

Inclusion Policy

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1. Mission & vision

International School Utrecht is a warm and welcoming community brought together by a single purpose: to inspire our students with a passion for lifelong learning, to equip them with the tools to achieve excellence for themselves and the global community they will live in. Uncovering and defining talent is at the heart of our educational mission.

We are a learning community.

2. Our core values

		
Curiosity	Connection	Compassion
Curiosity at International School Utrecht means being excited about lifelong learning, skills and knowledge development and the discovery of new things. Our curiosity shows our open mindedness, respect for diversity and going beyond the surface.	Connection at International School Utrecht means belonging, being included, feeling involved, seeing and making links between learning and life. We are more than a school, we are a learning community for curious minds and adventurous hearts to connect, learn and grow.	Compassion at International School Utrecht means being kind, empathetic and aware of individual values, contexts and needs to engage in meaningful conversations to support one another. Well-being is key to ensure we can all thrive.

3. Introduction

International School Utrecht (ISU) welcomes families from over 50 nationalities who create our dynamic and diverse school community. We believe that all our students are entitled to an education that enables them to develop their talents so that they can achieve their best, become confident individuals making a successful transition into adulthood as global citizens. As a school we developed nine belief statements that guide the type of educational approach we aim to achieve as an inclusive, continuum IB World School. Two of these belief statements focusing on our inclusive environment are highlighted below and will be further clarified in the rest of the policy:

We believe in the nurturing of a safe, caring, and inclusive environment that supports the well-being and emotional growth of our students.

We believe in the importance of a holistic education that develops the intellectual, personal, emotional, and social skills of our students, preparing them for a lifetime of learning.

Through promoting and creating a positive and supportive environment for student learning, development, and well-being, the school aims for all its students to reach their full potential and be successful learners. Our inclusion practices are offered within the mainstream environment, except for the Rainbow Class in primary.

This Inclusion Policy is designed to help understand the nature and details of the inclusion practices at ISU, as well as the rights and responsibilities of all stakeholders. It is written with regard to existing legislation and also takes into account statutory and non-statutory related guidance, including but not limited to the principles and practices of the International Baccalaureate, as well as the Dutch Education Act, 2014 (Wet Passend Onderwijs 2014) and the [UN Conventions of the Rights of the Child](#) (UNCRC, 1989). The policy gives an outline on the school's objectives related to inclusion, as well as its guiding principles and defines the framework designed to help our students and the school attain these goals.

In line with the [IB Access and Inclusion Policy](#) (IB, 2022), “access” and “inclusion” at ISU is defined as the following:

- Inclusion is an ongoing process that aims to increase access and engagement in learning for all students by identifying and removing barriers.
- Access refers to providing equitable educational opportunities in learning, teaching, evaluation/assessment and all other aspects of school life to all students by making space and provision for the characteristics that each person brings. (IB Access and Inclusion Policy, 2022, page 4)

With the development and implementation of this inclusion policy, ISU aims to:

- create an environment that meets the educational needs of each child;
- focus on the best interest of every student;
- be responsive to the needs and strengths of every student;
- identify a child who has additional educational needs as early as possible;
- ensure that additional needs are identified, assessed and provided for and thus to facilitate provisions to reduce barriers to learning;
- ensure that our students have a voice in this process and parents can play their part in supporting their child's education;
- identify roles and responsibilities of staff in providing for children's additional needs;
- promote effective partnerships and involve community partners when appropriate.

4. Philosophy

ISU is an International Baccalaureate (IB) World School, providing high-quality education for children aged 4–18, kindergarten to grade 12. Our mission statement ‘we are a learning community’ is at the core of our thinking and strategic planning. Our core values state that curiosity, compassion and connection are the drivers of all our decision making.

We welcome students from all over the world, regardless of gender, race or religion. As an accredited IB World School, we embrace the ideals as described in the IB Learner Profile. It is an expectation of the school, that applicants and parents/legal guardians embrace the principles of the IB mission statement and those of ISU (see section 1 of this policy).

5. Policy Review

All policies are updated (where appropriate) at the end of each academic year. A formal policy review takes place every 4 years as part of the 4-year School Plan cycle.

The IB Mission Statement; the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child; the CIS Code of Ethics and the ‘Stichting Primair Onderwijs Utrecht (SPO)’ and ‘NUOVO’ Mission and Vision are consulted for the writing and review of all policies.

6. Definition of additional educational needs

Additional educational needs refer to various groups of students who for a variety of reasons may face additional barriers to education and learning. This includes students with a diagnosed learning disability or learning difficulty.

Additional educational needs can be categorised under the four broad areas of development:

- **Communication & interaction:** Speech, language and communication needs, autism spectrum disorders.
- **Cognition & learning:** Moderate learning difficulties, severe learning difficulties, profound and multiple learning difficulties, specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia, dyscalculia and developmental co-ordination disorder.
- **Social, emotional and mental health difficulties:** such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, attachment needs, stress, depression and anxiety.
- **Sensory and/or physical needs:** such as visual impairment, hearing impairment, multi-sensory impairment, physical disability.

A *learning difficulty* means that the student has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others at the same age.

A student has a (learning) *disability* if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a long term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. This may include long term health conditions. A student with a disability may have additional educational needs if the disability prevents or hinders him/her from making use of school facilities.

Needs often overlap in these different areas and may also change over time. Additional needs are best considered in terms of a continuum from milder needs to more complex needs. As outlined in section 8, our inclusion framework is organised through three tiers. These tiers form a continuum to provide students with instruction and interventions at increasing levels of intensity.

7. Inclusion and Admissions Policy

All students applying to ISU will be admitted according to the admissions criteria. As an IB World School we offer a complete and connected International Baccalaureate programme for students from 4-18 from diverse international backgrounds. Both primary (Primary Years Programme) and secondary (Middle Years Programme and Diploma Programme) education are offered in an English-speaking environment. The school welcomes applications from students all over the world who demonstrate a need for international education.

Students with additional needs who apply to ISU are considered on a case-by-case basis, always using the best interest of the student as a guidance, considering:

- whether or not the school programme is appropriate to the student's academic and socio-emotional needs;
- whether or not the student can benefit from an international curriculum;
- whether or not there is space available in that grade level;
- whether or not the school is able to support the needs of the student.

Once a student is accepted to the school, staff is committed to guiding and assisting the student with any educational needs, where possible, to ensure equal access to the curriculum. More information about our admissions procedure can be found in the Admissions Policy on the school documents page on the website.

7.1. Rainbow Class in primary

Starting in August 2023, the Rainbow Class was opened as a special education classroom that students can join for parts of the day, based on their learning and development goals and overall educational needs. We strive to integrate our Rainbow Class students as much as is possible into their grade level classes.

The purpose of the Rainbow Class is to work towards a sustainable inclusive approach at ISU, meeting the needs of the diverse community of learners, to strengthen the current approach to inclusion, and to continue to effectively connect and collaborate with the experts around the school.

8. Inclusion framework: multi-tiered approach

To proactively address the academic, behavioural, and social-emotional needs of our students, the school uses a comprehensive framework and approach based on the following guiding principles:

1. **Student-centred** – focus on the best interest of every student;
2. **Needs-based** – responsive to the needs and strengths of every student;
3. **Prevention-oriented** – focus on early detection and intervention;
4. **Results-focused and systematic** – based on proven practices and aimed at positive results;
5. **Collaborative and transparent** – parents, teachers, students and others work together to develop appropriate and purposeful programmes for teaching and learning for all students;
6. **Culturally responsive** – reflective of and responsive to student diversity;
7. **Equitable** – provides students with access to the supports they need to be successful.

Emphasis is put on prevention (Tier 1) and the early identification and support of students with additional educational needs.

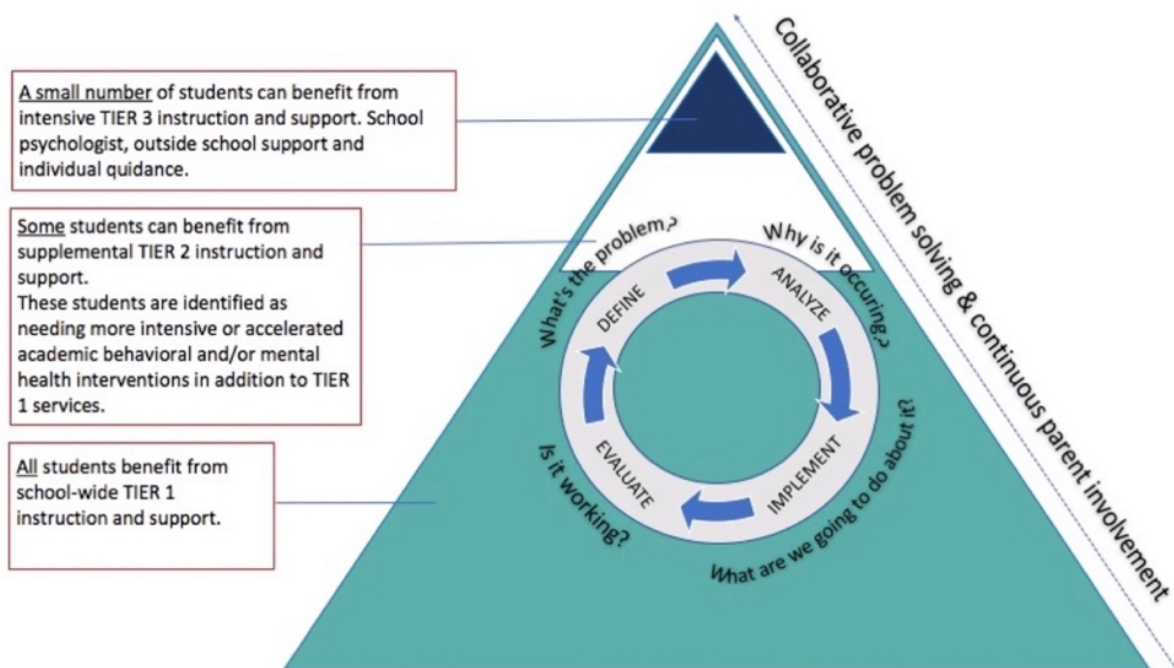
Being successful in supporting students and meeting the needs of all learners relies on collaboration at all levels. This inclusion policy supports this shared responsibility of all community members, teachers, students, and parents, to develop appropriate and purposeful programmes for progression through the IB programmes.

The term *inclusion practices* refers to all support given to students with the aim of increasing access and engagement in learning by removing barriers to learning. This includes the support given to students with additional educational needs and advanced learners (those students who are operating at a significantly higher level than the expected outcomes of their peers).

Support is broken down into the following areas:

- Academic support;
- Pastoral support.

The needs of students often cut across different areas of development, and so does the support – it is not uncommon that students receive both types of support, and that the type of support needed, changes over time.



The foundation for all students is the curriculum and high-quality instruction provided in Tier 1 (classroom support). The school supports students through regular professional development including workshops on Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and differentiation. Building on this strong foundation, Tier 2 (school support) and Tier 3 (external partners) interventions provide supplementary services and interventions for students with additional educational needs.

The support offered in Tier 1 and the additional interventions in Tier 2 and 3 is defined across the school. The steps taken and agreements are recorded and updated regularly in the schools' student administration systems (Parnassys and Magister).

TIER 1 – classroom support	
<u>Curriculum</u> Appropriate and relevant curriculum Differentiated instruction and classroom practices (UDL) English as an Additional Language support	<u>Pastoral</u> K-5 Classroom teachers, Grade Level Coordinators, Programme Leader, School Psychologist and the School Nurse 6-12 Mentors, Lead Mentors, Programme Leader, School Psychologist, School Nurse, Careers Counsellors
<u>Staffing</u> Qualified teachers and assistants Careers Counsellors Inclusion Coaches School Psychologists External School Nurse	<u>Environment/ facilities</u> Accessible facilities
TIER 2 – school support	
<u>Curriculum</u> K-5 In class support through co- teaching with the inclusion specialist, small group support focused on progress in language and maths, ATL's and social-emotional development 6-12 Small group or individual support sessions for students with identified additional needs focused on study skills, academic writing, or other learning needs; inclusive access arrangements (IAA) for assessments such as additional time or use of word processors	<u>Pastoral</u> K-5 Lunch bunch run by the inclusion department, small group counselling and individual counselling sessions 6-12 Individual mentor sessions, new student lunch sessions, small group counselling and individual counselling sessions.
<u>Staffing</u> Whole school inclusion team: Inclusion Coaches Inclusion Specialists Careers Counsellor School Psychologist	<u>Environment/ facilities</u> Identified inclusion areas in the school School counselling office Individual access arrangements if entitled according to IB regulations.
TIER 3 – school support plus	
<u>Curriculum</u> Appropriate and relevant curriculum Differentiated instruction and classroom practices Individual Learning goals within the Rainbow class in primary English as an Additional Language support K-12 Short term individual support in a 1:1 setting, for student with identified additional needs focused on progress in ATL's and academics	<u>Pastoral</u> In addition to the support provided in tier 1 and tier 2, 1:1 session with the School Psychologist can be scheduled (maximum of 8 sessions).
<u>Staffing</u> Inclusion Coaches External support team as required: Buurtteam (family counsellors). KOOS en Spoor 030 (Additional specialised youth care), Auris and Kentallis (experts in speech, language and hearing) Samenwerkingsverband (external	<u>Environment/ facilities</u> Identified inclusion working spaces in the school School counselling office Individual access arrangements if entitled according to IB regulations. Rainbow Class in primary for maximum 8 students

expertise), Jeugdgezondheidszorg (school doctor and school nurse), Leerplicht (attendance officer).	
Specialised teaching team to support in Rainbow Class	

In the following sections the rights and responsibilities of ISU students, parents, staff, and community partners are described.

9. Student rights & responsibilities

Through their academic and socio-emotional growth, students have the right to be supported by their parents/legal guardians and the school. ISU encourages all students to have agency in their own learning and development as lifelong learners; therefore, it is crucial that students are involved in the development, implementation, and evaluation of their own learning needs. These students should:

1. be given the opportunity, regardless of age, to say what they want for the future and give insight in their need;
2. take part in goal setting and planning;
3. be aware of their learning goals and actively strive to improve bases upon these goals;
4. understand the accommodation and self-advocate for these when appropriate;
5. reflect on their progress in meetings with parents.

10. Parent and legal guardian rights & responsibilities

At ISU parents and legal guardians are an essential partner in our students' education and form a vital part in offering effective support to our students. Parents have the right to be consulted and given opportunities to share their views and be an integral part of the ongoing support process.

In primary, the classroom teacher forms the link between the school and home and is the first point of contact for parents. In secondary, mentors guide the students through their academic and personal development. When concerns arise, parents should involve the classroom teacher and mentor who will involve the inclusion team when the student requires their further assistance. It is also possible that the school strongly recommends the parents to help their child at home with or without the use of external providers.

It is possible that the parents have already taken steps to meet their child's needs. It is common for children to receive treatment from a speech therapist, physiotherapist, tutor, etc. As ISU does not provide this type of support; parents will need to arrange and pay for it themselves. It is strongly recommended that close contact is maintained between parents, school, and the various external providers in order to align the support practices.

11. Staff rights & responsibilities

Staff at ISU have the right to appropriate training and relevant school support in order to meet the needs of our learners. These are the specific responsibilities depending on their role at school

- **All teachers.** Teachers are responsible for creating an appropriate curriculum, ensuring quality teaching and understanding the needs of their students. For Tier 1 student support, teachers should plan differentiated lessons taking into account student needs and areas of development. When students have additional needs that cannot be addressed by classroom strategies, teachers should involve the mentor and/or inclusion coaches in order to further determine the student's learning needs. Teachers work with the inclusion team, taking into consideration advice provided by outside service providers in developing resources, teaching strategies or approaches to support our students.
- **Classroom Teachers (primary).** In primary, classroom teachers form the link between the school and home. Classroom teachers track student's academic and socio-emotional growth, including relationships with teachers and peers. When concerns arise, the classroom teacher is the first point

of contact for students and parents. Classroom teachers are responsible for involving the inclusion team if necessary.

- **Mentors (secondary).** In secondary, mentors are responsible for the academic and pastoral well-being of our students. When concerns arise, the mentor is the first point of contact for students, parents, teachers, and the inclusion team. Mentors are responsible for involving the inclusion team if necessary.
- **Lead Mentors (secondary).** In secondary, lead Mentors are responsible for aligning the mentor curriculum for each grade level, horizontally and vertically. When grade-level concerns arise, Lead Mentors are responsible for aligning other mentors and involving the inclusion team and/or leadership if necessary.
- **Curriculum Coordinators.** The curriculum coordinators for PYP, MYP, and DP are responsible for aligning the academic curriculum, however, they will play a part in how the Approaches to Learning (ATL) curriculum is integrated within the entire programme. The curriculum coordinators will work closely with Subject Area Coordinators (secondary) and Grade Level Coordinators (primary) in order to align across the school.
- **Grade Level Coordinators (primary).** In primary, Grade Level Coordinators (GLCs) are crucial in developing teaching, planning and learning within the grade level. GLCs ensure continuity and progression throughout the curriculum, including the pastoral needs of the students. GLCs work closely together with the classroom teachers and the inclusion team regarding the overview of student needs in their grade level, ensuring all students receive the guidance they need.
- **Subject Area Coordinators (secondary).** Subject Area Coordinators are responsible for teaching and learning in their subject area, as well as curriculum alignment horizontally and vertically. SACs lead, manage and develop the subject area to ensure it achieves the highest possible standard of teaching and learning in their subject. SACs lead their team on the implementation of Tier 1 practices in their subject area.
- **Senior Leadership.** The senior leadership team is responsible for the leadership and management of the school, including the development of the school's vision on inclusion. Within the senior leadership team, the heads of primary and secondary school are responsible for the inclusion team.
- **Inclusion Team.** The inclusion team is responsible for promoting inclusion practices through Tier 1, as well as the development and delivery of appropriate services to support students with additional educational needs (Tier 2 and Tier 3). They support students' ability to learn and teachers' ability to teach. They:
 - coordinate/monitor the support available for the students in the school;
 - facilitate links to the community and other non-school support services;
 - enable students with additional needs to continue to access and engage in learning;
 - assist staff to guide and teach all students effectively;
 - ensure new staff members are being briefed about policies and procedures relating to student well-being and support;
 - advise/consult with school leadership on the development and review of effective inclusion policies and structures.
- **Inclusion Coaches.** The Inclusion Coach works in primary or secondary. Key responsibilities include coordinating student support, advising on admissions and transitions, coaching teachers, and fostering partnerships with parents and external professionals. They provide guidance to teachers regarding the implementation of extra support and contribute to the further development of the support system in the school. The focus is on continuously strengthening teachers in cyclical, professional, systematic, and effective daily practices in the classroom for all students. Additionally, they represent the school when collaborating with external partners in the community and maintain discussions amongst all parties.
- **Inclusion Specialists.** From kindergarten to grade 12 the Inclusion Specialists design, monitor and deliver interventions designed for the student's development. Inclusion specialists provide support to students through individual or small group interventions. Specialists also provide support to

teachers and parents/legal guardians of the students they support through sharing expertise; particularly with accommodating diversity and differentiation.

- **School Psychologists.** School Psychologists provide individual counselling and conduct assessments that will lead to information, strategies, inclusive access arrangements, resources, and support to assist in the student's overall development, academic progress, and well-being. The school psychologist can support teachers and students on all levels of the continuum of support.
- **Careers Counsellors.** Careers counsellors support students in the process of discovering their interests and strengths, setting educational goals, in preparation for post-16 pathways and beyond. Careers counsellors are responsible for providing comprehensive guidance and support to students in making informed decisions about their future academic and professional pursuits. This role involves collaborating with students, parents, mentors, and external stakeholders to facilitate career development initiatives within the International Baccalaureate (IB) framework. Starting in grade 9, the MYP Careers Counsellor advises students on their personal interests, requirements for the Diploma Programme, alternative routes such as MBO or the IB Careers-Related Programme, and career choices beyond secondary education. The DP Careers Counsellor advises students on DP subject choices, university requirements, and university applications.
- **English Language Acquisition (ELA) team.** Around 90% of ISU students come from multilingual households. Some students start at ISU speaking a language other than English and need assistance in order to proficiently learn English as an additional language. The specialists in the ELA team work in close collaboration with teachers to provide support for all children that are still acquiring English. Depending on the needs of the student, the ELA team and the inclusion team work together in providing support for the student. More on the needs of language learners and how we meet the needs of these students, can be found in the language policy on the school documents page on the website.

12. External partners rights & responsibilities

ISU works closely together with its community partners. As a school that is partly funded and supported by the Dutch government, ISU is a member of two regional support networks in Utrecht. Primary is a member of Samenwerkingsverband Primair Onderwijs Utrecht and secondary is a member of SterkVO.

For matters related to the health of our students, the municipality of Utrecht appoints a school doctor and nurse. Depending on the needs of the student and the family, ISU works closely together with the Attendance officer (Leerplicht ambtenaar) and our local social care (Buurtteam).

These external partners have the right to be informed of students needs according to Dutch regulations and are responsible for advising on and/or arranging support for students with additional educational needs.

If a primary student is accepted into the Rainbow Class, the school will follow the regular procedure for support through the Samenwerkingsverband and ask parents' permission to schedule the necessary external support and expertise needed.

13. Complaints

For any concerns or complaints in relation to our inclusion practices, the first point of contact is the students' classroom teacher or mentor. Should the issue remain unresolved, a confidential advisor (vertrouwenspersoon) is available, who is able to listen, give information on law and rules and guidance on the next steps to reach a solution.

Additionally, the ISU Complaints Protocol enables all registered students at ISU, parents/legal guardians of registered ISU students and ISU staff members to raise concerns about the school. The protocol can be found on the school documents page on the website.

Complaints about decisions taken by the local authority or external providers should be addressed to the organisation directly.