

Learning Diversity Policy

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1. Philosophy

At Discovery College we recognise that all students are individuals in terms of their intellectual and physical abilities and their social and emotional needs. We are sensitive to our students' needs and provide additional support for those learners whose needs are not being fully met for reasons of language, physical disability, and/or academic ability. These learners are identified as having Individual Needs (IN). IN is used as an umbrella term to recognise students:

- with Special Educational Needs (SEN);
- who have English as an Additional Language (EAL);
- who are Gifted and/or Talented (G&T) in one or more academic areas.

Our IN provision is aligned with the requirements of the English Schools Foundation (ESF) SEN Policy (2007) and supports ESF SEN Guidance for implementing the SEN Policy (2008, 2012). It reflects international best practice in codes of practice for students with special educational needs and takes into account UNESCO's 1994 Salamanca Statement (1994). It also reflects the International Baccalaureate Organisation's (IBO) stance on learning diversity in the classroom (IBO 2010, 2012, 2013).

As an authorised IB school we embrace inclusive practices where developing the learning of all students is the shared responsibility of the classroom teacher and specialist support teachers. The Learning Diversity (LD) teachers and LD Educational Assistants (EAs) work in collaboration with the classroom teachers and specialist teachers to develop our students' learning in all areas. We are committed to taking full account of our students' individual differences and to cater for their needs within mainstream classes through an inclusive teaching and learning approach. This approach includes the use of strategies such as guided small group work, co-teaching, parallel teaching, frontloading and re-teaching. In some cases, short-term one-to-one support may be provided. In exceptional cases, when students would benefit from more intensive learning support, individuals may be withdrawn from class to participate in short-term personalised, targeted learning support programmes. All work undertaken also involves the promoting of positive self-esteem in those students receiving support.

2. Aims and Objectives

The aims and objectives of the Learning Diversity Team (LDT) are:

- To provide clear procedures for identifying, monitoring and teaching students with IN in line with the ESF Code of Practice
- To carry out the above procedures in collaboration with parents, teachers, student counsellors, students and outside agencies (as required)
- To support the students with accessing all aspects of the curriculum
- To track interventions and progress through the maintenance of records of IN students
- To meet the needs of IN students through working in the role of consultant, coach and collaborator as appropriate with class teachers.

3. Identifying and supporting IN Students

At Discovery College the majority of students have their needs met in the mainstream classes through an inclusive model of support. As the College does not receive any subvention for IN students, it may be unable to provide the necessary support that may be required by students who have greater learning needs. This includes a student who is identified as being at a Level of Adjustment (LOA) 3 or above, as defined by ESF. Similarly, Discovery College acknowledges that all students must have a level of English sufficient to access the curriculum.

3.1 Admissions

The purpose of the admissions process is to assess a student's ability to access successfully the curriculum. All students applying to enter Discovery College will, at the time of admissions, be assessed for IN. The Learning Diversity Team will be consulted when concerns are noted. To be accepted for enrolment at Discovery College all students must meet admissions requirements.

3.2 Levels of Adjustment for SEN students (LOA)

The level of support a student receives is dependent on their level of adjustment (LOA). Students at LOA 1 are supported in the most part through the use of in-class differentiation, with guidance from the LDT. Students at LOA 2 or above may require more direct and/or sustained intervention from the LD teacher including small group or 1:1 sessions. They will also be supported by in-class differentiation.

| LOA Level | Explanation |
|-----------|--|
| 1 | A student with an LOA1 will at times require class-based teaching and learning adjustments. Our LOA1 students are supported within the classroom and may work with EAs. At times as appropriate they may be involved in small group work and parallel teaching with the LD teacher. The LD teacher works closely with the classroom teachers to support the provision of a differentiated curriculum. |
| 2 | A student with an LOA2 will at times require individualised teaching and learning adjustments. Modifications may include adjustment of objectives, materials or equipment. LOA 2 students may be supported through working in small groups within the classroom or through parallel teaching or partnership teaching. Some short-term one to one support may be provided with either an EA or the LD teacher, depending on the student's learning needs. |

3.3 English as an Additional Language (EAL)

As Discovery College has students from a diverse range of language backgrounds, we have a number of English as an Additional Language (EAL) students. LD teachers provide support to these students to develop their academic English. In collaboration with the classroom or subject teachers, the LDT provides additional support to EAL students within the classroom through interventions such as small group work and parallel or partnership teaching. Through differentiation within the classroom, secondary subject teachers use a variety of appropriate teaching and learning strategies to support language development.

EAL students are identified through the admissions process with English language assessments in the areas of listening, speaking, reading and writing. The secondary subject teachers will work closely with the LDT teacher to outline interventions, accommodations, teaching and learning strategies, and resources which can be used to support these students' language development needs.

3.4. Enrichment

Students at Discovery College with enrichment needs due to academic strengths are supported through differentiation within the classroom. These students exhibit above average performances in one or more areas of the curriculum compared to their age peers. These extensions and above age



level work may be done through individualised topic options, flexible grouping situations and other models to promote progress.

Bibliography

ESF SEN policy (2007)

ESF SEN Guidance for implementing the SEN Policy (2008) (2012).

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IBO MYP: From Principles into Practice (2012)

IBO Meeting student learning diversity in the classroom (2013)

UNESCO Salamanca statement (1994)