

# Inclusion Policy



**Verdala**  
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

## **Verdala International School**

### **Inclusion Policy**

<b>Access to Learning</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Admissions</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Standards</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Identification Process and Tracking Progress</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>IPC, IMYC, IGCSE, IBDP, IBCP Curriculum</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Statementing</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The Individual Educational Plan (IEP)</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Roles and Responsibilities</b>	<b>4</b>
Inclusion Coordinator (INCo)	4
Teachers	5
Learning Support Educators (LSEs)	5

## Access to Learning

As a non-selective school our aim is to ensure that all students are respected in an inclusive community fostered and supported within our school. We aim to provide a structure and a system that can support individual needs within the parameters of our school resources.

We believe that every student needs to experience success. Therefore, modification and differentiation techniques provide our students with equal opportunities to learn.

Modifications are implemented when the curriculum is either beyond the student's level of ability or when the student has already conquered such expectations. Modifications are made to the curriculum in order for the VIS student to be a participant in the mainstream class. Such modifications may be implemented on:

- Content level
- Instructional level
- Performance/assessment criteria

Modifications at VIS are likely to be implemented as determined by the Individual Education Plan (IEP) or by the student's educational team.

Accommodations regulate the way a student at VIS gains access to information and learning within the same curricular expectations. These may include changes such as in presentation designs, instructional strategies or diverse differentiated techniques during lesson time, applied assistive technology and other resources that are deemed necessary to enhance the individual student's learning.

## Admissions

As per the Admissions Policy, the Inclusion Coordinator (INCo) will vet all files and any students with potential, identified areas of needs. Any of the following options can be applied as relevant

- interview the student and family for further clarification on any concerns highlighted
- refer for further psychoeducational assessment
- create a provision plan as necessary

When necessary and for the best interest of the student, past reports may be requested and previous schools may be contacted for further information.

The above options are not exhaustive please refer to the Admissions Policy.

## Standards

1. Wherever possible VIS will make every effort to facilitate parental efforts to obtain assessments of their child.
2. Wherever possible VIS staff will meet with outside professionals and make every effort to coordinate with them over a child's requirements.
3. Should the result of an assessment mean a child requires individual learning support in the classroom, the school will meet with the parents and discuss the appointment of a Learning Support Educator (LSE). During such a process the funding for the services of the LSE will be determined.
4. The norm is for two LSEs per year group, however under exceptional circumstances, the number of LSEs may extend to three per year group as determined by the Leadership Team (LT), INCo and teacher(s) through an evaluative process. In such cases, the needs & dynamics of the whole year group will be taken into consideration by the team.
5. The school may make an assessment a prerequisite of the child remaining in the school. VIS does not fund such assessments. The school will set a timeframe in which the assessment is to be carried out. As a condition of continued enrolment, parents must meet this timeframe. The School will coordinate with and implement, where possible, the recommendations.
6. Inclusive assessment arrangements are in place wherever necessary throughout all programmes to ensure students are able to access the curriculum.

## Identification Process and Tracking Progress

Students who are not making expected progress and/or are struggling within the mainstream class are brought to the attention of the INCo. Such difficulties may be related to learning but also concerns may be raised that are linked to behaviour, emotional and social domains.

The INCo may determine that observations take place and when necessary evaluative, diagnostic assessments may be conducted. In general, concerns and provision plans are then raised and shared with parents/Legal Guardians in a meeting.

## IPC, IMYC, IGCSE, IBDP, IBCP Curriculum

- All programmes focus on the students' learner profile and ensure that the approaches to teaching and learning skills (ATLs) are aligned with the learning outcomes of the programmes offered within the three sections of the school.
- All students are encouraged to take decisions about their learning, in order for them to take responsibility for their learning journey whilst providing them with the opportunity to develop an understanding of themselves as learners.
- VIS supports access for students to all programmes offered.

## Statementing

The statementing process is managed by the Statementing Moderating Panel (SMP) which is appointed by the Maltese Minister of Education. The panel runs an assessment of the required support by the student to make sure that the student's needs are being met.

The INCo attends the board hearing upon the invite from the SMP. The INCo (or a representative of the school) together with the parents are part of the panel for the particular student with individual needs. During the panel's hearing, the parents, student, and professionals discuss the concerns met by the school and are presented to the panel. This will help determine the level of educational support required by the student. Periodic reviews of students' statements can take place.

The Application Process for the Statementing Moderating Panel takes place in the following manner:

- The INCo in liaison with the Principal and teacher/s, discusses with the parents/guardians what level of support or provision can be offered at VIS to the student with an individual needs.
- The INCo refers parents to the SMP when it is felt that added support other than the school can provide, is required.
- An application is filled with attached copies of reports to the SMP.

## **The Individual Educational Plan (IEP)**

The IEP document contains diagnosis or assessment information, observation data and whether the student benefits from mainstream curriculum or not. The document also holds other relevant information such as what other areas of concern are observed e.g. behavioural, social, emotional etc.

The IEP document spells out the annual goals of the student and how progress will be measured. The document will describe the short term goals or steps to reach the annual goal. The IEP will hold information [but not exclusive to] such as:

- changes made to the curriculum and instructional methods
- assistive technology
- behaviour plans
- other related services
- types of assessment
- transition

An IEP conference is held so that the above information is accessible and discussed with the IEP team i.e. all stakeholders. Reviews are held quarterly.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Inclusion Coordinator (INCo)**

The main role of the INCo is to ensure the effective implementation and monitoring of this policy and related actions, thus providing equitable access to a relevant curriculum for students with individual needs. This role includes the following:

- Overseeing the formulation, implementation and review of IEPs for students with individual needs;
- Accessing and regularly monitoring the records of students with individual needs;
- Ensuring the coordination of the provision of special examination arrangements (mainly internal testing and examinations, NWEA MAP testing, IGCSEs and IBDP/ IBCP );
- Coordinating and liaising with LSEs assigned to students with individual needs;

- Liaising, advising and collaborating with parents/legal guardians of students with individual needs.
- Liaising with staff, multidisciplinary teams and external agencies, who are in contact with students with Individual needs;
- Ensuring that students with IENs are encouraged to develop autonomy and where possible to begin to take responsibility of their own learning;
- Recommending and liaising with the LT on the procurement and management of resources.
- Coordinating professional development opportunities related to individual needs for staff in particular for LSEs;
- Ensuring that a proper transition process is implemented before moving from VIS to another institution or from one section to another and participating in the development of such transition programmes, where applicable;
- The INCo may refer families to specific professionals as part of the assessment process. Parents are at liberty to select other avenues of assessment but are required to inform the INCo of this.

## **Teachers**

- Teachers will promote a class and school environment that supports and celebrates inclusion.
- Teachers are responsible for implementing any IEPs, modifications, adaptations and differentiation in collaboration with LSEs/Teacher Assistants /INCo as necessary.
- Collaboration with INCo and LSEs as well as other teachers and stakeholder for the curriculum planning will take place as necessary.
- Teachers are involved in evaluation and assessment processes as well as Mapping Action Planning sessions, IEPs, Parent meetings.
- Teachers may, on the basis of behaviour or educational attainment level, believe that a child warrants assessment. In such cases the teacher is required to inform the INCo and Section Principal.
- Teachers will participate in professional development as and when needed, on inclusion and differentiated learning in order to inform themselves for any modifications or improvements for future planning.
- Grade level teachers will abide by the referral process system when there are concerns regarding a student. The INCo determines whether observations or an evaluative process needs to be carried out before such concerns are communicated to the parents.

## **Learning Support Educators (LSEs)**

The responsibilities of the Learning Support Educator employed at VIS include the following:

- Supporting and collaborating with the class teacher and other colleagues. With advice and guidance from the teacher, the LSE will assist in the education of all pupils, however giving priority to pupils with special educational needs in order to make sure that their needs are being addressed.
- Participating fully in Making Action Plans sessions (MAPs), which happen before the start of the scholastic year.
- The LSE will participate in and attend IEP conferences. Together with the INCo, class teacher and any other professionals, the LSE will develop and implement an IEP.

- Under the guidance of the INCo, the LSE will write the IEP document for the student with a statement, or the student(s) supported by the LSE.
- The LSE will adapt and/or differentiate lesson plans and resources as necessary and as required by the IEP.
- The LSE will assist in the preparation of educational materials and play an active part in all the components of the instructional and educational process in class under the direction of the class teacher.
- In collaboration with the INCo and class teacher, the LSE will participate in the observation, assessment and documentation process of the performance and behaviour of students.
- The LSE will promote an inclusive community of learners, in collaboration with the INCo, specialists, resource workers, teachers, parents, students and other stakeholders, where all students are valued and respected. This includes collaborative work in school and with other agencies, such as the Child Development Assessment Unit (CDAU), Resource Centres, NGOs and other educational and therapeutic organisations.
- Promoting at all times the aims, ethos and policies of the school.

### **Teaching Assistants (TA)**

The TA's role is to support the whole class however TAs can also support small groups of students and work with them on a specific area such as literacy and numeracy. Such groups may include children with individual needs.

It is imperative to note however that TAs are not assigned to support one specific student for an extended period of time during the school day.

The TA should be aware of the role of the teacher and provide support as necessary.

### **Outside services**

The school may reserve the right to refer students to outside services such as but not limited to Speech and Language Pathology, Occupational services, Psychological Assessment and therapeutic support. In such cases, the parents will always be consulted.

Reviewed in May 2018 by: Head of School, Principals, Two HS Teachers, Guidance Counsellor, INCo, IGCSE Programme Coordinator, Student Support Services, Leadership+

Reviewed January 2021