



Oman Private School

Inclusion Policy

Last Revised: January 13, 2020

The goal of the Oman Private School (OPS) Inclusion Policy is to create a welcoming and supportive learning environment for students of the Primary, Middle Years and any future secondary program the school may offer. To this end, creating and maintaining inclusion is a school-wide commitment and an ongoing process that aims to identify barriers to learning and overcome them while ensuring all students have equal access to engagement in the learning process.

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 in terms of educational objectives, the curriculum and assessment most notably in conjunction to the school's Language Policy. Inclusion is facilitated in a culture of collaboration, mutual respect, support and problem-solving involving the whole school community.¹

Purpose of the Policy

In compliance with the following IB *Programme standards and practices* (2014):

Standard A:

9a. The school supports access for students to the IB program(s) and philosophy;²

Standard B2:

8. The school provides support for its students with learning and/or special educational needs and supports their teachers;³

Standard C1:

6. Collaborative planning and reflection incorporates differentiation for students' learning needs and styles;⁴

Standard C2:

8. The written curriculum provides opportunities for reflection on human commonality, diversity and multiple perspectives;⁵

Standard C3:

10. Teaching and learning differentiates instruction to meet students' learning needs and styles;

¹ See International Baccalaureate, *Learning diversity and inclusion in IB programs*, January 2016, pg. 1

² International Baccalaureate *Programme standards and practices*, January 2014, pg. 15

³ *Ibid.*, pg. 17

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*, pg. 19

14. Teaching and learning fosters a stimulating learning environment based on understanding and respect;

15. Teaching and learning encourages students to demonstrate their learning in a variety of ways;⁶

and in accordance with OPS values of best teaching and learning practices, the school has implemented a school-wide Inclusion Policy with the aim to:

- clarify the parameters of our Inclusion Policy with transparency to the entire school community, including students, teachers, guardians and all other stakeholders
- identify learning challenges and disabilities
- establish OPS standards and practices in the admission of SEN students
- establish OPS standards and practices in accommodating SEN students
- identify other barriers to learning
- outline OPS initiatives in eliminating barriers to learning

Identifiable Learning Challenges and Disabilities

OPS has identified Special Education Needs (SEN) students as those who have a learning challenge or mental or physical disability that requires special education provisions to be in place for them. Possible diagnoses for SEN students could include:

- emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD)
- autism, including Asperger syndrome
- attention deficit (hyperactivity) disorder (ADHD/ADD)
- specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia
- obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD)
- communication difficulties
- medical needs such as epilepsy and cerebral palsy
- mobility difficulties
- global development delay (GDD)

SEN students may be identified to have learning challenges through the following methods:

- the caregivers may disclose the information about their ward verbally during the admission inquiry and a referral will be made to the senior leadership team;
- caregivers may supply medical documentation outlining the conditions of the student and a referral will be made to the senior leadership team;
- after admission, teachers may begin to identify certain characteristics that indicate the student has significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others in the class, at which point, they would be instructed by the senior leadership team to have multiple teachers from different subject areas complete a Teacher's Observations form to be reviewed further by the senior leadership team. If concerns are warranted, caregivers will be notified and the observational report will be discussed with them, upon which, a

⁶ Ibid.

referral may be made to a specialist to assist in supporting the teaching and learning of the student.

Admission of SEN Students at OPS

All students are unique, as such, OPS does not have set parameters for the admission of SEN students. Rather, each SEN student is assessed individually against the school's ability to accommodate the needs of the student, academically, physically, or otherwise. All students applying for admission to OPS are considered with the understanding that:

- all students, irrespective of creed, gender, economic background, or physical/mental disability should have an equal opportunity to attend our school within the school's ability to provide the necessary arrangements to support the students in terms of facility requirements and resources necessary
- all teachers and staff will continue to learn and understand more about learning diversity and special educational needs through professional development provided by the school
- to do justice to students seeking admission, we must consider the physical structural limitations of the facility and know the limits of disabilities we can support
- throughout the admission process, the school will do our best to anticipate and prepare for the needs of the student before commencement
- all students must be educated on the nature of different disabilities and learning challenges to increase compassion, empathy and a community that seeks to assist rather than isolate
- all students must be educated on the value of individual differences and foster the ideals of diversity
- the school will ensure policies and systems are in place to promote inclusive practices
- new students and their caregivers must give their full cooperation and be completely forthright with information necessary to inform the proper departments how we may be able to provide the best learning support possible
- identify and respond to individual needs and barriers on all grade levels, by all teachers and staff involved
- all students are entitled to individual learning that fosters stimulating challenges and advancement as appropriate
- the school will judiciously distinguish between barriers to learning that are stemmed from language barriers so that students may be connected with the correct supports within the school in accordance with the school's Language Policy
- the school will be prudent in identifying learning challenges early, have them properly and professionally assessed by external specialists to become involved in supporting the student, and provide assistance in accessing all elements of the IB curriculum as appropriate.

Disclosing a learning challenge or physical disability will not prevent a student from enrollment at OPS, nor will confirmation of such a disability be a reason for deregistering an enrolled student unless one (or more) of the following factors apply:

- physical limitations of the facility and/or staff will not allow the school to accommodate the needs of the student

- the nature of the learning challenge or disability will not allow the school to be conducive to the general and/or individual learning needs of the student
- the nature of the learning challenge or disability may bring unwarranted physical and/or emotional harm to the student
- the nature of the learning challenge or disability may bring harm to other students and/or staff in the school

Should a guardian or caregiver fail to disclose a physical or learning challenge, with prior knowledge of such condition, resulting in the discontinued enrollment of the student at the school, all deposits or fees paid to the school will be forfeited subject to the discretion of the governing body and head of school.

Accommodating SEN Students at OPS

Students enrolled at OPS and have been identified as requiring SEN support will be afforded every opportunity for learning as other students. In certain cases, an individual education program (IEP) will be developed for the student, and may include, but is not limited to:

- identifying goals, objectives and individual outcomes that accommodate the individual needs of the student
- possible strategies and services (adaptations, location of services, resources to be used) based on professional feedback
- criteria of success and procedures used to measure success
- making accommodations for shadow teachers and/or classroom assistants
- additional time for tasks or assessments, modified arrangements for assessment taking (private rooms, modified seating arrangements)
- allowing for rest periods and supervised access to electronic devices
- assigning scribes, readers, communicators, and prompters to help the student

The respective program coordinator will work with the class/subject teacher, in coordination with the guardians or caregiver of the SEN student, to develop an IEP that meets their learning needs. The aid of professional therapists will strongly be sought during the IEP development process. Available to OPS is an occupational and mental health therapist as well as a clinical psychologist who may be engaged with consent from all stakeholders when creating the IEP.

Additional Barriers to Learning

OPS recognizes there may be additional barriers to learning outside identifiable mental or physical disabilities. These may include, but are not limited to:⁷

- School organization and resources - barriers to learning exist when:
 - inclusion has not been defined and aligned with the school's mission and vision
 - school routines, transitions, teaching and learning practices do not align with policy
 - human and material resources to support inclusion are not available
- Cultures and policies - barriers to learning exist when:
 - policies and teachers do not reflect the inclusive nature of the school

⁷ See: International Baccalaureate, *Learning diversity and inclusion in IB programs*, January 2016, pgs. 2-4

- human rights, diversity, quality and equity are not taken into account in the policies and practices
- Approaches to teaching and learning - the barriers to learning exist when:
 - practices do not address human commonality, diversity and multiple perspectives
 - professional development does not support the whole community in developing effective strategies to increase access and participation
 - adjustments for learning and assessment across all IB programs are not provided
- Buildings and physical obstacles - the barriers to learning exist when:
 - school facilities are not accessible to all members of the community
 - lack of willingness to reorganize physical spaces, classroom orientation and structure
- Relationships among the community - the barriers to learning exist when:
 - the learner profile does not play a role in promoting the agency to affirm identity and empower personal freedom
 - collaborative practices amongst members of the community are not promoted

It will be the responsibility of the OPS senior leadership team and the governing body to identify such barriers, or respond to any aforementioned barrier or otherwise brought to the school's attention, and introduce processes for the removal of the said barrier for all members of the school community.

OPS teachers are also responsible for taking an active and proactive role in identifying any barriers and raising matters with the senior leadership team while ensuring all students under their instruction are exposed equally to teaching and learning, reaching them as individual learners. Working with program coordinators, OPS teachers will also ensure units are developed and taught factoring in matters related to human commonality, diversity, and multiple perspectives while allowing students to reflect on these.

Stakeholder Roles in Inclusion

Guardians' Role

Guardians are responsible for:

- Sharing any relevant information regarding learning or physical challenges they are aware of concerning their child/ward
- Engage the teacher, program coordinator, or head of school with any inclusion concerns at its earliest onset or revelation as applicable
- If outside support has been sought, consider sharing any information that will support the student's learning at school, and/or ideally when possible, allow the school to connect with the external support person(s)

IB Coordinators' Role

IB program coordinators are responsible for:

- Ensuring the Inclusion Policy aligns with IB standards and practices for ensuring all students have access to learning
- Holding regular meetings with teachers to ensure all have a clear understanding of the inclusion policy

- Ensuring respective teachers are made aware of any inclusion or special support needs a student may require
- Working with teachers to ensure best teaching and learning practices are implemented in the classrooms and to the inclusivity of all students
- Engaging all relevant stakeholders and working with them during the development of an IEP where applicable
- Making professional development recommendations where applicable to enable teachers and staff to better support teaching and learning in an inclusive environment
- Regularly reviewing the Inclusions Policy with the policies review team and updating as needed

Head of School's Role

The Head of School is responsible for:

- Establishing and making available the Inclusion Policy to the school community
- Ensuring teachers obtain any required training needed to uphold and guarantee best inclusion practices are implemented in the classrooms
- Engaging all relevant stakeholders and working with them during the development of an IEP where applicable
- Engaging all relevant stakeholders to discuss best teaching and learning practices are afforded to students with physical and or learning challenges
- Regularly reviewing the Inclusions Policy with the policies review team and updating as needed

Teachers' Role

All teachers are responsible for:

- Ensuring best teaching and learning practices are afforded to students with physical and or learning challenges
- Being cognisant and pre-emptively eliminating barriers to learning outside identifiable mental or physical disabilities
- Engaging all relevant stakeholders and working with them during the development of an IEP where applicable
- Being proactive and sharing any concerns with relevant stakeholders of suspected challenges to a student's ability to learn

This policy should be understood in conjunction with the school's Admission, Assessment and Language Policies.

Monitoring and Evaluating this Policy

This policy will be formally reviewed yearly by the governing body and pedagogy leadership team and will be revised as needed to adapt to changing best practices and the needs of our learning community.