for the purpose providing proper educational environment for gifted students Advanced Learning Plan (ALP) will be assigned for them.

Parts of the process are defined as:

- Closing the achievement gap by focusing on improving the learning process for all students.
- Resolving the achievement gaps as soon as possible and prohibiting them to grow.
- Ensuring to meet the full curriculum entitlement.
- Ensuring the student's previous rate of progress is maintained or improved.
- Being similar to the students whom are starting from the same achievement baseline but are less than the majority of the peers.
- Presenting the improvements in self-help, self-regulation, social, and personal skills.
- Presenting the improvements in the student's behaviour.

## **4. SEN Assessment Arrangements**

The SEN policy in Tehran International School is fully aligned with the IB policy, "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 I

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, July 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.

### Responsibilities of the school

- Students with learning support requirements may need support and arrangements for both teaching and learning.
- 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
- 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 the candidate's study of the Diploma Programme.
- The inclusive assessment provided to a candidate must be planned in advance to give a candidate ample time to learn to use them effectively during classroom activities.
- The inclusive assessment arrangements provided for a candidate must be carefully individualized, planned, evaluated and monitored. They should be based on current, not passed, requirements.
- 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.
- All requests for inclusive assessment arrangements submitted by a coordinator must have the support of the head of school.
- 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.
- The school is responsible for making all arrangements for approving and appointing a scribe, reader prompter, practical/aide or communicator.
- The school is responsible for making all arrangements for assistive technology that may be used to improve a candidate's learning and assessment including speech recognition and reading software. The IB does not pay for the hiring or purchasing of equipment.
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- 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).
- Preparing comprehensive assessment arrangements is conducted by the DP coordinator or the school principle fully based on IB policies and guidelines. Some of the examination are eligible to be arranged without prior authorization from the IB assessment centre while others are strongly required to be authorized.

## 5. Remote Support

In cases where remote support for SEN students is required the following options are promoted by IB and the school.

- Alternatives to using a reader include:
  - Reading software: There is a wide choice of reading software available, so it is important that students are matched with software that best meets their specific needs. Reading software can be requested for IBDP summative assessments, along with an electronic (PDF) version of the examination.
  - Reading pen: When the content is not available digitally, a reading pen is a viable option. This is a portable electronic device that scans and reads text aloud. Note that in IBDP summative assessments, students must not have access to a data storage facility, an in-built dictionary or a thesaurus.
- Use of word processor software or speech recognition software are alternatives to using a scribe. Both can be requested for IBDP summative examinations
- A human prompter is the usual choice to support a student who struggles with concentration. Audio prompters such as a timer—set to ring or vibrate at timed intervals—can serve as alternatives to a human prompter.

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