Ignite School

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Dubai, United Arab Emirat

Inclusion and Gifted & Talented Policy
2023-2024

Last Revised: August 2023 1st version / *November 2023 2nd version*

This plan will be revised on an annual basis.

This plan is subject to change in accordance with Federal and local laws.

Vision
Our vision is for all young people to experience that learning has lasting value beyond their life at school.
Mission
Our mission is to know the needs of every student, collaboratively creating a student-centered, sustainable 21st century learning environment that fosters leadership, social cohesion, creativity, responsibility and ambition providing a catalyst for abilities of lasting relevance to emerge.

Table of Contents

Section 1

Introduction

At Ignite, we believe in creating an inclusive school environment that respects diversity, supports a sense of belonging, and ensures that every child receives a quality education by meeting individual needs while fulfilling human potential. By addressing, accommodating, or removing barriers for those who experience them, we meet the needs of all students within a caring and supportive least restrictive environment.

Section 2

The Inclusion Department will ensure that students with challenges are provided with an environment that allows them to be educated effectively through Inclusion practices. .

Vision

The vision of Ignite School Inclusion Department is for all who qualify for SoD services to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to be independent and successful in school and in the community, and to experience that learning has lasting value beyond their life at school.

Inclusive Education Purpose

The primary purpose of inclusive education is to educate students who exhibit challenges in the regular classroom, meet their individual needs, prepare them to be independent and be active contributors in their school and outside school communities. Inclusive education allows students equal access and opportunity to an appropriate education in the general education classroom setting.

Objective

The main objective of inclusive education at Ignite School mission is to help prepare each student to contribute to their communities in meaningful and positive ways, by providing specialized instruction, honoring individual differences and learning styles, and developing independence. Inclusion is recognizing that we are all one even though we are not all the same.

Definition: Full inclusion

Full Inclusion is described as placing all students in the regular classroom on a full-time basis. Inclusion or mainstreaming refers to students being educated with non-disabled peers. Inclusion education recognizes differences by meeting the needs of individuals and taking positive action, so that everyone has equal access to the educational opportunities offered by the school. This includes regular monitoring of progress and achievement.

In an inclusive setting, the inclusion teacher collaborates with the general education teacher to implement the IEP (Individualized Education Plan) by providing services for students, and

ensuring fidelity of the IEP, including strategies, modifications and accommodations identified in the student's IEP (Individualized Education Plan). This can include co-planning and co-teaching between the inclusion teacher and the general education teacher, and including the LSA (Learning Support Assistant) as necessary. The general education teacher is responsible for instructing all children.

Inclusive Education Vision Aims
The Ignite Inclusion Department's aims are to:
- adapt and modify content and strategies to meet the needs of SoD
- have all students learning together in the general education setting
- offer a comprehensive, challenging, and relevant curriculum
- fully involve all children in the learning process
- enable SoD to be engaged in the life and work of the school to the best of their abilities, including equal opportunity to access and participate in school-sponsored co-curricular activities and extracurricular activities
- recognize and value the diversity of cultures, languages, religions, opinions and beliefs in society as a rich resource to support everyone's learning
- encourage parents to engage in their child's learning
- set and regularly progress monitor achievable targets that challenge the learning capabilities of all children
- ensure staff and children treat each other with respect
- commit to setting high expectations for all children
- have Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) support the learning and participation of children
- offer an inclusive environment that acknowledges and values differences and encourages positive interactions

Section 3

Legal Framework

Ignite School's Inclusion Team acknowledges and abides by the laws and guidance for Students of Determination to access specially designed curriculum:

- School for All (SFA) - General Rules for the Provision of Special Education Programs and Services (2021)
- The Dubai Inclusive Education Policy Framework (2017)
- The Directives and Guidelines for Inclusive Education (2019)
- Advocating for Inclusive Education (2021)
- UAE Federal law 29 (2006)

- Law no. (3) of 2022 Concerning the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the Emirate of Dubai, including its Definitions, its Objectives of the Law, and Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

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The Inclusion is influenced by Ignite's Academic Plan, which, in turn, leaned on the New York State Education Department's Blueprint for Improved Results for Students with Disabilities.

Inclusion Services Model for SoD

At Ignite, attention is given to ensure SoD are placed in the LRE (Least Restrictive Environment) the majority of the time, and students are provided instruction within the regular/general education learning environment as demonstrated by the child's needs in the IEP.

Standard Services Inside and Outside Classroom Settings

Standard Services may include the following, yet this is not meant to be an exhaustive list.
- Differentiated Instruction informed by data, included in teacher lesson plans
- Classroom accommodations
- Assessment accommodations
- 1:1 interventions as supported by the IEP, provided by Inclusion teacher and/or LSA (Learning Support Assistant)
- Modifications to the curriculum and/or assessments for access and opportunities to succeed
- Assistive technology as supported by the IEP
- Flexible, small group interventions and/or instruction
- Development, progress monitoring and revision/review of annual IEP
- Involvement of the IEP Team, including a parent/legal guardian, a regular education classroom teacher, and involvement of the child where practical
- Partnering with outside agencies, i.e., medical professionals, and relative community partners. Ignite School partners with Sunshine Learning Difficulties Center, licensed by the Community Development Authority (CDA).

Section 4

Categorization of Need

The KHDA revised framework (2019-20) provides guidance for those who qualify a student to receive special education services:

Common barriers to learning	Categories of disability (aligned with the UAE unified categorisation of disability)
Cognition and learning	1. Intellectual disability ([1]including Intellectual disability - unspecified) 2. Specific learning disorders 3. Multiple disabilities 4. Developmental delay (younger than five years of age)
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. [2]*Chronic or acute medical conditions*

The barriers and categories of need are utilized by the Ignite Inclusion Department to identify a primary and/or secondary area of need, along with an associated condition for a SoD, and to best plan for that child's needs while reducing any barriers for access and opportunities to learn. This also assists the Inclusion Department in the identification of SoD and their eligibility to receive support through an IEP (Individualized Education Plan).

Section 5

Graduated Systems of Support

The Dubai Directive and Guidelines for Inclusive Education outlines the use of graduated systems of support, or Multi-Level Systems of Support, as one of the most effective models of intervention, and which provides multiple levels of support in response to different levels of need. These multiple levels of support enhance teacher effectiveness with all students including SoD. At Ignite, emphasis is placed on ensuring the least restrictive environment, in which a large majority of students will respond to a high-quality Universal Level of education provided by the general education teacher. At times, it is necessary to employ small group instruction depending on the needs of students that are not being met at the Universal Level. Furthermore, depending on needs identified through data and data analysis, a

student may receive 1:1 instruction in the special education classroom when the Universal Level nor the Level 2 environment is deemed appropriate per the IEP.

**Level 3 - Individualized, High Intensity Support
Service (Academic and/or Behavioral/Social)**

- Individualized and specialized provision of support
- Different from support provided to most of SoD
- May include full-time support by a Learning Support Assistant (LSA)
- It is expected that only a few students will require access to Level 3 Support Service
- All students accessing L3 (Level 3) support service will benefit from the development and implementation of an individual education plan (IEP)

Level 2 - Targeted Support Service (Academic and/or Behavioral/Social)

- Additional, specific and time-limited intervention that is provided to students who are falling behind age expected levels of performance.
- It is expected that a minority of Students of Determination will require access to L2 (Level 2) support services.
- Some students accessing L2 (Level 2) support service may require enhanced support through an IEP
- Small group instruction within general education environment

Level 1 - Universal Support Service (Academic and/or Behavioral/Social)

- High-quality differentiated teaching in the classroom.
- It is expected that the large majority of SoD will be sufficiently supported through L1 (Level 1) support

Section 6

Identification / Assessment

Referral process chart for SoD (Students of Determination)

Recognition	Referral to Inclusion Department	Evaluation	Post Evaluation & Eligibility Decision	IEP Implementation and Progress Monitoring	Annual Review / Revise of IEP

Assessments Used for Identification of SoD and Progress Monitoring of the IEP

Ignite Assessments That Can Be Used for Identifying SoD & Informing the IEP	
Internal	External
- Admissions Assessments - Observations - Informal assessments - Formative assessments - Summative assessments - Core Content Benchmark Assessments - Teacher-created assessments - CLASS platform - Teacher reading and writing inventories	- MAP (Measures of Academic Performance) - CAT-4 (Cognitive Abilities Test) - IBT (International Benchmark Tests) for Arabic - QRI (Qualitative Reading Inventory) for identifying those in need of Reading Support - Outside Psychological/Medical Professional Reports

Progress Monitoring

Progress monitoring is a part of a student's IEP and used to determine if the student is making progress. The monitoring helps determine if the goals of the IEP are being met. The IEP is a working document and can be altered to meet the individual needs of the student. The results of the monitoring can be a basis to re-evaluate the IEP to provide different supports that may better meet the needs of the student. Progress monitoring is done three times a year. The type of progress monitoring used depends on the student's instructional level rather than his or her grade level. Progress monitoring can be obtained through observations, evaluations, and formative assessments.

Section 7

Ignite has an Inclusion Support Team consisting of representatives of:

Director - Wedad Saada

Principal -Dr. Gihan Fradi

Vice Principal Elementary – Colin Donovan

Vice Principal Academics – Radouane Rouchdi

Vice Principal Student Affairs – Rederick Williams

Leader of Provision for Students of Determination – Eunice Payne

> Inclusion Teachers – Dr. Carol Sims and Layla Asaad
>
> Support Teacher for Arabic – Alaa Awad
>
> Teacher Assistant - Mai Hussein Fathy
>
> Teacher Assistant - Areej Alhamayda
>
> Teacher Assistant - Diana Asiado
>
> NominatedInclusion Champion -Marcheta
>
> Hightower

The Ignite Inclusion Department acts in a consultancy role to work with class teachers, specialist teachers, parents, and students to draw up cross- curricular targets which aim to support the student and also outlines proposed strategies for learning.

The Ignite Inclusion Department maintains the inclusion section on CLASS Online

Assessments and Plan Builder, which summarizes the student's needs and outlines learning strategies. The CLASS platform also helps the Inclusion Department identify those students

who are Gifted and Talented.

The Ignite Inclusion Department maintains a multi-leveled list of students with identified learning needs as well as Emirati students. Identification of needs requires sensitivity and discretion, ensuring effective relationships (with students and families) and making certain maximum impact of support is achievable.

Key Roles and Responsibilities for Students of Determination

Inclusion Teacher:
- Ensure Least Restrictive Environment is being provided for SoD
- Collaborate with General Education Teachers and LSA (Learning Support Assistants)
- Monitor the Implementation of the IEP and Ensure its fidelity with progress monitoring
- Involve and consult parents/guardians of SoD to maintain positive bridge of school to home relationships
- Stay abreast of changes in UAE Federal and Local Government laws through Professional Learning experiences
- Plan and/or facilitate Professional Learning experiences for Ignite teachers and

Staff General Education Teacher:

- Plan differentiated instruction and inclusive learning experiences for all students
- Collaborate with Inclusion Teacher to ensure aids, services, modifications and accommodations are met for SoD
- Serve as contributing member on a student's IEP team
- Provide the least restrictive environment for SoD by collaborating with the Inclusion teacher(s), Administration, Families and outside community partners licensed as CDAs (Community Development Authority's)
- Participate in Ignite's Inclusion Department for improving the quality of the SoD delivery model

Learning Support Assistant (LSA):
- Provide direct support to SoD as identified in the student's IEP
- Assist the General Education Teacher(s) to ensure SoD have equitable access and opportunity for the curriculum and planned instructional activities
- Participate in the collection of paperwork designed to support the progress of SoDs

School Counselor:
- Support all students' wellbeing through individual counseling sessions and small groups
- Observe students' wellbeing in classrooms and social settings
- Provide guidance and work alongside teachers, staff, families and external community agencies in a supportive role for all students
- Liaise with Administration, teachers and staff on students' safety and wellbeing concerns
- Support students in need of behavioral supports and interventions

Director and Principal(s):
- Create and promote a culture of inclusion at Ignite School
- Apply the Inclusion Policy and general guidelines for special education programming
- Make sure that the necessities of SoD are being met in the school
- Accept SoD and set high expectations that students will succeed within the curriculum requirements at Ignite
- To oversee and coordinate with Inclusion Department members that resources and services are provided according to needs of SoD
- Forge and strengthen relationships among parents/guardians, teachers, and community partnerships for success of all SoD at Ignite.

Parents:
- Be an active member of their child's education by participating in the development and revision of the IEP through meetings and other communication means, i.e., video conferencing, email, phone calls
- Supply any/all information to Ignite the Admissions and Inclusion Departments relative to the Education of their child
- Comply with Ignite School rules, policies and deadlines with regard to registration and/or assessments of their child

School Nurse & Doctor:
- Maintain accurate medical and health records as they pertain to students' learning
- Team with School Administrators, teachers and staff to ensure all students are safe
- Promote healthy lifestyles of students

Students:
- Develop an understanding their specific learning needs as identified by categories and barriers (identified herein)
- Be an advocate for their learning in accordance with the IEP
- Participate in meetings and educational plan as deemed appropriate

Section 8
Provision for Students identified as Gifted and Talented

Definitions:

Gifted: 'A student who is in possession of untrained and spontaneously expressed exceptional natural ability in one or more domains of human ability.' It is imperative that their intellectual strengths be recognized and nurtured and accommodated appropriately.
Talented: 'A student who has been able to transform their giftedness into exceptional performance'.

Identification should be based upon ability and not on achievement. Some children can under-achieve for a variety of reasons such as: peer pressure, behavioral issues, special educational needs or reluctant learners. All staff need to be aware of this and look for 'hidden talents. Both qualitative and quantitative information can be used for identification purposes.

An able, gifted and talented student should be identified using a variety of methods. Ignite School will utilize the following to refer, identify and support Gifted and Talented students.

Referral process chart for Gifted and Talented Students

Recognition	Referral to Inclusion Department or Designee	Evaluation	Post Evaluation & Eligibility Decision	IEP Implementation and Progress Monitoring	Annual Review / Revise of IEP

Ignite Assessments That Can Be Used for Identifying and Supporting Gifted and Talented Students	
Internal	External
- Admissions Assessments - Teacher nominations - Parent nominations - Observations - Informal assessments - Formative assessments - Summative assessments - Core Content Benchmark Assessments - Teacher-created assessments - Teacher reading and writing inventories	- CAT scores Stanine 8-9 - Map scores percentile 95 & above - External attainment scores results stanine 8-9 - IBT (International Benchmark Tests) for Arabic - QRI (Qualitative Reading Inventory) for identifying those in need of Reading Support - Outside Psychological/Medical Professional Reports - CLASS platform - Identification by a previous teacher, previous school, external agency or organization

It is worth remembering that able, gifted and talented pupils can be:

- Good all-rounders
- High achievers in one area
- Of high ability but with low motivation
- Of good verbal ability but low writing skills
- Very able but with a short attention span
- Very able but with poor social skills
- Very able but with a learning difficulty or disability that masks their skills
- Expressing behavioral difficulties

Provision

The teachers of Ignite School are encouraged to ensure that daily teaching meets the needs of gifted & talented students through three approaches: accelerated, *enrichment and extension*.

Accelerated consists of enabling pupils to access work which would typically be for older pupils. This can occur through moving pupils up a year or through simply giving them work which would usually be given to older pupils. At Athena we focus on *enrichment* and *extension* as the two main strategies for meeting the needs of able, gifted and talented pupils.

Enrichment consists of broadening a pupil's education. This can consist of enabling a pupil to study aspects of a topic that there would not normally be time to study or adding extra subjects to the curriculum.

Extension occurs when pupils are encouraged to develop more sophisticated thinking and reasoning skills.

Classroom Provision

- All teachers have high expectations
- Tasks are designed to take account of levels of existing knowledge, skills and understanding
- Include higher order thinking tasks that involve strategic and extended learning (Webb's Depth of Knowledge, Bloom's Revised Taxonomy, Hess's Cognitive Rigor Matrix)
- Incorporate authentic, relevant learning experience through Project Based Learning, Passion Projects
- Pupils are encouraged to be independent
- Pupils have the opportunity to work with like-minded peers
- Student centered learning
- Valuing and utilizing students' own interests and learning styles through inventories
- Enriching beyond the regular curriculum
- Helps students think about their thinking
- Voice and Choice through Personalized Learning Avenues
- Encourage risk-taking to demonstrate learning in a myriad of ways
- Students are involved in the design of their learning cycles
- Plan and instruct using multitude of strategies, ideas and modes of inquiry

- Learner Profiles
- Curricular, teaching and learning adaptations (from CAT-4 assessment)

Please see the Ignite Gifted and Talented Referral For Teachers is in Appendix 4

School Based Provision

- Student as Leaders Program
- Student Council
- School based clubs – some by invitation only
- Enrichment opportunities – Entry to competitions/challenges
- League competitions
- Specialist teaching
- Intervention groups
- Wide range of After-school activities (ASA) and clubs
- Recognition and celebration of achievements in external activities e.g. football and swimming,

The Inclusion Register

The Inclusion department maintains a tiered list of students with identified gifts & talents, learning needs as well as Emirati students. Identification of needs requires sensitivity and discretion, ensuring effective relationships (with students and families) and maximum impact of support.

Section 9:

Provision for EAL (English as an Additional Language) Students

Definition:

Students whose main language at home is other than English are considered EAL (English as an Additional Language)

Aims and Objectives:
- Work with Admissions Department to identify and assess students who may qualify for EAL services
- Provide early intervention as appropriate for those are EAL students
- Liaise with Support Teachers who provide reading support to determine level of needs of EAL students
- Progress monitor growth of EAL students based on assessment data
- Work in partnership with teachers and staff to plan for curricular, teaching and learning adaptations based on internal and external assessment data
- Develop ILP (Individualized Learning Plan) or IEP to support the students' needs across the 4 language domains: Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing
- Work with general education teachers to promote a visually stimulating learning environment to support dual language acquisition through visuals, labels, scaffolded anchor charts and texts used to assist language learners

- Learn about and help facilitate learning for teachers and staff on high-leverage additional language acquisition strategies and incorporating them in to teachers' planning
- Provide guidance to Administration for the purchase of assistive devices, technology, assessment tools and materials designed to support the progress and achievement of identified EAL students

Appendix

Appendix 1: SoD Referral Form

Ignite Student Referral Form

Teacher:	Date:
Child's Name:	
Date of Birth:	
Class:	
DATA: **MAP: Reading/ Math/ Language/ Science** **Other Classroom Data:**	

Please circle the relevant area to identify your concerns			
● Medical Problems	● Classroom Behavior	● Communication	● Handwriting
● Hearing/ Sight	● Playground Behavior	● Concentration	● Reading
● Attendance	● Gross Motor Skills	● Language/ Understanding	● Writing
● Interaction with Adults	● Fine Motor Skills	● Listening Skills	● Mathematical awareness
● Interaction with peers	● Speech	● Spelling	● Visual Perceptual
● Memory	● Audio Perceptual	Other:	
Main area of concern:			

Parents concerns (if any):

Please list evidence and data to support needs for intervention:

Provision already implemented:

Please note your desired outcomes:

Appendix 2: Referral Process

The IEP Process

This following illustrates the IEP referral process at Ignite School. Each phase will guide parents and staff through the process in identifying students who may need additional assistance through inclusive practices.

Phase 1: Recognition

- Teacher or parent recognize academic or behavioral concerns
- Teacher/Parent set up a meeting with Inclusion Department

Phase 2: Referral

- Teacher will complete checklist and provide evidence of concern to Inclusion Department
- If parents provide documents including current medical report, psychological report or previous IEP, we will move to the Phase 3: Evaluation
- Teacher will share work samples, in class interventions and test scores with Inclusion Department
- Decision will be determined if students will be provided classroom intervention strategies, move forward in the IEP process, or referred to RTI
- (if student is already in RTI, meeting will take place with classroom teacher, RTI teacher and Inclusion Department)
- If the student moves forward, a parent conference will be set up to discuss concerns, testing and the purpose of Learning Support Teacher and interventions, and gain parental consent for assessment
- Parents will be informed that evaluation cannot move forward until consent form is signed, and dated.

Phase 3: Evaluation

- CLASS assessment administered
- Classroom observations
- Classwork samples

Phase 4: Post Evaluation and Eligibility Decision

- Inclusion Department meet with teacher to discuss findings
- Meeting is scheduled with parent to discuss findings and eligibility
- Findings of assessment presented, along with draft IEP.
- Parent sign to implement.

Phase 5: IEP Implementation

Appendix 3: Consent Form for Evaluation

Dear Parents of _____ Class _____ Date _____

Recently during the parent's meetings, we discussed a concern about your child's academic progress. In order to determine a clearer picture of their learning needs we recommend that a screening and evaluation should take place. This will help establish a better insight of how the school can support your child's learning needs to provide a meaningful educational experience.

Meantime, the Ignite Inclusion Team would like to observe and evaluate your child at the school level. Once we have completed our observations and receive your child's professional evaluation, we will schedule a meeting to best determine how we can assist them here at school.

Please indicate your agreement and consent for the Ignite Inclusion Team to be involved with your child by filling out the portion below and returning this letter to the school.

Thank you kindly,

Acceptance of consent

As the parent of _____, in Grade _____ I give my consent for the Inclusion Team at The Ignite School, Dubai, to conduct screening and evaluation with my child. To arrange a follow-up meeting, please contact me at:

Phone number _____ E-Mail _____

Signature _____ Date _____

OR

Rejection of consent

I do NOT give my consent for my child to be screened and evaluated by the Inclusion Team at The Ignite School, Dubai. I understand this rejection of consent may hinder my child's progress in school if specific learning needs are not addressed.

Signature _____ Date _____

Appendix 4: Gifted & Talented Referral Form

G & T Referral Form for Teachers					
Student Name:		**Teacher:**		**Class:** **Subject:**	**Date:**

CAT 4			
Verbal	**Non-Verbal**	**Mathematical**	**Spatial**

Progress Tests					
Math		**English**		**Science**	
Stanine	**SAS**	**Stanine**	**SAS**	**Stanine**	**SAS**

Please use your opinion of how strong the following abilities are:
3 = very strong   2 = moderate   1 = minor
Please use tick marks accordingly. No tick indicates that I have not seen a strength at all in that area. This may be because your teaching area does not give opportunity for the student to exhibit those abilities.

	Strength and Abilities	3		2	1	Descriptions of student behavior. Please tick mark any you think the student exhibits		
1	Humanities					Heightened levels of curiosity and a wide range of interests	Takes on too many projects	
2	Languages					Long attention span	Dislikes interruptions	
3	Writing					Ability to handle abstract ideas.	Questions others' opinions	
4	Oral expression					Flexibility in thinking	Disrespectful of authority	
5	Artistic/aesthetic					Alert and subtle sense of humor.	Preference for unusual original responses	
6	Academic					Superior vocabulary and verbal ability	Bossy and influences other students	
7	Creative					Excellent retention of knowledge	Dislikes subject boundaries	
8	Mathematical					Independent	Avoids discussions or group work	
9	Social/emotional					High level of personal responsibility and commitment	Frustration with personal performance	
10	Mechanical					Strong feelings and opinions	Appears opinionated, argumentative	
11	Scientific					Do you think this student is underachieving?	Isolates self from peer group	
	General Comment:						Signature of the teacher	
							Signature Head of the department	

Gifted and Talented Referral Form from Ignite Inclusion Department

Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually.

The policy was last reviewed in August 2023.

This policy is subject to changes in accordance with Federal and Local Government laws, and KHDA guidelines and protocols.

Signature ....Date........................

Wedad Saada

Director

Signature...Date........................

Dr. Gihan Fradi

Principal