Title: **Policy on Special Educational Needs Students**	Issue Date: **01/08/2019**
Department: **Guidance & Counselling Department**	Revision Date: **01/07/2020**
Reference No: **AJB-GCD-04**	Version No. **5**

1. PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to provide a guideline to teachers, phase coordinators, leaders and staff on how to identify and evaluate students with possible special educational needs. This policy shall support ADEC's standards of excellence, specifically the provisions of Standard No. A21.

The following are the specific premises of this policy:

- Al Ain Juniors School (AJ S) has a responsibility to identify students with special educational needs (SEN).
- AJS has a responsibility to foster collaborative home–school partnerships to support students with SEN.
- AJS has a responsibility to provide a range of opportunities and to monitor and evaluate programs for SEN students.
- Teachers, with support, have a responsibility to identify SEN students in their classes.
- Teachers have a responsibility to select and implement a variety of teaching strategies for inclusion in programs for the range of SEN students in their classes.
- AJS has to provide opportunities for staff development in the education of SEN students to teachers and other appropriate personnel.

2. SCOPE/TARGET AUDIENCE:

This policy applies to all staff employed in AJS and all students who attend these schools.

3. POLICY STATEMENT:

AJS aims to identify students with special educational needs and to maximize their learning outcomes in all academic systems. Schools have a responsibility to develop effective and equitable identification procedures and developmentally appropriate programs.

4. CONTEXT: INTRODUCTION TO STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Students with educational needs are prevalent, with various percentages of prevalence depending on gender, culture, and other correlates.

What does "special educational needs" mean?

Special Education Needs refers to any type of biopsychosocial condition which may hamper a student from meeting the academic standards of a regular school. Students may be identified with diverse conditions that may fall under this broad category.

In the "Procedures" section of this policy, AJS has identified categories of special educational needs.

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How does education tackle "special educational needs"?

There are different educational approaches and systems available to respond to students with special education needs.

Segregation
Depending on the prognosis and diagnosis done by a state-approved clinician, a student with identified special educational needs may be trained in a fully special education setting exclusively for students with special needs.

Mainstreaming
In some cases, a SEN student may be selectively placed in one or more "regular" education classes" during specific time periods in a week. This is more of learning "aside" students in the regular school than learning "with" them. The goal is to expose the SEN student with activities and social groups in a regular school.

Inclusion
A more modern approach and *philosophy* of tackling SEN is the commitment to educate each child, to the maximum extent appropriate, in the school and classroom he or she would otherwise attend. The student is enrolled in the mainstream school and goes out to a resource room / SpEd learning center during specific time periods in a week. This goes with the vision that the student will eventually attend a full time regular school.

Full Inclusion
Full inclusion means that all students, regardless of handicapping condition or severity, will be in a regular classroom/program full time. All services must be taken to the child in that setting. The SEN student does not have to go out of the regular classroom. Accomodations and modifications are provided to him/her in the regular classroom itself.

NOTE: It must be noted that the school has to be very clear which approach and system it is committed to implement in line with the school's educational philosophy and principles and as per the state rules governing it.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES & DELEGATION

The VP/SVP is responsible for implementing the Students with SEN policy.

The VP/SVP will nominate head teachers to have responsibility for policy on the education of SEN students.

The assigned counsellors, in collaboration with responsible phase coordinators and head teachers, will monitor the implementation of this policy and will report, as required, to the Principal.

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6. PROCEDURES

Identification and Screening of Students with Possible Special Educational Needs

Developmental diagnosis of special needs among children is done by a clinician or medical doctor. AJS, then, with its counsellors and special educators, can only go as far as *develomental screening* about children's special condition.

In making observations, descriptive analysis and judgment if a student has to be referred for *further evaluation*, the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV) serve as the basis.

In line with an earlier survey circulated by the Ministry of Education in September 2011, the following are the categories of special educational needs students identified by the school:

Table 1. Categories of Special Education Needs

Category	Operationalized Criteria
Physically challenged students	This refers to students with physical impairments that tend to limit mobility.
Intellectually-challenged students	This refers to students with mild to severe cases of mental retardation
Students with or with symptoms of learning disabilities	This refers to students with any neurobiological developmental condition such as dyslexia, dyscalculia, dysgraphia or dispraxia as per earlier diagnosis of a clinician. **Note:** Students with academic difficulties who manifest symptoms of LD, even without diagnosis, shall be included in this list.
Students with Autism spectrum disorders (ASD)	This refers to students with any developmental disorders such as autism, Asperger's and pervasive developmental disorder as per earlier diagnosis of a clinician
Students with inattention and hyperactivity	This refers to students with any attention or hyperactivity disorder such as ADHD as per earlier diagnosis of a clinician.

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Steps in Identifying and Screening Students with Special Educational Needs

Based on these categories, students with possible special education needs are **pre-identified** through the following steps:

1. The assigned counsellors distribute the "SEN Pre-screening form" among the teachers through the Phase Coordinator.

   The SEN Pre-screening Form is a simple and comprehensive list of special educational needs commonly observed in the classrooms. It is an expanded form of the categories identified and described in Table 1

2. The teachers fill these form for every student which they think falls under the abovementioned category. Students **may not be** informed at this stage

3. Completed forms are submitted to the Phase Coordinator, who in turn delivers them to the assigned counsellor.

4. The assigned counsellor go through the form and calls in the student for an interview. The focus of the interview is to verify the information in the pre-screening form and to observe the child's biopsychosocial status.

5. If the counsellor, based on the criteria, determines that the child may be a valid case of SEN, he/she collects the following information and coordinate with the PC for a possible parent meeting:
   a. Academic records
   b. Teachers's anecdotal report
   c. Inventories/mental ability
   d. Observations

6. Counsellor meets the parent to discuss the student's behaviours and conditions at home. History is explored.

7. All the information are put in a Case Report form and submitted to PC/VP for approval.

8. If the counsellor deems that the child has to undergo a formal developmental evaluation by the clinician, he/she writes a recommendation letter and, with a note from the responsible head, send it across to the parent.

9. A report of the formal evaluation by the clinician is requested from the parents for filing.

10. If the child is a diagnosed case of SEN, accomodations and modifications in the classroom have to be given. If a diagnosis is ruled out, the student's name is not included in the list but will be closely monitored for possible support.

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GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING DEPARTMENT

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Summary of Screening Procedure:

1. Evaluation of Academic Performance
2. Interview session (Counsellor)
3. IQ test
4. Final Profiling
5. Counsellor/PC/Head Meeting
6. Parents Meeting
7. Referrals for Further Assessment by a Clinician
8. Decision Making (Inclusion or Exclusion)

Accomodations in the Classroom

For students who are found to be having difficulties in the class and included in the list of SEN students, accomodations may be necessary. The following are the elements of teaching where accomodations can be done by the teacher (Shore, 2011).

Table 2. Accomodations and Modifications

Element	Definition	Example
Size	Adapt the number of items that the learner is expected to learn or complete.	Reduce the number of social studies, or science terms, or words to spell a learner must learn at any one time.
Time	Adapt the time allotted and allowed for learning, task completion, or testing.	Individualize a timeline for completing a task such a final research paper for science; pace learning differently (increase or decrease) for some learners.
Level of support	Increase the amount of personal assistance with a specific learner.	Assign peer buddies, teaching assistants, peer tutors, or cross-age tutors.
Input	Adapt the way instruction is delivered to the learner.	Use different visual aids, plan more concrete examples, provide hands-on activities, place students in cooperative groups.
Difficulty	Adapt the skill level, problem type, or the rules on how the learner may approach the work.	Allow the use of a calculator to figure math problem; simplify task directions; change rules to accommodate learner needs.

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Cont., Table 2

Output	Adapt how the student can respond to instruction.	Instead of answering questions in writing, allow a verbal response, use a communication book for some students, allow students to show knowledge with hands-on materials
Participation	Adapt the extent to which a learner is actively involved in the task.	In geography, have a student hold the globe, while others point out locations. Have a student with ataxia in physical education serve as a cheerleader from the stands during the game.
Alternate goals	Adapt the goals or outcome expectations while using the same materials.	In social studies, expect a student to be able to locate just the states while others learn to locate capitals as well.
Substitute curriculum	Provide different instruction and materials to meet a student's individual goals yet still aligned with the curriculum.	During a writing test, one student is learning computer skills such as keyboarding in the computer lab enabling completion of writing assignments.
Common goals	Meaningful involvement of the person with special educational needs in school, in the community, employment, and in their residences.	Involvement based on strengths not on weaknesses

Guidance and Mentoring

Continuous guidance and mentoring by the teachers, school heads, and counsellors shall be provided to the students. A meeting with the parents to set expectations and goals and to identify shared responsibilities shall be done at the onset of the program.

Academic advising may be done to students to ensure that they are coping with the requirements of the class and utilizing their potentials to the fullest.

Since SEN may be associated with negative behaviours, counsellors will directly intervene in any discipline and behavioural issues faced by the student.

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Referrals

If in the process the student exhibits behaviours and symptoms that require specialized attention from professionals, the school shall insist on referring the student, through the parents, to receive appropriate treatment and intervention.

Training and Public Awareness

Prior the launch of this program, teachers and school staff has to be oriented about the policy. Continuous in-service training must be put in place to support teachers and staff in effectively implementing this policy. Parents must also be informed via diverse media—correspondences, website, phone class, whichever is practical and available—about the existence of this policy and program.

7. DEFINITIONS

Assessment. Documenting, in measurable terms, a student's performance and experience (e.g., ease/difficulties in diverse academic areas) and his/her affective, behavioral and cognitive profile.

Developmental Diagnosis. Process of labeling a medical or psychological condition based on standard nosology or naming system (e.g., ICD, DSM); preferably, done by a clinician

Developmental Screening. Process of assessing if a child manifests symptoms of a certain condition. This leads to a referral for a more formal diagnosis by a state-approved clinician (i.e., developmental pediatrician).
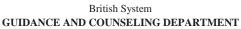
Accomodation. alteration of environment, curriculum format, or equipment that allows an individual with a disability to gain access to content and/or complete assigned tasks

Modification. a change in the curriculum

8. FORMS

"SEN Pre-screening form" (S1) shall be used in the implementation of this policy.

Form S1: SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS PRE-SCREENING FORM

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Directions: This form is used to provide support to children with specialized educational needs. Kindly supply all necessary information required. List down all pupils/students which in your observation has any of the following conditions stated in the tables below.

CLASS INFORMATION		
Class:	Class Teacher's Name	Subject/s taught:
Class Strength:	Subject Teachers handling the class:	

TYPES OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Speech and Language Problems	
Speech delay Students whose speech is lagged behind compared to other students in his/her age group.	
Stuttering/Stammering Students who have noticeable interrupted speech flow	
Cleft lip and palate Students with a cleft lip/palate condition	
Other speech and language conditions Please indicate your observation	
Learning Difficulties	
Reading Difficulty in reading silently/aloud. Difficulty in identifying letters/words. Difficulty in associating letters/sounds.	
Writing Difficulty in holding pen/pencil. Difficulty in copying letters/words. Difficulty in spelling dictated/copied words.	
Calculating Difficulty in performing basic operations (Mathematics).	
Memory Difficulty in memorizing.	
Other learning conditions Please indicate your observation	
Socialization Problems	
Lack of eye contact	

Inability to establish relationship with classmates/teachers	
Tantrums Students who manifest change in mood throughout the day. Students who cries violently in the class for no reason.	
Other socialization problems Please indicate your observation	
Other Health and/or Physical Concerns	
Visual impairment Blind or considerably poor eyesight requiring high-powered corrective lenses	
Hearing disability	
Diabetes Students requiring constant medical attention from the nurse due to juvenile diabetes and other related conditions	
Mobility problems Students requiring crutches or wheelchair due to difficulty in walking.	
Other health/physical concerns Please indicate your observation	

Reported by: ……………………………………………..   Date:………………………..

Received by: ……………………………………………..   Date:………………………..

BLOOM'S TAXONOMY

Competence	Skills Demonstrated
	* From Benjamin S. Bloom *Taxonomy of educational objectives*. Copyright (c) 1984 by Pearson Education.
Knowledge	observation and recall of information knowledge of dates, events, places knowledge of major ideas mastery of subject matter *Question Cues:*list, define, tell, describe, identify, show, label, collect, examine, tabulate, quote, name, who, when, where, etc.
Comprehension	understanding information/ grasp meaning translate knowledge into new context interpret facts, compare, contrast order, group, infer causes predict consequences *Question Cues:*summarize, describe, interpret, contrast, predict, associate, distinguish, estimate, differentiate, discuss, extend
Application	use information use methods, concepts, theories in new situations solve problems using required skills or knowledge *Questions Cues:* apply, demonstrate, calculate, complete, illustrate, show, solve, examine, modify, relate, change, classify, experiment, discover
Analysis	seeing patterns organization of parts recognition of hidden meanings identification of components *Question Cues:*analyze, separate, order, explain, connect, classify, arrange, divide, compare, select, explain, infer
Synthesis	use old ideas to create new ones generalize from given facts relate knowledge from several areas predict, draw conclusions *Question Cues:* combine, integrate, modify, rearrange, substitute, plan, create, design, invent, what if?, compose, formulate, prepare, generalize, rewrite
Evaluation	compare and discriminate between ideas assess value of theories, presentations make choices based on reasoned argument verify value of evidence recognize subjectivity *Question Cues* assess, decide, rank, grade, test, measure, recommend, convince, select, judge, explain, discriminate, support, conclude, compare, summarize