



Deutsche Internationale Schule Abu Dhabi
المدرسة الألمانية الدولية
German International School Abu Dhabi



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INCLUSION POLICY

German International School in Abu Dhabi

Effective from Academic Year 2024/25

Full Compliance by Academic Year 2025/26



1 Introduction

At the German International School Abu Dhabi (GISAD), students from diverse cultural and social backgrounds learn successfully together.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (December 13, 2006) affirms the right of all individuals—regardless of ability or disability—to have barrier-free access to education within an inclusive school system.

The aim is to eliminate barriers that hinder access to education and participation for children with special needs.

To provide our students with the best possible opportunities for the future, GISAD offers a variety of programs designed to support individual development and to foster the abilities, skills, and talents of each student.

*"The child takes the lead, and the teacher follows and supports."
(Maria Montessori, 1870–1952)*



2 Purpose

- Definition of expectations regarding inclusive education as a fundamental right for all students
- Specification of admission criteria for students with additional support needs
- Assurance of a standardized inclusive support framework, addressing aspects such as staffing, structural requirements, and support options
- Determination of conditions for charging additional fees to parents
- Allocation of tasks and responsibilities within the school leadership to promote an inclusive learning environment
- Definition of minimum requirements for compliance with standards and for the provision of educational services to students with additional support needs



3 Requirements for the Inclusion Policy

GISAD develops and implements an inclusion policy that includes at minimum the following elements:

1. The school's vision, mission, strategy, and goals for promoting inclusive education
2. Details on how the school supports the admission process for students with additional support needs and their families (see Section : Admission Criteria)
3. The school's standardized inclusive support framework for students with individual learning needs (see Section: Requirements for Inclusive Support), including:

- a. Staffing (see Section: Staffing Requirements in the Area of Inclusion)
- b. Accessibility and evacuation of the school building and premises (see Section: Structural Requirements)
- c. Pedagogical measures for inclusive teaching and learning (in the broadest sense), within curricula, through assessment and support systems (see Section: Inclusive Support Measures)

4. Information on the collection of additional fees (see Section: Additional Fees)
5. Definition of the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders (see Section: Responsibilities of the Various Leadership Levels)

This policy applies to all students who require the support of special education and therapeutic professionals.

4 Admission Criteria

4.1 Admission of Students with Individual Support Needs

In accordance with the principles of Federal Law No. (29) of 2006 on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, a student with additional support needs must not, under any circumstances, be denied a place at a desired school if the school has the capacity to admit the student in the appropriate grade level (see ADEK School Student Administrative Affairs Policy).

Therefore, GISAD aligns its admission process with the following points:

1. Priority is given to the joint admission of students with individual support needs and their siblings.
2. During the admission process, GISAD requests all clinical reports (from pediatricians, psychologists, therapists) from the parents.
3. GISAD actively supports the transition process for all students with individual support needs. This includes:
 - a. Students entering school for the first time or transferring from other preschools
 - b. Students transferring from special education schools, homeschooling, or other educational institutions
 - c. Students participating in exchange programs
4. GISAD conducts individual language assessments during the admission process to enable immediate implementation of language support measures at the start of school.
5. Based on all collected information, GISAD ensures fair and safe access to the institution for students with additional support needs and, if necessary, makes required adjustments in advance or
6. Clearly states why the school is unable to admit the student.
7. In this case, the school shall inform both ADEK and the parents in writing within 7 days of the admission decision about the inability to admit the student.
8. The school regularly updates the student records of students with individual support needs in the additional eSIS ALN module in accordance with ADEK requirements.

4.2 Notification of Non-Admission

4.2.1 Definition of Non-Admissibility

A student is considered non-admissible if their admission would demonstrably endanger their own development or safety, or that of others, or if it would place an excessive demand on the school's resources beyond the standards defined in this policy. In such cases, the school must notify both ADEK and the parents in writing within 7 days of the decision.

ADEK reserves the right to confirm or reject the notification of non-admission based on all submitted documentation.

4.2.2 Re-enrollment

In accordance with the ADEK School Student Administrative Affairs Policy, all students at GISAD are automatically re-enrolled for the following school year.

If parents request a repetition of the grade level, GISAD submits an application letter to ADEK, including medical reports and the individual support plan. ADEK must approve the repetition.

4.3 Referral to Special Education Institutions

The majority of students with individual support needs attend mainstream school together with their peers. An alternative school placement may be considered for students who meet the relevant support criteria.

1. If GISAD believes that a student would be better served in a special education institution, the school contacts ADEK prior to any discussions with the parents to determine whether the student meets the criteria for such placement.
2. In cases where a UAE national has been clinically diagnosed with severe autism spectrum disorder, a special education institution may be considered if all three of the following conditions are met:
 - a. ADEK, GISAD, and the parents agree that the student would benefit more from general special education support than from attending a mainstream school.
 - b. The student requires intensive therapies such as occupational therapy, speech therapy, and behavioral therapy, which cannot be adequately provided in a mainstream school setting.
 - c. GISAD ensures that the parents understand the criteria for admission to a special education institution and agree to the school's referral to ADEK.

5 Requirements for Inclusive Support Services

5.1 Staffing Requirements in the Area of Inclusion:

GISAD appoints the following inclusion-related positions in accordance with the ADEK School Staff Eligibility Policy:

5.1.1 Head of Inclusion:

GISAD appoints a Head of Inclusion. This person may be assigned to teaching duties for no more than 10% of their weekly working hours, outside of their responsibilities as Head of Inclusion and member of the school leadership team.

According to the ADEK School Staff Eligibility Policy, a Head of Inclusion who requires additional qualifications through professional development (CPD) must complete 60 hours of training from local and/or international providers within one year of appointment. Topics should include (but are not limited to):

1. Pedagogy for students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)
2. Identification of learning barriers
3. Strategies for supporting SEND
4. Support measures and their evaluation
5. Goal setting and development of Individual Education Plans (IEPs)
6. Coordination of inclusive support services
7. Allocation and use of resources

5.1.2 Inclusion Teacher:

GISAD appoints at least one Inclusion Teacher per school level. They may be assigned to teaching duties for no more than 10% of their weekly working hours outside their role as Inclusion Teacher.

According to the ADEK School Staff Eligibility Policy, Inclusion Teachers who require additional qualifications through professional development (CPD) must complete 40 hours of training from local and/or international providers within one year of appointment. Topics should include (but are not limited to):

- Pedagogy for SEND
- Identification of learning barriers
- Strategies for supporting SEND
- Designing effective instruction
- Goal setting and development of IEPs
- Planning and evaluation of support measures
- Use of resources to support learning in practice

5.1.3 Inclusion Assistant:

GISAD appoints Inclusion Assistants to support teachers in working with students with individual learning needs. Inclusion Assistants work under the guidance of a teacher and may perform the following tasks:

- a) Support the entire class when there is a higher number of students with additional support needs.
- b) Provide targeted support to small groups inside and outside the classroom (and occasionally to individual students if necessary) to ensure progress toward the goals outlined in the Development and Learning Plan (DLP) (see Section 3.3.1.d).
- c) Provide targeted one-on-one support for a specific student when required by the DLP (see Section 3.3.1.d) and clinical documentation.

GISAD conducts at least one review per school year to monitor learning progress and evaluate outcomes. Based on the results, it is determined whether the one-on-one support should be continued or adjusted to ensure maximum learning success.

5.1.4 Individual Assistant:

If a student with individual support needs requires additional personal care or other non-instructional support, GISAD allows the use of a parent-funded Individual Assistant. This role is not part of the school's inclusive support services.

- a) When discussing the recommendation to hire a school assistant with parents, GISAD presents test results and reports that reflect the student's need for support during most of the school day.
- b) The school assistant remains outside the classroom and enters only with the teacher's consent to assist the student.
- c) GISAD documents the provision of a school assistant for a specific student in the Enterprise Student Information System (eSIS) and the Private Schools Staff Information System (PASS).

5.2 Structural Requirements

5.2.1 General Structural Requirements:

GISAD ensures that the school building and all other learning spaces are accessible to all students (in accordance with the ADEK School Buildings and Facilities Policy). This includes:

- a) Parking areas, walkways, buildings, and playgrounds are accessible to all.
- b) All building entrances have ramps that meet official standards for barrier-free access.
- c) Staircases are equipped with handrails, color-contrasting strips, and tactile markings on the edge of each step.



- d) Signage includes symbols to complement text and uses color contrast for better visibility.
- e) Evacuation alarms are accompanied by flashing lights to alert individuals with hearing impairments.
- f) The GISAD school building has an elevator, ensuring full accessibility to both the ground and first floors.
- g) GISAD's restrooms are barrier-free and equipped with appropriate sanitary facilities for individuals with physical disabilities, in accordance with current regulations.
- h) This point is not applicable to GISAD, as the school does not have a swimming pool.
- i) Evacuation chairs are available to ensure safe building evacuation in emergencies (e.g., when elevators cannot be used or individuals cannot descend stairs independently).
- j) All teachers receive training in the safe use of evacuation chairs. GISAD designates specific staff members to assist students and staff with evacuation using these chairs in emergencies.
- k) Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) are created by the school for each student and staff member who requires additional support or guidance during evacuation. All designated staff involved in evacuation support receive appropriate training.
- l) GISAD coordinates with the school bus provider to ensure the safe transportation of students with additional support needs, making necessary and approved adjustments in accordance with the requirements of the Integrated Transport Centre (ITC).
- m) GISAD submits a plan if structural modifications are required due to the needs of a student with additional support needs.
- n) This point becomes relevant for GISAD if the previously mentioned point applies.
- o) The existing GISAD school building meets the structural requirements. If this changes, GISAD may apply for an exemption from ADEK with sufficient justification. Any renovations or expansions to the existing building are subject to general structural regulations.

5.2.2 Accessibility Requirements for Learning Spaces:

To ensure equitable access to education and inclusive learning opportunities, GISAD guarantees the following:

- a) All classrooms are accessible to all students. Tables and chairs are adjustable if necessary.
- b) Within classrooms, various tools (pens, pencils, scissors, etc.) are provided in different sizes and levels of usability. This is especially implemented in the kindergarten and Flex classes at GISAD.
- c) All scheduled lessons are accessible to students with additional support needs.
- d) Specialized classrooms, such as science labs, sports facilities, and art rooms, are accessible to students of different ages and offer adapted resources for the integration of students with physical and/or sensory impairments.
- e) Classroom acoustics and lighting are specially considered for students with hearing and/or visual impairments to reduce background noise or visual distractions that could hinder learning.
- f) Classrooms follow a Universal Design for Learning (UDL) approach, providing information and content in multiple formats. This approach enables multisensory learning.
- g) The entire teaching and learning environment is characterized by differentiated instruction to ensure fair access to curriculum content and school facilities.

5.3 Rooms for Non-Teaching Specialist Staff

To provide individualized support or specialized interventions for each student with additional support needs in accordance with the ADEK School In-School Specialist Services Policy:

- a) GISAD provides designated rooms at each school level (within the school premises for the duration of the interventions) to enable specialized learning support and interventions for every student with additional support needs.
- b) Each support room is assessed in terms of acoustics, lighting, flooring, and textiles to promote access to learning while considering sensory needs.
- c) A support room is equipped with all technical and digital resources equivalent to those in other classrooms to foster the development of digital competencies.
- d) GISAD provides a range of non-digital teaching and learning resources to enable specialists to carry out interventions as outlined in the Development and Learning Plan (DLP) (see Section 3.3.1.d).

Based on a risk assessment, GISAD develops an accessible improvement plan with clear actions and timelines to enhance accessibility.

6 Inclusive Support Measures

6.1 Establishing a System for Identifying, Monitoring, and Evaluating Students with Additional Support Needs

GISAD has established a system for identifying, monitoring, and evaluating students with additional support needs that:

- a) Defines how teachers or other staff can express the need for support regarding a student's academic, social, emotional, physical, behavioral, or developmental needs.
- b) Summarizes all relevant information from the student, parents, and staff.
- c) Identifies a student's support needs (e.g., through assessments such as standardized screening tools overseen by the Head of Inclusion), determines appropriate support measures, and identifies students who may benefit from further testing (see Annex 4).
- d) Enables the development of a DLP (Development and Learning Plan) that plans, monitors, evaluates, and reviews tailored support measures for the student. Both internal and external information is considered, and it is ensured that this information is shared with all individuals involved in the support process (see Annex 5).
- e) Ensures continuous communication with parents regarding the child's additional support needs and provides information (where possible in the native language) to support learning at home.
- f) Records information about students with additional support needs in eSIS.
- g) Tracks the progress of students with additional support needs through:
 1. The use of a tiered support model that reflects the level of support required.
 2. The creation of a DLP for all students receiving support at Tier 2 or Tier 3.
 3. Ensuring that learning progress for students with additional support needs, as well as other students receiving learning support, is regularly reviewed and communicated to parents. DLPs must be reviewed at least three times per year.
 4. Conducting at least one annual team meeting for students receiving Tier 2 or Tier 3 support, including all students with a school assistant. This ensures that support measures remain appropriate and that the student's long-term educational pathway is considered.
 5. Ensuring that all subject coordinators monitor progress in their subject areas to identify learning achievements linked to the DLP.
 6. Creating individual learning progress reports based on the DLP to make individual progress visible.

6.2 Inclusive Teaching and Learning Approaches

GISAD ensures that its teaching and learning approaches reflect the following elements:

- a) Integration of inclusive teaching strategies into lesson planning to support students with additional support needs through adaptive instruction.
- b) Individualization of lesson content for students with additional support needs, ensuring alignment with tiered support measures and DLP goals.
- c) Provision of professional development and awareness sessions on inclusive education approaches (including adaptive teaching strategies for differentiation and achieving DLP goals), offered by the Head of Inclusion and other specialists for staff.
- d) Ensuring that the Head of Inclusion deploys the inclusion team according to the needs of students with additional support needs to guarantee necessary support measures.
- e) Guidance and support for Inclusion Assistants and all interested school assistants.
- f) Application of a tiered model of support measures to ensure progress for all students with additional support needs.
- g) Ensuring that the Head of Inclusion coordinates all external specialists such as speech therapists, occupational therapists, psychologists, or other consultants in accordance with the ADEK School In-School Specialist Services Policy.
- h) Supporting students with additional support needs in learning to use assistive technologies (financial support may be requested from ADEK) to improve access to learning.
- i) Ensuring that all teachers experiment with a wide range of adaptive teaching approaches.
- j) Ensuring that concerns regarding learning progress and achievement are discussed with parents at an early stage to initiate support measures promptly.

6.3 Curriculum

GISAD provides students with additional support needs the opportunity to follow a modified curriculum and achieve meaningful outcomes by:

- a) Ensuring that all students with additional support needs have access to a broad and balanced school curriculum, including all extracurricular activities.



- b) Ensuring that the pathway for technical and vocational education and training (TVET) aligns with the guidelines of the UAE Ministry of Education.
- c) Informing parents when a modified curriculum may not meet general requirements equivalently (parents must then sign a consent form).
- d) Updating the eSIS system when a student follows an individual curriculum.

6.4 Assessment Modifications (Compensatory Measures)

GISAD ensures that students with additional support needs are not disadvantaged in any form of assessment. Therefore, the school must evaluate support measures to:

1. Ensure that all accommodations and modifications reflect the student's regular working practices in the classroom.
2. Ensure that approvals for accommodations and modifications are obtained and that the guidelines of external examination boards are followed.
3. Develop a policy for assessment accommodations that defines the process, criteria, and eligibility for requesting accommodations and modifications in assessments.



7 Additional Fees

GISAD adheres to the principle of inclusion, which states that equal access to education is the right of all students, and every effort is made to meet the needs of students with additional support needs within the school's fee structure.

If a student's additional needs, as outlined in a medical report, require the involvement of specialists beyond the school's regular support measures, GISAD may charge additional school fees. In such cases, the school must:

- a) Justify the requirements and costs for additional services beyond the regular inclusive support measures with appropriate documentation.
- b) Obtain parental consent, which must be renewed at least annually or whenever changes to the fees occur.
- c) Itemize all individually calculated additional fees and record them in the eSIS database.
- d) Provide parents with quarterly financial reports detailing the allocation of the additional funds collected.
- e) Limit additional fees for parents to a maximum of 50% of the school tuition fee, with any optional administrative fee for the use of external specialists not exceeding 10% of the cost (in accordance with the ADEK School In-School Specialist Services Policy).

(For schools with low to very low tuition fees, where the above maximum may not be sufficient to cover costs, more than 50% of the tuition fee may be charged if parents agree to the payment. Alternatively, the school must obtain ADEK's approval for any additional fees.)

- f) GISAD reviews all additional fees, their impact, and ongoing applicability on a quarterly basis.

8 Responsibilities of Different Leadership Levels

8.1 Leadership Roles and Responsibilities:

The inclusion policy of our school defines the roles and responsibilities of each leadership level, taking into account the following aspects:

8.1.1 The School Board:

- a) Determines the strategic direction of the school, including a clear commitment to inclusive education.
- b) Appoints a board member as the point of contact for inclusive education efforts.
- c) Provides financial resources for the necessary specialists and materials.
- d) Ensures that required adjustments to the school premises and buildings are implemented or planned to facilitate access for students with physical disabilities or sensory impairments.

8.1.2 The School Leadership:

- a. *Inclusive education as a regular agenda item:*
The school leadership ensures that inclusion and individual support are permanent topics in leadership and board meetings.
- b. *Inclusion in school development planning:*
The school leadership regularly develops and reviews the school's inclusive approach within the framework of the school development plan. Measurable goals are set to evaluate and improve support and accessibility for students with individual support needs.
- c. *Responsibility at the leadership level:*
The school leadership appoints a member of the leadership team to oversee all inclusive services at the school.
- d. *Head of Inclusion:*
The school leadership appoints a Head of Inclusion (in accordance with the ADEK School Staff Eligibility Policy), who is responsible for coordinating all aspects of support for students with additional support needs.
- e. *DaF Coordinator:*
The school leadership appoints a specialist responsible for coordinating and supporting students with multilingual backgrounds.
- f. *Gifted and Talented Education:*
The school leadership appoints a specialist to coordinate support for gifted or talented students in close collaboration with the school leadership.

- g. *Professional development and safeguarding:*
The school leadership ensures that all staff have access to training in adaptive learning. Additionally, training sessions on child protection awareness (in accordance with the ADEK School Student Protection Policy), especially regarding the needs of students with additional support needs, are provided.
- h. *Risk assessment:*
The school leadership implements a risk assessment procedure for all school facilities to identify and minimize potential hazards for students with communication, mobility, sensory, or behavioral challenges.
- i. *Data collection and reporting:*
The school leadership ensures that data identifying students with additional support needs can be provided upon request.
- j. *Incident documentation:*
The school leadership ensures that all incidents of abuse, especially bullying or discrimination against students with support needs, are documented and appropriately addressed.
- k. *Emergency planning:*
The school leadership establishes a system for evacuating individuals with special needs (students, staff, and visitors). Responsible persons are trained, and the school community receives regular information sessions.
- l. *Responsibility in emergencies:*
The school leadership holds overall responsibility for the safe evacuation of all individuals with special needs during emergencies.
Our school is committed to implementing these standards to create an inclusive and safe environment for all members of the school community.

8.1.3 Head of Inclusion

At our school, the Head of Inclusion assumes the following responsibilities to ensure optimal support for students with additional support needs:

- a. *Coordination of all support measures:*
The Head of Inclusion coordinates all educational, behavioral, social, and emotional support services for students with additional support needs, working closely with teachers and external specialists.
- b. *Collaboration with teachers:*
Together with teachers, the Head of Inclusion identifies the individual learning and support needs of students and monitors their progress and performance in relation to

curriculum requirements.

c. *Documentation management:*

The Head of Inclusion ensures that all records related to students with additional support needs are securely stored, regularly reviewed, and appropriately shared when necessary, in accordance with the ADEK School Records Policy.

d. *Student record maintenance:*

The internal register for students with additional support needs, including Development and Learning Plans (DLPs) and Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs), is regularly maintained, reviewed, and updated.

e. *Creating evacuation plans:*

In collaboration with the designated health and safety officer, the Head of Inclusion develops a PEEP for each student, which is reviewed at least once per trimester or when circumstances change (in accordance with the ADEK School Health and Safety Policy).

f. *Accessibility evaluation:*

Together with the health and safety officer, the Head of Inclusion evaluates the school's accessibility for students with additional support needs and ensures that appropriate evacuation procedures are in place.

g. *Data management and reporting:*

All data on students with support needs, including updates to the eSIS database (additional ALN eSIS module), are regularly reviewed and kept up to date by the Head of Inclusion.

h. *Quality assurance:*

The Head of Inclusion observes lessons and provides advice on support options and adherence to inclusive teaching principles.

i. *Parental engagement:*

In addition to regular parent meetings, the Head of Inclusion offers fixed consultation hours to discuss school support measures for individual students and to jointly develop support strategies for the home environment.

j. *Coordination of support programs:*

Individual school support programs (e.g., push-in and pull-out services) are organized, coordinated, and evaluated by the Head of Inclusion to assess their impact on student learning progress.

k. *Collaboration with specialists:*

The Head of Inclusion organizes the involvement of non-teaching specialists within the school to integrate their support into everyday school life (in accordance with the ADEK



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المدرسة الألمانية الدولية
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School In-School Specialist Services Policy).

Our school is committed to ensuring that all these measures are effectively implemented to support the best possible development and participation of all students.



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9 Validity

The Inclusion Policy enters into force on October 3, 2023. GISAD will be fully compliant with its provisions by the beginning of the 2025/2026 school year.

Non-compliance with this policy is subject to legal responsibility and the sanctions established under ADEK regulations, policies, and requirements, regardless of any other penalties imposed under Federal Decree Law No. (31) of 2021 on Crimes and Penalties and its amendments, or other applicable laws. ADEK reserves the right to intervene if the school fails to meet its obligations.



10 References

- Federal Decree Law No. (29) of 2006 on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- Federal Decree Law No. (31) of 2021 on Crimes and Penalties
- Ministerial Resolution No. (647) of 2020 on Inclusive Education
- ADEK School Inclusion Policy (Version 1.2, 2024)
- ADEK School In-School Specialist Services Policy
- ADEK School Student Protection Policy
- ADEK School Buildings and Facilities Policy

Last editing of the document	
by	Deborah Cornelsen
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