



## **GAA Inclusion Policy**

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<b>Approved by:</b>	Dr. Ethan Hildreth, Superintendent/CEO	<b>Date:</b> Aug/2025
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## Contents

<b>1. Strategic Goals</b> .....	3
<b>GEMS American Academy (GAA) Statement of Purpose (strategy &amp; targets):</b> .....	3
<b>2. GAA Mission and Vision</b> .....	3
<b>3. Targets</b> .....	4
<b>Guiding Principles</b> .....	4
<b>Inclusive Provision</b> .....	5
<b>4. Strategy</b> .....	5
<b>5. Standard Provision</b> .....	7
<b>5.1 GEMS Definition of Inclusion</b> .....	7
<b>5.2 Inclusion for All Learners (Standard Inclusive Provision)</b> .....	8
<b>5.3 Inclusion Team Monitors Progress and Reviews Services</b> .....	10
<b>5.4 Least Restrictive Environment</b> .....	10
<b>5.5 Curriculum Pathways and Outcomes:</b> .....	11
<b>5.7 Assessment Accommodations</b> .....	12
<b>5.8 Roles and Responsibilities</b> .....	13
<b>5.9 Physical Accessibility</b> .....	19
<b>6. Admissions</b> .....	21
<b>7. Inclusive Education Priorities</b> .....	23
<b>7.2 Leadership and Accountability</b> .....	24
<b>7.3 Systems of Support for Inclusive Education</b> .....	24
<b>7.4 Cooperation, Coordination and Partnerships</b> .....	25
<b>7.5 Fostering a Culture of Inclusion</b> .....	25
<b>7.6 Resourcing for Inclusive Education</b> .....	26
<b>7.7 Additional Fees</b> .....	26
<b>8. Glossary of Terms</b> .....	27
<b>9. Legislation and Guidance</b> .....	32
<b>10. Appendix — Reference Documents</b> .....	33
<b>11. Policy Review and Accountability</b> .....	34



## 1. Strategic Goals

### **GEMS American Academy (GAA) Statement of Purpose (strategy & targets):**

GAA is committed to ensuring that Students of Determination and all learners experience a sense of belonging, safety, competence, autonomy, and purpose in a common learning environment alongside their same-aged peers. This commitment is realized through collaborative leadership, inclusive practices, and the continuous development of an equitable school culture.

GAA promotes inclusion through:

- **Committed leadership** that prioritizes inclusive values and practice across all levels of the school.
- **Collaboration** among students, families, teachers, specialists, and leaders to ensure shared responsibility for every learner's success.
- **Student and family voice** being central in planning, decision-making, and review processes.
- **Ongoing professional learning** that strengthens staff capacity in inclusive pedagogy, differentiation, Universal Design for Learning (UDL), and adaptive teaching.
- **Monitoring and evaluation** at every level to continuously enhance inclusive culture, policies, and classroom practice.

GAA embraces diversity as a strength of our community. Inclusion is reflected in every classroom, where individualized adjustments, flexible grouping, and accessible teaching strategies ensure equitable participation and meaningful progress for all learners.

By fostering partnership and shared accountability, GAA strengthens its capacity to prepare confident, compassionate, and globally minded citizens who contribute positively to the world and promote the wellbeing of every member of the GAA community.

## 2. GAA Mission and Vision

GEMS American Academy (GAA) is a diverse and caring international learning community offering a rigorous, relevant, and holistic education. We develop global citizens who have the confidence and conviction to pursue their dreams and positively impact their world.

At GAA, we provide each student with a holistic, inquiry-based, and engaging program of study. We prepare our students to be internationally minded citizens who act with integrity and compassion, contributing positively to both their local and global communities.

Our inclusion philosophy ensures that every learner—regardless of ability, language, or background—has equitable access to high-quality education and meaningful participation in a common learning environment. We are committed to the principles of inclusive education as outlined



in ADEK's School Inclusion Policy (v1.3, 2024) and the UAE Federal Law No. (29) of 2006 concerning the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

We believe that all students can succeed when provided with appropriate support, challenge, and opportunity. We strive to promote each student's physical, mental, social, and emotional wellbeing; support academic progress and transition to further education and vocational pathways; and foster the thinking, creativity, and analytical skills needed to become compassionate, lifelong learners and contributors to a sustainable future.

### **3. Targets**

GEMS American Academy – Abu Dhabi welcomes all learners, including Students of Determination, students with additional learning needs, English Language Learners (ELLs), and Gifted, Talented, and High Ability Learners (G&T).

The school provides equitable access to high-quality education for students with mild to moderate learning differences who may require Learning Support (LS), English language acquisition support, or advanced learning opportunities.

In line with ADEK's School Inclusion Policy (v1.3, 2024) and Federal Law No. (29) of 2006, GAA ensures that all students are educated in the least restrictive environment and have access to personalized pathways that address their cognitive, social, emotional, linguistic, and physical needs.

GAA also identifies and supports students who may be at educational risk due to attendance, wellbeing, behavioral, or contextual factors, as per the ADEK School Educational Risk Policy (v1.1, 2024).

### **Guiding Principles**

GAA's guiding principles affirm that the school is a supportive and integrated learning community. These principles define a shared commitment to inclusive practice:

- All children can, do, and will learn when given equitable access to quality education.
- All teachers are teachers of inclusion and can support students in reaching their full potential.
- The classroom teacher is the primary architect of an inclusive learning environment.
- Diversity is a strength that enriches the entire school community.
- Strategies that define and comprise good teaching are applicable to all learners.
- Collaboration among teachers, inclusion coaches, and specialists enhances the delivery of instruction.



- Inclusion is achieved through flexible and responsive learning environments; when in the best interest of the student and class, short-term targeted interventions may take place outside the mainstream classroom.

These principles are implemented through GAA's Student Support Team (SST) Framework, which fosters collaboration between students, parents, teachers, and specialists to ensure the full participation and success of every learner.

## **Inclusive Provision**

GAA's inclusive provision, in accordance with ADEK's School Inclusion Policy (v1.3, 2024) and Federal Law No. (29) of 2006, ensures that every learner, regardless of ability, language, or background, can:

- Participate as equally as possible in educational opportunities in the least restrictive environment.
- Make effective academic progress to achieve their individual potential.
- Contribute positively to their local and international communities.
- Develop and sustain their physical, mental, social, and emotional wellbeing.
- Transition successfully to further educational, vocational, and community opportunities.
- Acquire lifelong skills that enable them to be engaged, creative, and compassionate contributors to society.

GAA's inclusive provision is embedded within the curriculum, teaching practice, and assessment, ensuring a rights-based, data-informed approach to inclusion across all divisions of the school.

## **4. Strategy**

GAA applies a Three-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) aligned with the ADEK School Inclusion Policy (v1.3, 2024) and the ADEK School Educational Risk Policy (v1.1, 2024). This model, grounded in Universal Design for Learning (UDL), provides equitable access and timely intervention for all learners.



Tier	Provision and Practice	Documentation / ADEK Alignment & Review
<b>Tier 1 – Universal Support</b>	<p><b>Purpose:</b> Provide high-quality, differentiated instruction accessible to all learners in the mainstream classroom.</p> <p><b>Practice:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lessons designed using UDL principles.</li><li>• Embedded differentiation &amp; accommodations.</li><li>• Inclusion Coach co-plans/co-teaches.</li><li>• ELL students receive in-class language scaffolds.</li><li>• Gifted &amp; Talented learners access enrichment tasks.</li><li>• School-wide wellbeing and PBIS expectations taught; SEL and restorative routines implemented.</li></ul>	<p><b>Plans:</b> Student Support Plan (SSP) – ADEK Support Plan for early intervention.</p> <p><b>Tier 1 Applies to:</b> All learners, including those at emerging risk.</p> <p><b>Review:</b> Every semester via SST</p> <p><b>Referral:</b> Teacher → SST after one semester if additional support needed</p>
<b>Tier 2 – Targeted Support</b>	<p><b>Purpose:</b> Provide short- to medium-term interventions for students performing below / above grade expectations.</p> <p><b>Practice:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students typically 1–2 years below level or needing extension/enrichment.</li><li>• Push-in / pull-out sessions with Inclusion / ELL specialists.</li><li>• Focused cycles of instruction + progress monitoring.</li><li>• Short-term therapy (Speech / OT) or targeted counseling as needed.</li><li>• Structured behavior or goal plans (BIP/BSP Tier 2).</li><li>• Accommodations + minor curriculum adjustments.</li></ul> <p>Regular progress monitoring &amp; SST review.</p>	<p><b>Plans:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• SSP (T2) – ADEK Support Plan</li><li>• ELP – Support Plan for Multilingual Learners</li><li>• ALP – DLP subtype for G&amp;T</li><li>• BIP/BSP (T2) – behavior plan with check-ins</li><li>• <i>Documented Learning Plan (DLP/IEP)</i></li></ul> <p><b>Tier 2 Applies to:</b> Students needing targeted support or moderate therapy services.</p> <p><b>Review:</b> Each semester through SST meetings and tracker.</p>



<b>Tier 3 – Intensive / Individualized Support</b>	<p><b>Purpose:</b> Deliver individualized, sustained interventions for students with significant or complex learning needs.</p> <p><b>Practice:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Long-term 1:1 or small-group instruction.</li><li>• Curriculum modifications or alternate pathways.</li><li>• In-School Specialist Services (Speech/OT) and Inclusion Assistants as required.</li><li>• Multi-agency collaboration with parents and external providers.</li></ul> <p>Comprehensive behavior or transition planning as needed.</p>	<p><b>Plans:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Documented Learning Plan (DLP/IEP)</li><li>• BIP/BSP (Tier 3) – intensive individual behavior plan within a DLP.</li><li>• Therapy Plans (SLP/OT) linked under ADEK In-School Specialist Services Policy.</li></ul> <p><b>Tier 3 Applies to:</b> Students of Determination or those with identified additional learning needs.</p> <p><b>Referral:</b> Managed by Inclusion Specialist / Head of Inclusion with parent consent</p> <p><b>Review:</b> Minimum twice yearly; continuous data logged in SST tracker.</p>
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## Monitoring and Evaluation

All interventions are coordinated through the Student Support Team (SST). Plans include measurable goals, parental collaboration, and clear review cycles. Progress data guide instruction and ensure learning occurs in the least restrictive environment.

## 5. Standard Provision

### 5.1 GEMS Definition of Inclusion

The GEMS vision for Inclusive Education is that all students receive the support they need to meaningfully belong to their school and wider community, feel highly valued for their contributions, and engage purposefully in learning.

Students should experience academic, cultural, social, and emotional success within a common learning environment alongside same-aged peers. This vision aligns with the ADEK School Inclusion Policy (v1.3, 2024) and Federal Law No. (29) of 2006 Concerning the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which emphasize that every learner is entitled to equitable access and participation in education.



## 5.2 Inclusion for All Learners (Standard Inclusive Provision)

GAA's Standard Inclusive Provision ensures that all students can access a high-quality, differentiated, and enriching curriculum through flexible approaches to teaching and learning.

Provision is made for all learner groups, including but not limited to the following:

**Gifted and Talented Learners (GT)** - At GEMS American Academy, we believe in providing the best possible education for students of all abilities. Teaching and learning are planned so that each student can aspire to the highest level of personal achievement.

In line with GAA's ethos, all students are given access to all areas of learning, and teachers endeavor to ensure that every student reaches their full potential. We recognize that gifted students think at higher levels of complexity and require access to a curriculum that allows them to move ahead faster and explore their areas of strength. Gifted and Talented (GT) students may demonstrate advanced intellectual aptitude or exceptional talent in academic subjects, the arts, or sports.

GT identification is based on a range of evidence, including standardized assessments such as CAT4 or WISC, teacher observations, classroom performance, and parent input. Students scoring in the high or very high range on the CAT4, alongside teacher assessment data, may be considered for identification.

### Support and Provision:

- Each identified GT student has an Advanced Learning Plan (ALP) in accordance with ADEK's Inclusion Policy.
- Classroom instruction is enriched through higher-order thinking, problem-solving, and creative challenges.
- Students may join honors classes, independent research projects, or extracurricular enrichment such as STEM fairs, art exhibitions, and academic competitions.
- In Primary, enrichment programs integrate STEM and creative learning opportunities.

**Multilingual Learners (MLL)/ English Language Learners (ELL)** - Particular care is given to students whose first language is not English. These students are not considered to have a learning difficulty solely because the language of instruction differs from their home language.

GAA assesses students' English proficiency using the WIDA MODEL (Measure of Developing English Language) twice yearly — in September–October and April–May. This data informs language instruction and additional supports as required.

### Support and Provision:



- Students are provided an English Language Plan (ELP) outlining language goals and strategies.
- Instruction includes differentiated approaches, co-taught lessons, and targeted small-group sessions.
- In Primary, support occurs through classroom differentiation and push-in support by Inclusion Specialists.
- In Secondary, support is offered through ELL English (Grades 6–10), ELL Resource classes, and IB Language B (Grades 11–12).
- Students scoring 4.5 (Bridging) or below on WIDA receive targeted ELL instruction.
- Progress is monitored continuously and reviewed each semester through the SST process.
- ELL/MLL students are included in the mainstream curriculum with appropriate scaffolds and culturally responsive instruction, in alignment with ADEK's Inclusion Policy.

**Students of Determination (SoD)** - Students of Determination (SoD) are learners with additional learning needs arising from a disability or recognized disorder that requires special educational provision. In accordance with the UAE School Inspection Framework, these are “educational needs which are different from those of the majority of students and which arise from the impact of a disability or recognized disorder.”

GAA ensures equitable access by identifying and addressing barriers to learning, providing specific accommodations or modifications as needed, and ensuring inclusion within the least restrictive environment.

**Common learning needs may include, but are not limited to:**

- Specific Learning Disorders (Dyslexia, Dyscalculia, Dyspraxia)
- Speech and Language Disorders
- Developmental Delays
- Attention Deficit and Executive Functioning Difficulties
- Sensory Processing Difficulties
- Autism Spectrum Disorders
- Behavioral, Social, and Emotional Barriers to Learning
- Medical Conditions Impacting Learning
- Difficulties Arising from Disrupted Educational Experience

**Support and Provision:**

- Each identified student has a Documented Learning Plan (DLP), which includes individualized goals, accommodations, and modifications.
- Support is coordinated through the Student Support Team (SST), led by the Head of Inclusion.
- Interventions are aligned with the Tiered System of Support and reviewed through regular SST meetings.



- Early identification follows the ADEK Educational Risk Policy, ensuring timely intervention before formal diagnosis or referral.
- When appropriate, In-School Specialist Services (Speech, Occupational Therapy, Counseling) may be provided in collaboration with parents and external providers.

### **5.3 Inclusion Team Monitors Progress and Reviews Services**

Each division at GAA convenes a Student Support Team (SST)—comprising Inclusion Specialists, counselors, principals or vice principals, and relevant teachers—to review student progress and determine appropriate levels of support (Tier 1–3).

Students with individualized learning plans (e.g., DLPs, ALPs, ELPs) are closely monitored for progress. Parents receive quarterly updates regarding learning goals and intervention outcomes.

For Tier 2 and Tier 3 students, annual review meetings are held to evaluate all inclusion services. Case managers or Inclusion Specialists provide recommendations for continued or adjusted support for the next academic year. If a student meets their DLP goals and no longer requires targeted intervention, they may transition to Tier 2 support or be exited from the SST process following agreement between the case manager, teachers, and parents.

Students with formal diagnoses continue to receive accommodations as required, and updated external assessments are requested every three years or as needed. Students who exit the inclusion program remain monitored for at least one semester to ensure successful transition within the mainstream environment. Re-entry can occur if further support is required.

### **5.4 Least Restrictive Environment**

GAA places students with additional learning needs in the least restrictive environment, ensuring that the majority of learning occurs within the general education classroom alongside same-aged peers. Support and differentiation are provided to remove barriers to access and participation.

#### **Examples of supports and services include:**

- Differentiated instruction and assessment
- Classroom and testing accommodations
- Assistive technology
- Small-group or 1:1 instruction or intervention
- Support from a Learning Support Assistant
- Modified curriculum or adapted outcomes (where appropriate)

#### **Additional guiding practices:**

- Use of “people-first” language when referring to Students of Determination.
- Development, implementation, and annual review of all Documented Learning Plans (DLPs).



- Ensuring that all staff working with Students of Determination are aware of identification and support procedures.
- Providing access to all school and extracurricular activities, as far as reasonably practical.
- Early identification of additional needs in accordance with ADEK's Educational Risk Policy.
- Maintaining ongoing communication with parents regarding progress and attainment.
- Involving students in decisions about their education wherever practicable.
- Collaborating responsibly with external agencies to ensure coordinated support and safeguarding.

## **5.5 Curriculum Pathways and Outcomes:**

GAA ensures that all students with additional learning needs have access to a broad and balanced curriculum, including extracurricular opportunities that are adapted to meet individual needs where appropriate. Any modified curriculum pathway that may not meet full equivalency requirements is explained to parents, who acknowledge understanding through a signed undertaking.

GAA offers the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IB DP) for eligible students in Grades 11–12. Students with learning differences applying to the IB DP or certificate courses must provide a recent psycho-educational evaluation report to determine eligibility for **IB Inclusive Assessment Arrangements (IAA)**.

Students with Documented Learning Plans (DLPs), Accommodation Plans (AP), or English Language Plans (ELPs) work with the SST and IB Coordinator to ensure appropriate accommodations and subject combinations. Documentation must be current and in place at least 12 months prior to final IB examinations. The IB Coordinator collaborates with the SST to ensure equitable assessment access and to confirm that all accommodations align with IB and ADEK regulations.

### **Adjusted Curricular Pathway**

For certain students with cognitive or significant learning challenges, the traditional curriculum or learning pathway may not be fully accessible or appropriate.

In such cases, a Modified Curriculum Pathway will be recommended to ensure meaningful access to learning and progress toward individual educational goals.

#### **1. Identification and Referral**

- Students are identified through a recent Educational Psychological Evaluation and triangulated assessment data (e.g., MAP, CAT4, classroom assessments, teacher feedback).
- The Student Support Team (SST) reviews evidence and recommends pathway adjustments where necessary.



## **2. Parent Consultation**

- Parents are informed of the proposed modified pathway and must provide written consent.
- The modification is documented within the student's Documented Learning Plan (DLP).

## **3. Eligibility for High School Diploma**

- Students enrolled in one modified subject (e.g., Math Foundations) may remain eligible for the GAA High School Diploma, with the modification clearly noted on the transcript and DLP.
- Students enrolled in two or more modified subjects may not meet diploma equivalency requirements and will instead receive a GAA Certificate of High School Completion.

## **4. Approval and Oversight**

- All modified curriculum decisions are approved by the Head of Inclusion and relevant Divisional Principal.
- Plans are reviewed annually by the SST and shared with parents.

## **5. Current Adjusted Curriculum Offerings**

- **Middle School Math Foundations (Grades 6–8)** – Program content is scaffolded and adjusted to meet individual learning needs; standards are modified below grade-level expectations.
- **English Language Arts Acquisition (ELL English, Grades 6–11)** – Not a modified program; aligns with grade-level standards while providing language scaffolds and flexible means of demonstrating understanding.

## **6. Transition and Review**

- Every effort is made to reintegrate students into the mainstream curriculum where possible.
- By Grade 9, a student's curriculum pathway will be finalized and reflected on official transcripts and reports.

## **5.7 Assessment Accommodations**

GAA ensures that students with additional learning needs are not disadvantaged during any form of assessment. All accommodations and modifications are designed to reflect the student's normal way of working in the classroom and are consistent with ADEK, IB, and other external examination board policies.

**GAA will ensure this by:**



- Implementing accommodations that align with strategies outlined in each student's Documented Learning Plan (DLP) or Accommodation Plan (AP/504).
- Seeking and maintaining approval for accommodations in accordance with guidelines issued by relevant assessment providers, including IB Inclusive Assessment Arrangements (IAA).
- Ensuring accommodations are used consistently throughout the year and reviewed annually to verify effectiveness.
- Communicating all approved accommodations with relevant staff, students, and parents to ensure consistent application across assessments.

## 5.8 Roles and Responsibilities

Inclusive education is a shared responsibility across all levels of the GAA community.

Leadership ensures that inclusion remains embedded in the school's culture, planning, and practice.

### **Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will:**

- Ensure inclusive provision is a standing agenda item in Senior Leadership and Board of Trustees meetings.
- Review inclusive provision as part of the School Development Plan, setting measurable goals to improve access and outcomes for all learners.
- Designate an SLT member with direct oversight of inclusion and student support.
- Appoint a staff member to lead Gifted and Talented (G&T) provision and collaborate with middle leaders to implement enrichment and extension programs.
- Ensure all staff have access to continuous professional development (CPD) on inclusive practice, adaptive teaching, and safeguarding of students with additional learning needs.
- Implement a risk assessment process for facilities and activities to identify and mitigate potential hazards for Students of Determination or others with physical, sensory, or behavioral needs.
- Maintain accurate data on student identification and support plans and provide reports to ADEK upon request.
- Ensure all incidents of discrimination, bullying, or maltreatment involving Students of Determination are documented, addressed, and resolved in accordance with GAA and ADEK safeguarding procedures.
- Guarantee that all safeguarding, child protection, and inclusion awareness sessions are delivered in a timely manner to staff and the wider school community.
- Undertake overall responsibility for the safe evacuation of all People of Determination during emergency situations, in compliance with ADEK Health and Safety Policy.

**Director of Inclusion** – The Director of Inclusion retains a specialized qualification in Special or Inclusive Education and provides school-wide leadership for inclusive practice across all divisions.



This role ensures compliance with ADEK's *School Inclusion Policy*, *Educational Risk Policy*, and *In-School Specialist Services Policy*, as well as GAA's *internal inclusion framework*.

**The Director of Inclusion will:**

**• Admissions and Placement**

- Collaborate with the Admissions Department to review applications and ensure that students with additional learning needs who have a reasonable expectation of success within the GAA curriculum are appropriately placed and supported.

- Advise on admission decisions in accordance with ADEK and GAA inclusion criteria.

**• Leadership and Compliance**

- Lead and manage the GAA Inclusion Department and Student Support Team (SST), ensuring consistent procedures for identification, referral, intervention, and review.

- Apply and monitor the implementation of GAA's Inclusion Policy and ADEK's requirements for inclusive education.

- Maintain accurate and secure systems for student records, DLPs, and support documentation.

- Ensure that all inclusion practices and documentation meet ADEK and inspection standards.

**• Culture and Collaboration**

- Promote a culture of inclusion, advocacy, and respect for the rights of all students.

- Build collaborative partnerships among classroom teachers, specialists, counselors, and parents to ensure coherent support for each learner.

- Coordinate provision for students requiring educational, social, emotional, and behavioral interventions in collaboration with multidisciplinary teams.

**• Monitoring and Accountability**

- Oversee the monitoring and evaluation of inclusion programs, interventions, and student outcomes.

- Lead annual review cycles for all Documented Learning Plans (DLPs), Advanced Learning Plans (ALPs), and English Language Plans (ELPs).

- Provide termly data analysis on student progress and report findings to Senior Leadership and ADEK as required.

- Ensure that students of determination and those at educational risk are tracked through consistent, data-informed processes.

- Does not have any teaching responsibilities outside of the Head of Inclusion role.

**• Professional Learning and Capacity Building**



- Design and deliver professional development on inclusive practice, adaptive instruction, and Universal Design for Learning (UDL).
- Support Inclusion Coaches, Learning Support Assistants, and teachers through observation, feedback, and ongoing mentoring.

- **External Partnerships and Compliance**

- Liaise with ADEK's Department of Special Education and external specialists, ensuring alignment with all local and federal regulations.
- Represent GAA at ADEK inclusion network meetings, inspections, and training events as required.
- Ensure that external therapy and support services are integrated under the In-School Specialist Services framework.

- **Parent and Community Engagement**

- Communicate regularly with parents regarding inclusion programs, services, and student progress.
- Build awareness of inclusive education across the school community through parent workshops and engagement initiatives.

- **Safety and Safeguarding**

- Collaborate with the Health & Safety Officer to ensure accessibility and risk assessments for all facilities and activities.
- Support safe evacuation procedures for Students of Determination in accordance with ADEK's Health and Safety Policy.

**Inclusion Specialist (Inclusion Teacher)** – at least one per cycle – The Inclusion Specialist holds a specialized qualification in Special or Inclusive Education and is responsible for ensuring equitable access to learning through individualized, targeted instruction and collaboration with teachers, families, and specialists to meet the needs of students with additional learning needs. GAA will ensure that Inclusion Teachers do not teach more than 10% of their timetabled workload outside of their role of teaching students with additional needs.

**The Inclusion Specialist will:**

- **Identification and Case Management**

- Support the early identification of students requiring additional learning support through screening, teacher observations, and analysis of academic or behavioral data.
- Lead the development, implementation, and termly review of Documented Learning Plans (DLPs), Student Support Plans (SSPs), and Accommodation Plans (APs).



- Collaborate with teachers, parents, and external professionals to ensure accurate, evidence-based recommendations inform student goals and strategies.
- Maintain a clear record of students' tier level, needs, and intervention history within the Student Support Team (SST) framework.

- **Planning and Instruction**

- Design and deliver small-group or individualized intervention programs (push-in or pull-out) to address identified learning or behavioral goals.
- Adapt curriculum content, instructional strategies, and assessment methods to align with student readiness and DLP targets.
- Co-plan and co-teach with classroom and subject teachers, integrating Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles and differentiated strategies.
- Provide guidance on adaptive teaching practices that promote engagement, independence, and progress for all learners.

- **Monitoring and Reporting**

- Monitor student progress regularly toward DLP and SSP goals, updating documentation each term in collaboration with classroom teachers.
- Communicate progress, next steps, and recommendations to parents at least quarterly and during scheduled SST or DLP review meetings.
- Maintain accurate case records, progress data, and intervention logs; ensure these are submitted through SST trackers and uploaded to ADEK reporting systems as required.

- **Collaboration and Support**

- Work collaboratively with Inclusion Assistants (IA) and Individual Assistants to ensure consistent instructional strategies and effective student support.
- Provide feedback, coaching, and contribute to the annual performance review of assigned Inclusion Assistants.
- Collaborate with counselors, ELL specialists, and external therapists or service providers to ensure coordinated multidisciplinary support.

- **Professional Growth and Leadership**

- Engage in ongoing professional learning related to inclusive practice, assistive technology, adaptive instruction, and evidence-based intervention.
- Contribute to school-wide inclusion initiatives, case studies, and professional development sessions for staff.
- Promote GAA's inclusive culture through advocacy, awareness, and modeling of collaborative, student-centered practice.



**Inclusion Assistant** – as required (school-employed) – The Inclusion Assistant (IA) is a non-teaching support professional who assists classroom teachers and Inclusion Specialists in supporting students with additional learning needs. They work under supervision to help implement instructional strategies, accommodations, and modifications that promote equitable access and participation.

**The Inclusion Assistant will:**

- **Instructional Support**

- Support the implementation of inclusive strategies and accommodations outlined in students' DLPs, SSPs, or APs under the guidance of the teacher or Inclusion Specialist.
- Work with individuals or small groups in the classroom or intervention space to reinforce learning and build engagement.
- Help prepare, organize, and adapt learning materials and resources to support lesson differentiation.

- **Monitoring and Reporting**

- Observe and record student participation, engagement, and progress to inform reviews and updates to support plans.
- Provide timely feedback to the Inclusion Specialist or classroom teacher regarding student performance and needs.
- Uphold confidentiality and follow ADEK and GAA protocols for safeguarding and recordkeeping.

- **Student Independence and Engagement**

- Encourage independence, problem-solving, and social interaction among students.
- Support behavior regulation and social-emotional learning strategies aligned with DLP or Behavior Support Plans (BSPs).
- Promote participation in inclusive classroom and school activities.

- **Professional Conduct and Collaboration**

- Collaborate closely with teachers, Inclusion Specialists, and other staff to maintain consistent and high-quality support for students.
- Participate in training and mentoring provided through GAA's professional development program (minimum 20 hours of in-house or external inclusion training annually, as required by ADEK).
- Follow all procedures outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) if assigned through a parent agreement.
- Support safe evacuation and accessibility procedures for students of determination in line with the ADEK Health and Safety Policy.



**Individual Assistant** – as required (parent-funded 1:1 support) – The Individual Assistant (IA)—also referred to as a Shadow Teacher or PoD Support Assistant—provides one-to-one individualized assistance for a Student of Determination (PoD) who requires additional logistical, behavioral, or safety-related support for a majority of the school day. This position is parent-funded and coordinated under the supervision of the Head of Inclusion and the student's Inclusion Specialist.

**The Individual Assistant will:**

- **Individualized Student Support**

- Provide direct 1:1 support to the assigned student, ensuring access to learning, safety, and inclusion across the school day.
- Implement individualized strategies, accommodations, and interventions specified in the student's DLP, BSP, or Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP).
- Encourage independence and social participation while avoiding overreliance on adult support.
- Support student regulation, focus, and emotional wellbeing through structured strategies provided by the Inclusion Team.

- **Coordination and Communication**

- Collaborate daily with the classroom teacher and Inclusion Specialist to ensure consistency in support strategies.
- Share relevant observations and data that inform goal-setting and updates to the student's DLP.
- Communicate progress and concerns through the Inclusion Specialist or Head of Inclusion and maintain professional confidentiality.

- **Professional Conduct and Compliance**

- Comply with all terms outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between parents, the school, and the assistant.
- Attend school induction and ongoing training in inclusion, health and safety, and safeguarding procedures.
- Follow ADEK and GAA regulations for confidentiality, conduct, and ethical support practices.
- Assist in ensuring the student's safety during all school activities and emergency evacuations as directed by trained staff.

**Parents and Guardians will:**

- Collaborate with the school to support their child's learning and play a central role in the development of inclusive practices, including the creation and review of Student Support Plans (SSPs) and long-term Documented Learning Plans (DLPs).
- Attend meetings related to the establishment, implementation, and monitoring of support and interventions designed to meet their child's needs.



- Sign school agreements, contracts, or memoranda related to additional provision (e.g., therapy, external assessment, or Learning Support Assistant [LSA] arrangements) where applicable, in accordance with ADEK and GAA requirements.
- Collaborate with the school regarding the educational services provided to their child, including assessments, accommodations, and interventions.
- Provide relevant external documentation (e.g., medical or clinical assessment reports) to inform accurate understanding of the child's needs and facilitate targeted support.
- Maintain open communication with the Inclusion Specialist or case manager regarding progress, wellbeing, and any changes in circumstances that may impact learning or support provision.

#### **Students will be supported to:**

- Take an active role in their own learning by contributing to the design and review of their Documented Learning Plans (DLPs) or goals, at a developmentally appropriate level.
- Understand and advocate for their own learning needs with guidance from teachers and inclusion staff.
- Develop independence and self-regulation through gradual release of support and use of strategies that promote autonomy in learning.
- Participate confidently in all school activities, learning environments, and community events as valued members of the GAA community.
- Build social and emotional skills that promote wellbeing, resilience, and positive peer relationships.

## **5.9 Physical Accessibility**

GAA ensures that all buildings, classrooms, and learning environments are inclusive, safe, and accessible, in line with Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles and ADEK's School Inclusion Policy (v1.3, 2024) and School Buildings and Facilities Policy. These provisions support the full participation of Students of Determination and all learners, regardless of mobility, sensory, or learning needs.

#### **Physical accessibility includes:**

- Accessible parking, pathways, entrances, and playgrounds, with ramps, automatic doors, and clear signage.
- Stairways fitted with handrails, contrast markings, and tactile indicators; elevators available for multi-floor access.
- Accessible transportation arrangements, including reasonable adjustments to school buses where required.
- Accessible bathrooms on each floor, with fixtures supporting independent use.
- Emergency systems with both visual and auditory alarms.
- Evacuation chairs and trained staff in place, aligned with individual Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs).



- Risk assessments completed for Tier 3 students prior to off-campus activities or field trips.
- Regular environmental audits conducted by the Head of Inclusion and Health & Safety Officer to identify and address accessibility gaps.

### **Accessibility of Learning Spaces**

- All learning spaces are designed and maintained to ensure equitable access and meaningful participation for all students, aligned with UDL principles. This includes:
- Flexible classroom layouts with clear pathways and adaptable configurations for individual, small-group, or whole-class instruction.
- A range of seating options, including adjustable desks, ergonomic seating, and sensory-regulation supports.
- Access to assistive technology such as tablets, screen readers, magnification tools, and alternative input devices, with staff trained to support effective use.
- Sensory-friendly adjustments, including noise-reducing materials, adjustable lighting, and visual supports.
- Inclusive learning materials differentiated by reading level, language, and sensory preference.
- Clear visual and auditory access to instruction, with amplification, captioning, or visual supports provided as required.
- Emergency and evacuation procedures accessible within classrooms and aligned with PEEPs.
- Periodic reviews of classroom accessibility conducted by the Head of Inclusion and Health & Safety Officer.

### **Specialist Support Spaces**

GAA provides designated specialist spaces to support students requiring targeted intervention while maintaining inclusion and safety standards. These include:

- **Sensory Regulation Rooms:** Low-stimulation environments equipped with appropriate sensory tools to support self-regulation.
- **Intervention and Therapy Rooms:** Accessible, private spaces for speech-language therapy, occupational therapy, behavioral support, and individualized instruction.
- **Small-Group Learning Areas:** Flexible spaces for Tier 2 and Tier 3 instruction, equipped with adaptive furniture and assistive technology.

Use of specialist spaces, student engagement, and intervention effectiveness are documented and reviewed regularly by the Inclusion team to ensure continued relevance, effectiveness, and compliance with ADEK requirements.



## 6. Admissions

At GEMS American Academy (GAA) values the unique contributions of all learners and believes that when diverse students learn side by side, all benefit. GAA welcomes students with a range of abilities and learning preferences, including Students of Determination (SoD), Gifted and Talented (GT) learners, and English/Multilingual Learners (ELL/MLL). In line with ADEK's School Inclusion Policy (v1.3, 2024), GAA aims to accommodate all students in their age-appropriate grade level, provided the school has the capacity and resources to meet their educational, social, and emotional needs. To maintain an effective balance of support, the proportion of students receiving direct learning support in any grade level will not exceed approximately 20%.

### Admission Considerations

#### 1. Initial Review

- All submitted documentation (school reports, assessments, and medical/clinical reports) will be reviewed to determine if GAA can meet the student's academic, behavioral, and emotional needs.
- Where additional information is required, parents may be asked to provide updated or specialized evaluations (e.g., psychoeducational or speech-language assessments).

#### 2. Screening and Assessment

- Students flagged with additional learning needs may be invited to meet with the Director of Inclusion or divisional leadership to determine the level of support required.
- For Early Years/Elementary applicants, this may include a play-based observation; for older students, a placement meeting or standardized screening (e.g., MAP) may be required.
- Students identified as English/Multilingual Learners will complete the WIDA MODEL or equivalent proficiency assessment.

#### 3. Placement and Support

- Students identified with additional learning needs will be placed in the mainstream classroom with the necessary accommodations and inclusion support.
- Upon admission, an initial Student Support Plan (SSP) or Documented Learning Plan (DLP) will be developed to guide provision.
- GAA's Inclusion and ELL departments work collaboratively to provide access and progress monitoring.

#### 4. English Language Learner (ELL/MLL) Placement

- Students new to an English-medium school may remain in ELL support for a maximum of 3–4 years, depending on progress and WIDA results.



- Students at Bridging (4.5) or below on WIDA will receive targeted language support through the ELL program.
- International students entering Grades 6–10 with limited English proficiency will join foundational or resource classes as needed.
- Applicants for Grades 11–12 must demonstrate sufficient English proficiency to access the IB Diploma Programme (IB DP) curriculum.

## **5. Students Identified with Additional Learning Needs (ALN)**

- Admission is contingent upon the school's capacity to meet the student's needs and parents' agreement to participate in the Inclusion Program.
- Admission is not contingent on parents paying for external supports as a condition of entry; and
- Where a parent-funded Individual Assistant is requested, it follows ADEK's specified conditions (see next item).
- Parents may be required to arrange additional supports, such as:
  - Occupational Therapy
  - Speech and Language Therapy
  - Behavioral Therapy
  - Educational Psychology evaluations
  - Learning Support Assistant/ Individual Assistant (LSA/ IA), if deemed necessary
- These services may be coordinated through GAA's In-School Specialist Services system or external providers as approved by ADEK.

## **6. Post-Admission Review**

- Following admission, GAA will evaluate each student's progress and adjust the level of support as needed.
- Placement and provision are reviewed at least annually through the Student Support Team (SST) process.

## **7. Parent Partnership**

- Parent collaboration is essential to ensure the best learning outcomes for all students with additional learning needs.
- GAA offers an academically rigorous program; if a student requires an alternate pathway, the school may recommend a Modified Curriculum Pathway leading to an Individualized Diploma or Certificate of High School Completion.
- Some students may begin on a probationary basis to ensure appropriate placement and support.
- Admission decisions are made by the Head of School in consultation with the Director of Inclusion, Counselors, and relevant teachers after reviewing records, assessments, and reports.



- If a student cannot adequately access the curriculum despite accommodations and modifications, GAA will work collaboratively with parents to review placement and may explore alternative educational options in consultation with ADEK.
- GAA maintains accurate Additional Learning Needs (ALN) records on the eSIS ALN module. The parent-school agreement at admission and each re-enrollment includes a statement that ALN data will be uploaded/maintained and used for planning/compliance/safeguarding.

## **8. Inability to Accommodate**

While GAA is committed to supporting a wide range of learning needs, the school must ensure that it can meet each student's educational, emotional, and safety requirements effectively. In alignment with ADEK's Inclusion Policy (Section 2.2), if the school determines it cannot meet a student's needs:

- GAA will submit an Inability to Accommodate Notification to ADEK within 7 days of the admission decision, providing supporting evidence (e.g., assessments, resource limitations, safety considerations).
- Parents will be notified in writing of the decision, rationale, and next steps, in collaboration with ADEK.
- ADEK reserves the right to uphold or overturn this determination.
- In cases where a student is already enrolled, the school will work with parents and ADEK to support an orderly and well-supported transition to an alternative setting.

# **7. Inclusive Education Priorities**

## **7.1 Admissions, Participation and Equity**

To ensure balanced, effective, and appropriate allocation of resources, GAA plans inclusion support using a tiered service delivery model. **To maintain a balanced and sustainable provision of support, students requiring Tier 2 and Tier 3 inclusion services combined will generally represent no more than approximately 10–13% of the total student population per grade, with flexibility applied based on student need, cohort profile, and available staffing and resources.**

- **Tier 1 (Universal Support):** Universal inclusive practices, differentiation, and classroom accommodations are available to all students through high-quality instruction and Universal Design for Learning (UDL). As Tier 1 supports are embedded within general education, there is no fixed percentage cap for Tier 1 learners.
- **Tier 2 (Targeted Support):** Students requiring targeted, short- to medium-term interventions (e.g. small-group academic, behavioral, or social-emotional support) typically represent approximately 5–8% of the student population per grade, depending on identified need and available resources.
- **Tier 3 (Intensive Support):** Students requiring individualized, intensive, and ongoing support (e.g. individualized learning plans, significant accommodations, or individual assistant support) typically represent approximately 2–4% of the student population per grade, based on complexity of need and staffing capacity.



- Admissions are determined on a case-by-case basis, based on the school's capacity and reasonable adjustments, and use of the ADEK "Inability to Accommodate" process where needed. In cases where GAA is unable to meet the needs of a student, the school will submit an Inability to Accommodate Notification to ADEK and parents within 7 days of the admission decision, supported by evidence of the school's capacity limitations.
- GAA prioritizes the enrollment of students with additional learning needs and their siblings within the same school.
- Original clinical or psychoeducational assessment reports must be provided by parents, conducted by qualified professionals (e.g., psychologist, therapist, or pediatrician). Failure to submit required documentation may affect enrollment or continuation of support services.
- Where a parent-funded Individual Assistant is required, parents will sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) outlining the terms of employment, responsibilities, and expectations, as per ADEK guidelines.
- Students with significant learning needs may be admitted into the Early Years program, where play-based learning predominates, on the understanding that continued enrollment will depend on the child's progress and the school's capacity to meet their needs over time.
- Students requiring a Modified Curriculum Pathway may graduate with an Individualized Diploma or Certificate of High School Completion, with parent acknowledgement and consent.
- GAA will support the transition process for all students with additional learning needs, ensuring coordination between divisions, external providers, and parents.
- The GAA Admissions Policy and procedures reflect GEMS Education and ADEK guidelines on inclusive enrollment practices.

## 7.2 Leadership and Accountability

### School leaders will:

- Empower all stakeholders to foster an inclusive school culture where diversity is valued, and students with additional learning needs are accepted, respected, and supported to achieve their full potential.
- Ensure a clear leadership structure for inclusion, with defined responsibilities for the Director of Inclusion, Inclusion Specialists, and Inclusion Assistants, as outlined in this policy and the GAA Inclusion Handbook.
- Embed inclusive goals and measurable targets in the School Development Plan to evaluate and strengthen accessibility and outcomes for all learners.
- Monitor compliance with local and federal legislation related to inclusive education, including ADEK and UAE Ministry of Education regulations.
- Promote continuous professional development for all staff in inclusive education practices, adaptive teaching, and safeguarding.

## 7.3 Systems of Support for Inclusive Education

### GAA staff will:

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- Create learning environments that promote full participation and inclusion — academically, socially, physically, emotionally, and culturally.
- Ensure that all staff receive training in inclusive education and adaptive instruction, enabling them to meet the diverse needs of learners across all grades and subject areas.
- Implement and regularly review Documented Learning Plans (DLPs), Student Support Plans (SSPs), and English Language Plans (ELPs) to guide teaching, intervention, and accommodations.
- Collaborate within the Student Support Team (SST) to monitor progress and share data with parents each term.
- Maintain clear, transparent agreements through Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) whenever a parent-funded Learning Support Assistant or Individual Assistant is engaged.
- Uphold ADEK's expectations for recordkeeping, data submission to eSIS, and adherence to safeguarding, health, and accessibility standards.

## 7.4 Cooperation, Coordination and Partnerships

### GAA staff will:

- Collaborate closely with parents and caregivers of students with additional learning needs to ensure that provision, accommodations, and services are appropriate, high-quality, and consistent with the student's Documented Learning Plan (DLP).
- Prepare students with the skills and abilities necessary for success in further education, training, employment, and community participation.
- Involve parents and caregivers centrally in the use of assessment data, planning and review of provision, and in evaluating overall inclusion effectiveness within the school.
- Work in partnership with external agencies—including special education centres, healthcare providers, therapists, and government entities—to coordinate assessments, therapies, and accommodation recommendations in line with ADEK and GEMS guidelines.
- Maintain confidentiality and professional communication with all partners involved in the student's care and education.

## 7.5 Fostering a Culture of Inclusion

### GAA staff will foster a culture of inclusion through:

- Promoting awareness, understanding, and appreciation of neurodiversity and inclusive values among students, staff, and parents.
- Providing ongoing professional development at all staff levels to build confidence and competence in meeting the diverse needs of learners.
- Showcasing diversity by increasing the representation of all learner types in school communications and events (e.g., newsletters, assemblies, social media).
- Encouraging student voice and advocacy so that students with additional learning needs are active participants in their educational journey.



- Embedding inclusion in all areas of school life—curriculum design, assessment, extracurricular activities, and community partnerships—so every learner feels valued and supported.

## 7.6 Resourcing for Inclusive Education

### **GAA staff will:**

- Allocate an appropriate portion of the school's annual budget to support inclusive provision, staffing, professional learning, and assistive resources, as required by ADEK Section 5.3.
- Invest in continuous professional development to ensure all staff are skilled in evidence-based inclusive teaching strategies, differentiated instruction, and adaptive assessment.
- Ensure that any additional fees for services reflect the actual cost of provision and demonstrate value through measurable impact on student progress.
- Provide a clear rationale for additional services such as therapy, assistive technology, or modified curriculum support, with transparent documentation and annual parent agreements.
- Regularly review the quality, delivery, and impact of inclusion-related services, ensuring efficiency, effectiveness, and alignment with DLP targets.
- Maintain inclusive, safe, and universally designed physical spaces equipped with adaptive tools and assistive technology to ensure equitable access for all students.

## 7.7 Additional Fees

Where the exceptional need of a student requires specialist intervention and support beyond the school's standard inclusive provision, additional fees may be charged to cover the cost of this enhanced provision. Such fees must be approved by ADEK, and will be communicated to parents. Such fees will not exceed 50% of the tuition fee applicable to the student's enrolled year group.

Where additional school fees are necessary, GAA shall:

- Justify, with evidence, the requirements and costs for additional provisions that extend beyond the standard inclusive provision.
- Obtain a parental agreement, which shall be renewed at least annually, or when there is a change in the fees charged.
- Itemize all additional individually chargeable fees and update the student records on the eSIS database with the itemized charges.
- Schools shall provide termly financial statements to parents itemizing the allocation of additional funds charged.
- Limit additional charges to parents so that they do not exceed 50% of the tuition fee for the enrolled grade/year group.
- GAA will review all additional charges on a termly basis and evaluate the impact and ongoing applicability of specialist services.



## 8. Glossary of Terms

### **Accommodation**

An adjustment to teaching, assessment, or the learning environment that enables a student to access learning equitably without lowering curriculum expectations or standards.

### **Accommodation and Modification**

Accommodations change how a student learns the material; modifications change what a student is expected to learn. Modifications are documented on student records or transcripts.

### **Accommodation Plan (AP)**

A plan outlining specific accommodations that allow students with identified needs to access grade-level curriculum without modifying learning outcomes.

### **Additional Learning Needs (ALN)**

Any requirement for additional support, modification, or accommodation that enables a student to access learning. Includes Students of Determination, learners with temporary or contextual barriers, Gifted and Talented learners, and Multilingual Learners.

### **Advanced Learning Plan (ALP)**

A personalized plan for Gifted and Talented students outlining enrichment, acceleration, or extension opportunities. A subtype of a Documented Learning Plan (DLP).

### **Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) / Behavior Support Plan (BSP)**

A structured plan identifying proactive strategies, goals, and supports to address behavioral, social, or emotional needs that impact learning.

### **Clinical / Educational Assessment Report**

A professional evaluation by a qualified clinician (psychologist, therapist, or doctor) used to identify learning, emotional, physical, or behavioral needs that inform school-based planning.

### **Co-Teaching**

A collaborative teaching model in which the classroom teacher and Inclusion Specialist jointly plan, instruct, and assess all students in the same classroom.

### **Differentiation**



A teaching approach that adapts instruction, content, and assessment methods to accommodate varying student abilities, learning styles, and needs.

### **Documented Learning Plan (DLP)**

An ADEK-mandated individualized education plan that includes learning goals, accommodations, modifications, and monitoring processes. It encompasses IEPs, ALPs, BSPs, and related sub-plans.

### **Educational Risk**

A situation in which a student's academic, behavioral, wellbeing, or contextual factors place them at risk of underachievement or disengagement. Addressed through the ADEK Educational Risk Policy.

### **English / Multilingual Learner (ELL / MLL)**

A student whose first language differs from the school's language of instruction and who requires structured English-language development to access the curriculum.

### **English Language Plan (ELP)**

A targeted support plan outlining goals, strategies, and accommodations for students acquiring English as an additional language.

### **External Service Provider**

A licensed professional such as a therapist, psychologist, counselor, or doctor who delivers specialized support outside of school, coordinated with the GAA Inclusion Team.

### **Federal Law No. 29 of 2006**

UAE law guaranteeing the rights of People of Determination to education, employment, and social participation within an inclusive environment.

### **Gifted and Talented (G&T)**

Students who demonstrate exceptional aptitude or performance in one or more areas and require enrichment or extension opportunities to reach their potential.

### **Head of Inclusion / Director of Inclusion**

A senior leader responsible for overseeing inclusion, coordinating the Student Support Team (SST), ensuring compliance with ADEK policies, and maintaining quality inclusive provision across the school.



## **In-School Specialist Services (ISS)**

Therapeutic or specialist interventions—such as speech, language, occupational therapy, or counseling—delivered within the school in accordance with ADEK's In-School Specialist Services Policy.

## **Individual Assistant (IA)**

A parent-funded staff member (also called Shadow Teacher or PoD Support Assistant) who provides one-to-one logistical, behavioral, or personal care support to a specific Student of Determination under school supervision.

## **Individualized Diploma / Certificate of High School Completion**

A school-issued credential for students following a Modified Curriculum Pathway when standard diploma equivalency is not appropriate, completed with parental consent and ADEK guidance.

## **Inclusion**

The practice of educating students of all abilities together in a common learning environment with appropriate supports and differentiated instruction.

## **Inclusion Assistant (IA)**

A school-employed, non-teaching support professional who assists teachers and Inclusion Specialists in implementing accommodations and supporting students with additional learning needs in class or small groups.

## **Inclusion Specialist / Inclusion Teacher**

A qualified educator with expertise in Special or Inclusive Education who provides individualized or small-group interventions, manages DLPs, and collaborates with teachers and families to ensure access and progress for students requiring additional support.

## **Inclusion Team**

All staff engaged in delivering inclusive provision, including the Director of Inclusion, Inclusion Specialists, Inclusion Assistants, Individual Assistants, counselors, and other specialists.

## **Learning Support (LS)**

Academic or behavioral support beyond classroom differentiation, provided by Inclusion Specialists or assistants for students requiring targeted or intensive intervention.



### **Learning Support Assistant (LSA)**

A support professional who works under the direction of an Inclusion Specialist or teacher to provide academic or behavioral assistance. The term may refer to either an Inclusion Assistant or Individual Assistant depending on context.

### **Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)**

An educational setting where students with additional learning needs learn alongside their peers to the greatest extent possible, using accommodations or modifications as necessary.

### **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)**

A formal agreement signed by the parent, school, and any parent-funded assistant outlining expectations, confidentiality, and professional standards of conduct.

### **Modified Curriculum Pathway**

An alternative or adjusted curriculum designed for students whose cognitive or functional level prevents full access to grade-level standards. Goals and outcomes are individualized and recorded in the DLP.

### **Multidisciplinary Team (MDT)**

A group of professionals—including educators, therapists, and specialists—who collaborate to plan, implement, and review individualized educational or therapeutic programs.

### **Occupational Therapy (OT)**

A specialized intervention supporting fine motor, sensory, and self-care skill development to enhance participation in learning activities.

### **People of Determination (PoD)**

The UAE's official term for individuals with disabilities, emphasizing empowerment and ability, as recognized by Federal Law No. 29 of 2006.

### **Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP)**

An individualized safety plan outlining the assistance required for a student or staff member to evacuate safely during an emergency.

### **Pull-Out / Push-In Intervention**

Instruction or therapy provided either outside (pull-out) or within (push-in) the mainstream classroom to support specific learning or developmental goals while maintaining inclusion.

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## **Reasonable Adjustment**

A change to practices, policies, or environments that removes or reduces barriers to participation for Students of Determination, without imposing undue hardship on the school.

## **Referral Process**

The formal procedure for identifying students who may need additional support. Involves observation, data collection, discussion with the SST, and referral for internal or external assessment.

## **Student Support Plan (SSP)**

A short-term plan for students receiving emerging or targeted interventions (Tier 1–2) as part of the Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS). May transition into a DLP if long-term support is required.

## **Student Support Team (SST)**

A multidisciplinary team that identifies students of concern, reviews progress data, and coordinates interventions across Tier 1–3 levels of support.

## **Students of Determination (SoD)**

Learners with disabilities or recognized disorders who require specific accommodations, modifications, or specialized provision to access education equitably.

## **Therapy Plan (SLP / OT / Counseling)**

A plan developed by a licensed therapist outlining therapeutic goals, strategies, and review cycles, integrated within the student's DLP and coordinated with the school's Inclusion Team.

## **Tiered System of Support (MTSS)**

A three-level model (Tier 1 Universal, Tier 2 Targeted, Tier 3 Intensive) used to organize academic, behavioral, and social-emotional interventions according to student need.

## **Universal Design for Learning (UDL)**

An instructional framework that promotes flexible teaching and assessment methods, providing multiple means of engagement, representation, and expression to meet diverse learner needs.

## **Wellbeing Support**

Services and programs designed to promote students' mental health, resilience, and social-emotional growth, in alignment with ADEK Wellbeing and Student Mental Health Policies.



## 9. Legislation and Guidance

This policy is guided by Federal Law No. (29) of 2006 Concerning the Rights of People of Determination and its amendments, which guarantee equal access to educational opportunities for all learners within the United Arab Emirates. It aligns with the principles of inclusion, equity, and accessibility established by the UAE Federal Government and the Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge (ADEK), ensuring that all students who experience barriers to learning have equitable access to high-quality, inclusive education alongside their peers. GAA follows all expectations outlined in ADEK's School Inclusion Policy (Version 1.3, September 2024), and ensures consistency with related ADEK frameworks on Educational Risk, In-School Specialist Services, Wellbeing, Health and Safety, and Student Protection.

This policy is based on the following legislation and guidance:

- **Federal Decree Law No. (29) of 2006** — Concerning the Rights of People of Determination and its amendments.
- **Federal Decree Law No. (31) of 2021** — Promulgating the Crimes and Penalties Law (safeguarding provisions).
- **Ministerial Resolution No. (647) of 2020** — Policy of Inclusive Education (Ministry of Education).
- **ADEK School Inclusion Policy (v1.3, 2024)** — Mandating standard inclusive provision and leadership accountability in Abu Dhabi private and charter schools.
- **ADEK Educational Risk Policy (v1.1, 2024)** — Defining early identification, monitoring, and support processes for students at risk of underachievement.
- **ADEK In-School Specialist Services Policy (v1.3, 2024)** — Governing the provision and regulation of in-school therapy and specialist support services.
- **ADEK Student Wellbeing Policy (v1.3, 2024)** — Promoting mental health, safety, and social-emotional development of all students.
- **ADEK Student Protection Policy (v1.3, 2024)** — Outlining safeguarding and reporting procedures for students of determination and all learners.
- **ADEK Student Behavior Policy (v1.3, 2025)** — Providing guidelines for positive behavior management and restorative practice.
- **ADEK Health and Safety Policy (v1.3, 2024)** — Ensuring physical accessibility, safe environments, and inclusive emergency procedures.
- **UAE National Policy for Empowering People of Determination (2017)** — Promoting empowerment, participation, and inclusion across society.
- **UAE Vision 2030 and Vision 2071** — National strategies prioritizing inclusion, diversity, and accessibility across education and community systems.
- **Ministry of Education “School for All” Framework (2010)** — General Rules for the Provision of Special Education Programs and Services (Public and Private Schools).
- **Abu Dhabi Disabilities Classification Guide (2020)** — Standardized criteria for identifying and supporting Students of Determination across disability categories.

### Principles



These laws and frameworks collectively uphold the UAE's commitment to:

- **Equity:** Ensuring every learner has access to quality education that meets their individual needs.
- **Participation:** Promoting the inclusion of all learners in common educational settings.
- **Protection:** Safeguarding the rights, dignity, and wellbeing of all students, particularly Students of Determination.
- **Accountability:** Requiring schools to document, evaluate, and continually improve inclusive provision in alignment with ADEK standards.

## 10. Appendix — Reference Documents

This Inclusion Policy is aligned with GAA's overarching school policies and ADEK regulatory frameworks. All documents are accessible via the school website or available on request.

### Whole-School Policies and Governance

- Admissions & Enrollment Policy
- Curriculum & Assessment Policy
- GAA Whole School Assessment Policy
- Behavior, PBIS & Wellbeing Policy
- Health, Safety & Crisis Management Policy
- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

### Student Support and Inclusion Frameworks

- IB Diploma Programme (IB DP) Inclusion Policy
- GAA Gifted and Talented Policy
- GAA English / Multilingual Learners (ELL / MLL) Policy
- GAA SST (Student Support Team) Handbook
- GAA Modified Curriculum Pathway Guidelines
- GAA Behavior and Intervention Flowchart
- Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy
- GAA In-School Specialist Services Procedures
- GAA Learning Support Assistant / Individual Assistant Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)
- GAA Accessibility and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Guidelines

### ADEK and National Policies

- ADEK School Inclusion Policy (v1.3, 2024)
- ADEK Educational Risk Policy (v1.1, 2024)
- ADEK In-School Specialist Services Policy (v1.3, 2024)
- ADEK Student Wellbeing Policy (v1.3, 2024)



- ADEK Student Protection Policy (v1.3, 2024)
- ADEK Student Behavior Policy (v1.3, 2025)
- ADEK Health and Safety Policy (v1.3, 2024)
- ADEK Parent Engagement Policy (v1.1, 2024)
- ADEK Staff Eligibility Policy (v1.3, 2024)
- Federal Law No. (29) of 2006 — Rights of People of Determination
- Ministerial Resolution No. (647) of 2020 — Policy of Inclusive Education
- Abu Dhabi Disabilities Classification Guide (2020)
- Ministry of Education “School for All” Framework (2010)

## 11. Policy Review and Accountability

This Inclusion Policy will be reviewed annually by the Director of Inclusion, in collaboration with the Senior Leadership Team and the School Improvement Team, to ensure continued alignment with ADEK regulations, GEMS Education standards, and international best practice.

Revisions will reflect updates to ADEK policies, internal procedures, or regulatory requirements.

All updates will be approved by the Principal / Head of School and shared with staff, students, and parents.