

POL/AC012 NLCS Dubai Inclusion Policy – Whole School

Policy Title:	NLCS Dubai Inclusion Policy – Whole School
Policy Number:	POL/AC012
Version:	Version 8
Effective Date:	November 2025
Scheduled Review Date:	November 2026
Supersedes:	Version 7 – Implemented November 2025
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Approved By:	Senior Leadership Team

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Introduction

Our school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students and young people. The school expects all teaching staff, non-teaching staff and volunteers to share and uphold this commitment. If a student cannot feel safe they cannot learn to their full potential.

Vision

At NLCS Dubai, Inclusion is focused on empowering every student to independently reach their fullest potential, reflecting our school ethos of 'floors, not ceilings'. We are committed to ensuring all barriers to learning are effectively removed, to allow every single student in our community to thrive and grow, embracing their uniqueness and developing a passion for learning in our caring and academically stimulating environment.

1. Overview of Inclusion

At NLCS Dubai we provide a rigorous education that enables each student to make the most of their gifts. We value and respect all students equally and ensure all students have an equal opportunity to fully engage in the curriculum. At NLCS Dubai we offer every student, including those who have special educational needs or are students of determination, a broad, balanced and ambitious education. We recognise that some students face barriers to their learning, and we aim to identify and remove these barriers through a variety of means. The IB Access and Inclusion policy identifies barriers as the following:

'Barriers are all the obstacles that may prevent or disadvantage a student from participating or effectively engaging in their learning, teaching and assessment.'

The full IB policy can be found [here](#).

In addition, we recognise that some students will require additional challenge and extension in areas where their ability is particularly advanced.

1.1 NLCS Dubai defines the term special educational needs as follows:

Students have a special educational need if they experience a particular difficulty or challenge when learning, which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. This includes:

- If a child experiences a significantly greater difficulty or challenge in learning than the majority of their peers, or
- If they have a medical issue that prevents or hinders them from making full use of educational provision provided by the School for students of the same age.

1.2 KHDA Categorisation System

NLCS Dubai categorises special educational needs based on the KHDA's 'Guide for implementing the Categorisation System for Students of Determination' - November 2025. The system uses two identification categories: Students of Determination (those with a formal diagnosis) and Students with Evidence-Based Indicators of a Disability (those with an identified barrier to learning). Students are then categorised using the relevant tables:

Students with a formal diagnosis use the following categories:

1. Intellectual disability
2. Communication Disorders
3. Autism Spectrum Disorder
4. ADHD
5. Psycho-emotional Disorders
6. Specific Learning Difficulties
7. Visual Impairment

8. Hearing Impairment
9. Deaf Blind Disability
10. Physical Disability
11. Multiple Disability

Each category has subcategories which are selected in line with the identified need.

Students without a diagnosis (barrier identification) are categorised as follows:

1. Thinking and Learning Needs
2. Communication and Speech Needs
3. Social Communication and Interaction Needs
4. Attention and Focus Needs
5. Social, Emotional and Behavioural Needs
6. Learning Difficulties in Specific Skills
7. Vision Needs
8. Hearing Needs
9. Physical and Movement Needs
10. Multiple and Complex Needs

Each category has a list of subcategories which are selected in line with the identified barrier to learning. Students who fall into this category, must have completed in-house assessments with the Inclusion team to provide evidence of the barrier to learning.

When a student is identified as having either a formal diagnosis or a barrier to learning, they will be placed on the school's internal register. Parental consent will then be sought to add students to the KHDA portal, inline with government guidelines (see 3.0).

1.3 The Graduated Approach

At NLCS Dubai a student's additional needs are supported using the Graduated Approach as per the [KHDA Implementing Inclusive Education: A Guide for Schools](#):

Level 1 – The student is making progress in class, but some reasonable adjustments and differentiation of teacher time, resources or presentation is required for them to fully access the curriculum and produce work that reflects their true ability. Students on **Level 1** may or may not have a diagnosis and or specialist reports. They may or may not have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) and or an Individual Learner Profile (ILP).

Level 2 – The student is not making expected progress through the steps in **Level 1** and needs additional support in or out of the classroom, delivered by either a teacher or a member of the inclusion department

through one-to-one or small group intervention. **Level 2** students may or may not have a diagnosis and or specialist reports. They may or may not have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) and or an Individual Learner Profile (ILP).

Level 3 – The student's needs are so complex or significant that they require outside professional intervention beyond the School's experience, capacity or resources. This intervention may take place on the School site or outside at a specialist centre. **Level 3** students will typically have an IEP, a diagnosis and associated specialist reports or be in the process of being assessed.

Students are assigned a level based on the amount of support they are receiving. Students may move between levels as the need for support either increases or reduces.

1.4 Gifted and Talented Provision

At NLCS Dubai we aim to cultivate the unique gifts and talents of all our students, providing an environment where every student can flourish. We do not believe in labelling students, but we do believe that every child matters and their needs must be met. When a student at NLCS is identified as being gifted or talented or, in some cases both, according to national guidelines within the UAE, the School ensures that they are supported and challenged in order that they may reach their true potential. Gifted and talented students are defined as follows by the KHDA:

Gifted: *'A student who is in possession of untrained and spontaneously expressed exceptional natural ability in one or more domain of human ability'.*

Talented: *'A student who has been able to transform their giftedness into exceptional performance'.*

For further information about our Gifted and Talented provision, please refer to the Gifted & Talented policy.

1.5 English Language Learners

Students must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because their language or the form of language used in their home is different from the language in which they are taught. Provision for English Language Learners (ELL) is to be found in the School's EAL policy.

1.6 Individual Education Plans

Provision for students with additional needs at NLCS Dubai is a whole school responsibility. All teachers are teachers of students with special educational needs or students of determination. We aim to support teachers by providing them with information and training about students who experience barriers to their learning including those with special educational needs, and advice on strategies for support through Student Passports, IEPs (Individual Education Plans) and ILPs (Individual Learner Profiles).

1.7 Principles: The four principles pertaining to special educational needs in the International Baccalaureate concern the importance of:

affirming identity and building self-esteem

valuing prior knowledge

scaffolding

extending learning

2. The Inclusion Department

The Inclusion department at NLCS is made up of the following staff:

Inclusion Champion – Vice Principal for Pastoral

Leader of Provision – The Head of Inclusion Whole School

Head of Inclusion - Junior School

Support Teachers

EAL Teachers

School Counsellors

Learning Support Assistants

The Inclusion department is also supported by the Inclusion Governor, parent representative and, where appropriate, a student representative - KHDA guidelines say we should have parent and student representatives - do we appoint them this term and hold a meeting with them?

2.1 Head of Inclusion Whole School

The Head of Whole School Inclusion is responsible for implementing and monitoring all provision for students with additional needs. The Head of Whole School Inclusion works closely and meets regularly with the Head of Junior School Inclusion, Senior Team and the wider pastoral team. The

Head of Whole School Inclusion implements necessary documentation for students, outside agencies and the KHDA. The Head of Whole School Inclusion develops, implements and monitors Individual Education Plans, in partnership with the Head of Junior School Inclusion,

teachers, parents and the student themselves. Termly IEP reviews are held in consultation with teachers, parents and the student. The Head of Whole School Inclusion plans and implements targeted interventions and measures their impact. The Head of Whole School Inclusion works with Heads of Department in the Senior School and Head of Houses to monitor and identify trends in progress data for all students. The Head of Whole School Inclusion is also involved in collaborative planning for the MYP, with the Junior School Head of Inclusion doing the same in the PYP. The Head of Whole School Inclusion follows up inclusion referrals from teachers and provides one-to-one specialised support. Regular professional development is delivered by the Inclusion Team, along with day-to-day support for teachers.

2.2 Head of Junior School Inclusion

The Head of Junior School Inclusion oversees the day-to-day management and allocation of resources in the Junior School. Working closely with the Head of Whole School Inclusion, the Head of Junior School Inclusion monitors provision for students, line manages the Junior Inclusion team and liaises with the Junior School Senior Team to ensure the correct support and resources are in place for all students. All strategic priorities for the team are implemented and monitored in the Junior School team by the Head of Junior School Inclusion.

2.3 Support Teacher

In compliance with the KHDA framework for Inclusion, advanced skills teachers, known as ‘Support Teachers’ are also part of the inclusion team at NLCS Dubai. They spend 60% of their time improving teaching and learning to ensure the school is meeting the needs of every student. The remainder of their time is spent supporting students who have additional needs, but preferably in the classroom, alongside the teacher, through modelling and team teaching. Support teachers are highly experienced classroom practitioners who have undergone further training in professional development for teachers. Their role at NLCS Dubai is to develop teachers’ classroom practice to ensure the diverse needs of our students are met. The Support Teacher achieves this through acting as a professional coach, mentor and through modelling inclusive practice. Support Teachers are required to make an evidenced impact on classroom teaching throughout the School through observations, collaborative working with teachers, co planning and teaching.

2.4 Classroom Teacher

Classroom teachers at NLCS Dubai are ultimately responsible for all students in their classes making progress, including those students with additional needs. Teachers work to develop their confidence and knowledge of students’ needs through professional development and working directly with Support Teachers. Classroom teachers work collaboratively with parents, Learning Support Assistants and all members of the Inclusion Team to continuously develop their inclusive classroom practice. They are fully

involved in the creation and implementation of students' Individual Education Plans, reviewing these termly with parents and the Head of Inclusion. They are responsible for managing information about the students in their classes and communicating this effectively with parents and other relevant personnel in the School. They are required to provide a welcoming, safe and fully inclusive environment for all students, providing floors, not ceilings. They supervise and coordinate work and planning with the Support Teachers and with Learning Support Assistants, working together to implement the most suitable interventions and scaffolding where needed, to support and stretch every child.

2.5 Learning Support Assistant

The Learning Support Assistants are individuals who plan, deliver and assess interventions according to a child's individual needs. They work with the child, teacher and parents to reach targets within a child's IEP. They work with teachers in the classroom to ensure that all students are fully included and can successfully access the physical classroom and the learning in every lesson. Whilst the class teacher is ultimately responsible for the progress children make in their class, the LSA supports this, by aiding the class teachers in providing resources and an environment where barriers to learning are eradicated. LSAs can be deployed by the class teachers or the Head of Inclusion according to most need. They can work with very able students or students who face barriers to their learning, with individuals or small groups, in the class or outside it on occasions when necessary. At NLCS Dubai we aim to keep the students in their classes as much as possible, and we work closely with the teachers on creating an environment where this is possible. An effective LSA forms a bridge between the teacher and the child, helping them to achieve at a level at which they are genuinely capable.

2.6 School Counsellor

The School Counsellors are qualified clinical psychologists who provide social, emotional and psychological support on a one to one or small group basis. They liaise closely with the Head of Inclusion, Heads of House and the Vice Principal Pastoral to support students with Social, Emotional and Mental Health challenges. The School Counsellors meet with parents and refer students to outside agencies accordingly, to best serve the needs of the student and their family.

2.7 EAL Teacher

EAL Teachers are experienced teachers who provide support and guidance to both teachers of EAL and EAL students. They work closely with the Head of Inclusion, Heads of Departments and teachers to ensure effective strategies are developed and implemented that remove language barriers to learning. They deliver Professional Development to all staff on EAL support and complete assessments of the language needs of EAL students as they arrive, ensuring an accurate starting point is identified for each individual student. Support for students who are English Language Learners is provided on a case-by-case basis and based on their level of English in four key areas; reading, writing, listening and speaking. EAL teachers complete initial assessments to ascertain working levels of English and to identify where support is required. Where

appropriate, students will be supported both in class and during study sessions to work on key vocabulary and terminology to improve the students overall understanding.

3. The Inclusion Register

The Head of Whole School Inclusion is responsible for maintaining a list of all students in the school who have been identified as having one of the following:

- 1. A formal diagnosis**
- 2. An identified barrier to learning**

This is inline with the KHDA *Guide for Implementing the Categorisation System for Students of Determination, November 2025*. Students who have been identified under the second category will have completed inhouse assessments which clearly identify a barrier to learning. When a student is added to the Inclusion register, parental consent will be sought to add the student to the KHDA portal. The portal is used to store student information regarding their needs and level of support in place (see 5.5). Where permission is not granted, students will not be added to the KHDA portal but remain on the internal school register.

This register is updated weekly and can be accessed by teaching staff in the school's internal drive. All teaching staff are briefed at the start of each academic year about the students who have identified needs. During the course of the year updates are given at weekly staff briefings and the students' progress and provision is monitored. Regular meetings ensure parents are fully involved in every aspect of their child's provision. The Head of Whole School Inclusion and Junior School Inclusion are responsible for attending these meetings, alongside the Pastoral Team and School Counsellor in the case of social, emotional and mental health concerns.

3.1 Compliance

This Policy is written with reference to the following documents pertaining to the education of people of determination in Dubai:

[Inspection Framework. DSIB 2017](#)

[UAE 'Schools for All' – General Rules for the Provision of Special Education Programmes and Services \(Public and Private Schools\)](#)

[Regarding the Rights of those Individuals with Special Needs - UAE Federal Law #29](#)

[Concerning the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the Emirate of Dubai – Law#2](#)

[Regulating Private Schools in the Emirate of Dubai - UAE Executive Council Ruling #2](#)

[Inclusive Education Framework. KHDA 2017](#)

[Implementing Inclusive Education – A Guide for Schools. KHDA 2019](#)

[Directives and Guidelines for Inclusive Education. KHDA 2020](#)

[Guide for Implementing the Categorisation System for Students of Determination, KHDA 2025](#)

4. The International Baccalaureate

All students at NLCS Dubai are equally regarded in terms of the [IB Learner Profile](#), and the aim to develop the attributes of the whole person applies to every student. The Inclusion Policy promotes the principle of inclusiveness across the School and amongst all members of the School community. The IB supports the following principles of an inclusive education: “Inclusion is a process by which schools and others develop their cultures, policies and practices to include all students”. UNESCO Guidelines for Inclusion.

IB Standard A9:

The School supports access for students to the IB programmes and [philosophy](#)

IB Standard A9a:

The School strongly encourages participation for all students

IB Standard B1.5b:

The School has developed and implements an Inclusion policy that is consistent with IB expectations and with the School’s Admissions Policy:

An inclusive education service offers excellence and choice, incorporating the views of all stakeholders.

The interests of all students must be safeguarded.

The school community and other authorizing bodies should actively seek to remove barriers to learning and participation.

All students should have access to an appropriate education that affords them the opportunity to achieve their personal potential.

With the right skills training, strategies and support, the majority of students with special educational needs can be successfully included in mainstream education.

“Mainstream education will not always be appropriate for every student all of the time. Equally, just because mainstream education may not be appropriate at a particular stage, it does not prevent the student from being included successfully at any other stage.” (3) Special education needs within the International Baccalaureate programmes (2010).

5. Identification

Students who have, or are suspected to have, a special educational need will be identified through the following:

Referrals from individual teachers

Concerns raised in staff meetings such as pastoral and academic meetings

Concerns or referrals from parents

Information and assessment reports provided by parents

Where a student is shown through data to have an extended period of not making expected progress in class, the teacher will submit a referral to the inclusion team accompanied by appropriate documentation/ samples of work. The referral procedure will involve a range of relevant teaching staff and all communication is documented, including that with parents or guardians. Parents are informed of any concerns at the referral stage and are fully involved in any subsequent steps that are taken. Further investigation, i.e. appropriate screening and assessment or a further referral to a specialist will take place to establish the extent of the student’s difficulties and allow appropriate action to take place.

5.1 School based support

When a student is identified as having a special educational need, either through a diagnosis or identified barrier to learning or, a support plan appropriate to the level of need will be created and shared with teachers and parents. These plans will be assigned as follows:

Level 1 – Student Passport

Level 2 – Individual Learning Plan and Student Passport

Level 3 – Individual Education Plan

The type of support deemed appropriate will range from in-class support from a Learning Support Assistant to withdrawal for intervention, either individually or as part of a group with a Support Teacher.

Where a student is referred to the Inclusion team and is receiving additional short term interventions to identify if a barrier to learning exists, a plan will also be assigned in line with the aforementioned levels.

5.2 Parental support

We value the input and support of parents and aim to work in partnership with parents at all stages of intervention. They are kept fully informed about any results from testing and actions taken as a consequence. Once support is established, there is frequent and regular contact between the Head of Inclusion and parents. Parents are invited to attend all review meetings and contribute significantly to the completion of any internal education plans. Support and advice for parents is available at any time in a variety of formats:

Discussions with members of the Inclusion team

Workshops and parent sessions on particular topics

Guidance on local support groups

Meetings with school counsellors or other in-school specialists as appropriate

5.3 External Professionals

When professional expertise from an educational psychologist, psychiatrist, speech and language therapist or other professional or agency is deemed appropriate to assess and/or meet the needs of the student, the Head of Whole School Inclusion will source a range of suitable professionals and liaise between them and the parents.

5.4 Monitoring and review

The Head of Inclusion holds a register of all students who have additional needs. Students' progress is regularly monitored and reviewed involving appropriate outside agencies, staff, students and parents. IEPs will be updated following the termly review. Students with an IEP will be given the opportunity to review their own progress against their IEP targets.

5.5 Standard School Service Agreement

At NLCS Dubai our Standard School Service Agreement follows the guidelines stipulated in the KHDA Directives and Guidelines for Inclusive Education 2020. It ensures the support available for students is based on the payment of basic tuition fees and is available to all students of determination.

Specific services for students include:

Formal and informal school-based processes that are used to assess and identify students of determination

The development, implementation and review of individual educational plans

Curriculum modifications and adaptations required to enable students to access education in the common learning environment with peers of the same age

Small group or one to one support sessions within or outside of the classroom delivered by teachers, counsellors or support staff assistance from support teachers

Additional support from Learning Support Assistants

Training to enable the student to benefit from assistive devices and associated applications where provided by the school

Appropriate school-based support, advice and guidance to the parents of students of determination

Planning, organising and training the students and relevant staff on emergency procedures

Conducting a physical environmental scan to identify and mitigate risks that can be relevant to the students

The KHDA Directives and Guidelines for Inclusive Education 2020 states;

'Most students of determination do not require high levels of individualised support to meaningfully engage with classroom activities and experience success. The classroom teacher is the primary resource available to meet the needs of students of determination.'

At NLCS Dubai support for our diverse range of needs is assigned as follows:

Level 1

The students' needs are met in-class through high quality teaching. ECAs are available for extra support.

Level 2

The majority of students' needs can be met in-class, however some students will require booster sessions or intervention for a particular area of difficulty such as phonics, reading, spelling, numeracy or organisation.

In the Junior School students will receive intervention for 20 - 40 minutes per session for no more than four sessions per week.

In the Senior school students will receive support in study sessions, lunchtime ECAs and form time for a maximum of four sessions per week.

Level 3

Students at level 3 will require both in-class support and intervention, for either academic or emotional needs or both, to support their progress. External support may also be in place as appropriate.

In both the Junior and Senior Schools, students will be supported in-class by either a Learning Support Assistant or Support Teacher. Intervention will be delivered by either a Learning Support Assistant, Support Teacher or School counsellor as appropriate. The total number of hours of support provided by the school will not exceed 20% of the student's timetable. ECAs with a specific focus on supporting learning will also contribute to the total amount of support provided.

In all cases the support provided to the individual student is bespoke to their needs – Appendix 1.

In the cases where students require further support, above and beyond the support already being provided at level 3, the Head of Inclusion will meet with parents to discuss additional requirements and to create a bespoke plan. In line with the KHDA guidelines a parent/school contract will be drawn up and submitted to the KHDA.

5.7 Access Arrangements

The IB defines access arrangements as *'changes or alterations introduced to learning, teaching and assessment to remove or reduce barriers. They do not change what a student is expected to learn and do not lower expectations, but instead provide the optimal support to address a range of barriers and enable the student to work around them'*.

The Head of Whole School Inclusion, working closely with teachers, is responsible for overseeing the implementation of access arrangements. Access arrangements which are to be in place for external examinations require approval from the IB. The Head of Whole school Inclusion is responsible for gathering the required evidence for the application to the IB. Applications for the MYP and DP examinations will be submitted by the MYP and DP Coordinators respectively. All access arrangements must be the normal way of working for the student and teachers and the Inclusion team will support the student to effectively utilise any access arrangements deemed appropriate. Full details of access arrangements in the IB curriculum can be found [here](#).

Policy Review:

This policy will be reviewed every one (1) year for major versions, and periodically updated as and when required.

6. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Levels of Support Flow Chart

