



Amersfoort International School

AnnoNu



INCLUSION POLICY

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Table of contents

1. Aims of policy
2. Vision and Mission
3. Philosophy of inclusion
4. Inclusion in practice
5. Roles and responsibilities
6. Admissions
7. Identifying SEN
8. Arrangements for children SEN
9. Partnership with parents or guardians
10. Monitoring of policy
11. References
12. Definitions
13. Appendices



Aims of policy

The aim of this policy is to outline the philosophy of inclusion at Amersfoort International School so that all stakeholders understand and agree with the ethos of inclusion. The policy is primarily written for the teachers, and other relevant staff members such as the admissions team of the school, but can also be shared with the parents/guardians and the students where appropriate.

The policy outlines the methods of ensuring an inclusive environment in the school, in the communications such as social media, newsletters and school reports. It will address how to ensure an accessible curriculum, represent our diverse student body, and create equity for all.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the appendices; the SEN flowchart, the CAT4 flowchart, the IEP, initial concern form and the observation form

Vision and Mission

Amersfoort International School is a learning community based on inclusion and equal opportunity. We strive to create a positive school culture that supports students to reach their full potential. We believe in sharing our resources and expertise, and that learning reaches far beyond academic development.

We also understand and value the fact that our curriculum must meet the needs of our changing community. It is our vision to empower our students to become internationally minded and successful learners in an ever-changing world.

Learning for All

The word 'all' is key to our mission. It represents our commitment to nurturing diversity, inclusion, and equal opportunity.

AIS has been modelled to become a center of expertise within a network of other Dutch educational facilities in Amersfoort and the surrounding area. This initiative, called the Amersfoort's Model, aims to promote unification in the region.

The model includes a vision on how international education can contribute to promoting equality of opportunity and combating segregation in the city. AIS will serve to complement other Dutch schools by offering inclusive and equal opportunities to all global citizens.

Legal obligations

The International Baccalaureate Organization states that it is the responsibility of:

- The leadership team together with educators, learning support professionals, parents, students and all stakeholders to put in place processes to remove barriers to learning for every member of the school community.
- Every teacher makes sure that each student is exposed to learning and teaching that reaches them as individual learners.

Learning Diversity and Inclusion in IB Programmes 2016

The national requirements in The Netherlands are as follows:



“Schools are required to offer supplemental instruction, support, and guidance to all students whose educational needs differ from the tutelage in the regular classroom”.

From article 8 and article 12

- *For those students who consistently require instruction at a different level than other students in their age group, the school tailors the education in a manner that meets the individual needs and skills of identified students.*
- *Suitable education and appropriate instruction and guidance must affect the continuous progression of the student’s academic development.*
- *The school evaluates the results of the interventions periodically and adjusts where and when needed.*
- *The school documents objectives and goals of the intervention in an individual educational support plan and stipulates extra measures taken to supplement the standard curriculum. The school outlines prospects for suitable academic development for all students receiving structural additional support services.*

Additionally: “Schools use a monitoring system to continuously document progression of the student’s personal and academic development and identify the student’s level, year group and school. The monitoring system makes use of tests that assess the student’s knowledge and skills”.

From article 8

- *Instruction is organized in a way that secures an uninterrupted educational development that is aligned with the student’s learning profile and progress.*
- *First and foremost, primary education focuses on emotional and cognitive development, creative growth, development of essential knowledge, and acquiring a social, cultural, and physical skill set.*
- *The law stipulates that evidence of progress in mathematics and language is obtained through the administration of a “trustworthy, valid and normed test.” The systematic gathering of evidence of progress in mathematics and language needs to start in group 3.*

(Translated from 2017 research framework for the supervision of preschool education and primary education – Inspectie van het Onderwijs

Philosophy of inclusion

We at AIS believe that inclusion means to see, ‘...difference as an ordinary aspect of human development’ (Spratt, and Florian, 2015, p91). Inclusive pedagogy responds to diversity in positive ways (ibid, p90), to see the strengths of all individuals and their backgrounds. We aim to provide equity in education, rather than equality of education.

AIS follows the International Baccalaureate (IB) program, which is implemented around the world in international schools. They consider inclusion a key element of the curriculum, which they define as “an ongoing process that aims to increase access and engagement in learning for all students by identifying and removing barriers.” (IB, 2019, p2). AIS believes in the ‘social model’ of special educational needs (Shakespeare, 2006, p7). This model sees the strength in all types of neurodiversity, and we believe that we as educators have a duty to enable each individual learner to achieve to create a more equal and equitable society.

Our language of instruction is English, and as an inclusive school, we will have children who have varying levels of English language ability when they join our school. As an international school, we celebrate multilingualism and encourage translanguaging in class. We do not see a beginning level of English as a



special educational need but rather will scaffold and differentiate activities so that the child can access the curriculum whilst learning through English.

Inclusion in practice

How can we ensure that our diversity is represented in our school day-to-day?

Primarily, we ensure that the resources used are representative of a diverse community, diverse in race, language, gender, sexuality, neurodiversity, and family diversity. We think it is vital that we, '... respect as well as respond to human differences in ways that include learners in, rather than exclude them from, what is ordinarily available in the daily life of the classroom (Florian, 2007, cited in Florian and Black-Hawkins, 2011, p814). This means that we will buy and use books which show people of all these different backgrounds, and use other resources such as pictures, visual examples and display resources to create representation throughout the school building. We will provide books in school in every native language of our student population for students to read in school and to borrow to take home to read as well.

Language is an important way in which we shape the world around us and make sense of the world around us. That is why inclusive language is an inherent part of having an inclusive ethos at school. We endeavour to use inclusive language when addressing all different types of people. The best way to be inclusive with language, is to ask the individual what language they prefer to use to represent themselves, whether regarding their race, gender, sexuality, background or neurodiversity. For example, we use the pronouns preferred by the individual, and if we are not sure which pronouns to use then we will ask the individual to make sure that they are comfortable with how we address them. In terms of SEN, we avoid terms which denote a negative attitude towards the individual's neurodiversity. For example, words which use the prefix 'dis' connote a negation, such as 'disadvantage'. Rather than seeing someone with a SEN as 'disadvantaged', we look at the strengths of the individual, and the strengths of their SEN as well. Specific types of SEN have strengths which are specific to that type of neurodiversity, and these should be celebrated, and used to the advantage of the individual.

In 1994 the United Nations created the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994) which has helped to reshape education for students with Special Educational Needs (SEN). This has led to many different curricula developing guidelines on how to provide effective support for students with SEN within the mainstream classroom (Leary and Hill, 1996). The IB provide guidelines on how to support students with a range of Special Educational Needs (SEN) in a document called, 'Meeting Student Learning Diversity in the Classroom' (IBO, 2019), which we refer to at AIS to implement teaching and learning strategies to support all of our learners.

The IB references the Universal Design for Learning as a core value in developing their guidelines in supporting students with SEN (IB, 2019) as they aim to provide inquiry-based learning to promote engagement in all learners. UDL is a guideline to design education in a flexible way, which is suitable for all diverse needs in the classroom; 'The philosophy of UDL is based on the idea that there are multiple ways of representing knowledge (principle one), multiple ways students can demonstrate their understanding (principle two), and multiple ways of engaging students (principle three).' (Capp, 2017, p792). We embody this philosophy in our educational design, as we plan the curriculum to be tailored to the individual needs of the students we have in our classroom. We are flexible in methods of representing and demonstrating knowledge to enable all students to participate successfully.

The IB is based on inquiry, and we place importance on cooperative learning in our inquiries. UDL is a philosophy which helps to '...ensure that each child is an active member of a community which learns together in ways which do not rely on the marking out of difference' (Spratt, and Florian, 2015, p93). Cooperative learning models are among the best-documented approaches for promoting successful inclusion in classrooms where there is substantial diversity in the student group (Nind et al. 2004 cited in Frederickson and Cline, 2009, p94). UDL, and cooperative learning together can be valuable methods to



recognize and develop the strengths of all students, and to help them to learn about and to overcome challenges which they may face in their learning, and in their later, wider life.

We also make sure that inclusion and diversity are represented in the staff of the school, so that hopefully the children can see role models which they can relate to at school.

Roles and responsibilities

The Special Needs Coordinator (SENco)

The Special Needs Coordinator is responsible for overseeing the collaboration of writing and reviewing the inclusion policy and overseeing the day-to-day use of the policy in practice. This means that the SENco liaises with teachers, parents/guardians and students to help to create a supportive learning environment for all students in the school.

Tier 1 - Monitoring of students for academic support

Classroom teachers are often the first to identify a child requiring additional support.

“It is the responsibility of every teacher, as a teacher of all students, to make sure that each student is exposed to teaching and learning that reaches them as individual learners”.

-Learning Diversity and Inclusion in IB Programmes 2016

The progress for all students is reviewed twice a year with the SENco and class teacher. Additional support may be initiated at any time. During these meetings the teacher may express concerns about a particular student or group of students. The SENco may coach the teacher about ways to adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of the individual student. Class teachers may request a meeting with the SENco at any time, when there is a specific concern regarding a student. The results of any interventions will be discussed and evaluated in subsequent meetings with the teacher

Tier 2

This stage is characterised by the gathering of further information about the student and the development of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) and/or an Intervention Plan (IP).

The SENco will consult all records of the child (school doctor, EAL, assessment results, previous school reports, etc.) and may conduct an individual assessment of targeted academic areas. As a result of all this data collection, one or more of the following actions will be taken:

An IP will be set up in collaboration with the class teacher and parents; a learning support teacher will begin an intervention.

- An IEP will be developed in collaboration with the class teacher and parents with clear goals and ways to achieve them.
- The class teacher and/or the support teacher will provide support as identified in an IP or IEP.
- External institutions and/or other professionals may be consulted

The decision to provide academic support is based on the following:

- Group overview meetings
- Assessment results
- Observations in class
- Formal and informal assessments
- Previous school documents

The SENco together with the class teacher will meet regularly with the parents regarding the student's support programme and progress.

Guidelines for implementing an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or Intervention Plan (IP) Individual Education Plan

Individual Education Plan (IEP)

- Students who are being referred for further assessments through an MDO or a private psychologist



- Students with severe behaviour difficulties
- Evaluate and update every 8-10 weeks

Intervention Plan (IP)

- For all students receiving learning support including in-class support
- Evaluation every 8-10 weeks

These evaluations will determine whether the student:

1. receives ongoing support
2. progresses to Tier 3

Tier 3

When the student is not making adequate progress despite in-school support, external professionals will be consulted. A multidisciplinary consultation (MDO) process may be initiated in agreement with parents. The SENco will be responsible for making any arrangements for visits by other professionals to the school. Based on external interventions and recommendations a new plan will be set up to better address the student's needs. However, if there is enough evidence that the school cannot satisfactorily meet the needs of the student, the school and parents discuss alternatives which may include other educational institutions.

The SENco is responsible for informing the support teacher on the IP's and IEPs and the needs of the children, and monitoring and developing their support work with the children.

The classroom teacher

The classroom teacher is responsible for the day-to-day teaching of the students. That includes differentiating the lessons and resources within reason to make the curriculum accessible for all children within the class. This will include using visual aids, sentence starters, graphic organizers and other activities dependent on the needs of the children. They are responsible for realising the IEP in the classroom, and for giving feedback on the IEP to the support teacher. They are also responsible for completing initial cause for concern forms where appropriate and passing on any relevant information regarding the child's needs to the SENco. This could be written feedback, or photo or video evidence, or examples of the child's work.

Parents/guardians

We want to work together as a team with the parents/guardians of the child to be able to provide the most holistic and effective support for the child as possible. To do so, we need to have open and direct communication between the school and the parents/guardians. We are all working together on the same team, with the same aim of helping the child. If the parent/guardian receives information or statements from external agencies, such as psychologists, speech and language therapists etc, it would help the school hugely to be able to read a copy of these documents. That way we can understand the needs of the child better, and make sure we are supporting them appropriately. We expect parents/guardians to attend meetings with the SENco and teachers where possible to discuss the progress of the child.

Students

Students have a responsibility to reflect on their feelings, behaviours and thoughts to be able to grow and learn. We hope that the students will share any concerns they have either about themselves, or about other students, with any member of staff so that we can help them to feel their best in school, academically, emotionally and socially.



Admissions

As an inclusive school, we aim to provide an education for a diverse student population. This is dependent on the resources which we have available. To ensure an effective and safe education for all students, we need to address the needs of the individual student upon application to the school.

At application stage, we must take into consideration whether we have the teaching staff available to provide the support which an individual may require, if we have the space and physical resources which may be required. If it is deemed that we cannot provide effective and safe education for the individual applying, or for the other children in the school, then we will recommend that the child attends another school, which is better equipped for their needs.

Part of the application form asks if the child has received any additional support for their learning previously. It is important that the parents/guardians provide information at this point so that we as a school can provide support for the child from the very start of their time with us. It is important to be proactive about providing support, so that the child has every opportunity to succeed and feel confident and comfortable at school. We ask for any documents or statements from agencies such as psychologists or speech and language therapists so that we can better understand the child and can create an informed approach to teaching and learning for the child.

Withholding information at this point may mean that we will be unable to continue working with the child if we do not have the resources available to provide an effective and safe education for them.

Limits to the support available at AIS

We provide the highest quality of education for all students at our school. There may be cases where we do not have the resources available to support the individual needs of the child. This could be in cases where the child shows aggressive behaviour towards themselves, other children or adults in school. At AIS, we provide support for students with identified mild to moderate learning needs, social-emotional needs and/or English language acquisition needs. We do not have the expertise to support children who have severe special educational needs, have certain physical disabilities, deaf or blind. In cases where the needs of the child are beyond what we can offer at AIS, we will work with the families to advise them on possible next steps and alternative placement for the child where their needs can be met more effectively. In this way, we can ensure a safe and quality education for all children in our school.

Identifying SEN

At AIS, we use a range of methods to assess the needs of the children. When children first start at AIS, we allow a settling in period where we monitor the academic understanding and behaviour of the child. We then use some initial assessments to gather a baseline understanding of their abilities in reading, spelling and maths. We also monitor the attitude to learning (AtL) and the Social, Emotional Learning (SEL) of the child.

In grades 3 to 8 we use the CAT4 assessments from the company GL. CAT stands for Cognitive Ability Testing, and the 4 is for the 4 areas of cognition which it tests: verbal reasoning, non-verbal reasoning, quantitative and spatial awareness. This assessment is used as a tool to inform the teacher of areas which they need to focus on or provide more directed instruction or support. These tests are repeated at the start and the end of the year to monitor the progress made by the child; they are not used to compare students with one another. GL provide qualitative feedback on the assessments for areas of strength for the child and areas of challenge. We can provide this feedback for the parents, but we do not send home a



quantitative score from the assessment, as this is not our purpose for using them. See appendix for CAT4 process flowchart.

We also rely on the teachers to complete initial cause for concern forms where necessary. The teacher is the main point of contact for the child within school and so will know the child's needs in detail. It is imperative that the classroom teacher liaises with the special needs coordinator to identify a special educational need and any other additional needs of a child.

A parent/guardian may also speak with the special needs coordinator to identify a special educational need. They can provide information of the child's behaviour at home, to help us to develop a holistic view of the child and their needs. The parent/guardian has the responsibility at admission stage to inform the school of any additional needs or support which the child currently has or has had in the past.

Arrangements for children with SEN

We believe that the child learns best when included in their community. 'Inclusive pedagogy is a pedagogical approach that responds to learner diversity in ways that avoid the marginalisation of some learners in the community of the classroom' (Spratt, and Florian, 2015, p90). For this reason, we use push-in support as much as possible. This means that the child can continue to be involved with the main class, but at the same time receive support to do so. This method also helps the rest of the children in the class, as having an inclusion specialist or teaching assistant as push-in support for one, can help to increase support for all in the room (Griffiths, 2001, cited in Spratt, and Florian, 2015, p95).

AIS does also provide pull-out sessions for when individual instruction would be most beneficial. This may be for perhaps a specific gap in the child's learning, or to work on SEL which may be best on an individual basis. We tailor the support structure around the needs of the children which we have in school. We may at times create small group instruction in literacy, or in numeracy, and have a regular weekly or bi-weekly sessions with the same group of children. Children will return to the main class where possible when the gap in their learning has been filled sufficiently.

Partnership with parents or guardians

Partnership with parents/guardians is a key element of inclusion. Inclusive pedagogy relies on seeing the child holistically, and the parent/guardian can provide valuable insight into the way the child thinks and behaves outside of school. We always write the IEP in conjunction with the parent/guardian, as well as the child, so that all parties are heard and valued in the process of supporting the child.

Monitoring of policy

The AIS Inclusion Policy will be updated annually to best reflect current school data, but the main content of the policy will be updated every three to five years. This will be a collaborative process, whereby input is gathered from the full range of our community. For this version, staff have read and provided feedback which has been incorporated. This document has been shared with the parent community via our website.

This Policy is due to be updated: February 2027



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Definitions

Neurodiversity refers to the diversity in the ways in which people think and learn. Just as we all look different, we all think differently too.

Neurodivergent refers to a person whose cognition is different from the average cognition.

Special educational needs are referred to as SEN. A SEN is a learning need which affects the way that a person learns. This may mean that the person has difficulty learning in certain ways, but it could also refer to someone who is exceptionally quick at learning and can analyse things in a way which is out of the ordinary for a person of their age group.

A statement of need is an official document from a trained professional such as a psychologist, occupational therapist, educational psychologist, doctor, or speech and language therapist. It is a document which outlines the needs of the child and the school is obliged to adhere to the advice on the statement. This statement will be used to inform the IEP, and in turn the teachers and special needs coordinator on how to best provide an effective and safe education for the child.

Push-in support is when a teaching assistant goes in to the main classroom to provide support specifically for 1 or 2 students who may be tier 2 or 3. This person may also talk to instruct other children in the group while they are there, but their primary focus is on supporting the student/s specified for support.

Pull-out sessions are whereby the teaching assistant takes an individual child or small group of children out of the main class, either for direct instruction or for practise of a specific skill. This could be in a programme of a few weeks, but the aim is for the child to return to the main classroom where possible to learn with their peers.



Appendices

