



*We raise passionate, caring and brave leaders  
to shape a peaceful tomorrow  
through the best quality education.*

*At Still I Rise International School Nairobi  
we change the world  
one child at a time.*

... Still I Rise International School Nairobi, Mission Statement



THERE IS NO AVERAGE BRAIN AND THUS NO AVERAGE STUDENT

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## A SCHOOL IN A SPECIFIC CONTEXT

### IB Mission Statement

The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end, the organisation works with schools, governments and international organisations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

### IB Learner Profile

**Inquirers:** We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.

**Knowledgeable:** We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.

**Thinkers:** We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyse and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.

**Communicators:** We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.

**Principled:** We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.

**Open-Minded:** We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.

**Caring:** We show empathy, compassion and respect. We have a commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.

**Risk-takers:** We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.

**Balanced:** We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives—intellectual, physical, and emotional—to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.

**Reflective:** We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.

### **Still I Rise International School Mission Statement**

We raise passionate, caring and brave leaders to shape a peaceful tomorrow through the best quality education.

At Still I Rise International School Nairobi we change the world one child at a time.

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## OUR PHILOSOPHY

### Philosophy

At *Still I Rise International School*, we believe that every child is unique and capable of thriving in a learning environment that recognizes and nurtures individual strengths, needs, and identities. We are committed to fostering an inclusive, equitable, and supportive community where diversity is celebrated, and every learner feels valued, empowered, and engaged.

Inclusive education is acknowledged by the United Nations as a matter of human rights and social justice. According to *Learning diversity and inclusion in IB Programmes*, 2016, inclusion is “an ongoing process that aims to increase access and engagement for all students by identifying and removing barriers” (p1). By addressing learning support requirements within our pedagogy, curriculum and assessment, we aim to foster the “culture of collaboration, mutual respect, support and problem-solving involving the whole school community” (p1) to which all IB schools must strive.

Our international school admits students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds across East Africa. We recognize that the diversity of personalities, experiences, nationalities and cultures of our school’s composition is an enriching factor. It strengthens our international outlook, and it brings with it too a multiplicity of strengths, capacities and scholastic interests. We are preparing our students to graduate into caring leaders in a diverse world; it is an asset, therefore, that during their formative education they experience companionship and collaboration with such a rich tapestry of young people.

Inspired by the IB Learner Profile, staff and students alike are determined to be balanced, caring and principled. This means going beyond being merely accepting, it means being actively inclusive. We employ multiple strategies so that there is no obstacle to a joyful, rewarding experience for all at our diverse school. Children with special educational needs are not only welcome here, but are given the opportunity to flourish alongside their peers. By applying differentiation techniques to our pedagogy, curriculum and assessment, as well as considering our learning spaces, we seek to make our school as accessible as possible to the broadest range of students. This, in itself, is an extension of our philosophy which led to the founding of our school in the first place: that high quality education should be a right for all. It is also an extension of our commitment to provide individualised attention and care to all our students, no matter whether their educational needs include diagnosable learning difficulties or not.

This Inclusion policy supports the following IB Programme standards and

practices:

- **A9.** The school supports access for students to the IB programme(s) and philosophy.
- **B1:5.** The school develops and implements policies and procedures that support the programmes.
- **B2:8.** The school provides support for its students with learning and/or special educational needs and support for their teachers.
- **C1:6.** Collaborative planning and reflection incorporates differentiation for students' learning needs and styles.
- **C3:10.** Teaching and learning differentiate instruction to meet students' learning needs and styles."

**Purpose:** this policy outlines our approach to child protection safeguarding and inclusion and reflects our commitment to the International Baccalaureate (IB) philosophy of providing all students with access to high-quality, holistic education. It ensures that learning differences are embraced and that all students—regardless of ability, background, language, or personal circumstance—can participate fully and achieve their potential. We emphasize the removal of systemic, environmental, and attitudinal barriers to ensure full participation for all students, in line with the IB's definition of inclusion as an ongoing process to increase access and engagement for all.

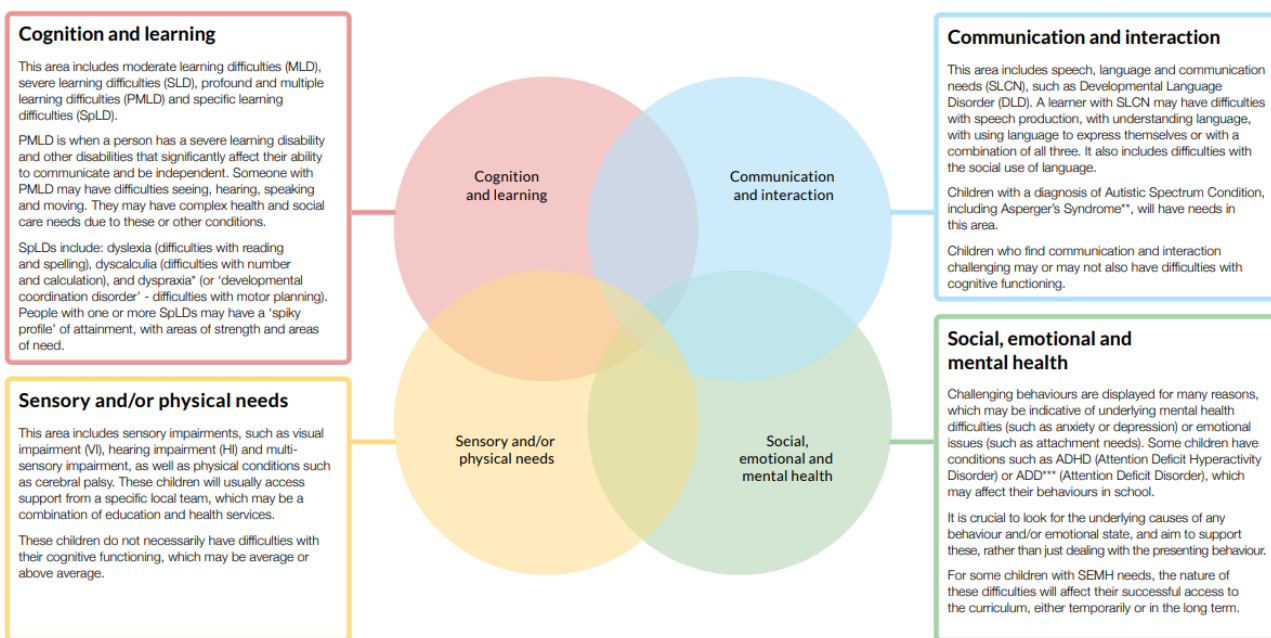
## Definitions

- **Child Protection and Safeguarding:** Child protection refers to the specific actions and policies taken to protect individual children who are at risk of harm due to abuse, neglect, exploitation, or violence. It is about identifying children who are in danger and taking steps to keep them safe. Safeguarding compliments this and refers to everything we do to promote the well-being of children and ensure they grow up in a safe, healthy, and supportive environment. It includes preventing harm, promoting welfare, and creating safe environments.
- **Inclusion:** An ongoing process of increasing access and engagement for all learners by identifying and removing barriers to learning.
- **Diversity:** The presence of differences that include ability, race, ethnicity, language, culture, gender identity, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, religion, and family structure.
- **Equity:** Ensuring fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all students, while striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented full participation.

# LEARNING DIFFERENCES

Students with learning differences in this context are those with the intellectual capacity to meet all our curriculum and assessment requirements, but who may require reasonable adjustments in school practices in order to realise and demonstrate their achievement potential.

The terms used within SEND are not universally agreed, either within legislation or by the individuals with those needs. However, the following terms and categorisations come largely from the SEND Code of Practice (2015) and are therefore a useful guide. This document is not an attempt to list all types of need, merely to provide a starting point to understanding the breadth of needs that fall within SEND.



\*With many types of SEND a learner's difficulties will not be restricted to one area. A dyspraxic learner's difficulties in school may overlap into 'Sensory and/or Physical needs', for example. SEND Code of Practice (2015) classification is being used in this case.

\*\* Though no longer recognised as a term in the International Classification of Diseases manual (ICD-11), some children will identify as having Asperger's, hence its inclusion here.

\*\*\* ADD is no longer recognised as a term within the ICD-11 manual, though it is mentioned in the SEND Code of Practice (2015).

This resource supports the [Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools](#) guidance report

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Candidates who require inclusive arrangements of pedagogy, curriculum, assessment or learning space may have learning support requirements due to one or more of the following:

- **Language and communication differences** affect reading, writing, spelling, handling numbers or processing symbolic language (dyslexia and dyscalculia being amongst the most common diagnosed conditions).
- **Speech and language differences** affecting both receptive and expressive communication (e.g. aphasia, dysphasia, stuttering, selective mutism).
- **Emotional and behavioural differences** including attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, autism spectrum disorder, Asperger's syndrome, phobias, obsessive and compulsive disorders



- **Social, emotional and behavioural differences resulting from mental health difficulties.** Anxiety, depression, schizophrenia, manic depression and eating disorders are among the most commonly used vocabulary within this category, but there is an infinite variety of causes and manifestations of mental health difficulties, especially in the context of our students' often vulnerable backgrounds and daily lives.
- **Physical and sensory challenges** including any form of physical disability or physical challenge and difficulties regarding hearing or vision.
- **Medical conditions** (skin disorders, heart disease, epilepsy, asthma, cystic fibrosis, sickle cell anaemia, diabetes, renal failure and allergies being amongst the many possibilities).

Many of these terms and learning differences are named. Such terms can help us identify needs and respond accordingly, but it is important to recognize that our students are more than a set of labels and we concentrate instead on their area of challenge.

## SCHOOL CONTEXT & ADMISSIONS PROCESS

### Our School

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The Still I Rise International School of Nairobi is located in Mathare North, an area neighbouring the Mathare slum in Nairobi, capital city of Kenya.

Our students come from a wide range of backgrounds, both within Nairobi and beyond, including the surrounding areas, other Nairobi's neighbourhoods (Kawangware, Kayole, Eastleigh), refugee communities in Kakuma and Dadaab, learners from other Still I Rise academies-reflecting the rich diversity of nationalities and ethnicities represented at the Still I Rise International School of Nairobi.

Our admission procedure outlined in the admission policy is primarily based upon the vulnerable status of children. We actively prioritise those students who lack a support network such as family and a stable home life, and resources like a hygienic home and an income which would pay for schooling. This poverty takes its toll on the mental health of our students who arrive requiring support and intervention. Through regular 1-1 sessions with our Inclusion Department, group sessions with boys and girls discussing adolescent issues, psychodrama and playful workshops working through trauma, group projects about topics from loneliness to bullying, yoga and meditation sessions outdoors, we attempt to slowly calm the students and take them from what we refer to as the 'survivor brain' toward a 'learner brain' where

cognitive development can occur in a child with a relaxed state of mind.

## INCLUSION TEAM

All of our students know first-hand the realities of economic poverty. Many have undergone the traumas of forced migration, domestic violence, sexual assault and a host of other experiences which no child should go through. The delicate and nuanced nature of each student's background and psychological condition means that wherever possible, in addition to our internal structures, we consult the expertise of local Kenyan professionals who are best placed to understand the context. This is of heightened importance when identifying Learning differences and making necessary adaptations to support children with challenges.

### Our Inclusion Team

At the Still I Rise International School of Nairobi, our Inclusion Team plays a vital role in creating a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment where every child can thrive. The team is made up of dedicated professionals with distinct but complementary roles.

#### Overview of Roles and Responsibilities:

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- **Child Protection & Safeguarding**  
This team leads the development and implementation of child protection systems, safeguarding policies, and psychosocial support strategies. They manage student wellbeing cases, run 1:1 counseling sessions, liaise with external child protection agencies, and ensure all staff are trained on safeguarding.
- **Learning Support**  
The Learning Support Team (made up of inclusion specialists and English and Early Literacy Support) works closely with students who need additional academic or behavioral assistance and in training teachers in how to identify and support students with learning differences. They design individualized support plans and coordinate with teachers to ensure that learning strategies are inclusive, targeted, and effective.
- **Inclusion Specialist**  
The Inclusion Specialist ensures that students with diverse learning needs are supported through tailored intervention plans and inclusive classroom practices. They train teachers, implement IEPs, and coordinate access arrangements in line with IB policies.
- **Early Literacy Specialist**  
This role focuses on building foundational English language and literacy skills, especially for students learning English as an additional language. They design dynamic lessons, differentiate instruction, and provide extra academic and

pastoral support for struggling learners.

- **Matrons**

Matrons provide full-time, active supervision and care to students during non-academic hours. They help ensure students' health, safety, and emotional wellbeing by offering basic first aid, monitoring for signs of distress, and maintaining a nurturing, family-like environment in the boarding area. Matrons also play a key role in identifying safeguarding concerns and reporting them to the CPS team.

- **Social Worker**

The Social Worker identifies vulnerable children for school enrollment, conducts home visits, engages families, and supports students' emotional development. They also collaborate on safeguarding efforts and connect families to external resources.

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## **Child Protection and Safeguarding**

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Our full time Child Protection Officers are at the heart of our school. They take into account the multifaceted issues facing each child at school and at home. They are trained to recognize the issues which may be hindering learning or causing the exhibition of challenging behaviours, and distinguish these external factors from potential disorders. A new student exhibiting distress could have an undiagnosed learning need, but they could also be homesick, expressing trauma or feeling frustrated at the wave of challenges they are facing in this new environment, such as attending a school for the first time or receiving classes in their non-native English.

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The Child Protection Officers must therefore know each of our students in great depth. To achieve this, they have the following duties:

- Conduct extended 1:1 listening sessions with each student at least every two months
- Follow up any referral of child protection concerns as well as child safeguarding issues
- Develop individualised behavioural support strategies for students with additional needs in collaboration with the teaching team
- Train teachers on manageable strategies to integrate in class to support the socioemotional needs of all students
- Plan and run 1:1 sessions with students requiring additional support
- Work closely with teachers to assess and refer children in need of additional support by participating in whole school assemblies and subject specific meetings when necessary
- Implement strategies on supporting children who have experienced and continue to experience trauma
- Outreach work with the families of enrolled students

- In the course of offering 1:1 support, observe and report disclosures that may suggest learning, developmental, or emotional needs.
- Attends IEP or Learning Support meetings to provide insight into the students' home situations, trauma history, or protection concerns. This is in addition to offering input on safeguarding needs that may impact learning or classroom behavior.
- Advocate for safe, trauma-informed learning environments while at the same time facilitating communication between the protection team, Learningexpert, teachers, and caregivers.
- Monitoring students' wellbeing to ensure that support decisions and interventions do not expose vulnerable students to harm or discrimination.

## Learning Support

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Our full-time Learning Support Specialist and Early Literacy Specialist are at the heart of our inclusive learning environment.

In collaboration with the CPS department, they work to ensure that every student is supported to access learning according to their unique profile of strengths and needs. With a deep understanding of developmental, cognitive, emotional, and learning differences, they play a key role in identifying barriers to learning and helping students, families, and teachers address them collaboratively and compassionately.

A student struggling in class may have an undiagnosed learning need, but they may also be impacted by limited prior schooling, gaps in literacy or numeracy, or recent changes in language of instruction. Our Learning Support team is trained to discern between these possibilities and to recommend targeted interventions, screenings, or referrals as needed. They work to ensure that learning support is thoughtful, timely, and equitable, always grounded in classroom realities and family contexts.

To do this, they carry out the following responsibilities:

- Conduct observations to help identify learning needs early and accurately
- Develop Individual Education Plans for students requiring additional support, in close collaboration with teachers and students
- Provide targeted, in-class and/or out of class support or interventions to students with diagnosed or suspected learning needs
- Lead teacher training sessions on inclusive strategies, differentiation, and accommodations
- Guide and monitor the implementation of access arrangements for internal and external assessments
- Attend classroom sessions and planning meetings to support inclusive planning and co-teaching
- Liaise with external professionals (e.g., educational psychologists, speech therapists) when referrals are needed
- Meet with team regularly to discuss progress, share resources, and communicate with families
- Maintain clear records of support strategies and monitor student progress over time
- Contribute to a whole-school culture of inclusion by participating in school-wide initiatives, assemblies, and parent events

## Teacher support

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The Inclusion Team plays a central role in building teacher capacity around trauma-informed teaching and effective differentiation. Through regular collaboration, teachers receive ongoing training and support to meet the diverse needs of their students. Weekly check-ins allow teachers to discuss individual student cases, safeguarding concerns, and strategies for academic and emotional support. Monthly professional development sessions focus on inclusion practices, differentiation, and trauma-informed approaches, ensuring that staff are continuously growing in their expertise. As part of onboarding, all new teachers attend sessions that introduce the school's inclusion policy and frameworks. Identified teacher mentors are assigned to support students with learning needs or IEPs, conducting monthly one-on-one check-ins and tracking progress toward IEP goals. These mentors work closely with the Learning Support team to share observations and ensure consistency in support.

Additionally, departmental Teaching Assistants enhance classroom inclusion by assisting with lesson planning, resource development, group facilitation, and individualized interventions. Together, these structures empower teachers to create responsive, inclusive learning environments.

Within our school, there are various teachers who step into leadership roles to guide the school in providing Special Education support to identified students and to lead their peers in using inclusive and supportive practices in their classrooms. These teachers collaborate with the Learning Support Specialist and the Global Team and gain further training on evidence based practices to support diverse students and differentiate instruction. They also collaborate with the teacher leader who coordinates Extra Sessions which is our school's small group instruction and response to intervention program for students who may have fallen behind in their class work. Together all school teachers provide the necessary support to the Learning Support Specialist and Child Protection Department and enact the tasks outlined in this policy.

# STUDENTS' LEARNING NEEDS

## Identification and support for student with learning needs

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The [Inclusive Access Arrangements Decision Pathway](#) is a step-by-step guide designed to help teachers and staff systematically identify students who may require access arrangements during their IB programme. It begins by determining whether a student has previously identified challenges or if new concerns have recently emerged. Teachers are encouraged to gather current observations, review past documentation, and evaluate any trial support strategies. The process emphasizes ongoing monitoring, collaborative planning (e.g., IEPs or learning plans), and a focus on reducing learning barriers throughout teaching and learning. When necessary, the pathway supports referral for formal assessment and guides schools in requesting access arrangements for IB summative assessments, in accordance with IB policy. This approach ensures early identification, continuous support, and equitable access for all learners.

### 1. Referral and Initial Screening

Students with potential learning needs are identified either by classroom teachers or by the Inclusion Team. This typically happens when a student shows ongoing difficulty in accessing curriculum content or making expected academic progress.

#### Key Reflection Questions for Teachers:

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- What are the barriers to the student's learning and participation?
  - Who is affected by these barriers?
  - What classroom strategies or resources have already been used?
  - What additional supports could be introduced?
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#### Referral Process:

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1. **Raising a Concern:** Concerns can be raised by any stakeholder (teachers, parents, Inclusion Team). These are discussed during monthly departmental meetings, attended by a member of the Inclusion Team.
2. **Observation and Documentation:** The Inclusion Team begins collecting classroom data, work samples, and teacher notes about strategies already attempted. This documentation is ongoing.

3. **Screening and Planning:** The Inclusion Team and the classroom teacher collaborate to conduct targeted screenings or observations in the identified area(s) of need.
  4. **Developing a Support Plan:** If warranted, the student is referred for additional support. This can include the creation of an Individual Educational Plan (IEP), and/or referral to small-group or 1:1 support sessions.
  5. **Ongoing Monitoring:** Teachers continue to provide daily encouragement and supportive classroom strategies, while the Inclusion Team monitors student progress closely.
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## 2. Individual Educational Plan (IEP)

If screening confirms that a student requires sustained support, the Inclusion Team develops an **Individual Educational Plan (IEP)**. This document ensures that the student's learning, emotional, and social needs are met through specific accommodations and targeted goals.

### IEP Development and Structure:

#### IEP template

#### Stage 1: Understanding the Student

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- Personal and academic profile compiled from input by teachers, caregivers, and the student.
  - Any relevant diagnosis or area of special need.
  - Summary of current academic performance and emotional/behavioral observations.
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#### Stage 2: Setting Goals and Supports

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- **Measurable, realistic goals** are co-created with the student.
  - **Short-term objectives** are defined, with assigned staff responsible for follow-up.
  - An **action plan** outlines:
    - Teaching strategies
    - Differentiation and classroom adjustments
-



- Social or behavioral goals
  - Any awareness or inclusion activities for peers
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### Stage 3: Monitoring and Review

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- A **mentor teacher** is assigned to conduct at least monthly 1:1 check-ins with the student.
  - The Inclusion Team meets at least once per term with the mentor and rest of the teaching team to review progress and revise the IEP.
  - Adjustments are made based on teacher observations, student feedback, and academic data.
  - If significant progress is made, the IEP may be concluded.
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IEPs are updated every term and serve as a vital record of support provided, ensuring students have appropriate documentation for future educational settings or accommodations.

### 3. Additional Support Structures

#### **Teacher Mentors:**

Every student with an IEP is assigned a mentor teacher who:

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- Provides regular emotional and academic check-ins
  - Supports goal setting and monitors progress
  - Collaborates with the Inclusion Team to revise the IEP and report on student growth
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#### **Teaching Assistants (TAs):**

Each academic department has a dedicated TA who supports:

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- Lesson planning and differentiation
  - Resource development and small group activities
  - 1:1 academic interventions and classroom management
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This structured process ensures that students with learning needs are identified

early, supported with targeted interventions, and regularly monitored to ensure progress and long-term success.

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## **Kenya Learning differences**

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Whilst a little behind the international curve on establishing a structured response to learning differences, Kenya has made strides forward in the 21st century.

The Revised Edition of the National Education Act (1980) had already enshrined into law a certain degree of inclusivity by stating that “no pupil shall be refused admission to, or excluded from, the school on any grounds of sex, race or colour or on any other unreasonable grounds”. But it was not until the Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2005 when the country first explicitly laid out a policy direction on special needs and disabilities. It underscored “the government’s commitment to ensuring that learners with special needs and disabilities have equal access to quality and relevant education.” In the years that followed, efforts have been made to improve the Kenyan education sector’s policy and legal framework. There has also been a focus on collecting adequate data on children with Learning differences, providing appropriate facilities, and advocating the importance of mainstreaming special needs education in the nation, though on all counts this is work in progress rather than mission complete.

## **Kenya Institute of Special Education**

Kenya Institute of Special Education (KISE) is a semi-autonomous government agency of the Ministry of Education, Kenya. Their mission is to “facilitate service provision for persons with special needs and disabilities through human capital development, research, data management, functional assessment, rehabilitation, inclusive education practices, technology and production of educational resources and assistive devices.”

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In order to continuously improve our identification of potential Learning differences, we use KISE for the following services:

- Their teacher training courses about Learning differences and disabilities
- Their educational and psychological assessment centre for the training of teachers of children with special needs education
- Visitation of their orientation and mobility centre for training and demonstration purposes
- Their wealth of written resources about Learning differences and disabilities
- In individual cases where a potential need has been established, we refer the child to their Functional Assessment service. Located in Nairobi, their qualified

experts can assess for visual impairment, hearing impairment, intellectual differences such as autism, emotional and behavioural disorders, physical and multiple disabilities and speech, language and communication.

- Material for teacher training and screening resources are also available online. [www.kenyadisabilityresource.org](http://www.kenyadisabilityresource.org) is a not-for-profit site with free resources on disabilities and learning differences, as well as an online support network for those working in the area in Kenya.

## AN ENVIRONMENT FOR LEARNING DIFFERENCES

Before explaining adjustments we make on a needs basis, it is important to clarify how our 'default' learning environment is conducive to the benefit of all students and their learning differences:

- Safety is of the highest priority. Our school is designed to be a haven for students who come from the most challenging of circumstances.
- We strive to build the confidence of each student as they discover their strengths as well as areas of improvement.
- We differentiate class activities so that all students are challenged.
- Students feel part of a community. Cultural festivals to regular class activities and competitions, whole-school events and sports days all help every student feel included and part of a wider team.
- Students are listened to. The student voice, channelled through democratically elected Class Captains, is powerful and drives change within the school community.
- Internationally minded, the school gives the students hope for a life beyond the slum in which they live, should they wish to expand their horizons.
- We provide a safe, structured setting, with scheduled routine
- Humour is employed by the teachers, but not sarcasm which can be misconstrued. The classroom's atmosphere is one of positivity and optimism.
- Language is clear and understandable
- Feedback is prompt and students are given the opportunity to ask follow up questions and discuss the methodology behind assessment.
- Peer support is built into our Unit Plans as students provide emotional and academic support to each other. The goal is to create a cycle of positive

behaviour, with adult influence only when necessary.

- Students are provided a regular outlet to discuss feelings. Teachers are encouraged to spend time bonding with the students in the break times, and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Team is on hand. There are also group opportunities in pastoral time, health education classes, music, art and drama, amongst others.
- While achievement is measured precisely so students can track their learning, the emphasis is moreover on trying our best.
- We ground learning in real life so that students understand why they are studying what they are studying.
- Storytelling, role play and drama are regularly included in classroom activities to encourage collaboration, communication, responsibility and the concept of personal belongings.
- Independence is engendered through regular pedagogical techniques such as scaffolding, experiential learning, inquiry, chunking, graphic organisers, reinforcement using ICT programs, demonstrations and experiments. All students have equal access to all school facilities, including technology.
- Diversity is celebrated at all stages. We admit students based on diversity of nationality, background and gender. We then instil an anti-bias approach into our curriculum which celebrates identity and diversity, as well as advocating for justice and activism.
- Our curriculum and library offer an insight into a world of the variety of human lives. Difference, the children learn, can be a very good thing.
- As well as taking measures to ensure a safe learning environment, we cover all medical costs of our students, small or large – via an insurance scheme with public hospitals and we privately cover anything not covered under that scheme.

## SPECIFIC SUPPORT AND LEARNING INTERVENTIONS

### Support for Seekers (New Starters)

Students who join the school during the preparatory year, referred to as **Seekers**, receive specialized support tailored to their often disrupted educational and emotional backgrounds. The support model integrates trauma-informed and

attachment-based approaches, promoting both academic and emotional development. Key features include individualized English language support, phonics interventions for early learners, and access to the Cambridge English Curriculum. Seekers are assigned student mentors to assist with social-emotional integration and language development. Structured play sessions, wellbeing check-ins, and out-of-school support by trained staff further ensure holistic care. Each new student follows a personalized transition plan, coordinated with previous schools or relevant partners.

### Extra Sessions for Academic Support (General Intervention)

The school runs **tiered intervention cycles** targeting students with consistently low performance in English and Mathematics. These sessions occur during weekly study periods and are guided by data from diagnostic assessments on the **Century** platform. Each term-long cycle starts with a diagnostic to identify gaps and generate individualized learning paths. Students work on specific learning nuggets, requiring a 90% score to progress, and retake diagnostics at the end to measure improvement (passing score: 60%). English and Mathematics teachers facilitate these sessions, providing targeted instruction, academic support, and behavior management. Students are selected based on performance data, IEP reports, and teacher referrals.

### Student Specific Interventions

**Students** identified with sustained low academic performance in English or Mathematics receive focused interventions outside regular class time. These sessions take place twice a week. Students are selected through report card data and teacher input. Each cycle begins and ends with a 1 diagnostic assessment, allowing teachers to track progress. Teachers differentiate instruction and provide individualized feedback.

## ADJUSTMENTS

### Adjustments to pedagogical practices

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Inspired greatly by IB's *Meeting Student Learning Diversity in the Classroom (2013)*, we may make the following adjustments to classroom practice on a needs basis. Additionally, we embrace **Universal Design for Learning (UDL)** as a guiding principle. By designing lessons that anticipate variability from the start, we minimize barriers and enhance engagement for all students—not just those with identified needs.

### **Some of the adjustments made in class for learning differences include:**

- Pre-teaching notes can be made available to students who require them as an assistive aid and visual prompt
- Extra time may be put into proofreading and marking work to pick up on recording and decoding errors.
- Multi-sensory learning, such as offering audio versions of a text.
- Print size can be increased at request.
- Visual organizers, graphics and mind maps are provided.
- Buddy system and peer support.
- A quieter spot of the classroom is offered to reduce unwanted distraction.
- Brain breaks and restructuring of lesson time.
- The library and “The Den” (a safe space usually occupied by our Child Protection Officers) are places students may be given rights to visit beyond the usual schedule.
- A timer to help the student keep on task may be provided, whilst potentially dangerous implements such as scissors may be removed if a student is physically impulsive.
- Century is an adaptive online learning platform that uses artificial intelligence to personalize learning pathways in subjects like English, Math, and Science. In our extra support sessions, it serves as an intervention tool by identifying knowledge gaps and guiding students through targeted, self-paced micro lessons to reinforce foundational skills and boost confidence.
- Mental health specialized support: this includes showing empathy, providing safe spaces for conversation if the student wishes to initiate such interaction, taking concerns seriously, following the appropriate reporting channel and passing the responsibility on to the suitable professional who can escalate the response as necessary.
- Both the learning space and pedagogical practices are open to adjustment as required depending on their needs. In a classroom this may mean changing seating formation, maintaining eye level communication.
- Those students with hearing impairment are sat optimally in the class. The teacher ensures there is no obstacle to lip reading and may repeat instructions personally to the student. Whenever possible, visual and written aids are used such as class notes or vocabulary lists.
- Those students with visual impairment may be given tactile materials, allowed to submit work orally, positioned optimally and provided with the assistive technology they require to succeed at school.
- We maintain contact with the doctors who supervise our students’ cases, ensuring all teachers are aware of the prevalent information pertaining to the medical condition and how we may aptly respond to the child’s needs.
- All needs and adjustments are recorded within the student’s Individual

Education Plan, shared only with those members of staff who work directly with that student each term.

### Adjustments to the learning space

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- Our school has three floors. A ramp has been built to connect the floors together.
- Gender-specific disabled toilets are available on the first floor.
- Within our buildings, we maximise natural light and flow of air. Classroom walls that are painted lighter colours can help all children to see better.
- We ensure that play areas are accessible and safe (in terms of minimising both physical hazards and child protection risks).
- We ensure that toilets are accessible, safe, clean, private and separated by gender; and that there is safe drinking water easily accessible to all students and teachers.

### Adjustments to assessment

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In accordance with IB protocol, we ensure that assessment is accessible in terms of design, content and medium so that all students have the opportunity to succeed. Our flexible approach is tailored to the needs of the students as well as the assessment, as outlined in our Assessment Policy. We always communicate the purpose, product, process and medium of every assessment beforehand so that students fully understand expectations and may communicate a need for any adjustments not already provided.

We provide inclusive assessment arrangements in whichever way is feasible and within the regulations of IB, individualised to current requirements. No adjustment gives any candidate an advantage. Where necessary, our MYP and DP coordinators, with the permission of the candidate, submits the assessment adjustment request along with the appropriate documentation to the IB Global Centre. *Candidates with Assessment Access requirements (2017)* outlines the arrangements which require IB's prior authorization and those which do not.

### Access Arrangements and Modifications

- *Access arrangements* are changes to how a student is assessed (e.g., extra time, use of a reader), without altering what is being assessed.
- *Modifications* change the actual learning expectations or assessment criteria and are not typically permitted in IB assessments.  
IB emphasizes providing access, not reducing rigor.

## Examples of Access Arrangements

These are changes to *how* the student completes the assessment, not *what* is being assessed. Below are strategies we use to provide equitable access while maintaining the integrity of assessment.

### Practical Strategies

#### 1. Extra Time

- Allow up to 50% additional time during examinations. *Additional time for mathematics—applicable to mathematics and subjects that require mathematical calculations (25%) DP Specific*
- Plan assessments with flexible start/end times.
- Give early finishers enrichment tasks to avoid drawing attention to those who need more time.

#### 2. Reader

- Assign a trained adult or peer to read instructions, questions, or content aloud.
- Use text-to-speech software for independent readers.
- Ensure the reader reads verbatim and doesn't explain or interpret.

#### 3. Scribe

- A trained adult writes for the student based on verbatim responses.
- Use speech-to-text software for older students with writing difficulties.
- Practice scribing in formative tasks so students are familiar with the process.

#### 4. Separate Room / Quiet Environment

- Create a calm, distraction-free space with supervision.
- Schedule assessments at alternate times if needed.



- Use headphones with white noise or calming music (if permitted).

## 5. Assistive Technology

- Allow laptops/tablets for typing answers if handwriting is a barrier.
- Use screen readers, magnifiers, or speech-to-text tools.
- Ensure students regularly use these tools during regular classwork so it's not a new experience during assessment.

## 6. Enlarged Text / High-Contrast Materials

- Print assessment booklets in large font sizes.
- Use bold, clear fonts with high contrast (black text on white or cream paper).
- Avoid decorative fonts and crowded layouts.

## 7. Simplified Instructions (not content)

- Rephrase directions without altering the task.
- Offer visuals or flowcharts to explain multi-step tasks.
- Allow clarification questions before starting.

## 8. Breaks During Assessment

- Permit supervised rest breaks without extending the test time (unless justified).
- Let students pause for hydration, emotional regulation, or sensory reset.
- Track timing to ensure equity across all students.

Some access arrangements (e.g., extra time, reader) require **IB authorization** before official assessment use. Others (e.g., providing a quiet room or enlarged text) may be granted **internally** by the school. The MYP and DP Coordinators ensure compliance with IB regulations.

Teachers incorporate accommodations into daily instruction, not only during assessments. For example, formative tasks may allow oral presentations instead of written reports, or chunked instructions to support working memory challenges. These strategies benefit all learners through differentiation and universal design.

#### Individualized Support and Modifications for Students with Learning Needs:

To ensure equitable access to learning, a range of support strategies may be implemented for students with identified or suspected learning needs. These may include:

- Adjustments to assessment criteria to reflect individual learning profiles
- Differentiated task structures, such as scaffolded instructions, extended time allowances, or a reduced task scope
- Referrals for external specialist services, such as shadow teaching, therapy, or life coaching
- Structured after-school academic or emotional support provided by school staff
- Preferential seating or placement within the classroom to support visual, auditory, or attentional needs
- Tools such as customized graphic organizers or time-management aids to support task completion and executive functioning

Each student receiving learning support is reviewed annually, and adjustments to their support plan may be made throughout the year based on ongoing monitoring and teacher feedback.

#### Access Arrangements for DP Students

In the Diploma Programme, candidates with learning support needs may be eligible for **inclusive assessment arrangements**, in line with the *General Regulations: Diploma Programme (2022)*. Key points include:

- A learning support need—whether temporary or permanent—may hinder a candidate’s ability to demonstrate their skills and knowledge under standard assessment conditions.

- The school is responsible for identifying and responding to the specific needs of each student, as IB only provides general guidance.
  - The IB may authorize inclusive assessment arrangements upon request by the DP Coordinator. These might include, for example, extra time, the use of assistive technology, or modified test formats.
  - Should the school or candidate believe an arrangement is inappropriate, a re-evaluation can be requested. The first re-evaluation is conducted by IB staff, and, if necessary, a second (final) re-evaluation may be completed by an IB employee and an external specialist.
  - Requests for re-evaluation must be submitted within one month of receiving the original decision.
  - Once access arrangements are authorized, neither the student nor their guardians may cite them as grounds for reconsidering exam results due to "adverse circumstances." The approved arrangements are considered full accommodation.
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## **Gifted and Talented Students**

**Definition:** Gifted and talented students are those whose intellectual or creative potential is so advanced that they require specialized support to thrive academically and personally. This may include:

- High general intellectual ability
- Exceptional aptitude in subject areas such as mathematics, science, literacy, or languages
- Distinctive talent in the arts, leadership, creative thinking, or physical expression

### **Identification:**

Gifted and talented learners are identified through the same referral process as students with learning support needs, in collaboration with the Learning Support Specialist. Identification may occur through classroom observations, performance data, or teacher and parent referrals, and is considered on a case-by-case basis.

### **Accommodations:**

- In the MYP, accommodations may include personalized learning plans, differentiated instruction, leadership roles, enrichment groups, or subject-specific acceleration.
- In the DP, adjustments may involve flexible course selection—such as choosing a fourth HL subject, pursuing anticipated subjects, or leading ambitious CAS projects. Further individualized accommodations may be made depending on the student's profile.

### **Requesting IB Assessment Access Arrangements**

When a student is nearing formal IB assessment years (e.g., MYP Year 5), access arrangements may be requested through the MYP and DP Coordinators. This process includes:

- Documented evidence of need (e.g., psychological/medical reports)
- Record of consistent school-based accommodations
- Parental consent  
Requests must be submitted by the Coordinators through the IB Access and Inclusion portal in accordance with IB deadlines.

### **Access Needs vs. Adverse Circumstances**

- **Access needs** refer to ongoing, documented requirements such as dyslexia or sensory impairment.
- **Adverse circumstances** are unexpected events (e.g., family trauma, illness) that may temporarily impact a student's performance.  
IB provides different mechanisms for supporting students depending on which applies.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY, DISTRIBUTION & REVIEW OF POLICY**

As part of their enrollment into our school, Caregivers are given access to the Co-Education Pact which is a key document that aims to define the general terms and expectations governing the School community as a whole, Parents/Caregivers, students, and Still I Rise International School. The Co-Education Pact serves as a reference guide, outlining the values, principles, and accepted norms and rules to be

adhered to by all members of the International School community. Here they provide their consent to manage and store students' data.

Any sensitive documents are kept in the school safe in the school office, managed by the school administrator. Only the relevant members of the team can access confidential information regarding individual students on the school drive. Any written reports and observations of doctors or psychologists are directly sent to the School Leadership Team and filed in the students' folders in the CPS Room.

We share the CPS and Inclusion policy with all teachers, and lead trainings and workshops for the wider school community (other school staff, parents, students) to disseminate information on the topic and refer to the policy.

This CPS and Inclusion Policy will be annually reviewed by a multi-disciplinary committee so that it continues to reflect the needs and profiles of our students. The Inclusion Team takes ownership of this review ensuring we include the voices of all stakeholders (students, teachers, parents, Pedagogical leadership Team, Global Team).



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