



ICS Inclusion Policy & Practice



Introduction

What is Responsible Inclusion?

Inclusion at ICS is defined as; being included and participating in the school community using one's abilities in regular day-to-day activities. It is being a part of what everyone else is doing, and being welcomed and embraced as a member who belongs. This means that a student with learning diversity is supported by the school to make this belonging and participation occur. Responsible inclusion is being accountable to make this "inclusion" happen within the resources available to the school and within the abilities of the student(s).

Inclusion is facilitated in a culture of collaboration, mutual respect, support and problem-solving involving the whole school community. ICS utilizes research based best practices and programs to help facilitate responsible inclusion.

Foundational Principles

Vision

We strive to be Our Best with Africa and Our world

Mission

We nurture the talents, character and intellect of all learners, challenging them to be a positive influence and empowering them to excel in their world.

ICS Learner Profile

The ICS Learner Profile is the core and foundation of what we teach at ICS. We believe that these traits will help our students develop into compassionate, engaged and active global citizens.

PRINCIPLED: We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.

CARING: We show empathy, compassion and respect. We have a commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.

THINKERS: We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyze and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.

OPEN-MINDED: We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.

KNOWLEDGEABLE: We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.

COURAGEOUS: We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.

INQUIRERS: We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.

BALANCED: We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives – intellectual, physical, and emotional – to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.

REFLECTIVE: We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.

COMMUNICATORS: We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.

*The ICS Learner Profile is based on the IB Learner Profile, International Baccalaureate Organization 2013

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This Policy & Practice document represents our Policy and high level details of our Practice. The ICS SST Handbook provides details of implementation and execution of this policy and practices.

This Policy & Practice was developed in 2016-17, and reviewed in 2018-19. This will be reviewed every 2 years by the Director of SST, Executive Director of Learning and the Schoolwide Leadership Team. Next review 2020-21.

Responsible Inclusion at ICS

ICS Addis is committed to a progressive and reflective process concerning inclusion. The ICS Board, administration and faculty support and encourage the education of many children and aim to provide the best responsibly inclusive education in Africa. ICS is fortunate to have an extensive array of supports available to students and parents.

The ICS Student Support Services Program is based on the concept that differentiation is achieved by the continual adjustment of an appropriately challenging learning program to match a student's demonstrated level and pace of learning. This is achieved through Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), the Response to Intervention (RtI) model, and parent and student involvement. Through these programs and partnerships ICS works, within the resources available, and to the best of our ability to meet the individual needs of our students.

We believe:

- Education is enhanced by the creation of affirmative, responsive environments that promote a sense of belonging, safety, self-worth and growth for every student
- Diversity in learning is a rich resource for building inclusive communities
- That all students can and want to learn.
- All students need to have an opportunity to find their passions and reach their potential.
- Ensuring students have access to what they need to learn, when they need it is equally important as the curriculum we teach.
- That a variety of strategies and specialists are necessary, in order to become more effective in assisting students and teachers.
- All students will develop the ICS Learner Profile attributes and develop into inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through multi-cultural understanding and respect.
- Learning is considered from a strength-based perspective
- The relationship between teacher and student has a significant impact on how well the student learns.
- All students need to know themselves as learners and know how to advocate for their learning.
- Planning for students with special needs requires flexibility, an open mind, and patience.

Responsible Inclusion during Admissions

All ICS Admissions Policies & Practices work in partnership with the following Responsible Inclusion guidelines.

ICS can and does provide an appropriate education for highly capable students, students with mild to moderate disabilities, as well as some students requiring more intensive supports. ICS accepts students who have no English (reading or speaking) as well as students with limited skills/abilities. However, starting at grade 7 exceptions do apply to English language learners. Realizing that there are limited resources within the school and within the Addis Ababa community, we can only admit students for which we have the services and resources available. Admission is open to students who we can support responsibly in our inclusion model.

Families and previous schools must provide all records and evaluations upon admissions for a review by the Director/Coordinator of the Student Support Program.

In cases where ICS determines that it may have an appropriate educational program for a child, the school may require parents to pay additional fees beyond the normal tuition rates.

ICS has limited services and resources available for meeting the needs of learners with intensive behavioral, emotional or other issues. Students applying for admissions that have these intensive needs may not be accepted.

Admissions will involve the division principal and the Director/Coordinator of the Student Support Program to discuss any student with data and/or records that indicate current or potential needs.

Response to Intervention

“RtI is a practice of... (1) providing high-quality instruction/ intervention matched to student needs and (2) using learning rate over time and level of performance to (3) make important education decisions.” (NASDSE 2005, pg. 5)

ICS practices the Response to Intervention (RtI) model to address student performance and growth. RtI provides a framework for PLCs to structure interventions and discussions concerning students. RtI is the practice of providing high-quality instruction and interventions matched to student(s) needs, monitoring progress frequently to make changes in instruction or goals, and applying data to important educational decisions. RtI holds the promise of ensuring that all children have access to high quality instruction, and that struggling learners – including those with learning disabilities – are identified, supported, and served early and effectively.

We attempt to provide: “What a student needs when a student needs it” without a lot of barriers, paperwork, or labels.

Tier 1: High Quality Core Instruction

All students get Tier 1 instruction. At Tier 1 all students receive instruction within an evidence-based, scientifically researched core program. Our teachers and programs allow for a wide range of differentiation in the classroom, focusing on Content, Process, and Product. All our teachers are trained in providing accommodations for any student to help ensure their success.

Tier 2: Some Risk

Tier 2 consists of children who fall below the expected levels of accomplishment and are at some risk for academic/behavior failure. The needs of these students are identified through the assessment process, data dialogues and PLC conversations. Instructional programs, strategies and/or accommodations are delivered that focus on their specific needs. These students need regular supplemental or strategic instruction to support their learning and raise their achievement to proficiency in the core curriculum.

Tier 3: At Risk

Tier 3 instruction is targeted long-term instructional intervention for students who are significantly behind or show a lack of growth on or towards benchmarks and/or who may have an identified learning disability. These students show a clear documented educational need for this level of service(s). These students are not able to make sufficient progress with Tier 2 support.

Student Focus Process

At ICS we use a Student Focus Process. The Student Focus Process (SFP) is the recognition that there may be issues surrounding a child's learning and/or behavior that require the collective attention of a group of educators (specialist and generalist alike) and may include the parents and/or student. It is an invitation to have a professional inquiry about a child's learning and a commitment to share responsibility and accountability for the design and implementation of strategic interventions.

Student Progress Monitoring and Reporting

ICS uses two different progress monitoring and reporting tools.

The **Individual Learning Plan ILP** is meant to address each child's unique learning issues and include specific educational goals, services, timeline and assessments. ILPs will be developed by the SFT and case manager and will be monitored by the case manager. Parent signatures and specific goals and progress monitoring are required. The ILP is an opportunity for the parents, the student (if appropriate), and the educators to work together as team members to discuss the student's needs, to identify services that will be provided to meet those needs, and to set annual goals.

A **Progress Monitoring Plan /PMP** is a less formal process for documenting a student's current level and interventions designed to increase the student's performance. The PMP is a plan for students who have significant needs and have a specific and targeted intervention(s) but may not have an identified disability. The PMP outlines one or more of the following: specific skills, behaviors, goals, accommodations, progress monitoring timeline and assessments relevant to the students learning and/or behavioral needs.

Learning Support

Tiered Levels of Support are provided to students within each division. Learning support (Tier 2 or 3) is provided to students with a range of needs; from below grade level expectations to diagnosed disabilities. Students receiving learning support services may receive interventions in reading, writing, math, content specific and/or social/emotional skills.

The amount of time a student receives support varies per division and level of need. All involve intense collaboration and problem solving between the SST and classroom teachers. Students may have a PMP or ILP with identified goals. These goals are met through strategic and targeted interventions.

Other Student Support Services

ICS offers a wide range of other support services.

English as an Additional Language Program

The ICS English as an additional language (EAL) program is designed to provide a meaningful, relevant, and professional intervention program for English Language Learners (ELL) that meets their specific and individual needs, while treating their culture and primary language with respect and dignity.

School Psych Services

Evaluates different areas of a child's cognitive abilities, levels of achievement, behavioral patterns, language skills and other areas of processing that impact learning.

Transition Support

ICS accepts a specific percentage of students who have significant to intensive learning disabilities or sometimes students currently enrolled are found to have significant learning disabilities. ICS offers these students the opportunity to attend and be part of the ICS community. Transition students require more support, services, accommodations, and modifications than our average student requires and are supported by a specially trained group of teachers and teaching assistants. They are included in the mainstream environment as much as possible and we believe our school and students are enriched with their attendance at ICS. The number of these students is limited to no more than 2% of our total school population.

Speech and Language

Evaluates and provides intervention to children presenting with cognitive/ communicative disorders including, but not limited to, disordered articulation, voice, expressive language, receptive language, pragmatic skills, executive function skills, feeding/swallowing and, fluency (stuttering).

Occupational Therapy

Evaluates and provides intervention to children struggling with fine motor skills, gross motor skills, sensory processing skills, activities of daily living as well as instrumental activities of daily living.

Counseling

School counselors provide transition planning, career exploration, educational interventions, and behavior support for students within SST. ICS School Counselors can and will be case managers of specific students who may need specific behavioral or emotional supports.

Medical Re-entry Protocols

Students attending ICS at times may need to take a leave of absence and seek significant medical and mental health interventions. It is important that entry back into school be appropriately monitored to ensure the success of the student and ensure that teachers have the necessary information to ensure the students success.

Once a re-entry plan is established, the family will be contacted and informed of the re-entry date. On the first day back at school and prior to entering class, the student will be asked to meet with the divisional counselor and others if necessary. Follow up meetings and progress monitoring of the student is conducted by the school counselor. Follow up meetings and adjustments to plan are based upon the needs of the students.