Sama American Private School
مدرسـة سـما الأمريكيـة الخاصـة

Inclusion Department

Special educational needs and disability (SEND) Procedure

2021-2022

Contents

Special Education Categories

The following categories of disabilities are recognized the by UAE, Ministry of Education as categories of disabilities that qualify a student to receive special education programs and related services, if it can be demonstrated that the disability adversely affects the child's academic performance:

Common Barriers to Learning	Categories of Disability
Cognition and Learning	1. Intellectual Disability 2. Specific Learning Disorders 3. Multiple Disabilities 4. Developmental Delay (Younger than 5 years
Communication and Interaction	5. Communication Disorders 6. Autism Spectrum Disorders
Social, Emotional and Mental health	7. Attention Deficit Hyper Activity Disorder 8. Psycho-emotional Disorders
Physical, sensory and medical	9. Sensory impairment 10. Deaf-blind disability 11. Physical disability 12. Chronic or acute medical conditions

Intellectual Disabilities

Intellectual disabilities, formerly called "mental retardation" means having significantly below average general intellectual functioning, existing along with deficits in adaptive behavior which are manifested during the developmental period and adversely affect a child's educational performance.

Multiple disabilities

A student who experiences a number of severe barriers to learning, such as a sensory disability and a physical disability, may be identified as having a multiple disability. Students are identified with a multiple disability when severe barriers caused by more than one type of disability, disorder or condition are present. The particular combination of challenges experienced by a student who experiences multiple barriers to learning will vary but will always have a very significant impact upon their personal and educational functioning. This may mean that they make tiny steps of progress over time.

Specific developmental delay

Children who are delayed in one specific area in development (whilst other areas develop at the expected rate), experience specific developmental barriers. As these children get older, and are able to participate in standardized assessment procedures, they may be diagnosed with specific learning disorders. It is expected that most children who experience specific developmental delay will have their needs met within the context of an inclusive early year's education setting. Early and targeted intervention is important to minimize any potential delay in development.

Specific Learning Disabilities

A specific learning disorder is a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using spoken or written language. The disorder may manifest itself in an impaired ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell or understand mathematical calculations such as dyslexia, dysgraphia and dyscalculia.

Physical and health related disability

This means physical and health problems which are chronic or severe in a manner that they lead to poor and limited functionality and adversely affect the educational performance of the student such as asthma, attention deficit disorder with hyperactivity, diabetes, heart disease, epilepsy, leukemia, cerebral palsy, renal failure, HIV, and head injuries etc.

Visual Impairment

Visual impairment means impairment in vision that, even with correction, adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term visual impairment includes both partially sighted and blindness.

Hearing Impairment

Including Deafness Hearing impairment including deafness means an impairment that, with or without amplification, adversely affects educational performance; may be permanent or fluctuating; may be so severe that the child is impaired in processing linguistic information through hearing, with or without amplification.

Speech and Language Disorders

Speech and language disorders means having a communication disorder such as stuttering, impaired articulation, language impairment, or a voice impairment that adversely affects a child's educational performance.

Autism Spectrum Disorders

Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), also known as Pervasive Developmental Disorders (PDDs), cause severe and pervasive impairment in thinking, feeling, language, and the ability to relate to others. These disorders are usually first diagnosed in early childhood and range from a severe form, called Autistic Disorder, through Pervasive Development Disorder Not Otherwise Specified (PDD-NOS), to a much milder form, Asperger's Disorder. They also include two rare disorders, Rett's Disorder and Childhood Disintegrative Disorder.

Emotional and Behavioral Disorders

An emotional and behavioral disorder means a condition exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree that adversely affects a child's educational performance: An inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors. An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers. Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances. A general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression. A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems.

Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder   ADHD

Students with this type of ADHD are likely to be less disruptive and active in the classroom than those who have the hyperactive-impulsive type.

Chronic or acute medical conditions

Students with chronic or acute medical needs will experience significant barriers to learning because of reduced strength, alertness, stamina or concentration and they are identified as having a special educational need. Examples of chronic or acute health problems include heart defects, epilepsy, and cancer or brain tumour.

Gifted and Talented

Gifted and Talented refers to having outstanding ability, or a great deal of willingness in one or more areas of intelligence, or creativity, or academic achievement or special talents and abilities such as oratory, poetry, drawing, handicrafts, sports, drama, or leadership capacity. More often the performance of the talented or gifted student is so exceptional or advanced that they require special provisions to meet their educational needs in the general education classrooms with support from special education teachers and resource room teachers.

The Ministry of Education in the UAE provides various services to Gifted and Talented students such as: enrichment programs inside the general education classes or resource rooms (either in a subject in the curriculum, or subject not included in the curriculum). Additional services include assigning student's individual projects and studies, specialized educational tours, attending lectures, debates, educational seminars, participating in educational competitions, providing students with programs to solve problems, programs of leadership, communication and computer skills, and other such enrichment programs are also provided.

Exclusionary Clause

The term disability and or placement in special education does not apply to students who are experiencing learning problems that are primarily the result of the following circumstances:

- Environmental factors
- Cultural factors including not being a native Arabic speaker
- Economic disadvantage
- Students who have experienced academic failure.

If any of the above circumstances are present, then a student should be referred to the School Support Team for intervention and support services. The major categories of disabilities which may qualify a student for special education programs and services are not limited to the mentioned, but also include other disabilities such as the following:

- Multiple Disabilities
- Developmental Delay

Special Education Programs

An important consideration in special education is to provide the student with disabilities an education in the least restrictive environment which means that to the extent possible, a student with disabilities should be educated with age-appropriate peers who do not have a disability. The regular classroom is the best educational option for all students, including students eligible to receive special education services. There are different types of special education programs, and inclusive education learning environments that are available to meet the needs of students with special needs which are described and illustrated below, along a continuum from least-to-most restrictive learning environments. For example, a student with special needs may be enrolled in all regular education classes and receive special education support services only from community service provider, or may receive classroom-based or school-based special education programs and support services. Some students have disabilities that are so severe that they are unable to benefit from participating in a regular education school setting and participate in community or center-based educational programs.

Pre-Referral Services

Before a referral is made to determine a student's eligibility for special education programs and services, students enrolled in regular education classrooms whose performance exceeds or does not meet expectations compared to their peers should be referred to the School Support Team who will develop an intervention plan to improve the student's academic performance.

Special Education Programs

Inclusion in Regular Education Classroom with Community-Based Support Students with special needs may be enrolled in a regular education classroom and receive special education support service.

Inclusion in Regular Education Classroom with Classroom-Based Support

Students with special needs may be enrolled in a regular education classroom and receive special education support services in the classroom from the general and or special education teachers or from specialists. For example, a student with a speech and language disability may receive speech therapy services from the speech and language therapist in the regular education classroom.

Inclusion in Regular Education Classroom with School-Based Support

Students with special needs may be enrolled in a regular education classroom and receive special education programs and services outside of the regular classroom, but in the school setting. For example, a student with a specific learning disability might receive individualized instruction from a reading specialist in the school setting, but outside of the regular education classroom,

Inclusion in Regular Education Classroom with Resource Room Support

A resource room is a classroom located in the regular education school where students with special needs, or the Gifted and Talented may attend to receive individual or group instruction and support in not more than half of his academic subjects as indicated in his Individual Education Plan (IEP), or Advanced Learning Plan (ALP).

Basic Special Education Classroom

The basic education classroom is a classroom in a regular education school where students with special needs attend to receive group instruction and support in the majority of their academic subjects as indicated in his IEP.

Programs for Gifted and Talented Students

The students identified as Gifted and Talented have an exceptionally high level of capability in one or more subjects, or in areas of personal interests such as electronics or play writing. Gifted and Talented students require advanced educational programs to supplement the general education curriculum and provide them with a high level of enrichment activities.
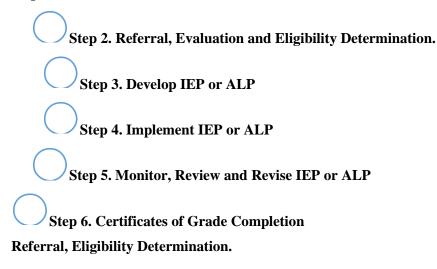
Enriched activities may include independent studies and vocational guidance which are detailed in a written document referred to as an Advanced Learning Plan (ALP) which is developed by a specialized team to meet the needs, interests and creativity of Gifted and Talented students. An example of approved enrichment programs is the Comprehensive School Enrichment Program.

Identification at Level of School

When a student who is not enrolled in any special education program experiences learning or behavior difficulties, or has sensory, medical or physical needs, the student may be referred by a parent, school personnel or community organization for a comprehensive evaluation to determine his eligibility for special education programs and services. The following 6 steps should be followed to determine the student's eligibility for special education programs and services.

    Step 1. Pre referral

    Step 2. Referral, Evaluation and Eligibility Determination.

    Step 3. Develop IEP or ALP

    Step 4. Implement IEP or ALP

    Step 5. Monitor, Review and Revise IEP or ALP

    Step 6. Certificates of Grade Completion
    Referral, Eligibility Determination.

Step 1. Pre referral.

    Student Support Teams

- The school principal forms a School Support Team (SST) which consists of the school principal, student's teacher, special education teacher, social worker, speech and language pathologist, and psychologist.

The student who is experiencing learning problems and a parent are also invited to participate in the SST meetings.

- The SST may meet once a week to discuss the academic performance of students who are experiencing learning problems and have been referred to the SST.

- Written referrals to the SST may be made by any school personnel and will be received by the school principal or another person as designated by the principal.

- SST members receive notification of a proposed SST meeting including date, time and location.

- The SST meets and reviews referrals received.

- SST members conduct a review of students' academic and performance history, medical history, and conducts a classroom observation in the area of concern. For example, if the student is experiencing problems in mathematical calculation, the observation is conducted in the student's math class.

- SST members make recommendations for pre-referral interventions intended to improve the student's academic performance.

- The SST members monitor the student's progress for a maximum of four weeks and review data weekly for discussion.

- If the student's progress is adequate, interventions may be discontinued when no longer needed.

- If the student's progress is not adequate, the SST may refer the student to the Multidisciplinary Evaluation Team out and inside the school to conduct a comprehensive evaluation and determine eligibility for special education programs and related services.

- For students who are not enrolled in any school at the time that a request for an evaluation is made, or at the request of a parent, a comprehensive evaluation will be conducted to determine eligibility for special education services without completing Step 1 of the process.

Step 2. Referral, Evaluation and Eligibility Determination

The Multidisciplinary Evaluation Team (MET) who conduct the comprehensive evaluation include the following: special education teacher, teacher, the guardian, the school principal, psychologist, social worker, and other specialists from out the school who are required according to the condition of student such as a speech therapist, physical therapist, physician, nurse and the student himself, if appropriate.

- Each member of the MET conducts a comprehensive assessment to determine the student's strengths, needs and present level of academic and social functioning.

- Each MET member must complete an evaluation within 30 days from the date that the referral was received by the SST.

- MET members provide a copy of their report to discuss the results of each assessment and to determine the student's eligibility and need for special education programs and related services.

- MET members complete the Multidisciplinary Evaluation Summary report (MES)

Step 3. Develop IEP or ALP

If the MET determines that the student is eligible to receive special education programs and services, then following the MET meeting, an IEP meeting is held, and an IEP is developed. The most important elements of the IEP are the goals and objectives and accommodations, and modifications that are needed to meet the educational needs of the student.

Accommodations and Modifications for Students with Special Needs

Any type or combination of special education programs and related services specified in the **Individualized Educational Plan** or **Advanced Learning Plan** may be provided to students who qualify for services to meet their educational needs. In addition, in order to meet the educational needs of students, accommodations and modifications in the

teaching methods, learning materials or learning environment may be necessary and should be specified in the IEP or ALP. Accommodations are changes that do not alter what is being taught and includes alterations of the environment, curriculum format, or equipment that allows an individual with a disability to gain access to content and/ or complete assigned tasks.

Examples of accommodations may include extended time for students with fine motor limitations, visual impairments, or learning disabilities.

The term "modification" may be used to describe a change in the curriculum. Modifications made be necessary for students with disabilities who are unable to comprehend all of the content an instructor is teaching and are specified in the IEP or ALP. For example, 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 general education class in which they are included.

Step 4. Implement IEP or ALP

Special education programs and services are provided to students in accordance with the recommendations of the IEP or ALP. The IEP or ALP should be implemented immediately following written parental approval. Implementation of the IEP or ALP should start as soon as possible but within a 2 week period. There are many factors to consider when placement decisions are being made. The following questions should be considered by the MET when making placement decisions.

Step 5. Monitor, Review and Revise IEP or ALP

- The IEP should be reviewed and progress monitored during each regularly scheduled card marking period. However, school personnel or a parent/guardian may request that the team review progress at an earlier data.
- During the first three months following the SST team may be reconvened to review the progress.

- The special education teacher, responsible for overseeing the implementation of the IEP will prepare the IEP Annual Review report at the end of the academic year and make recommendations for the next school year.

Step 6. Certificates of Grade Completion

Upon completion of a grade level, students with special needs will be given a certificate of completion which also indicates that he has a disability and that he has received special education services.

Reference

- UAE Inspection Framework 2015-2016

- Laws and Regulations such as Dubai Inclusive Education Policy Framework (2017)

- Federal Law No. (29) of 2006 Concerning the Rights of People of Determination

- Federal Law No. (2) of 2014 Concerning Protection of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the Emirate of Dubai

- Executive Council Resolution No. (2) of 2017 Regulating Private Schools in the Emirate of Dubai

- Federal Low of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) (1975)

- Resolution No. 43 of 2018 in support of the people of determination

- International and local inclusion policies