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International Baccalaureate®  
Baccalauréat International  
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Cambridge Assessment  
International Education

Cambridge International School



# **Inclusive Education Policy**





## **IB 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 programmes of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.





## IB LEARNER'S 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 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.



## Cambridge Assessment International Education

Cambridge Assessment International Education prepares school students for life, helping them develop an informed curiosity and a lasting passion for learning. We are part of the University of Cambridge.

Together with schools, we develop Cambridge learners who are confident, responsible, reflective, innovative and engaged – equipped for success in the modern world.

### Cambridge Learner Attributes

**Confident:** in working with information and ideas – their own and those of others.

**Responsible:** for themselves, responsive to and respectful of others.

**Reflective:** as learners, developing their ability to learn.

**Innovative:** and equipped for new and future challenges.

**Engaged:** intellectually and socially, ready to make a difference.

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## MISSION STATEMENT OF FIRSTSTEPS SCHOOL

FirstSteps School believes in providing a stimulating value-based learning environment based on mutual understanding and respect to develop caring, responsible and lifelong learners. We promote international-mindedness in our school community to nurture global citizens fulfilling our mission **INDIA FOR WORLD.**

- I** Inculcate universal brotherhood and values,
- N** Nurture innocence, uniqueness and creativity,
- D** Develop concern for environment in particular and the Planet Earth in general
- I** Imbibe entrepreneurial skills & international mindedness.
- A** Acquire habit of inquiry.
  
- F** Foster international education system,
- O** Open mind for the development of intellect, self-esteem, self- confidence and critical learning,
- R** Respect one-self and others,
  
- W** Welcome the change and develop it with a positive attitude and vision.
- O** Organise self-discipline
- R** Right environment to develop inquisitiveness for learning and to disseminate learning beyond the classroom.
- L** Learners for life time and leaders of tomorrow.
- D** Develop the virtue of understanding others' perspective.

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## **Introduction**

We at FirstSteps School believe in equality of opportunity; we recognise that all students are capable of learning and each learner will be able to reach his or her full potential and achieve success.

The facilitators and support staff strive to meet the varied educational needs of all the students by utilizing a variety of learning and teaching strategies and methodologies and making required arrangements that allow every student to be challenged academically, enhance positive self esteem, develop respect, concern for others and become responsible, independent, global citizens. At the heart of the curriculum and programme of the school we aim to reflect on the principles of learning: to enhance knowledge of the student, provide opportunities of academic growth, minimize the learning barriers and provide support and developing a positive identity. (Principles of learning Cycle IB)

## **Understanding - Inclusion**

We define inclusion as 'an ongoing process that aims to increase access and engagements for all students by identifying and removing barriers'. (Learning diversity and inclusion in IB programmes, 2016). Inclusion: refers to integrating learners in the regular school system (and class) as opposed to placing a learner in a special school or class. Learners with additional educational requirements are provided with the technical, assistive or personal supports needed.

Inclusion is an organizational paradigm that involves change. It is a continual process of increasing learning and participation for all students. It addresses learning support requirements and questions the broader objectives of education, the nature of pedagogy, curriculum and assessment. It is an educational approach to which all schools should aspire. Inclusion is facilitated in a culture of collaboration, mutual respect, support and problem-solving involving the whole school community.

We believe that inclusion is not only limited to students with differential needs but it is a positive resource with regard to what it means to be international minded and intercultural awareness. We encourage our students to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who embrace the similarities and differences of all members of our community.

## **Understanding Barriers to learning:**

Some of the barriers that may be found affecting the learning process are -

- School organization and resources
- Culture and policies
- Approaches to teaching learning
- Buildings and Physical obstacles
- Relationships among students

## **Additional Learning Needs**

In line with the IB's commitment to inclusive education, students are considered in terms of their strengths. The IB has moved away from the use of deficit labels to identify students and instead considers the areas of challenge that a student may experience: reading; writing; mathematics; social and emotional, learning and behavior; mental health and psychological well-being; speech, language and communication; vision; hearing; giftedness; physical; medical/illness.

Different countries have different definitions of, and terms for, additional learning needs. Broadly, the term refers to learners who experience learning difficulties that make it harder for them to learn than most children and young people of the same age.

Gifted and talented learners are also considered to have specific needs if their potential is distinctly above average in one or more of the following domains: intellectual, creative, social and physical.

## **Philosophy**

We recognize and respect that our students come from a variety of backgrounds, cultures and levels of life experiences. The diversity of student backgrounds contributes to our school community and inspires facilitators and students to be caring and open minded.

The majority of students will have mild or transitory difficulties, but some students will have long term and more complex needs. The inclusion policy aims at early interventions and develop modified Individualised Learning Plans (ILP) to fit into regular programme.



The specific IB standards and practices that relate to supporting learning diversity are:

- A9 The school supports access for students to the IB programme and philosophy.
- B1:5 The school develops and implements policies and procedures that support the programmes(s).
- B2:8 The school provides support for its students with learning and/or special educational needs and support for their facilitators.
- C1:6 Collaborative planning and reflection incorporates differentiation for students learning needs and styles.
- C3:6 Teaching and learning differentiates instruction to meet students learning needs and styles.

### **Cambridge support**

Cambridge is committed to ensuring all schools, teachers and learners around the world are supported during each exam series and may require additional resources to study and prepare for the assessments. Cambridge recognises that some learners may require extra accommodations when taking an assessment due to additional assessment needs.

### **Individual Learning Plan (ILP)**

ILPs are drafted to support students with identified barriers to learning. Where appropriate, students voice their own needs and ILPs and are personalised to individual needs, enacted in partnership with parents and students, shared with all relevant teaching staff and reviewed every enquiry cycle.

Parent, Special Educator, School Councilor, Coordinators, Principal and Head of the School will work closely for revision of the ILP as per the need of the learner.

### **Inclusion Support Team**

Terms inclusion and inclusive education refer to a broad understanding that embraces the diversity of learners and all minority groups. Inclusion is achieved through a culture of collaboration, mutual respect, support and problem solving. Dynamic learning communities refers to the whole school community, and any work on developing inclusion should not forget the voices of all learners, their parents and caregivers, support staff and non-teaching staff.

## **The Inclusion Support Team comprises of:**

- Chairperson
- Head of School
- Principal
- Primary Coordinator
- Learning Support Teacher - Counselor
- Examination Officer
- Teachers with a specific interest in inclusion.-
  - Language teachers, Physical Instructors, Homeroom teachers and Specialist subject teachers.
- Parent community members-
- Non teaching school staff member

## **Purpose of the Inclusion Support Team**

- Collaborate with class teachers and other education staff( coach and support)
- Meet regularly (once each term) to revive planning and implementation
- Maintain minutes of meetings and effective follow up.
- Assign learning support assistance to students and classes
- Develop partnerships with outside agencies.

## **Challenges in supporting additional learning needs**

There is an understanding within the school community, teachers, parents, non academic staff and administration, of the need to be mindful in labeling a learner. While teachers can make significant observations about a learner and his or her behaviour, they are not qualified to diagnose or assess such learning needs.

It is important to consider if the environment is contributing to the difficulties a learner may be experiencing. Schools need to be sensitive to any differential needs for such learners. Paying attention to the environment means ensuring learners feel safe, supported, stimulated and that the classroom environment is attuned to the individual learning, social, and physical needs of learners.

The principle of 'each child is unique', requires educators to be flexible and open-minded. All children learn at different paces and have different strengths, challenges and interests. Multiple and complex needs cannot be addressed with one model or formula. It takes considerable time, creative thinking, collaboration, appropriate funding, accessibility, research and educator training on an on-going basis.

It is necessary to recognize the additional learning needs for children's development involves 'readiness to learn' and 'readiness for school'. 'Readiness to learn' means they have the cognitive development needed to learn specific concepts and ideas, and a 'readiness for school' involves a specific set of cognitive, linguistic, social and motor skills that enables a child to assimilate the school's curriculum.

## **Principles of planning**

**Inclusion:** refers to integrating learners in the regular school system (and class) as opposed to placing a learner in a special school or class. Learners with special educational needs are provided with the technical, assistive or personal supports needed.

**Individual Learning Plan (ILP):** a teaching and learning plan designed in collaboration with the parent/s, learner, teacher/s and relevant multi-disciplinary team members specifically for learners with special educational needs who have received a diagnosis.

**Modification:** refers to modifying the learning content and assessment in order to meet the abilities of the learner. This means lowering or raising the educational objectives and expectations.

**Pragmatics:** refers to the social use of language and/or conversation. This can include problems with initiating communication, difficulty using unwritten rules and inability to maintain conversation on a topic, inappropriate interrupting and an inflexible style of conversation.

**Psycho-educational assessment:** a systematic process of gathering relevant and valid information about a learner's strengths and needs. It can include testing, with a certified and expert source, to measure intellectual performance and help clarify the type of processing deficit, helps identify how the disability significantly or negatively impacts an individual.

**Remediation:** focuses on finding alternative ways to help, mainly, primary school age children learn. It includes any of the following options: reteach the information, use alternative instructional strategies, break tasks down into smaller parts to analyse what the child knows and what components are problematic, reduce the number of items that must be completed, provide additional practice, engage in one-on-one tutoring.

**Scaffolding:** a strategy used to support all learners and facilitate the construction of meaning and knowledge. Once a learner no longer needs the scaffold or support, it is removed.

## **OBJECTIVES**

- all children have access to a broad and balanced curriculum, differentiated as appropriate to meet individual learning needs
- all children are given equality of opportunity to participate fully in school activities
- maximum opportunities for effective inclusion throughout the school to develop children's maximum independence, as appropriate to their level of need
- all children have opportunities to meet personal standards of excellence
- early identification of additional learning needs
- removal of barriers to learning and achievement
- effective assessment and monitoring of needs
- appropriate provision for children with additional learning needs
- all staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities in providing for children's learning needs and work collaboratively to support children with intensive learning needs
- make necessary provisions , accommodation and develop resources for students with intensive learning needs
- parents are able to play their part in supporting their child's education
- close and effective partnership between parents, the setting and outside agencies
- where appropriate children's views are valued and listened to

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## **Areas of monitoring and support – The four principles of good practice**

The four principles of good practice identified by the IB as promoting equal access to the curriculum for all learners are: affirming identity and building self-esteem, valuing prior knowledge, scaffolding through the following processes in these regular classroom practices.

### **Objectives and strategies**

- a. High quality Individualised Education Programmes developed in collaboration with Counselor, Homeroom facilitator, Parent, Coordinator, Principal and Head of the school.
- b. Positive Behavioral support can be achieved through the following interventions:
  - Trainings and workshops – All staff
  - Open communication between all channels in school
  - Active role of the school counsellor
  - Collaborative projects with other regional institutes for the differently abled
  - Visits to regional organizations for the differently abled
  - Inclusion - staff hiring
  - Sharing success / Guest speakers
- c. Assessing basic learning needs by using the following tools:
  - Observation and recording
  - Collaboration
- d. Enabling equality through:
  - Inclusive classroom
  - Co-curricular activities
  - Student council
  - Suggestion box
  - Student agency – Voice Choice and ownership
- e. Technical support and provisions:
  - Smart classrooms –
  - Library/ Digital library
  - Manipulative
  - Use of applications and tools available online
  - Collaborate with local regional expert support like –
  - GRIID
  - Institute of Mentally Handicap
  - Institute for the Blind

## **Admission Policy**

FirstSteps School has an inclusive admissions policy, the school will follow First Come, First Serve policy. We welcome children with differential education needs, provided we can make appropriate arrangements for their needs. As an educational institution we are equipped to support inclusive program for most of the students with mild differential educational needs.

## **Referral Process Learners with Established Special Needs**

- For the children who have already been identified to have any additional learning needs at the time of admission to the school, are discussed to identify the needs and arrangement required at school.
- Inclusion support team decides the grade and the facilitator best suited for the child. This is decided in a meeting between the Head of the School, Principal, PYP coordinator, Senior School Coordinator, Special Educator and School Counsellor.
- The Homeroom facilitator is then guided through the plan and her recommendations considered. After a joint meeting with the Head of the School, Special Educator, School Counselor, Facilitator and Parents, the parents are informed about the devised Individual Learning Plan (ILP).
- Once the parents understand and approve, the various adjustments (e.g. location of the class, size, extra attendant / shadow etc.) are considered and made.
- All the other subject facilitators are also made aware of the adjustments and the requirements of that student which are mainly
- Supplemental activities tailored to the child's learning need
- In case the student goes for therapies outside the school, complete support is given to the parents with regards to attendance and flexibility of the school hours.
- The school curriculum then works in tandem with the therapy requirements and the progress achieved there.

- The special educator/councilor observes the student as well as helps the facilitator with him/her as per the time table.
- Weekly reports and updates are discussed with the PYP Coordinator, Principal and Head of the School; any changes if required in the plan are considered and incorporated.
- Learners with any additional needs may benefit from specific access arrangements that take the learner's difficulty into account when assessments or learning tasks are performed.
- On need Basis, the special educator/school psychologist visits the therapy centre and discusses the challenges and progress with the student's therapist.

### **Learning needs identified by facilitators during school session**

- When the homeroom facilitator observes any additional needs for a learner, it is discussed with the inclusion support team. A facilitator referral form is filled by the homeroom facilitators based on their observations and a report is prepared by the special educator on the basis of additional learning needs identified.
- The special educator/school counselor then observes the student in the learning environment and informally identifies the required learning needs.
- After which it is brought forward in a face to face meeting with the parents, who are then guided about the future steps.
- The identified students are recommended for diagnostic testing by an outside agency. The school provides the parents with a list of certified and reputable institutes for the purpose. The school does not provide any diagnostic testing at this point. The school will, however, support the parents in their efforts to obtain diagnostic testing by providing supportive documentation and, if necessary, granting the student a temporary leave of absence in order to be tested.
- As a result of the recommendations of the diagnostic testing, various modifications in the curriculum and the class are made.
- These modifications are discussed with the parents and their approval sought.
- All the other facilitators and support staff are made aware of these

modifications and any special requirements of the child.

- In case the student goes for therapies outside the school, complete support is given to the parents with regards to attendance and flexibility of the school hours.
- The school curriculum then works in tandem with the therapy requirements and the progress achieved there.
- There are supporting facilitators supporting the homeroom facilitators from time to time wherever the need felt
- The student teacher ratio of the classroom in the school facilitates and supports the teaching learning process; allowing for the integration of the principles of learning process.
- The student is also visited by the special educator/councilor as per the time table and weekly updates given to the Head of the School.
- During the exams, extra rooms with invigilators are organized, scribes made available, special educator/psychologist made available to guide and prompt the student and time is extended in compliance with the recommendations for special consideration.
- The question paper is set and grading done according to the abilities of the student.
- The parents are then informed of the progress during the parent-facilitator meetings and future plans are discussed with them.
- On need basis, the special educator/school councilor can visit the therapy centre and discusses the challenges and progress with the student's therapist.

### **Collaboration and Differentiation**

With the identification of the special education need, the inclusion support team will formulate a plan of differentiated learning and teaching for the student. Appropriate scaffoldings and learning experiences will be provided to ensure that the students understand the concepts and imbibe the **learners profiles** of being **caring, open minded, risk takers, knowledgeable, thinker, communicator, inquirer, principled, balanced and reflective.**

The inclusion support team collaborates and work on develop an ILP. With each learner, the most effective strategies for achieving agreed goals and learning opportunities can be created that will enable every student to develop, pursue and achieve appropriate personal learning goals. There is, an important link between differentiation and thoughtful adaptive planning. There is also an important link with the idea that every teacher is a language



teacher every teacher is special education need teacher to some extent.

Differentiated teaching may involve using collaborative and cooperative learning, a variety of learning practices, creative approaches to teaching and learning, differing formats and modes of exploring and presenting knowledge. By providing students with multiple means of representation, action, expression, and engagement as in Universal Design for Learning (UDL), students are given equal opportunities to learn.

Tomlinson and Cunningham Eidson (2003) have identified the following three curricular elements of **differentiation**:

Content	<p>What should a student come to know, understand and be able to do?</p> <p>How will the student gain access to the knowledge, understanding and skills?</p>
Process	<p>What activities will be used to help students make sense of the knowledge, understanding and skills?</p>
Product	<p>What products will provide evidence of what the student knows, understands and is able to do?</p>



## **Differentiation in assessments**

Access arrangements/accommodations: It is imperative to consider learner's intensive needs, if any, into account when assessments are conducted or learning tasks are performed. We understand that the provision of access arrangements does not lower the learning standards and therefore readily avail adaptations where required.

Examples of access arrangements include:

- allowing extended time for tests, exams, or assignments
- allowing for intermittent breaks during the task, test or exam
- providing a quiet or separate testing area so there are fewer distractions and less noise
- use of a computer instead of handwriting for exams or assignments
- use of a scribe or voice recognition software program which writes a candidate's responses and can then read them back to the candidate
- Arrangement of furniture to accommodate for the disability
- use of a reader or reading software
- differentiated tasks and modified test papers

## **Evidencing Learning**

- An individual learning plan is maintained for all the students with special needs after the assessment in order to enhance the skills that are deficient for the overall performance of the child.
- The formative and summative tasks are differentiated using assessment strategies and tools according to the child's abilities.
- All class room facilitators regularly meet with special educators in order to collaborate on curriculum and assessment, to reflect on student learning, and to plan for differentiation.
- The child's progress is recorded on a daily basis using a daily log sheet maintained by the special educator. They are further discussed on a weekly basis via internal communication among the concerned faculty of the children with special needs.
- Individual cases files are maintained to record the progress of each child with additional and intensive needs.

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## Documentation

Individual student profiles will document all the developments and records of individual students.

Facilitators will keep record of any accommodations and modifications made for student with special educational needs. These records will be placed in the students' file on a monthly basis and will be reviewed to evaluate the effectiveness of the modifications and accommodations used.

The evaluation will determine whether the modifications and accommodations should be continued, stopped, or adjusted to best meet the individual needs of the student.

## Important links to other the policy

The Inclusive policy is in sync with other school policies of the school and creating a synchronized approach through continuous efforts of the teachers, administrators, staff, parents and students, is important to establish a positive school culture.

School **Admission Policy** states that we are an inclusive school and offer equal opportunities for admissions in school; we recognize and accept students with additional learning needs. The school **Assessment Policy** mentions the principles of differentiation and provisions for any additional needs at all the levels of assessment allow them any liberties from the adapted **Academic Integrity** in the school. It is understood that any additional learning needs of the student will have an impact on the School **Child Friendly Policy** which is supportive of ensuring a safe and inclusive culture in the school. The school ICT and technical support ensures any additional support required for the additional learning needs of the learners. The school **ICT Policy** defines the role and support for additional learning needs of the learners.

There is a comprehensive plan to recognize any additional needs required in one or more of the four strands of language, the Language policy has a strategic flow to work on such learning needs; it is understood that the language is the means to facilitation of any knowledge acquisition. The **Language Policy** clearly defines the scope of facilitation to address any differential language learning needs. The **National Education Policy** of India 2020, has the objectives to develop inclusive schools around the nation. The **local authorities (Chandigarh UT Administration)** has issued specific provisions to be adopted to make the city Child Friendly in every aspect of

social, physical, and emotional well being. The school takes active responsibility to adhere to the authorities guidelines issued by the local administration.

### **School Developmental Programmes - Inclusion**

Inclusion supportive PD

Short-term and long-term professional development (PD) needed to increase knowledge across the whole community (students, parents, teaching and non-teaching staff) and develop educators as educators of all students.

Workshops and training sessions for the whole school staff to sensitise to a more responsible behavioral support in the inclusive classrooms.

Identified helpful IB trainings in the coming session -

Developing learning communities

Learning diversity and inclusion

Social and emotional learning

### **Provisional improvements**

Digital library

Language labs

### **Inclusive community development**

Collaborative projects with learners of other schools learners of regional special school

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## **Inclusion Policy Review Process**

- This policy is a living document. It has been created using IB/Cambridge support materials, local school data and input from stakeholders in the school's learning community. It is an ongoing process that will be systematically reviewed, evaluated and modified as needed by the students, staff, coordinators, and administrative members.
- The language policy review committee will comprise of Chairperson, CEO, Head of the School, Principal, PYP-Coordinator, Language Facilitator, Exam Facilitators and Homeroom facilitators. The committee will review the current document, revise as needed, and plan how to communicate current practice to staff and parent community.
- The committee will review the current document, revise as needed, and plan how to communicate current practice to staff and parent community.
- Upon reviewing the policy in June 2022 (March to September), the school has now adopted to replace the earlier SEN (Special Education Need) Policy with Inclusion Policy

## **IB Resources/References**

- Learning diversity and inclusion in IB Programmes (2016)
- IB Programme standards and practices (2014)
- The IB guide to inclusive education: a resource for whole school development (2015) Updated in November 2019
- Templates of SEN policies
- Candidates with assessment access requirements DP (2014)—MYP (2015)
- Special Education Needs – CAIE
- Chandigarh's Child Protection Programme
- Department of Education – Chandigarh Administration
- Special Educational Needs Policy | Golders Hill School
- Fairgreen International School – Inclusion Policy January 2022
- handbook-inclusive-education.pdf (cbseacademic.nic.in)
- Global Disability summit 2022 – University of Cambridge

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