

## **ISM Inclusion Policy (SEN)**

The ISM, in line with IB philosophy believes that education should be an inclusive practice and that “education is enhanced by the creation of affirmative, responsive environments that promote a sense of belonging, safety, self-worth and whole growth for every student”<sup>1</sup>

In support of our mission statement to focus on the individual development of each student, we are committed to working in partnership with students to remove barriers to learning. Through the concepts of shared responsibility and respect the ISM believes in a learning environment that allows each student to experience success and build on their strengths in order to fully participate in their education and develop into life-long learners

### **Procedure/Implementation**

Barriers to learning can arise through a number of different avenues, be it facilities, approaches to teaching and learning, cultural constraints, resourcing. All stakeholders at the ISM have a responsibility to address barriers to learning and work collaboratively to find ways to remove those barriers. This process is lead by the leadership team supported by the Board of Directors, teaching staff and parents, but driven by the needs of the students.

In addition to this procedural outline a number of specific ISM policies address inclusion in key areas and are referenced where appropriate within this document. These include, the Admissions Policy, Language Policy, Assessment Policies.

### **Core principles**

- Everyone has a right to education
- The school environment should promote a sense of belonging and self worth
- Learning diversity including multilingualism, is a positive resource
- All learners should have equal opportunity to access a quality education
- Assessment provides all learners with opportunities to demonstrate their learning
- All students have a voice and are listened to
- Effective learning is built on students experiencing success
- The IB Learner Profile attributes are at the heart of an inclusive education

### **How do we support inclusion?**

**Facilities:** Our building is fully accessible and our classrooms are designed with enough space to ensure easy access. All our furniture is moveable and we have a limited amount of additional furniture and breakout spaces to ensure a teaching environment that is supportive to individual needs. Temperature, light and ventilation can be adjusted to create an

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<sup>1</sup> *Learning diversity and inclusion in IB programmes* IBO, 2016 p.5

environment supportive to learning. Lesson transitions are facilitated through breaks located throughout the day (see also School Culture below)

**Flexible Learning:** Where appropriate we consider variations to timetable and/or routine to support learning. This may include swapping lessons, placing additional support in classes or providing extra learning opportunities outside of scheduled classes. Where need is identified we involve stakeholders in developing individualised, student led learning through Individual Learning Plans (ILPs), Action Plans, differentiation, scaffolding and access arrangements.

**School Culture:** We work to build a school culture of inclusion and mutual respect. Some of the ways in which we promote this are through our annual Spirit Week, communal meal times, our House System, Twin Day mentor sessions, whole school events and field trips, events to inform and support different cultural and political occasions. All stakeholders within the school have the opportunity to suggest and introduce events and activities with the support of the leadership team.

**Teaching and Learning:** This culture is also embedded in Teaching and Learning practices where teachers are encouraged to learn about and draw on the experience and diversity within their classrooms to encourage student directed inquiry within their units. Our Unit Plans are designed with a space for teachers to collect examples of authentic ways they connect to the Learner Profile, International Mindedness and other subject areas. Students have the opportunity to share their learning with other classes and to support learning in other classes and collaboration time is built into the schedule to provide opportunities for teachers to develop authentic learning experiences across classes. The majority of our courses have more teaching time allocated to them than required by the programmes being delivered to allow more time for student led inquiry.

**Professional Development:** We look to create opportunities for teachers to share best practice amongst themselves and organise in-house professional development led by teachers, coordinators or other members of the leadership team when areas of need have been identified.

**Taught Language and Mother Tongue Support:** Our language of instruction is English but we celebrate the diversity of languages at ISM through events and other activities and are developing the number of mother tongue resources available in the library. Where there are identified language needs amongst our student body we have additional qualified ELL and GLL support staff in place who plan and develop support programmes for particular language needs ([See also Language Policy](#)).

**Learner Profile and Reflection:** In addition we embed the language of the Learner Profile in all our interactions in particular when asking students and teachers to reflect on what happens at school both in and out of the classroom. These attitudes and principles are at the heart of developing an inclusive culture. Opportunities for reflection are encouraged in interactions between members of the school community.

**Celebrating Strengths:** We encourage students to develop strengths and interests at all levels of the school and support each other when doing so, be that providing opportunities to try or develop new talents and interests, or opportunities for people to show their strengths to others. Identifying these strengths can arise organically during learning, particularly in classrooms that encourage inquiry or through the provision of additional clubs or projects/ activities that allow both teachers and students to further additional skills. Our responsibility is to both support the provision of these opportunities and identify new opportunities and strengths while providing an environment that encourages risk taking. This happens easiest at the points where discourse and collaboration are encouraged (see above).

### Where we need to develop

Supporting inclusion is an ongoing and adaptive process that requires the ability to respond quickly to changing circumstances. While our small size allows us to identify individual learning needs quickly it can hamper our ability to respond effectively. The key areas where we need to seek continued investment and development to effectively meet our mission are:

**Professional Counselling Support:** Our long term goal is to be able to provide at least part time in house counselling support. In the short term we will seek to address this need by building a network of contacts who we can approach for professional advice.

**Learning Needs Specialists:** While we have a notable amount of language support within the school qualified experience in supporting more specialised learning needs is lacking. These leaves us unable to provide the best possible learning environment for some prospective students. This is an area we also look to bridge through a network of support but requires additional resourcing in the future.

**Professional Development:** One area that we need to develop further that will also help to address some of the other areas of development is the level and quality of our professional development. Seeking out and providing support for staff and students to further their knowledge and skills in the areas of inclusion is one of our medium term goals.

**Facilities:** Maintaining and improving the condition of our facilities to ensure our school remains inclusive is an ongoing need

**Resources:** Access in house to more adaptive technologies (Braille Readers, dictation software etc.) will increase our ability to be inclusive. This is addressing a future rather than current need but is part of our long term planning. Increasing the amount and quality of mother tongue materials in the library is another goal which we will look to develop through fundraising, donations and awareness campaigns including, for example, the European Day of Languages.

### How do we identify and engage with learning needs?

We identify need through open, collaborative and honest communication.

- Students and their families or guardians can approach any member of staff to discuss their learning needs
- Teaching staff share teaching interventions within their classroom or potential areas for support within collaboration meetings
- On application for the school, students are asked to disclose any areas of need and provide information from previous schools ([see also Admissions Policy](#))

When the need for intervention has been identified, Coordinators will organise a meeting with the student, homeroom teacher, parents/guardians and other teachers as appropriate to devise an action plan. Dependant on the need this could take many forms:

- Breakdown of possible interventions detailing those responsible for implementation
- Variations to timetable/classroom
- Scaffolding learning or assessments
- Detailed Individual Learning Plan
- Access Arrangements in line with the programmes offered at ISM
- Formal request for medical assessment to identify the most appropriate interventions
- Any other approach within the resources available to the school<sup>2</sup>

When a plan of action has been agreed this will be detailed on the [Access Arrangements](#) form.

When a plan of action has been implemented the School Coordinator will arrange regular collaboration meetings with students, teachers and parents/guardians as appropriate to assess the impact and make alterations as necessary.

### How is this policy reviewed?

This policy is under continuous review from the ISM Leadership Team dependant on ongoing feedback and based on the needs represented within the school. This process is supported where necessary through the involvement of the ISM Board of Directors. The policy is also subject to a detailed review in line with the ISM policy review cycle every 2-3 years (dependant on need) incorporating the views of all stakeholders.

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<sup>2</sup> See also [Assessment Policy Grades 1-5](#), [Assessment Policy Grades 6-12](#)