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DUBAI INCLUSIVE EDUCATION POLICY FRAMEWORK



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Dr. Abdulla Al Karam

Chairman of the Board of Directors and Director General of KHDA

Persons with determination. This is how the UAE has chosen to view the attributes of persons with disabilities; a reflection of their strength of character, their perseverance and their courage. The inspiration for the development of Dubai Inclusive Education Policy Framework is clear in the words His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum who stated that 'Determination, strategy and vision for the future are our real resources in the quest for excellence and success.'

The Dubai Disabilities Strategy has a determined an aspirational vision to create a fully cohesive and inclusive society. One where the rights and access to equitable opportunities for people of determination are assured and protected. Under the leadership of the Executive Council of Dubai, and through the focus of 'My community... a city for every one initiative, KHDA has the privilege of leading the Inclusive Education taskforce and the development of Dubai's Inclusive Education strategy. This is just one strand of Dubai's aspiration to be a fully inclusive city by 2020. It has been implemented alongside strategic plans to ensure access to quality health and rehabilitation services, equal employment opportunities, universal accessibility and sustainable social protection systems.

The concept of inclusive education lies at the heart of effective education. It encompasses the principles of diversity, personalisation, equity, respect, acceptance and enrichment. When we improve the quality of inclusion within our schools, we improve education for all.

The Inclusive Education Framework is an aspirational framework designed to enable to achievement of an inspirational vision. However, it is you, the teachers, the parents, the school leaders and other professionals who hold the power to create this change; a change to realise the success of all students who experience special educational needs and disabilities within Dubai. In the words of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum "The goals are clear, the road is paved and the clock ticks; there is no place for hesitation. There are many who talk, we accomplish."

Fatma Belrehif

Executive Director of Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau

KHDA has acted as a facilitator of quality across the educational landscape in Dubai and we continue to embrace the privilege of transferring the aspirational vision our country into the life of our schools and the hearts and minds of their students.

Ensuring the provision of quality education for students of determination has always been a central feature of our work, and the strategic prioritisation of inclusive education by our leaders has enabled the development of a clear and focused policy framework. This framework provides a holistic description of the conditions necessary to enable all education settings across Dubai to develop fully inclusive systems of education. It has been informed by extensive research, analysis, consultation and refinement including large-scale scoping of international best practice, tailored to the specific needs of Dubai.

The framework provides valuable information about the required standards of educational practice as well as offering clear guidance regarding the actions necessary to ensure the provision of quality inclusive services for students of determination. Importantly, it challenges the use of outdated definitions and perceptions of students with special educational needs and disabilities and provides revised common terms of reference which should be used across the education sector when referring to matters related to the development of inclusive education.

The development of the Inclusive Education Policy Framework has only been possible through the efforts of many. I would like to extend my thanks to the many teachers, parents, students, principals, school operators, and in particular the people of determination who shared their feedback, views and experiences in a way that enabled us to shape our vision of inclusion for the future.

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DUBAI INCLUSIVE EDUCATION POLICY FRAMEWORK

According to the United Nations, around 10 per cent of the world's population live with either a medical impairment or a disability. An *impairment* is defined as a medically identified condition or a long-term limitation of a person's physical, mental, cognitive, communicative and/or sensory functions. Impairments become *disabilities*, when the person experiences attitudinal, social and/or environmental barriers that prevent *full* and *effective participation* within a community. Therefore, a disability is the result of an individual's interaction with society, if barriers to participation for that person are not removed. It is **not** an attribute of *the person*.

In the context of education, those who remain excluded from schools and other education provisions are most often those children who experience a special educational need and disability (SEND). This inclusive education policy framework reflects on how education providers and other stakeholders respond to the needs of children and young people who experience SEND.

1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

1.1 PURPOSE

Under the leadership of HH Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum and in accordance with 'My Community...A city for everyone' initiative the Inclusive Education Task Force, in collaboration with all education providers, is committed to achieving educational excellence and is therefore determined to establish a quality inclusive education system across the Emirate of Dubai. The focus on inclusive education is part of the wider vision for Dubai to become a *fully inclusive* city by 2020. This, in turn, is part of a wider strategic plan which, in addition to education, incorporates health and rehabilitation, employment, universal accessibility and social protection.

The purpose of *'Dubai Inclusive Education Policy Framework'* is to provide information about the procedures and standards necessary for the improvement of inclusive education provision. It is also intended to inform entity specific directives, so that:

> *Every day, in every classroom, all students, including those identified as experiencing special educational needs and disabilities, will **learn** and **achieve** in a safe, supportive, engaging and appropriately challenging common learning environment. Within such a setting, their personal, social, emotional and academic needs are fully met.*

1.2 | SCOPE

The *'Dubai Inclusive Education Policy Framework'* aims to inform and empower all education providers, local regulatory authorities and governing bodies across the Emirate of Dubai.

Through the development of an emirate-wide system of integrated services this policy framework will set aspirations for a wide variety of settings; early childhood services, primary, secondary and higher education settings, including special needs centres. They will be monitored through appropriately designated local authorities with clear co-ordination and alignment of the quality resources necessary to enable a fully inclusive education system for children who experience SEND.

This policy framework will be applied to all education sectors across Dubai and will include all settings providing education to all students, ranging from those who are of pre-primary age to those engaged in higher education. This document is particularly pertinent to students who experience disabilities. It will require change to many existing practices and procedures to achieve the outcomes that the policy framework is designed to deliver. The contents will be subject to review as implementation indicates necessary over time.

DISABILITY

"A social condition that occurs when an individual with a long term limitation, experiences attitudinal, social and environmental barriers that prevent full and effective participation within a community. A disability is the result of an individual's interaction with society and is not an attribute of the person."

COMMON LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

"An educational setting where students from different backgrounds and with different abilities learn together in an inclusive environment."

2. PRINCIPLES

At its heart, inclusive education is a provision that is committed to educating all students, including students identified as experiencing special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) in a *common learning environment*. In such settings, all students have access to quality instruction, intervention and support, so that they experience success in learning.

Inclusive education providers create a culture of collaboration, in a landscape of mutual respect and equality for all. All students are given opportunities to be successful learners, to form positive social relationships with peers, and to become fully participating members of the learning community.

To achieve a high-quality, inclusive education system it is vital that all stakeholders across all education sectors within Dubai develop a shared commitment to internationally recognised values of inclusive education.

All stakeholders, including governing bodies and leaders at all levels should:

- view and value student diversity as integral to the human condition
- recognise the learning potential of all students
- engage with theories of learning that support child-centred and differentiated approaches to teaching and learning
- acknowledge that all students have the right to education in a common learning environment
- prevent marginalisation and discrimination in education based on the experience of SEND in order to reduce barriers to participation in learning
- be proactive in removing barriers to learning in diverse student populations, by adapting and modifying curricula, teaching and learning strategies
- reject ability-labeling in teaching, along with the idea that some learners cannot learn due to individual deficits
- Fulfil their responsibility to facilitate an inclusive culture within their individual education settings and be accountable through the programmes, practices and outcomes of the entire learning community.

BARRIERS

"Attitudes, beliefs, practices, physical or technological obstacles, or the lack of support, that result in a student's exclusion from, or in their less-than-full participation as a valued equal in, the common learning environment in mainstream schools and classrooms."

3. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

'Dubai Inclusive Education Policy Framework' has been developed to support the UAE's commitment to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) as well as federal and local legislation that calls for the inclusion of all learners, regardless of ability, in the education sector. Federal Law 2006 and 2009 and Dubai Law no 2 (2014) clearly demonstrate Dubai's commitment to ensuring the educational and social inclusion of all children, adults and families experiencing special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). These laws reflect international best practices and align with the UAE's ratification of the UNCRPD, particularly Art. 24, on the rights to Inclusive Education. The principles of **inclusion** and **equity** lie at the heart of the legislative framework. It requires that education providers ensure that students who experience SEND have equitable access to quality inclusive education with their peers.

The policy framework has been developed in partnership with a diverse range of stakeholders. It is based on international evidence of successful inclusive practices in education. It is also the culmination of an international benchmarking literature review, a participatory research process, based on extensive consultation with many stakeholders and an environmental scan of the enablers and barriers to inclusive education. The process has included a situation-analysis that identifies potential barrier-mitigation strategies and illustrates students' journeys across education phases and providers in Dubai.

Based on international best-practice and research, the policy framework purposefully offers definitions of key terms with the intention of informing a clear, common language and approach (Appendix 1). This policy framework also takes into account the complexity and the uniqueness of the education landscape of Dubai, which hosts schools from all over the world, collectively delivering over 17 different curricula. This landscape is characterised by a diverse range of different education settings including schools, early learning centres, higher education providers and special education centres.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEED AND DISABILITY (SEND)

"A need which occurs when a student identified with an impairment requires the school to make specific modifications or provide specific supports to prevent, remove or reduce any potential disability from occurring and to ensure that the student can access education on an equitable basis and within a common learning environment with same-aged peers."

4. DUBAI INCLUSIVE EDUCATION STANDARDS

The following **standards** provide clear guidance about the actions necessary to assure good governance and accountability to enhance and extend quality inclusive education services within schools and other education settings across Dubai:

1. Identification and Early Intervention
2. Admissions, Participation and Equity
3. Leadership and Accountability
4. Systems of Support for Inclusive Education
5. Special Centres as a Resource for Inclusive Education
6. Co-operation, Co-ordination and Partnerships
7. Fostering a Culture of Inclusive Education
8. Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting
9. Resourcing for Inclusive Education
10. Technical, Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Higher Education and Post-School Employment.



STANDARD 1

IDENTIFICATION AND EARLY INTERVENTION

OVERVIEW

Identification and early intervention refers to the accurate and urgent process through which education providers, and other professionals, utilise formal and informal methods of assessment to accurately identify the type of SEND experienced by a student. This information is then used to inform the use of targeted, evidence-based interventions which accelerate learning, progress and development.

ALL EDUCATION PROVIDERS SHOULD:

1.1 Ensure that admission into all educational settings, including early years ***will not*** *be conditional upon the submission of a medical diagnosis.*

1.2 Carry out an 'assessment of educational need' upon entry to school, or other formal education programme.

1.3 Use the outcome of the 'assessment of educational need' alongside other information to appropriately identify the category and level of SEND experienced by the student.

1.4 Ensure appropriate identification procedures on entry, in the early years, and in classes are consistently applied and occur in a timely fashion.

1.5 Use the information gained from assessment upon entry and identification procedures to determine the type and level of support appropriate for each student, based upon their level of development and experience of SEND. This will include some or all of the following:

i. universal design strategies for students at an 'appropriate level' of development, for example whole class differentiation strategies

ii. targeted interventions for students who experience a delay in their development or achievement of educational outcomes; for example, providing access to a small-group social skills intervention group

iii. individualised interventions for a student who experiences significant levels of SEND, for example, providing access to targeted evidenced-based intervention for a student who experiences specific learning difficulties

1.6 Develop personalised individual education plans (IEPs) for students identified as experiencing SEND.

1.7 Use the IEP as a **SMART** document to inform the use and impact of **S**pecific intervention, **M**easured outcomes, **A**ttainable targets, and **R**elevant and results-oriented activities and **T**ime-sensitive measures, in response to the SEND experienced by each student.

1.8 Develop systems to ensure they work in partnership with Early Intervention Centres to enable the effective transition of young children who experience SEND into formal mainstream education settings.

ALL RELEVANT AUTHORITIES WILL:

1.9 Provide information and guidelines to early childhood education providers on how to utilise published and routinely administered developmental screening tools. They do this both to enrich universal provision for all children and to inform targeted support for children identified 'at risk' of, or actually experiencing SEND.

1.10 Set clear quality assurance guidelines and a standardised structure for medical and clinical assessments related to the provision of inclusive education for children who experience SEND.

1.11 Ensure information from medical and clinical assessments, screening procedures, and related services can be utilised to enhance the quality of educational provision and outcomes for students who experience SEND.



STANDARD 2

ADMISSIONS, PARTICIPATION AND EQUITY

OVERVIEW

Matters concerning admissions, participation and equity refers to the fact that students who experience SEND have the same right as all other students. This includes the right to be admitted to a preferred school where they are able to engage and participate in a quality learning experiences alongside same aged peers.

ALL EDUCATION PROVIDERS SHOULD:

2.1 Ensure students are not refused admission based only on their experience of SEND. This will ensure that students will be able to attend the school chosen for them by their parents.

2.2 Ensure students who experience SEND will receive “sibling priority” for admission to a specific school or educational programme.

2.3 Ensure that students who experience SEND will be guaranteed the right to receive quality education and training in all types and phases of schooling across Dubai.

2.4 Ensure that students who experience SEND will be actively supported to participate in the process of learning as they develop their potential, and build relationships with their peers, through social interactions in age appropriate *common learning environments.*

2.5 Ensure that students who experience SEND will be provided with the support, accommodations and curricular modifications required to enable equitable access to educational opportunities. Appropriate priority will be given to the development of each student’s potential, including meaningful participation in the learning process, with peers in the *common learning environment.*

2.6 Ensure they promote the principle of equity for students who experience SEND.



STANDARD 2

ALL RELEVANT AUTHORITIES SHOULD:

2.7 Establish appropriate processes and mechanisms to monitor and ensure compliance with the requirements of *'Dubai Inclusive Education Policy Framework'.*

2.8 Establish common inclusive education quality standards, that will be applied to all education settings, including early learning and special centres, and will be utilised to monitor and evaluate the quality of provision and outcomes for students who experience SEND.

2.9 Ensure that special needs centres are able to provide adequate places and timely admissions for students with the most complex and severe learning difficulties. They will also plan students' transition into mainstream settings.



LEADERSHIP AND ACCOUNTABILITY

OVERVIEW

The leadership and accountability aspects of inclusive education refers to the effectiveness with which senior leaders and governors empower all stakeholders to develop the attitudes, approaches and strategies to build the expertise and culture where students who experience SEND are welcomed, accepted, valued and well prepared for their next stage of development and education.

ALL EDUCATION PROVIDERS SHOULD:

3.1 Develop and implement a policy and programme mandate consistent with Dubai inclusive education policy framework to the education leaders working under their direction.

3.2 Develop and implement a strategic Inclusive Education Improvement Plan to ensure the successful inclusion of students who experience SEND.

3.3 Ensure regular and time bound monitoring and evaluation processes inform targeted improvement strategies and measures of success.

3.4 Provide the appropriate regulating authority with systematic updates on the implementation of the inclusive education policy framework and submit required documentation, as agreed with the relevant authority.

3.5 Ensure that when discriminatory action against a student who experiences SEND is suspected they will take action to resolve the matter through mediation among the involved parties including, remedial action to eliminate the discrimination and refering to the appropriate education authority for review and action.

3.6 Ensure that the positions of school and programme leaders, such as principals, assistant principals, programme coordinators and similar positions, are filled by candidates who have, or have the capacity, to acquire the identified knowledge and skills related to operationalising the inclusive education policy framework.

3.7 Ensure that teachers have access to the appropriate initial, in-service and on-going training and support necessary to work effectively in common learning environments with students identified has experiencing SEND.

3.8 Develop partnerships with other educational entities, including schools, universities and specialised service providers to plan, organise and deliver pertinent training and capacity-building courses and programmes in Dubai.

3.9 Ensure that leaders at all levels are held to account for the quality of provision and outcomes of students who experience SEND.

3.10 Ensure that leaders at all levels will fulfill inclusive education related leadership tasks by taking the following actions:

i. fostering the use of inclusive instructional strategies and quality teaching through on-going capacity building, including providing classroom teachers with coaching and mentoring to facilitate learning for all students

ii. ensuring that a student's education is primarily provided by classroom teachers and other educators within a common learning environment

iii. developing and implementing a plan to ensure the accessibility of school premises and other education settings in accordance with **Dubai Universal Accessibility Code**

iv. organising educational staff and other school resources to meet the learning needs of all students

v. organising working conditions that foster inclusive practices such as collaborative educational cultures, teachers' involvement in professional development that is meaningful for their work and enable them to focus on the development of teaching strategies

vi. ensuring that educational staff receive effective support to meet the needs of individual learners in their classes

vii. embedding effective collaborative systems to draw on the knowledge and competencies of educators, therapists and other members of staff to assist each other in meeting the needs of students who experience SEND

viii. ensuring that, where appropriate, educational staff have access to expert support from external professionals such as psychologists, therapists, counsellors, medical practitioners and others

ix. actively engaging families, parents, caregivers and other relevant stakeholders, such as community and social workers and medical professionals, to share responsibility for the education of students who experience SEND

x. ensuring educational staff are accountable for the monitoring of student progress in learning.

ALL RELEVANT AUTHORITIES SHOULD:

3.11 Link professional development and training requirements, as well as inclusive education provision and strategic planning, to licensing mechanisms for school operation and the requirements of teaching staff.

STANDARD 4

SYSTEMS OF SUPPORT FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

OVERVIEW

The provision of a high quality strategic support is essential for the development of a fully inclusive system of education. This refers to the implementation of practices, policies and procedures which education providers must ensure in order to establish fully inclusive educational experiences for students who experience SEND. This includes, providing robust systems of support for students and teachers, introducing new approaches to teaching, providing flexible curricular pathways and objectives and the use of diverse assessment strategies.

ALL EDUCATION PROVIDERS SHOULD:

4.1 Provide alternative and accredited curriculum pathway options for students who are identified as experiencing SEND, including those who may attain significantly below curriculum expectations.

4.2 Establish an Inclusion Support Team (IST). Membership of the IST must consists of: the principal, leader of provision for students who experience SEND, the support teacher(s), and champion for inclusive education. Best practice would also include membership from student representation, parental representation, learning support assistant(s) (as appropriate) and other staff as needed including counsellors, mentors, therapists or classroom teachers.

4.3 Ensure that that the members of the Inclusion Support Team will:

i. work in close collaboration with classroom teachers and other educational staff to support the education of students who experience SEND in common learning environments by providing coaching and support to teachers on a timely basis

ii. meet on a regular basis, typically once a week

iii. maintain minutes of the meetings and utilise effective systems to follow-up on specific actions and strategies

iv. assign learning support assistants to individual students who experiences SEND and/or class groups as needed. The allocation of these para-professionals will be dynamic. The focus and impact of their support will be routinely reviewed and their allocation may change in accordance with student and teacher need

v. where appropriate, develop partnerships with special centres and external professionals who work with individual students. These partnerships will be responsive to the needs of students who experience SEND and their families to ensure access to high quality inclusive education.

4.4 Implement practices that will:

i. establish learning environments that encourage and support the active involvement and inclusion of every student - physically, academically, socially, emotionally and culturally

ii. develop and implement an inclusive education improvement plan, which specifies how support to teachers and students will be delivered and how it can be improved over time. This plan will be reviewed and up-dated at least on an annual basis

iii. incorporate inclusive education knowledge and capacity into recruitment, employment and retention policies and demonstrate that these factors are given appropriate priority when hiring staff and implementing performance management procedures

iv. ensure each teacher, and other educational staff, are trained in inclusive education techniques, or if not, develop a personal learning plan to acquire this knowledge and skill within a time bound period

v. ensure that each teacher, and other educational staff, demonstrates confidence and proficiency in fulfilling his or her professional responsibility for each student in an inclusive setting, given appropriate resources, coaching and support

vi. ensure that collaboration and team-work are consistently practiced and that staff meet regularly to discuss the progress of individual students as well as to discuss teaching methods, instructional procedures and innovative teaching strategies

vii. make support teachers (ST) and learning support assistants (LSA) available to the school team to assist classroom teachers in providing effective instruction to students with diverse learning needs including those who experience SEND

viii. establish and operate collaborative problem solving processes and approaches with teachers to identify and deal with problems and challenges that emerge for students

ix. encourage and support parent/family participation in the education process and ensure that they have every opportunity to contribute to student success

x. ensure that the development individual education plans direct the strategies used by teachers to meet the educational goals of students who require a focused and personalised approach for their learning. This will be particularly important for students who experience SEND

xi. ensure that parents of children who experience SEND, and where appropriate the children themselves play a central part in the development of the IEP and related programme design

xii. ensure that curricular adjustments and modifications foster the learning of all students



by enhancing the participation and learning of students who experience SEND

xiii. ensure that flexible curricula pathways respond to the diverse cognitive, cultural and linguistic backgrounds of students and are supported by a variety of teaching methods to accommodate a range of learning styles

xiv. ensure that teachers have access to and use new technologies, including information and communications technologies, mobility aids, devices and assistive technologies considered essential for meeting the needs of individual students, specifically those who experience SEND.

4.5 Ensure that classroom teachers and other educators working in an inclusive common learning environment will:

i. demonstrate and apply knowledge and understanding of inclusive education values and principles

ii. be proficient in inclusive education techniques, curricular modification, personalisation of learning objectives and assessment strategies

iii. work with parents, caregivers and professionals to develop appropriate individual education plans for individual students who experience SEND

iv. collaborate effectively with parents, other teachers, specialised professionals and other service providers, including those working as members of a multi-disciplinary team

v. utilise appropriate technologies, including "assistive technology" as a tool to support learning and empower students who experience SEND

vi. collaborate with support teams to create opportunities that facilitate the meaningful participation of all students in the common learning environment (e.g., lesson planning, classroom set-up, purposeful student groupings)

vii. prioritise student relationship building, followed by familiarity with the student's learning characteristics, performance levels, and personalised learning outcomes

viii. apply formative assessment, universal design for learning, differentiation and other learner-centred activities, so that students can pursue and achieve curricular-based learning goals

ix. engage in coaching and co-teaching opportunities with support teachers and other colleagues to accommodate all students within an inclusive learning environment.

4.6 Develop the professional role of a 'support teacher' who will assist teachers and other education professionals in the provision of instruction to students who experience SEND by spending not less than 60 per cent of their time engaged in activities that directly assist individual teachers.

4.7 Ensure support teacher/s increase the capacity of classroom teachers and other education professionals to be fully inclusive by providing support through:

i. the identification of the specific needs of individual students

ii. the development of specific and personalised individual education plans

iii. the development of instructional and educational strategies

iv. the modification and adaptation of curriculum structures

v. the development of appropriate assessment procedures

vi. modeling appropriate teaching strategies such as co-teaching or team teaching with the classroom teacher

vii. the operation of the Inclusion Support Team.

4.8 Ensure the support teacher will allocate not more than 25 per cent of their time working directly with individual or small groups of students who experience SEND. These activities will include:

i. working directly with student(s) to determine individual needs and collect information about the student's strengths and weaknesses necessary to complete an IEP

ii. providing instruction to student(s) individually or in a small group in the common learning environment

iii. providing instruction to student(s) individually or in a small group outside the common learning environment

iv. dealing with social, emotional, behavioural and/or family situations (e.g., housing, food, health and mental health conditions) of students.

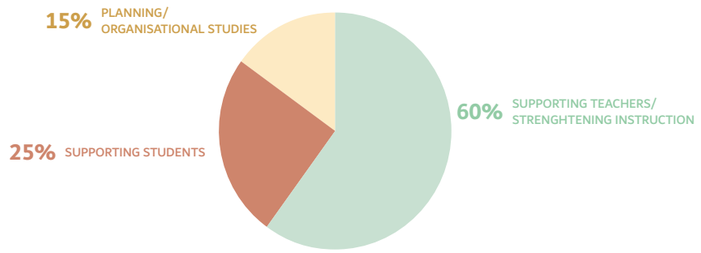
4.9 Ensure the support teacher will use not more than 15 per cent of his/her time working on administrative duties, by:

i. working closely with the school principal to ensure the effective administration and operation of the Inclusion Support Team

ii. maintaining effective communication with parents as well as any service providers working with the family or the child

iii. facilitating the transition of students who experience SEND from segregated into mainstream settings.

4.10 Ensure that the role of the support teacher must focus upon supporting teachers in an active and sustained manner across the year in accordance with the time allocation guidelines below:



4.11 Ensure that 'shadow teachers' will be renamed 'learning support assistants'. They will be accountable to the revised job description and will be required to complete the relevant training and development programme appropriate to their role within a time bound period.

4.12 Ensure, that when learning support assistants are employed by the parents of students who experience SEND, the school implements a memorandum of understanding (MOU) that clearly sets out the terms and conditions of employment within the school. This should include information about professional induction, monitoring and training requirements, line management procedures, the code of conduct, expected levels of professional practice, assessment, marking and feedback procedures, confidentiality and levels of accountability.

4.13 Learning support assistants will be required to:

i. contribute to the education of students in inclusive schools and classrooms by implementing small-group and individual instruction

ii. engage in class-wide monitoring of student learning (e.g., independent or small-group work) identified and planned by teachers and the Inclusion Support Team

iii. prepare learning materials for use by student(s) under the direction of the teacher

iv. collect formative assessment data on student performance and progress, based on systems designed by teachers or Inclusion Support Team

v. assist students who require personal care supports (e.g., eating, using the bathroom, dressing)

vi. facilitate peer interactions based on guidance from the teacher and Inclusion Support Team. Invite students to help each other and, as required, also engage in non-instructional tasks (e.g., group supervision such as in the cafeteria, on the playground, bus boarding, field trips) identified by teachers and the Inclusion Support Team

vii. apply current best practices and strategies learned through professional development courses, in-service training or workshops.

ALL RELEVANT AUTHORITIES SHOULD WHEN APPROPRIATE:

4.14 Ensure that education providers have access to high quality, cost-effective, time-efficient and accredited, inclusive education training and development opportunities in accordance with their mandate.

4.15 Ensure that inclusive education training and development programmes provide key members of staff within education settings the necessary knowledge and understanding in accordance with their professional role with a clear focus upon delivering and developing high quality systems of support for inclusive education in accordance with their mandate.

4.16 Ensure the completion of the approved training and development programmes for members of the Inclusion Support Team and link this to teacher licensing processes, teacher standards and teacher appraisal mechanisms.

4.17 Ensure that teacher responsibilities relating to the education and welfare duties for students who experience SEND is linked to teacher licensing processes, teacher standards and teacher appraisal mechanisms.

4.18 Work in partnership with education providers to ensure attainment which is below age related expectations and/or is within an alternative accreditation framework gains the certification and equivalency necessary to enable progression to further education, training and/or employment opportunities.

4.19 Where appropriate, ensure the Inclusion Support Team will be a condition upon which to enable the licensing of education providers to operate within the Emirate of Dubai.

STANDARD 5

SPECIAL EDUCATION CENTRES AS A RESOURCE FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

OVERVIEW

Special education centres are an important element of the inclusive continuum of provision for students who experience SEND within Dubai. The expertise they hold and the specialised services they provide are of immersive value to the development of a fully resourced system of inclusive education

THE ASPIRATIONAL ROLE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION CENTRES SHOULD:

5.1 Enhance the development of inclusive education by providing expertise and sharing their knowledge and experience of working with students who experience SEND. This may include:

i. providing aspects of educational provision for students who experience severe, complex or profound levels of SEND through the delivery of a recognised educational curriculum and using evidence based teaching and therapeutic practices

ii. providing specialist advice, support and educational services to students and families who experience SEND through direct curriculum delivery and programme accreditation

iii. collaborating with and assisting educators and support staff in mainstream education settings in the development and delivery of individual educational plans in common learning environments

iv. acting as local resource centres to provide expertise and support to individual schools or clusters of schools

v. providing external support to individual students as requested by parents or guardians including rehabilitation and therapeutic services

vi. support the identification of students who experience SEND, and assist in the development and provision of related interventenions, with a particular focus upon pre-primary education settings, including nurseries

vii. maintaining a system for the management of administrative



data and other information about students who experience SEND from early years to post-secondary and vocational education and training

viii. networking with local service providers to improve the quality of their support; facilitate parental access to services needed by their child who experience SEND

ix. linking with higher education institutions and vocational and training centres to support initiatives to support the employment of students who experience SEND

x. providing guidance to students and families who experience SEND, through transition from a special school or centre to a mainstream education setting and classroom.

ALL RELEVANT AUTHORITIES SHOULD:

5.2 monitor and evaluate the quality of education provided by special education centres in accordance with common inclusive education standards.



STANDARD 6

CO-OPERATION, CO-ORDINATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

OVERVIEW

The involvement of key stakeholders is an essential feature of effective inclusive education. The alignment of standards and practices across service providers will ensure students who experience SEND and their families receive the best possible provision of programmes and services.

EDUCATION PROVIDERS, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH OTHER SERVICE PROVIDERS SHOULD:

6.1 Consult and collaborate with parents and caregivers of children who experience SEND to ensure appropriate and adequate provisions, accommodations and services are provided, including involvement in:

i. the use of assessment procedures

ii. education service planning

iii. the evaluation of education services

iv. the evaluation of support and assessment services.

6.2 Collaborate to ensure all students, particularly those who experience SEND, are well prepared with the skills and abilities to take on further education, training, employment and community engagement.

ALL RELEVANT AUTHORITIES SHOULD:

6.3 Work together to monitor and evaluate the quality of services provided to students and their families who experience SEND.

6.4 Establish standards and procedures for licensing assessment clinics and education and health intervention services.

6.5 Implement a system of integrated services to ensure information about, and services for children and their families who experience SEND, is appropriately shared and utilised to the benefit of the child and their family.



STANDARD 7

FOSTERING A CULTURE OF INCLUSION

OVERVIEW

Securing sustainability is essential for the development of a truly inclusive system of education. Inclusive education is not a project or an initiative. It is the progressive development of attitudes, behaviours, systems and beliefs that enable inclusive education to become a norm which underpins school culture and is reflected in attitudinal, organisational and pedagogical discussion and decisions.

ALL RELEVANT AUTHORITIES SHOULD, WHERE APPROPRIATE:

7.1 Provide training to educators at all levels, from early years to higher education, to sensitise themselves and increase their awareness about the experience of SEND. They will use different models of disability including social and bio-psycho-social, instructional accommodations, support and assistive technologies needed by students who experience SEND.

7.2 Provide training to educators on how to identify and support learners who may have “invisible” disabilities since these learners experience greater risk of dropping out when their conditions go unnoticed in educational settings.

7.3 Provide opportunities for parents and caregivers to better understand SEND, inclusion rights and the resources and support mechanisms available to them and their families.

7.4 Develop advocacy and communication plan(s) to raise awareness and reduce stigma on issues relating to inclusion, discrimination and stigmatisation of students who experience SEND.

7.5 Incorporate and integrate a monitoring and evaluation plan to track and measure any impact on attitudes, beliefs and experiences of students who experience SEND.

7.6 Increase the representation of all types of learners, particularly those who experience SEND, in education and promotional materials including print and on-line sources, literature, toys, the media and other relevant sources of information to highlight the abilities and capacities of individuals who experience SEND.



STANDARD 8

MONITORING, EVALUATING AND REPORTING

OVERVIEW

Establishing a rigorous system of monitoring, evaluation and reporting is equally important to both authorities and education providers. This ensures that progress towards achieving a fully inclusive education system is tracked, feedback is obtained and targeted support, guidance and action can be taken.

ALL RELEVANT AUTHORITIES AND EDUCATION PROVIDERS SHOULD:

8.1 Work collaboratively to strengthen and harmonise existing *Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)* systems to collect and analyse data, track student progress and share information on children who experience SEND from birth to adulthood across all relevant sectors.

8.2 Be required to collect information and periodic data on:

i. the numbers of children who experience SEND, disaggregated by gender, age, nationality, type of disability, attendance levels, health status and location/jurisdiction

ii. the numbers and characteristics of students who are denied admission to schools and other education providers – specifically related to disability

iii. the number and characteristics of students who experience SEND attending mainstream education settings special education centres

iv. the number and characteristics of students who experience SEND exiting in the education system once they reach 18 years of age and the type of support, if any, they receive thereafter

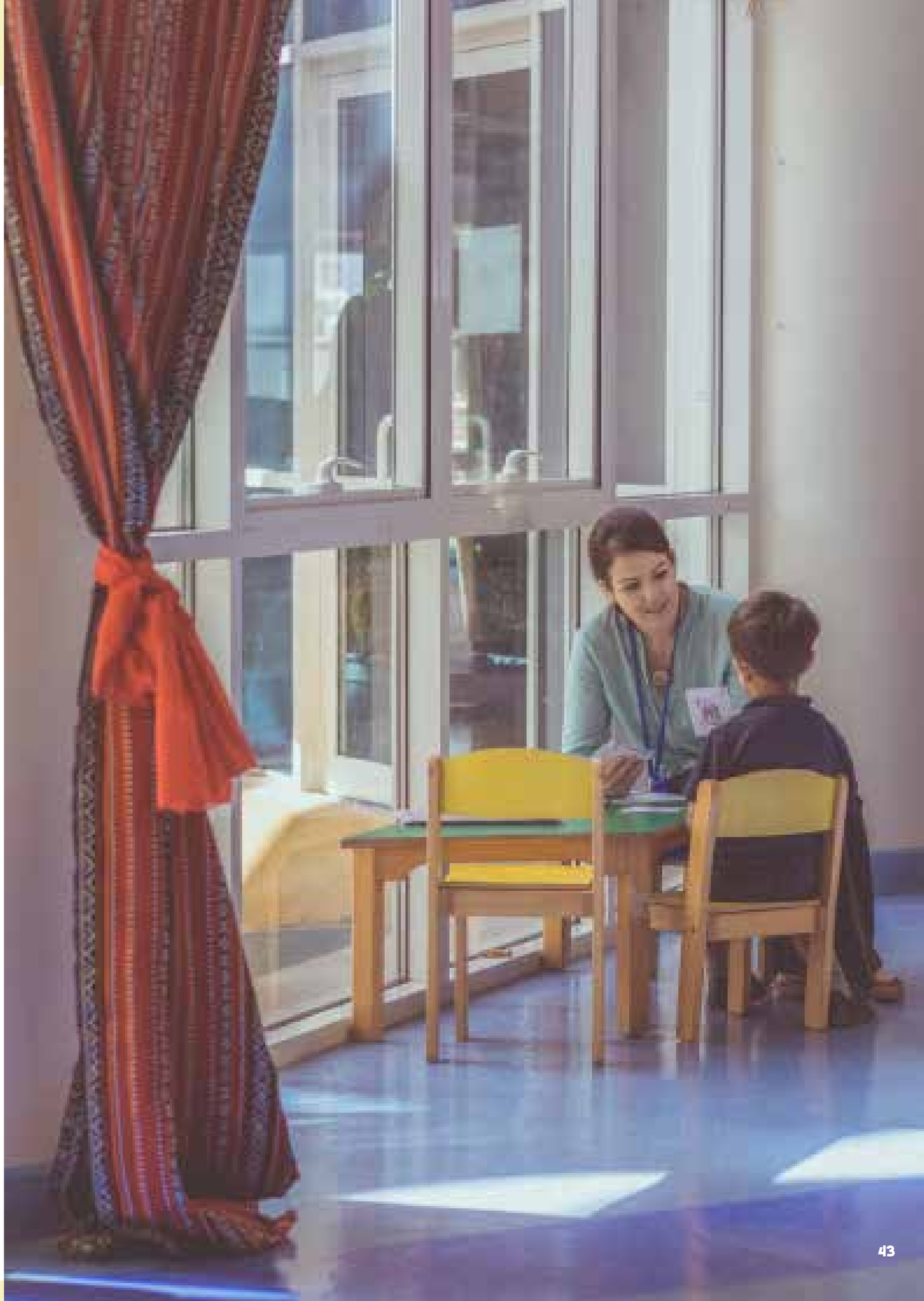
v. the progression and outcomes of students who experience SEND attending mainstream educational settings and special education centres

vi. school level data on accessibility, accommodation, teacher and student support (including number of support teachers and learning support assistants), IEPs, training, funding, assistive technologies and other types of support compliant



8.3 Be accountable for regularly reviewing, reporting on education practices, outcomes and funding, disaggregated by levels of education, disability and other equity indicators (e.g., training, human resources, reasonable accommodation and support provisions), to assess the impact of inclusive education policies and programmes

8.4 Utilise a common evaluation framework to monitor, evaluate and report on the quality of inclusive educational provision and related impact upon the outcomes for students who experience SEND.



RESOURCING FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

OVERVIEW

The benefits of targeted resourcing to ensure effective support for inclusive education extend beyond the individual student who experiences SEND. Inclusive education is necessary preparation for active participation in an inclusive world and an inclusive life.

ALL EDUCATION PROVIDERS SHOULD:

9.1 Invest in professional learning and training for teachers, other educational staff including support staff to ensure they are knowledgeable and effective in the use of evidence-based instructional strategies, personalised planning techniques and appropriate use of curriculum.

9.2 Ensure that the cost to families for required services, based on a student's disability, are reasonable and reflect good value for money indicated by efficiency of delivery and impact upon student outcomes.

9.3 On the rare occasions when students who experience particularly complex and severe levels of SEND require the addition of high levels of therapeutic or specialist provision within their educational programmes, funding and contractual agreements will ensure that:

i. additional fees to parents represent the actual cost of the services

ii. there is a clear rationale for additional services including educational objectives and impact measures

iii. regular review and evaluation of the quality of delivery and impact upon student outcomes, including progress towards intended learning outcomes.

9.4 Ensure that all educational facilities comply with **Dubai Universal Accessibility Code** so that physical accessibility is achieved, and existing environments such as early learning centres, schools, transportation infrastructure, playgrounds and other spaces be made as fully accessible as possible.

9.5 Ensure that private schools allocate an appropriate percentage of the school budget for the development and support of school based provision for inclusive education.

9.6 Provide funding through core operational budget to enable the fulfillment of the general guidelines which recommend:

i. a support teacher at a minimum ratio of 1: 200 students; that is one (1) support teacher for every 200 enrolled students (or portion thereof) in the general school population

ii. a learning support assistant at a minimum ratio of 1: 125 students; that is one (1) "LSA" for every 125 enrolled students (or portion thereof) in the general school population.

ALL RELAVENT AUTHORITIES SHOULD, WHERE APPROPRIATE:

9.7 Utilise appropriate schemes of funding to enhance the provision of additional services and increase the capacity of individual schools or education facilities. This may include school psychologists, therapists, behaviour specialists, autism specialists, Braille teachers, experts in assistive technology and in retrofitting existing spaces to be fully accessible.

9.8 Increase the recruitment and hiring quotas for qualified Arabic-speaking and other multi-lingual assessors and therapists to serve the Emirati and diverse expatriate population of Dubai.

9.9 Allocate a percentage of the budget for the purpose of improving the capacity of the teaching force through reform of pre- and in-service teacher education, ongoing support, and professional development, as well as expanding the education workforce via support teachers (ST) and learning support assistants (LSA).



STANDARD 10

VOCATIONAL TRAINING, HIGHER EDUCATION AND POST-SCHOOL EMPLOYMENT

OVERVIEW

The development and organisation of post-secondary learning pathways to employment and further or higher education for students who experience SEND is essential to enable their active participation in the labour market and society in general.

ALL TVET AND HIGHER EDUCATION PROVIDERS SHOULD:

10.1 Establish an **'Accessibility Office'** to provide support for students who experience SEND. The Office will consist of a Accessibility Officer and an Inclusion Support Team as required by the different education providers to facilitate the enrolment of students who experience SEND and provide all necessary support to the staff in terms of needed curricular adaptations, teaching and learning modifications, existing assistive technologies and devices to support participation of all students.

10.2 Work in partnership with schools to develop accredited vocational and alternative education pathways.

10.3 Implement under-graduate level courses associated with inclusive education and related specialist services. Ensure that vocational trainers, academic lecturers and other teaching staff possess the basic knowledge and experience of inclusive education principles and techniques.

ALL RELEVANT AUTHORITIES SHOULD, WHERE APPROPRIATE:

10.4 Develop and implement **school-to-work transition programme/s** and strategies to actively promote the employment of people with disabilities in the wider economy including the revision of accreditation processes for all education certificates. This can include diplomas from special education centres and schools.

10.5 Ensure that students who experience SEND will have **full access to training courses and work placement** programmes such as apprenticeships, training contracts, and supervised work programmes in the private, public and voluntary sectors.

10.6 Ensure that students who experience SEND will receive certification, accreditation or qualification upon completion of training



courses specifying the skills and competencies they have acquired and their relevance to employment.

10.7 Collaborate to develop a database to register public offices, private companies, institutes, voluntary associations and other organisations whose activities are suitable for promoting meaningful work placements of students who experience SEND.

10.8 Work with relevant bodies from higher education, technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and post-school employment sectors to provide **reasonable accommodation,** appropriate support and assistive devices based on the individual education plans. This includes monitoring that students who experience SEND are employed based on their acquired skills and are paid competitive salaries.





APPENDIX I : DEFINITIONS

A | IMPAIRMENT

A medically identified condition or long-term limitation of a person's physical, mental, cognitive, communicative and sensory function.

B | DISABILITY

A social condition that occurs when an individual with a long term limitation, experiences attitudinal, social and environmental barriers that prevent full and effective participation within a community. A disability is the result of an individual's interaction with society and is not an attribute of the person.

C | SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEED AND DISABILITY (SEND)

A need which occurs when a student identified with an impairment requires the school to make specific modifications or provide specific supports to prevent, remove or reduce any potential disability from occurring and to ensure that the student can access education on an equitable basis and within a common learning environment with same-aged peers.

D | BARRIERS

Attitudes, beliefs, practices, physical or technological obstacles, or the lack of support, that result in a student's exclusion from, or in their less-than-full participation as a valued equal in, the common learning environment in mainstream schools and classrooms.

E | COMMON LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

An educational setting where students from different backgrounds and with different abilities learn together in an inclusive environment. Common learning environments are used for the majority of the students' regular instruction hours and may include classrooms, libraries, gym, performance theatres, music rooms, cafeterias, playgrounds and the local community. A common learning environment is not a place where students who experience SEND learn in isolation from their peers.
Effective common learning environments:

- Enable each student to fully participate in the learning environment that is designed for all students and is shared with peers in the chosen educational setting;
- Provide a positive climate, promote a sense of belonging and ensure student progress toward appropriate personal, social, emotional and academic goals;
- Are responsive to individual learning needs by providing sufficient levels of support and applying student-centred teaching practices and principles.

F | EQUITY

It is the extent to which individuals can take advantage of education and training in terms of opportunities, access, treatment and outcomes. Equity is not the same as equality. It assumes that learners have different needs that require different types of support in order to develop their full learning potential. Equity therefore requires differential treatment that takes account of student diversity and reduces the gaps between the outcomes achieved by the most advantaged and the least advantaged social groups.

Equity in education for students with special educational needs and disabilities occurs when schools ensure access to a learning experience that promotes a sense of belonging and enables appropriately challenging levels of academic and social engagement.

G | INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Inclusive education is about ensuring access to quality education for all students by effectively meeting their diverse needs in a way that is responsive, accepting, respectful and supportive. This is evident through student engagement and participation in an education programme within a common learning environment with the benefit of targeted support which enables the reduction and removal of barriers that may lead to exclusion.

Inclusive education is not a project or an initiative. It is the progressive development of attitudes, behaviours, systems and beliefs that enable inclusive education to become a norm that underpins school culture and is reflected in the everyday life of the school community.



H | EDUCATIONAL EXCLUSION

The act of marginalising and discriminating against students with the effect of preventing them from accessing quality educational opportunities in common learning environments with their peers.

Preventing, reducing and removing exclusion within the education system is a fundamental step to aligning the UAE with internationally ratified policies and commitments to inclusive education.

I | DIRECT DISCRIMINATION

Actions that cause a student to experience unequal, inferior and unjust treatment than another student on the basis of experiencing a special educational need and disability (SEND).

Examples of direct discrimination include:

- Not admitting who experiences a disability into the regular classroom or forcing them into a separate or otherwise "special" educational programme or service;
- Failure to ensure and enable physical access to appropriate educational provision;
- Failure to provide appropriate accommodation or support to a child;
- Preventing access to extra-curricular activities or opportunities to learn outside the classroom.

J | INDIRECT DISCRIMINATION

A process that occurs when an education provider applies a provision, criterion or practice in the same way for students with and without special educational needs and disabilities [SEND], but by doing so has the effect of putting students who experience SEND at a disadvantage compared to other students.

Examples of indirect discrimination include:

- Failure to communicate a clear commitment to the inclusion of students with special education and disabilities (SEND) in marketing material and policies;
- Failure to adjust admission criteria to accommodate a student's special educational need and disability;
- Forcing parents of children who expereince SEND to incur excessive additional cost to enrol their children in educational settings;
- Failure to provide opportunities for appropriate educational progression.

TERMS USED IN THE DOCUMENT

An education authority is a public authority or government agency responsible for exercising autonomous authority over education providers within Dubai.

A Governing body is a group of people who formulate the policy and direct the affairs of an education provider in partnership with the senior leaders. Governing bodies are accountable for the quality of provision and outcomes provided by an education provider.

An education provider is a public or private entity, which is responsible for the operation of an educational setting with the purpose of enrolling students in the study of an approved educational curriculum. This includes schools, Early Learning Centres (ELCs), kindergartens, special centres, vocational education centres, online schools, and universities.

A student is a child, young person, or adult who is formally registered to access an approved educational curriculum. This includes pre-primary, school aged children, and adults accessing higher education courses.

KNOWLEDGE AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

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