



# Greenwood International School Inclusion Policy

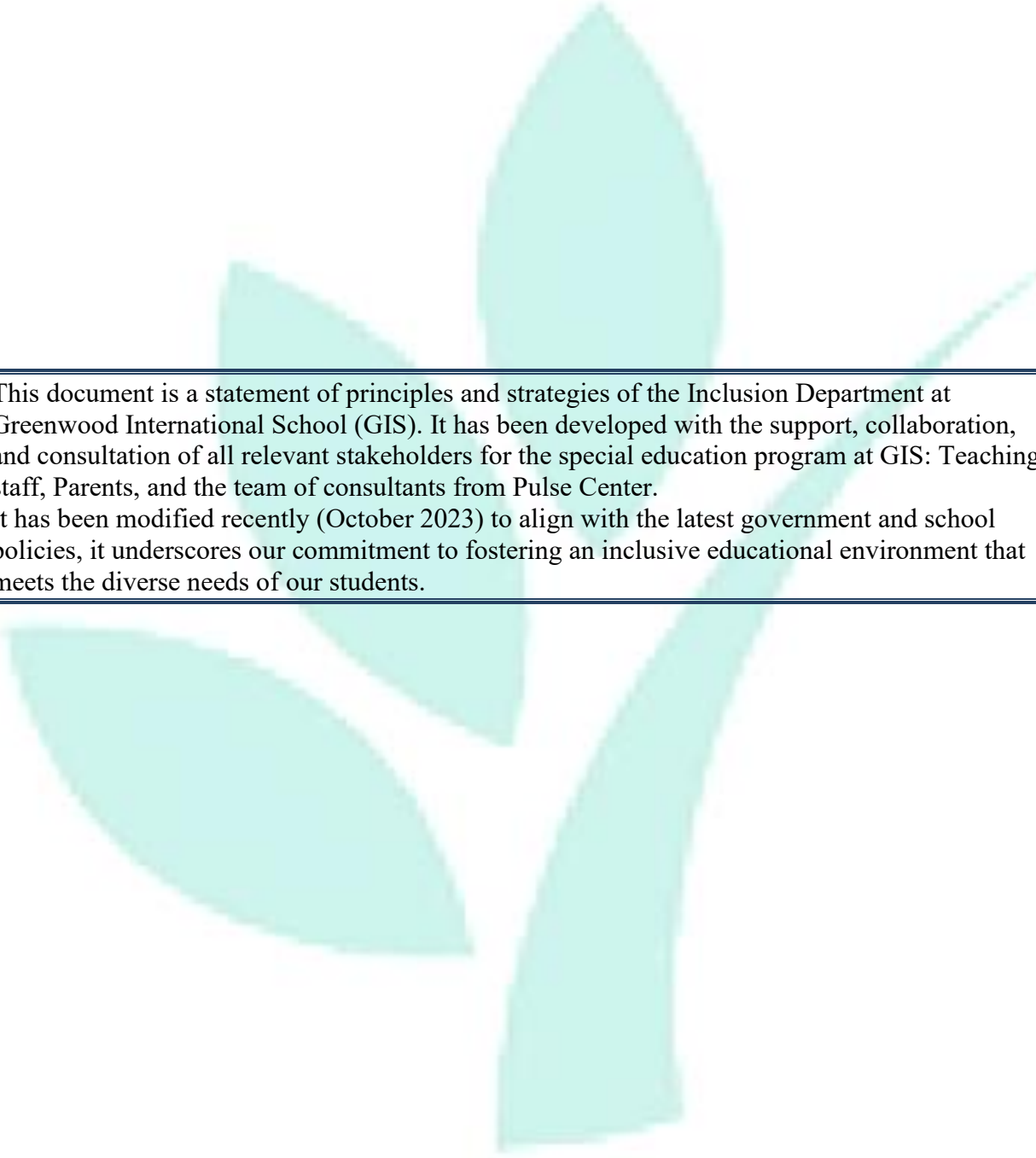
- ❖ Date: August 30, 2023
- ❖ Author: Head of Inclusion
- ❖ Revised by: Head of Inclusion &SLT
- ❖ Policy type: Academic and Operational
- ❖ Circulation: Internal and External
- ❖ Date authorized: September 1, 2023
- ❖ Authorized by: Senior Leadership Team
- ❖ Date of next review: August 2024



# **GIS- INCLUSION POLICY**

## **2023-2024**

**INCLUSION- Every Child Matters**



This document is a statement of principles and strategies of the Inclusion Department at Greenwood International School (GIS). It has been developed with the support, collaboration, and consultation of all relevant stakeholders for the special education program at GIS: Teaching staff, Parents, and the team of consultants from Pulse Center.

It has been modified recently (October 2023) to align with the latest government and school policies, it underscores our commitment to fostering an inclusive educational environment that meets the diverse needs of our students.

## **Mission**

**GIS** believes that all students, regardless of their personal capabilities, can reach their academic, behavioral, and social potential. By providing educational opportunities and supportive services to Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) students, in a secure and nurturing environment, they can achieve their full potential and become self-sufficient in school and eventually productive members of the community.

**GIS** recognizes that each student is an individual with specific needs and should be provided with the opportunity for education and development in their cognitive, physical, emotional, personal, and social development.

## **Definition**

According to the UAE Federal Law no. 29 of the year 2006, a child with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) is defined as a child who is “suffering from a temporary/permanent, full/partial deficiency or infirmity in his/her physical, sensational, mental, communicational, educational or psychological faculties to an extent decreasing the possibility of satisfying his ordinary requirements in the conditions of people without special needs.” In line with Federal Law (2006) and Law No. 2 (2014), improving the education and outcomes of students with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities remains a priority for Dubai.

In April 2017, H.H. Sheikh Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum (ruler of Dubai and Vice President of UAE) came to an order to refer to people with special needs as the “People of Determination”. The KHDA started using the terminology “Students of Determination”. Thus, the school has adopted the same terminology and introduced it to the teachers and parents.

KHDA’s new categorization framework for students of determination (2019-20) defines a student of determination as a student with long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairment which, in interaction with various barriers, restricts the students’ full and effective participation in education on an equal basis with peers of the same age. Students of determination are identified through one or both procedures listed below:

- Through the observation of a specialist and/or a knowledgeable school team, of a student who displays almost all the characteristics of a particular category of impairment, delay, or disorder.
- Formally diagnosed by a qualified and licensed medical professional as having long-term difficulty, impairment, or disorder.

The main categories of as per the new categorization are:

<p><b>1. INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild Intellectual Disability</li> <li>• Moderate Intellectual Disability</li> <li>• Severe Intellectual Disability</li> </ul>	<p><b>7. PSYCHO-EMOTIONAL DISORDER</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Depression</li> <li>• Bi-polar disorder</li> <li>• Oppositional defiance disorder</li> <li>• Obsessive/ compulsive disorder</li> <li>• Post-traumatic stress disorder</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. MULTIPLE DISABILITIES</b></p>	<p><b>8. ATTENTION DEFICIT AND HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ADHD-inattentive type</li> <li>• ADHD-HYPERACTIVE TYPE</li> <li>• ADHD-combined type</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. DEVELOPEMENTAL DELAYS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Global Developmental Delays</li> <li>• Specific Developmental Delays</li> </ul>	<p><b>9.SENSORY IMPAIRMENTS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visual impairments</li> <li>• Hearing impairment</li> </ul>
<p><b>4. SPECIFIC LEARNING DISORDERS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dyslexia</li> <li>• Dysgraphia</li> <li>• Dyscalculia</li> <li>• Dyspraxia</li> </ul>	<p><b>10.DEAF-BLIND</b></p>
<p><b>5. COMMUNICATION DISORDERS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expressive language disorder</li> <li>• Receptive language disorder</li> <li>• Global language delay</li> <li>• Speech fluency disorder</li> <li>• Speech sound disorder</li> <li>• Social communication disorder</li> </ul>	<p><b>11.PHYSICAL DISABILITY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Muscular dystrophy</li> <li>• Cerebral palsy</li> <li>• Spina bifida</li> </ul>
<p><b>6. AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Autism spectrum disorder level 1</li> <li>• Autism spectrum disorder level 2</li> <li>• Autism spectrum disorder level 3</li> </ul>	<p><b>12. CHRONIC OR ACUTE MEDICAL CONDITIONS</b></p>

## Partnerships and Collaboration

For the academic year 2018-2019, Greenwood International School is collaborating with **Pulse Center**.

A team of consultants from Pulse Therapy will help screen students who may require additional learning support or who may require assistance in other areas related to their overall academic needs. The team has also been available to assess the students' level of functioning and difficulties across various developmental areas.

This collaboration intends to help GIS provide the best support possible for students with special and/or exceptional needs along with efficient and continuous monitoring and guidance to help students further develop and progress academically.

**Pulse Therapy Center provides the following services for GIS staff and students as needed:**

- **Inclusive Programming for KG children:** The inclusion program is set up at Greenwood International School for students between the ages of 4-6 years old. Children with learning and/or developmental areas of need (e.g., ADD/ADHD, Autism, speech delay, multi-sensory processing difficulties, etc.) are included in the general classes, and in all academic and non-academic subjects/areas based on their level of functioning and skills.
- **Screenings** are provided upon the Head of Inclusion's request and after consent from the parents.
- **Assessments** to analyze clinical needs as well as to create goals and objectives.
- **Training Teachers:** as needed and requested. An individualized education plan (IEP) will be created for the student and will be implemented by the staff.
- **Training Parents:** as needed and requested.
- **Workshops** to cover training needs.
- **Shadow Training** provided specifically upon request for it.
- **Counseling and support** as needed and requested and upon teacher referral.
- **Occupational Therapy:** can be provided after school hours if agreed upon by the school.
- **Speech Therapy:** can be provided after school hours if agreed upon by the school.
- **Behavior Therapy:** a home-based program provided after school hours.
- **Social Skills group:** This service can be provided within school hours and after school hours.

- **Progress monitoring:** Progress will be monitored weekly, and reports will be generated quarterly and will be shared with the school and parents (unless otherwise deemed necessary).

### **Inclusion Team**

The inclusion Department operates under the GIS Support Team comprised of the Counseling Department, ELL Department, and Inclusion Department.

**School Inclusion Team:** A committee of teachers, administrators, and school personnel that determines if a student is eligible to receive special education services reviews the data and develops intervention plans for students whose performance exceeds or does not meet expectations compared to their peers. (Term used in School for All)

**In GIS the team consists of:**

- Governor for Inclusive Education: Ms. Amelia Brown
- Principal: Ms. Lina Zarif
- Vice Principal: Mr. Stephen Richard DaCosta
- Head of Curriculum: Ms. Rania Barakat
- Head of Teaching and Learning: Ms. Boudour Konialy
- Head of Kindergarten & Elementary: Ms. Kefah Samara
- Head of Middle School: Mr. Wissam Ezzeddine
- Head of High School: Mr. Rabih El Hawari
- Inclusion Champion: Ms. Rachelle Punzalan
- Head of Inclusion Department: Ms. Rachelle Punzalan
- Ms. Rose Aurellano (G&T Coordinator and Learning Support Teacher)
- Ms. Anabel Saberon ( Learning Support Teacher)
- Ms. Joane Fanuncio (Learning Support Teacher)
- School Counselor: Loubna Hallab
- ELL Head: Ms. Rana Mohammad Saher
- ELL Teacher: Ms. Lynette Makanda
- The Learning Support Assistant (LSA)
- Clinician from Pulse Center, usually the Director of Special education & Inclusion Classroom teacher
- The student experiencing academic/behavioral/psychological difficulties (if appropriate)
- The student's parent

The Inclusion team meets to discuss the academic performance of students who are

experiencing learning difficulties and those who have been referred to the Inclusion Department. The identification procedure includes a review of students' academic and performance history, and medical history, a classroom observation in the area of concern, and administration of formal (SNAP SpLd) and/or informal assessment. The team makes recommendations for pre-referral interventions intended to improve the student's academic performance. The recommendations are shared and discussed with the parents, to ensure that the school and the parents are in agreement. The team monitors the student's progress for a maximum of four weeks and reviews data for discussion. If the student is eligible to receive special education programs and services, waves of intervention are followed to deliver the services.

#### Role of the Head of Inclusion:

- The Head of Inclusion takes a leading role in coordinating the formulation of the Inclusion policy and in following the process for development.
- Meets with the class teacher while compiling the IEP/IAP/504 Plan in order to ensure that suitable measurable targets are set for the student.
- Liaises with staff members when reviewing the IEPs/IAPs/504 Plans and when evaluating the student's progress and sets new targets, as appropriate.
- Encourages staff to maintain records for the student and keep evidence of achievements which include marks, examples of students' work, and photographs.
- Receives written referrals to the Inclusion Department made by any school personnel or parents.
- Handles referral of students of determination
- Handles admission procedure for students of determination

#### Admission

GIS accepts students with special needs on the basis that we are able to provide the selected students with the most supportive, assistive, and educational settings that can cater to their needs. Each student's file is thoroughly examined by the Inclusion team and the collaborative Pulse Center team to assess the student's skills and areas of difficulties, and accordingly determine whether the school is able to cater to the student's needs within a mainstream



environment. Once admission is granted and the child is registered as a student of determination (waves 2 & 3), extra fees will be applied amounting to AED 10,000 + VAT/academic year.

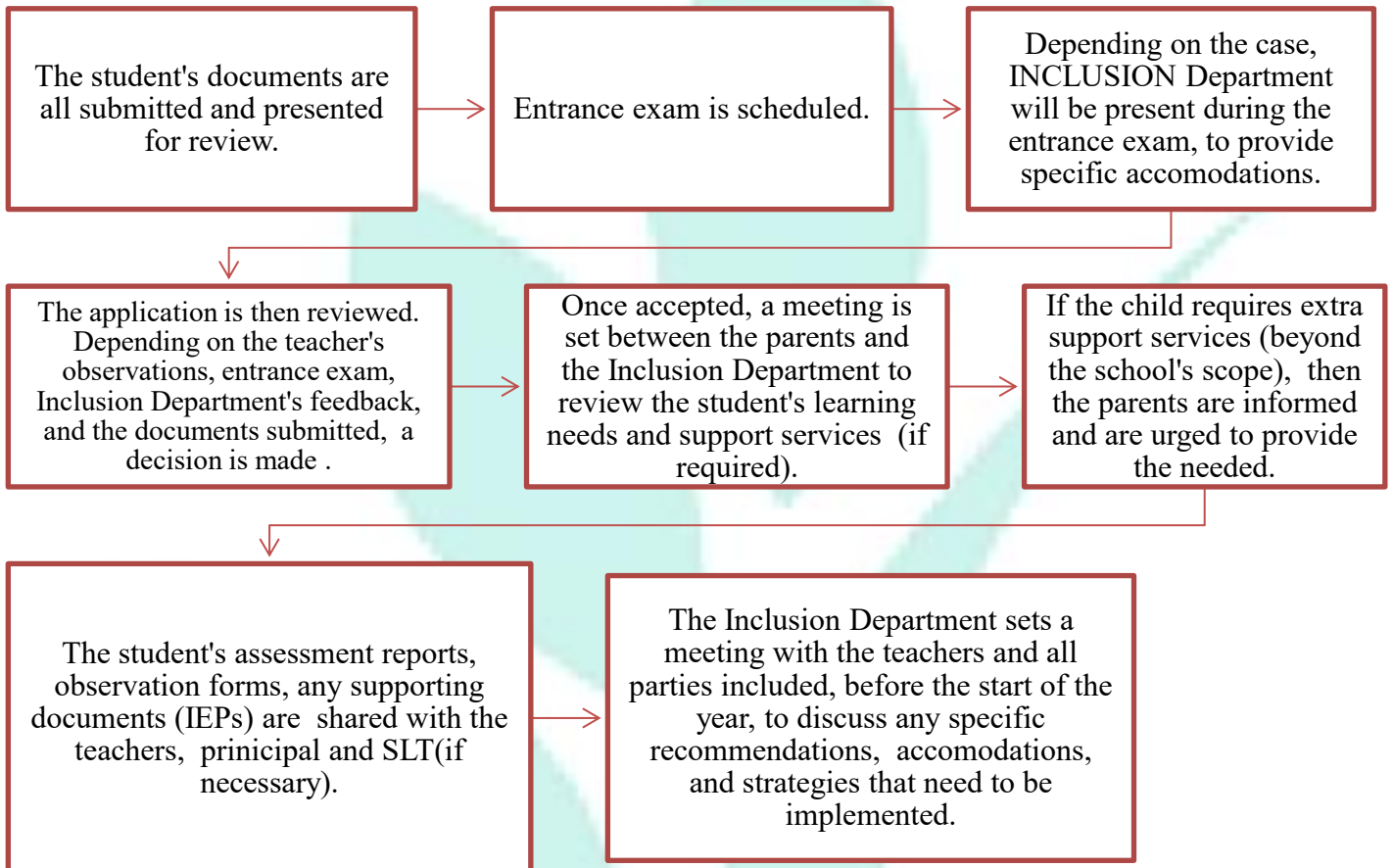
GIS has been hosting an inclusion program at the school since 2013 and is accepting students with special needs (students with Autism Spectrum Disorders, ADHD, difficulties with communication and speech and language). Those students are accepted and mainstreamed in the regular education classrooms.

Admission and placement of students of determination are more flexible. While age is the first and foremost basis of placement, the Inclusion Department believes that certain factors should be taken into consideration such as:

- Comprehensive or Psycho-educational report
- Individual Education Plan
- Progress Report from the Inclusion Department
- Inclusion Department recommendation/s

***\* In line with Dubai Inclusive Education Policy Framework. The school gives priority to the sibling/s of students of determination provided they pass the prerequisite procedures.***

### Admission Procedures



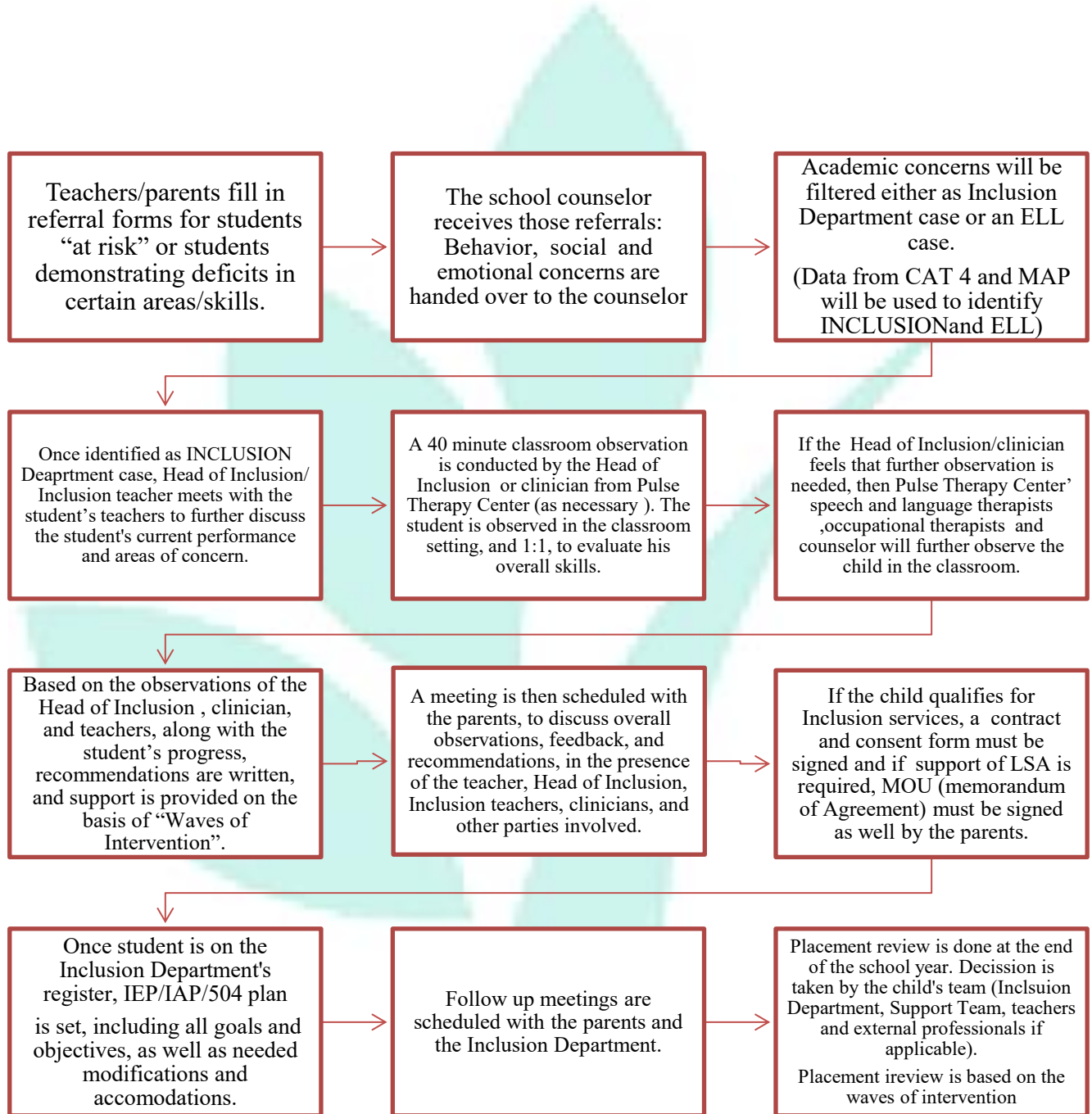
### Identification of Students of Determination

Identification of students of determination is the responsibility of all GIS staff and in collaboration with Pulse Centre, the Head of Inclusion and along with the members of the Support Team will ensure that those students are identified at an early stage. Students of determination may be identified through the observations of teachers and standard tests. When a student is identified as a student of determination and the name is placed in the register, extra fees may be applied.

The identification procedure is as follows:

REFERRAL > IDENTIFICATION > MEETINGS > WAVES OF INTERVENTION > REVIEW

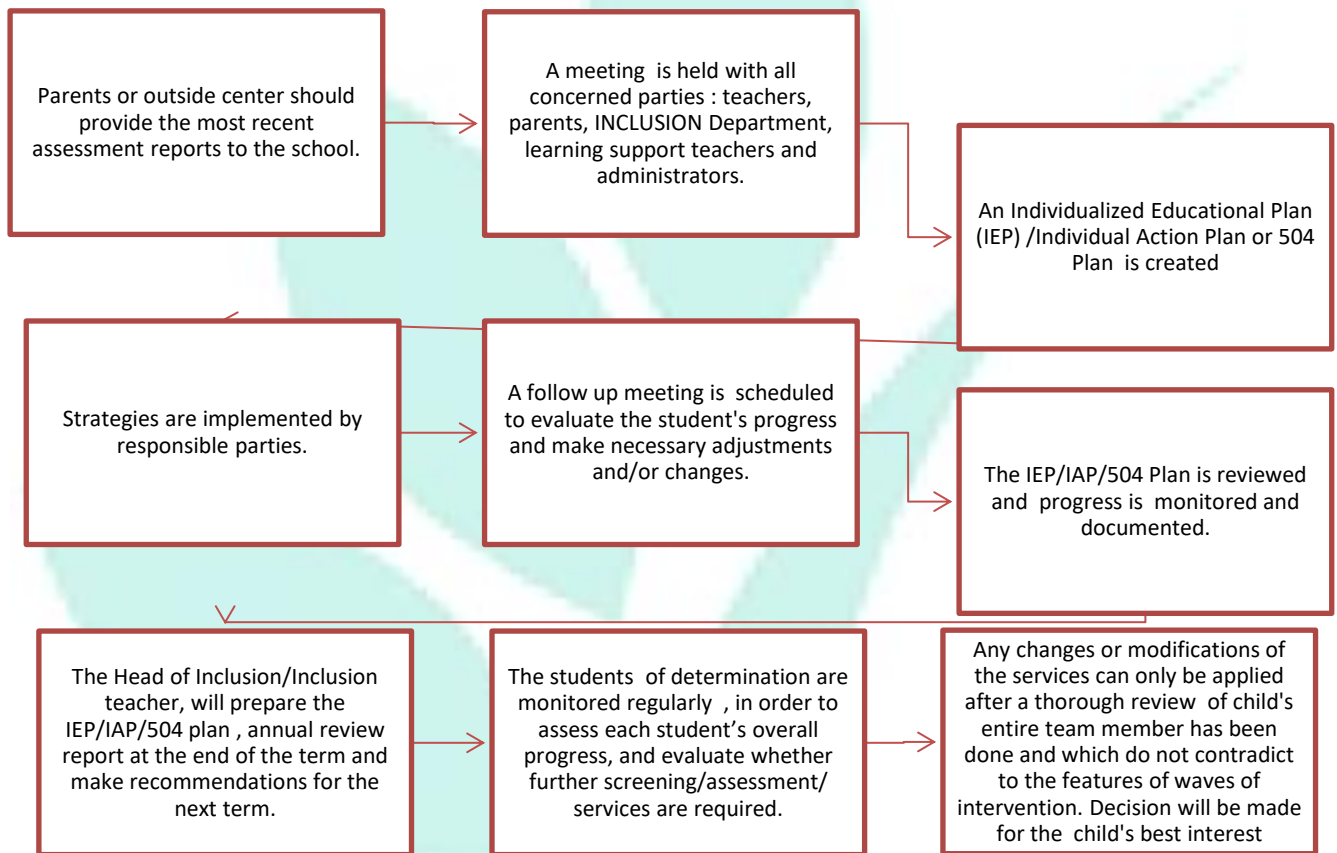
Identifying students of determination at GIS is a gradual process as mentioned below:



## Process of School Enrollment for Students of Determination

Inclusion Department services are provided to students with special needs from kindergarten to 12th grade. Information regarding the enrollment process and due dates for re-enrollment for a student with special needs is made available to parents and members of the community by school staff during the end of the second term of each academic year.

### Standard Procedures for Students Diagnosed as Student of Determination



**At Greenwood International School we categorize students with special educational needs accordingly:**

*Each wave has its salient features that must be followed by all the parties involved with the students of determination*

**Accommodations and Modifications for Students with Special Needs and Disabilities**

Any needed accommodations and modifications in the teaching methods, learning materials or learning environment will be specified in the Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) to meet the student's educational needs.

**Accommodations included are:**

- Computer text-to-speech computer-based systems for students with visual impairments or Dyslexia.
- Extended time for students with fine motor limitations, visual impairments, or learning disabilities.
- Use of calculator, number line, and multiplication Chart
- Large-print or Braille print worksheets for students with visual impairments
- Timing accommodations: giving students more time to finish tasks or assessments. The test may be divided into short intervals depending on the circumstances and the student's physical health.
- Setting accommodations: usage of visual schedules, token boards, and seating arrangements within the classroom.
- Response accommodations: if the student has weak muscles or difficulty in movement, the response mode maybe changed: instead of providing a written response, the student

<b>Wave 1</b>	<b>Wave 2</b>	<b>Wave 3</b>	<b>Wave 4</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Students whose attainment is well below expected levels in identified areas of the curriculum.</i></li><li>• <i>Medical cases</i></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Students experiencing significant learning difficulties, which may lead to an adverse effect on their successful participation in the day-to-day learning.</i></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Students who have been identified by an external medical and/or clinical expert, as having complex learning needs as well as other significant difficulties.</i></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Students with severe condition who can be partially mainstreamed in a regular class supported by an LSA</i></li></ul>

may be allowed to respond orally, or someone may write the answer for him

### Curriculum modification and support

In order to meet the needs of all the students in the classroom, the curriculum is developed so that no child is left behind. The weekly lesson plans set out by the classroom teachers differ depending on the needs of the students in the classroom. The difference can be in terms of the methods and strategies used to deliver the lesson, content of lesson or materials.

Other possible modifications include:

- Personalized Curriculum
- Functional Curriculum (Math)
- Functional Skills in English
- Pre-Vocational
- A modification in the curriculum; can be specific to a subject or to several subjects (based on the student's current area of difficulty).
- Modified assessment paper.
- Oral assessment
- Assignments might be reduced in number and modified significantly for a student with cognitive impairments that limit his/her ability to understand the content in the regular class in which they are included.
- Assessments are modified to meet the student's current level. The grade that a student of determination receives on a certain subject will be based on the level of instruction indicated in the IEP. However, given that the grade reports can't be differentiated, and there can be no indication of the student's disability, then the grades assigned on the report card are based on the student's overall performance in comparison to same-age peers.
- Varied Assessment Methods: Recognizing that some students may face challenges like behaviors, intellectual abilities, or sensory issues that make extended periods of testing difficult, we will implement an on-going assessment with diverse range of formats. These will include oral assessments, performance evaluations, practical tests, and other alternative methods. This approach will replace lengthy examinations such as mid-semester and end-of-semester tests, allowing for a more inclusive and effective evaluation of students' progress
- **Mixed ability** seating in classroom and clearly defined mentors in groups provide necessary "lowered affective filter" and promote a cooperative learning environment for students of determination.

- **Progress** is closely monitored based on the student’s IEP goals and his achievement criteria/goals and MAP RIT score against their starting point. Data on the student’s current performance is collected from assessments, classroom observations, worksheets, etc. The student’s level is then tracked, and his/her goals are updated according to his/her current performance level.

For students with special needs and disabilities, the curriculum is tailored to their needs in the following means:

- Provide physical, verbal, and visual prompts (visual schedules, picture aids, etc.)
- Differentiate the objective for the students (if the goal was to sound out letters, for some students the goal would only be letter identification). Such goals are differentiated and modified according to individual skills and abilities
- Classroom environment (group placement, distractors around the classroom, etc.,)
- Tailoring of the product (writing, drawing, tracing, etc.,)
- Second language exemption (Arabic) upon KHDA approval, for students with language difficulties, and/or other disabilities, that affect their ability to learn a second language.
- A shift to special classes of Arabic, Islamic Studies, and Social Studies for Arabs or Emirati students with KHDA approval.
- Students who are partially mainstreamed will be granted exemptions from specific external assessments, including CAT4, NGRT (New Group Reading Test), and ABT (Arabic Benchmark Test). Additionally, students who have received full approval from KHDA for exemption from Arabic studies will also be exempted from taking the ABT

### **Range of Provision**

The school utilizes a “social model” of disability to shape provision for students of determination in order to minimize physical, attitudinal, communication, and social barriers that impede student’s achievement.

The needs of the majority of children will be met in the classroom through differentiation in order to accommodate all learning styles and “**Push-in**” support from the Inclusion teacher. For some students, it may be necessary for them to spend time in small group work or being “**Pulled out**” from the classroom for specific intervention related to their needs. This may be delivered by a Learning Support Teacher, regular teacher or Learning Support Assistant.

## **Monitoring Students Progress**

The progress is evaluated based on teacher observations across different subject areas and different settings (special education teacher, general education teacher, and class assistants), and through:

- Observations
- Screenings
- Work samples
- Data collection
- Formative Assessment Results
- IEP/IAP goals
- Progress reports
- Standardized testing
- Meetings with concerned parties to review goals
- Academic Achievement

## **Certificates of Grade Completion**

Upon completion of a grade level, as per the request of parents, students with special needs will be given a certificate of completion which also indicates s/he has received special education services. The certificate provided to the student will indicate the following:

- Category of Disability
- Assistive Technology Needed

The grades that a student with special needs earns in coursework will be based on the level of instruction indicated in the IEP.

Providing the above-mentioned conditions in the certificate is to assist the student who may be required to provide this information to other institutions inside the UAE, or abroad in order to continue to receive special education supportive services, and to ensure his /her right of access as stated in **article 12 of the Federal Law No. 29/2006**.

## **Transition of Students**

The student's portfolio, which contains grade reports, assessments, and IEPs, is carried on to the next educational stage. Teachers from different grade levels share their feedback about the students, their basic skills, interests, preferred learning methods, and their educational strategies.



Based on the teachers' feedback as well as the Inclusion Department's observations and data collection, if an assessment is requested from the parents by the Inclusion Department, so as to assess their child's current level as well as his/her areas of deficit, then parents must provide a valid and up to date assessment report. As assessment report is imperative, as it effects the student's continuation at the school as well as the student's transition into other grade levels. A meeting with the parents is also scheduled, to collaborate and decide on the overall transition plan that would ensure a smooth transition.

### **Involvement of Parents at GIS**

The Inclusion Department strongly believes in the involvement of the parents of students of determination. Parents are one of the most important factors that will affect the child's overall progress and development, and their presence and active involvement are crucial elements for the success of their own child. Parents of students with special educational needs are very involved in their child's development and progress.

Meetings are conducted with the parents of the children who have been identified at risk, in which the child's overall skills and abilities as well as recommendations, are discussed during those meetings in order to set an action plan.

An open-door policy is implemented to ensure that parents' concerns can be attended at the earliest possible time.

#### **Communication with parents takes place in a number of ways:**

- Parent-teacher interviews
- Informal discussions before and after school
- Appointments
- Written communication (newsletters, email, etc.),
- Telephone,
- School website
- School App (Paragon)
- WhatsApp

### **Training and Workshops for Parents**

The school understands the importance of parental involvement in their children's daily activities, progress and development. In order to involve them, parents need to be empowered with skills that will enable them to help and educate their children. Keeping this in mind, we organize regular workshops for parent enrichment in various topics ranging from "Early signs of Learning Disabilities, "ADHD Awareness" and "Parenting an ADHD child", and more

### **RESOURCES**

Most of the resources used by the students of determination are available within the classroom, Inclusion Room, or Pulse Center's classroom. Any additional resources should be made to the Head of Inclusion and ordered when necessary. Every year, the Head of Inclusion provides list of resources needed to the School Principal.

### **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

All staff members are encouraged to attend courses that help them to acquire the skills needed to work with students of determination. This may take the form of in-house training or external training as available. All teaching staff will attend regular meetings with the Inclusion Department to review the INCLUSION Plan and to share information on the progress of students. GIS takes special consideration to audit any training the teachers has had in relation to specific areas and decides if any training is required. Inclusion Training (Identifying Students of Determination) is a mandatory for all new staff.

### **Record Keeping**

Teachers are encouraged to keep a record of appropriate teaching and learning strategies to overcome difficulties a student may face. These act as a useful reference point for teachers and Inclusion Department in determining strategies or reasonable adjustments that can be made to assist in improving the progress of a students of determination.

Records include:

- monitored academic progress or achievements of a child

- records of any concerns about a child's safety / welfare
- a record of the school's involvement with the student and with parents/careers

The student portfolio should contain:

- Individualized Education Plans and Reviews at relevant stages
- Copies of all correspondence
- Reports, test results and papers, minutes of meetings, incident reports; and anything else the Head of Inclusion feels is relevant or important
- KHDA approval for subject exemption or shift to special classes.
- Psycho- Educational report (if present)
- Statement of the condition (if available)

