

Rationale for Learning Support Policy

2023 - 2024

Next review date: August 2024



This policy has been read and adopted by AAESS Board of Directors and Principal:

Signed:



For and on behalf of AAESS Board of Directors

Date: August 2023

Signed:



Mr Andrew Thomas, Principal

Date: August 2023

By definition every child is unique and every child has different learning needs. Among educators, the ongoing process that increases access and engagement of all learners in learning is known as inclusion. Furthermore, the generic term “**learning support (LS)**” rather than “special educational needs (SEN)” has been adopted in AAESS, as we feel it caters best for the wide spectrum of learning needs along a continuum.

Valuing diversity and difference is a key aspect of becoming more internationally minded and is an important goal of our school. Hence at AAESS our programmes of study are inclusive as they can cater to the needs of all students. Inclusive education involves responding positively to each student’s unique learning profile, including students with diverse learning needs. The central place of Learning Support at AAESS helps teachers and students respond in a flexible way to those students who have additional learning requirements.

Students may need support if they have:

- A cognitive disadvantage which affects their ability to learn at the same rate as the majority of their peers;
- A specific learning barrier;
- A speech and language impairment affecting expressive and/or receptive communication;
- A behavioural impairment affecting their ability their ability to learn effectively;
- A sensory impairment;
- A physical disability;

A combination of any of the needs listed above. Further to this:

Students with Learning Support requirements may:

- display difficulties or live with conditions that are a barrier to learning and therefore need particular teaching strategies for classroom management and effective education.
- display a higher than average aptitude in one or more subjects that requires adaptation and extension of the curriculum.
- have the aptitude to meet all curriculum and assessment requirements but require support to reach their full potential in learning and assessment.
- require support to access teaching and learning including planned strategies to access curricular instruction and inclusive assessment arrangements to access assessment.

At AAESS we endeavour to provide students with the support they need in order to set and meet individual learning targets. Differentiation is an integral part of teaching and learning. This may involve utilising collaborative and co-operative learning, a variety of learning practices, creative approaches to teaching and learning, differing formats and modes of exploring and presenting knowledge and understanding being made available to the students. However, in those cases where students require instruction beyond regular teaching practices, learning support is provided.

Aims of learning support at AAESS:

The principle aim of learning support is to optimise the teaching and learning process in order to enable pupils with learning barriers to achieve expected levels of achievement in literacy and numeracy.

Promote a whole-school approach to:

- Identifying a child at risk as quickly as possible and take early action to meet these needs;
- Planning strategically to improve accessibility of the school's premises and curriculum for all students; and
- Monitoring progress and reviewing goals regularly.
- Work in partnership with parents by making regular contact to share progress;
- Work in partnership with students to reach targets and goals;
- Liaise and seek assistance, where appropriate, of outside agencies consisting of Child Care Professionals.
- To develop positive self-esteem and positive attitudes about school and learning in these pupils.
- To enable these pupils to monitor their own learning and become independent learners.
- To provide supplementary teaching and additional support and resources for these pupils in Literacy and Numeracy.
- To involve parents in supporting their children's learning through effective parent-support programs;
- To promote collaboration among teachers in the implementation of whole-school policies on learning support for these pupils.

Learning Support (Early Years and Primary School)

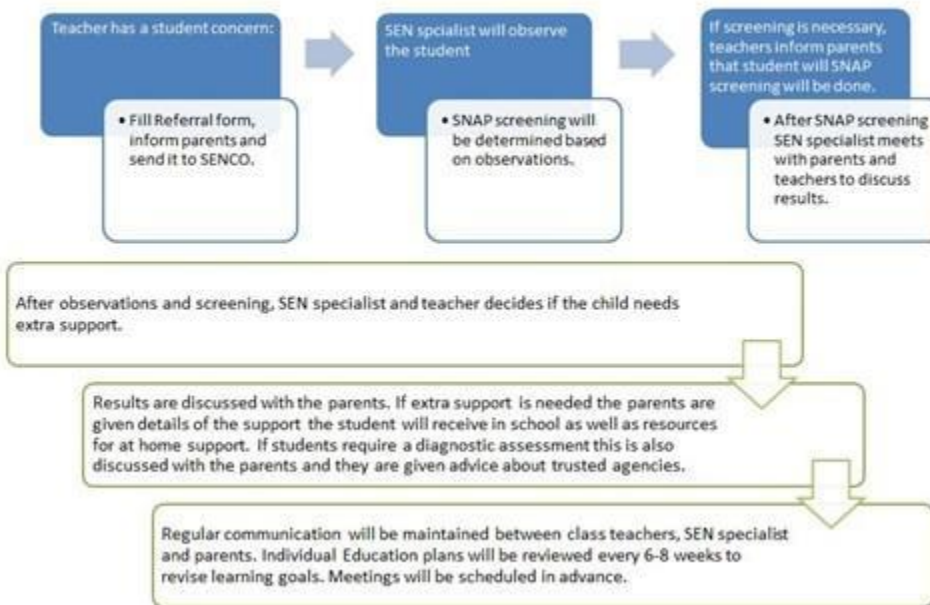
The Learning Support Department at Al Ain English Speaking School strives to ensure that students with additional or Special Educational Needs (SEN) achieve positive outcomes and make academic progress before leaving primary school. Learning Support students are assisted on areas of specific learning difficulties in all academic subjects, as well as life/social skills in order for them to reach their potential.

Learning Support is co-ordinated by Dr. Anne Shipton who is our whole school Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO).

Learning Support Students will have an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) created, based on the shared goals and aspirations of themselves, their parents and their teachers, under the guidance of the SENCO and the Learning Support team. SMART targets are tracked and evaluated a minimum of three times each academic year, using the Assess-Plan-Do-Review model. External Assessment Reports need to be up to date and the guidelines set out by these professionals are taken into deep consideration when planning the IEP. Where a student is attending individual therapy such as Speech and Language Therapy (SLT), or Occupational Therapy (OT), termly progress reports must be submitted to the SENCO to ensure we also support these goals in school.

Identification of need

Learning Support Process



Learning Support in action

All teachers are teachers of children with SEN. They are responsible and accountable for the learning and progress of *all* the children in their class, including those with SEN. The SENCO is available to assist and guide teachers and parents in planning and coordinating the best support possible for these students. Students with difficulties accessing the mainstream curriculum, receive inclusive support from Learning Support Assistants. This kind of support works alongside the classroom teacher but allows for extra instructional support and explanation that classroom teachers cannot always provide 1:1.

Examples of learning support delivered to pupils are:

- Speech and Language support
- Intensive reading / writing / spelling / phonics remediation
- Basic Mathematics skills practice;
- Fine-motor skills practice

The Learning Support department also supports students who find specific areas challenging, but may not have Special Educational Needs. In these cases, the SENCO will plan, deliver and assess effective booster interventions, which are evidence based and work to close gaps in peer attainment. These programs also support children with additional needs who require such intervention. The impact of these will be monitored and progress will be reported to parents, teachers, the Heads of Year and the Head of Primary.

Learning Support (Secondary School)

The Learning Support Department at AAESS ensures that students with learning difficulties achieve sufficient proficiency in literacy and numeracy before leaving primary school. The Learning Support students are assisted with strategies to facilitate their learning in order for them to achieve their potential. The students are assisted on areas of specific learning difficulties in skill areas of literacy and numeracy.

The Learning Support Students that have an Assessment Report from an external agency will have an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) with specific targets that are tracked and modified. Psychological Assessment Reports need to be repeated and updated every two years. Where a student is attending individual therapy such as Speech and Language Therapy (SLT), or Occupational Therapy (OT) termly progress reports must be submitted to the Learning Support Coordinator. In addition, updated reports can be requested annually. All students with special learning needs or in need of remediation will require a formal external assessment before they become part of the SEN (Special Educational Need) student list.

Identification

- Teachers flag students that require support in one or more subject areas (behavioral, learning, physical).
- The Learning Support Specialist observes student in the classroom.
- Learning Support Specialist and subject teacher meet to discuss the observation.
- Outcome of observation is discussed with parents and further assessment is requested.
- IEP is created based on recommendations from assessment report(s) and input from parents and teachers.
- Teachers differentiate instruction for SEN students and are supported by regular Professional Development.
- Teachers and the SENCO meet to review the student's IEP.

Request for additional educational assessment

Role of teacher:

- To refer students with continued and consistent learning difficulties for further evaluation and assessment.
- To provide instructional recommendations that will assist students in their learning and development.
- To offer fully differentiated Quality First Teaching in the classroom

Role of learning support:

- To review with teacher and make joint decision on areas of concern, meeting with parent and write referrals.
- To provide an individualised intervention program for the student.
- To discuss assessment results with the concerned specialist and parents.
- To assist in the implementation of recommended strategies in the context of the classroom.
- To monitor and facilitate the effectiveness of the recommendations and their implementation.

Strategies include:

- Specific skills coaching related to subject specific areas;
- Curriculum-based support with close collaboration between Learning Specialist and teachers;
- Specific homework support;
- Targeted academic support for students speaking no English or little English in addition to EAL provision.

Supporting students with additional needs

- The subject specific teacher will differentiate teaching and make reasonable adjustments based on the student's IEP.
- SEN students will have a report and IEP (Individual Education Plan) with clear strategies and accommodations.
- All teachers to view current strategies that are working with the student and/or note any focus that may need adjustment via live, regularly updated SEN Tracking Forms.
- Teachers are supported through Professional Development seminars that are need-based and held regularly.
- SENCO to meet with students for additional support needed outside of the classroom.
- SEN Audits are carried out to ensure accommodations/strategies are being made by the classroom teacher.

Review meetings with teachers

Learning Support meetings will be held on a bi-monthly basis with the Heads of year. The goal of these meetings is to:

- Review the student's current progress and consider their progress data.
- To update or make additional accommodations based on classroom strategies and observations.
- To document meeting outcome.
- To review and feedback on IEP and proposed strategies.
- To discuss 'next steps' and develop a focus for each, individual student.

Review meeting/updates with parent

SENCO meets with parents to update them on the reasonable adjustments being made for their child.

Termly “Parent Updates” are sent via email, informing them of adjustments and intervention, inviting them in to meet and discuss classroom strategies.

Annual reviews are held in which IEP modifications are made based on the needs of the SEN student (with reference to SEN tracking forms).

Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
Assessment	The process of collecting information on a child's abilities, difficulties, behaviour, specific needs.
Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)	When a child requires reasonable adjustment in class in order for them to fulfill their academic potential
Code of Practice (CoP 2106)	A guide to the schools about their responsibilities to children with special educational needs.
Inclusion	A word used to describe the practice of educating children with special educational needs in mainstream school whenever possible.
Individual Education Plan (IEP)	Also known as an IEP. It is a programme devised for an individual child with educational difficulties. It sets out targets and reports outcomes.
School Action (SA)	The stage of the SEN graduated response where support is provided by the school in addition to, or different from that usually provided.

<p>Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>"Achieving Excellence"</i></p> <p>Also known as a SENCO. A member of the teaching staff in school who has additional expertise and responsibilities to enable the school to meet the needs of pupils.</p>
<p>Transition Review (TR)</p>	<p>Held in years 6 and 9. These reviews help to plan for the child's future before the time comes for them to change year group.</p>
<p>Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD)</p>	<p>This included Dyslexia/Dyspraxia/Dysgraphia/Dyscalculia</p>
<p>Exit Strategies</p>	

Key Documents

AAESS promotes Inclusion across all key stages therefore the features of this policy are also applicable to our Students of Determination and all those receiving Learning Support services at the School.