Inclusive Education Policy

International School Nadi

The development of this document was a collaborative effort between the Learning Support Team, Programme Coordinators, Heads of Department and individual subject teachers. Feedback was sought by all stakeholders and the document was revised 4 times before the document was finalised. This policy will be evaluated at the beginning of 2016.

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Mission, purpose and aims

A: Mission

School's *vision*

We will nurture, encourage and empower our students to be well-rounded enquiring individuals, who strive to reach their full potential and willingly contribute as global citizens.

Mission

In order to achieve our vision we will:

- Continue to develop a seamless curriculum from pre-school to Year 13 with particular emphasis on the transition between each programme
- Develop a high quality, cohesive International Baccalaureate curriculum throughout the school utilising modern, progressive teaching and assessment methods (including standardised testing) and ensure that the standard of education provides students with internationally recognized and portable qualifications;
- Foster intellectual curiosity and an interest in all facets of learning - academic, cultural, sporting and social;
- Tailor the learning process to individual students' needs;
- Develop a learning community employing internal and external information and communication technologies to support curriculum delivery;
- Involve parents and community in the process of student learning and other areas of the school;
- Develop resources around the school's learning needs;
- Communicate our strategies and market our school to the community;
- Monitor report on and improve our performance.

Our Values

- We believe in fostering an understanding of tolerance towards and an acceptance of all cultures.
- We believe in integrity and respect for the individual while protecting their rights
- We believe in a balance between all facets of education – academic, cultural, sporting, and social
- We believe in a safe, caring and co-operative environment that provides for optimal teaching/learning experiences and promotes excellence.
- We believe in lifelong learning

We strongly support the IBO Mission statement:

The International Baccalaureate Organization aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. To this end the IBO works with schools, governments and

international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment. These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

B: Purpose of the Inclusive Education Policy

This inclusive education policy is a working document created by staff and administration from a range of departments within International School Nadi. The staff have collaborated to create this policy to reflect the required principles and practice of the IB.

The purpose of this policy is to recognise the differences in learning styles, support student learning and promote differentiation in the curriculum in order to achieve the students' highest potential during their schooling with ISN.

This policy is a guiding principle of the expectations required of all stakeholders for inclusive and differentiated strategies for students with learning diversity needs. This policy is a statement of agreement, which is asked to be followed by staff and the wider school community in order for the school to achieve its mission.

C: Beliefs and Aims

Within ISN, we believe that the students' overall academic, social and emotional welfare are of the utmost importance and that it is the responsibility of all those who interact with the students. We view a student's education as a partnership between the student, the parent(s)/guardian(s), and the school. With this belief in mind, staff are encouraged to focus on the unique talents, abilities and needs of each child.

ISN believes in developing an environment that enables optimum learning by ensuring the school uses a collaborative and inclusive learning approach that affords all students the opportunity to reach their personal potential. Inclusion is an ongoing process that aims to increase access and engagement in learning for all students by identifying and removing barriers. This can only be successfully achieved in a culture of collaboration, mutual respect, support and problem solving. Inclusion is the learner profile in action, an outcome of dynamic learning communities.

Recognising Student Diversity

International School Nadi recognises that students come from a variety of cultures, backgrounds, and have a range of academic, physical and other needs. There are many students who may have

a recognized, special educational need; other students may have special needs that have not yet been diagnosed. Examples of these special needs include:

- specific learning disabilities (such as dyslexia and dyscalculia)
- language and communication disorders
- emotional and behavioural difficulties
- physical difficulties affecting mobility
- sensory impairments (such as visual or hearing difficulties)
- medical conditions (such as asthma, epilepsy and diabetes)
- mental health conditions (such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, eating disorders and anxiety)
- gifted and talented students
- English as a second language (ESL)
- Students who are identified as being two years above or below chronological age expectations

The Use of Standardised Assessments

A variety of standardised assessments are used at International School Nadi as a benchmark to determine individual students results as well as identifying areas that could benefit from further development as a whole school approach. The results of standardised tests are used by classroom teachers, curriculum coordinators and the learning support team to identify students who may benefit from additional support or participation in an extension programme.

The Four Principles of Good Practice

The IB has identified four principles of good practice that promote equal access to the curriculum for all learners across the continuum, but that are particularly relevant to those with special needs. These principles are based on elements of good practice that are essential to the development of the whole person and are the core principles for support within ISN.

1. Affirming identity and building self-esteem
Social and emotional conditions for learning that value all languages and cultures and affirm the identity of each learner promote self-esteem. Affirming identity can be achieved by:

- promoting a class and school environment that welcomes and embraces the diversity of learners
- by valuing and using the diversity of cultural perspectives to enhance learning
- by liaising with parents to establish understanding of how best to collaborate to achieve shared goals.

2. Valuing prior knowledge

New learning and understanding is constructed on previous experiences and conceptual understandings in a developmental continuum. When planning the range of new learning that can take place in any individual, previous learning experiences or prior knowing must be taken into consideration.

It cannot be assumed that those learners who have diverse learning needs will necessarily all share the same previous learning and background knowledge. It may be that these learners have a wealth of relevant background knowledge that can be activated as a base for further learning. However, the teacher may have to build up background knowledge in preparation for further learning. Therefore, teachers should:

- explicitly activate learners' prior understanding
- use their knowledge of learners' prior understanding to differentiate tasks and activities that will build up the   further background knowledge necessary for new learning to occur
- record information in learning profiles that will support planning for future differentiation and inform
  teacher practice
- consider the time and the strategies necessary for activating and building up background knowledge when planning a unit of work or lesson.

3. Scaffolding

Scaffolding is a temporary strategy that enables learners to accomplish a task that would otherwise be impossible or much more difficult to accomplish. The use of graphic organizers to develop a piece of written research is an example of scaffolding. Other scaffolding strategies may provide a more concrete, and less abstract, context for understanding. Examples of these are:

- visual aids
- demonstrations
- dramatization
- small, structured collaborative groups
- teacher language
- use of mother tongue or best language to develop ideas and initial plans.

Knowing the level of aptitude of a particular learner allows a number of small steps to be incorporated into the learning process so they can work towards mastery while receiving constructive feedback on all attempts. Templates may be designed for particular tasks, with quite a large amount of detail provided in the first level that diminishes over time as the learner begins to grasp the requirements of the task.

4. Extending learning

As learners progress through the years, they are required to read and write increasingly sophisticated texts in the content areas of the curriculum. Teachers can help learners extend their learning by combining high expectations with numerous opportunities for learner-centred practice and interaction with cognitively rich materials and experiences.

Learners who read extensively, both inside and outside an IB programme, have far greater opportunities to extend their academic language and concepts than those whose reading is limited. The provision of opportunities to experience the enjoyment of reading, and to be aware of a wide range of genres for writing, are crucial to developing student learning. The use of assistive technology and software enables learners with language issues to access material they can engage with meta-cognitively.
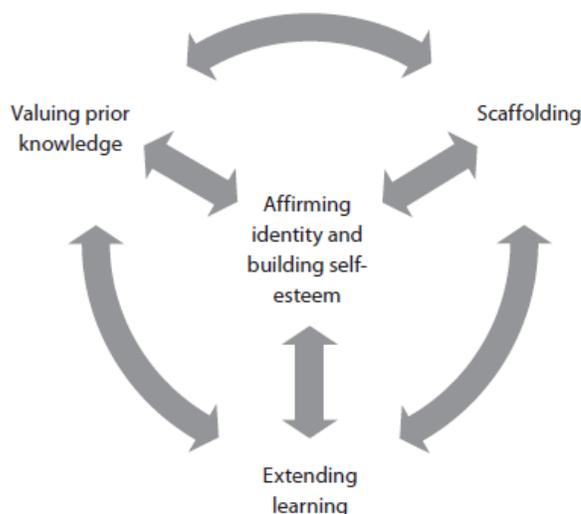

Figure 1

Visual representation of the four principles of good practice in an IB SEN learning cycle
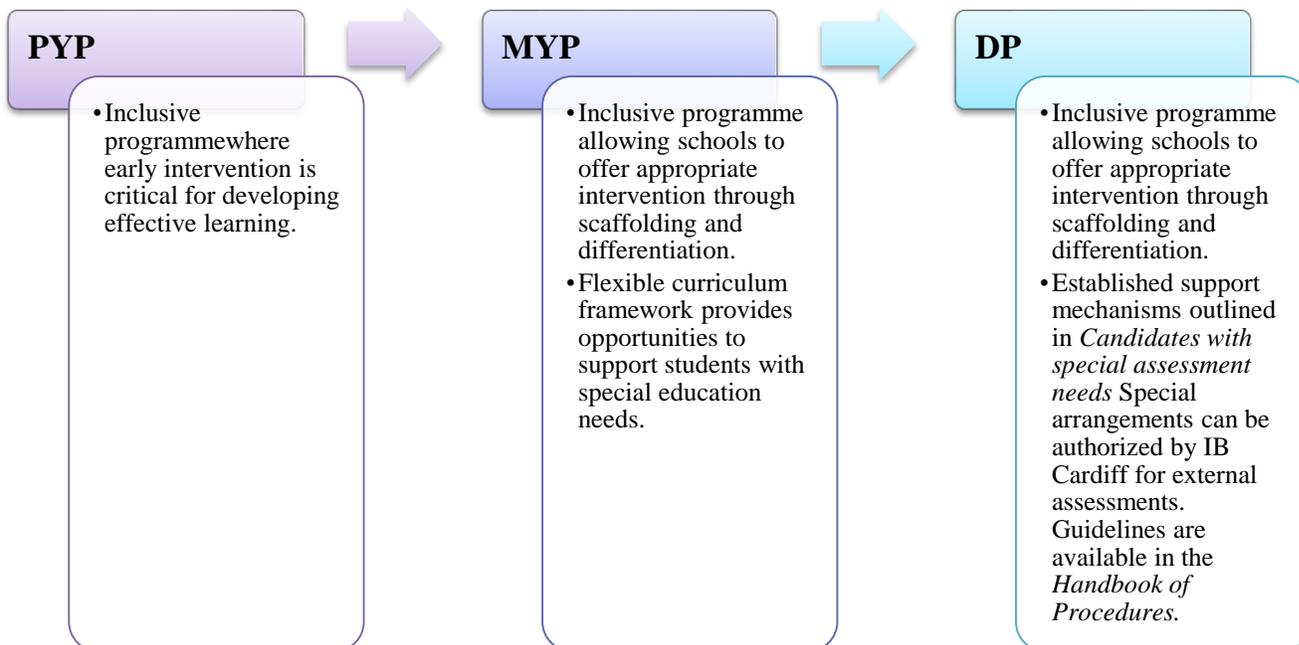
Supporting Student Diversity: a whole school approach

Learning support is the responsibility of all the staff within ISN, in which we encourage open communication, collaboration and an inclusive learning style. Through developing cultures, policies and practices to include all students we are able to remove barriers to learning and participation.

Through this collaboration, we as a team provide a continuum of support throughout the IB programme. Teachers within ISN work with the learning support staff to differentiate for the educational needs of the students within the classroom. Differentiation is seen as the process of identifying, with each learner, the most effective strategies for achieving agreed goals.Learning Support aims to ensure that the student is continually encouraged to participate in class tasks and to engage in learning without segregation. Individual support is provided when there is a strong identified need and after all options are exhausted for in class inclusion.

The IB Support Continuum

PYP	MYP	DP
• Inclusive programmewhere early intervention is critical for developing effective learning.	• Inclusive programme allowing schools to offer appropriate intervention through scaffolding and differentiation. • Flexible curriculum framework provides opportunities to support students with special education needs.	• Inclusive programme allowing schools to offer appropriate intervention through scaffolding and differentiation. • Established support mechanisms outlined in *Candidates with special assessment needs* Special arrangements can be authorized by IB Cardiff for external assessments. Guidelines are available in the *Handbook of Procedures.*

The Role of Administrators

Administrators play a key role in the supporting an inclusive learning environment. Learning diversity may be identified through the initial student enrolment interview. In addition all learning support referrals are initially processed by the curriculum coordinators. All curriculum coordinators work closely with the learning support team and Head of Departments to ensure that students are provided with meaningful and equitable access to the curriculum through addressing difference and diversity within our school.

Responsibilities

- Before accepting a student with special educational needs as a candidate for the Diploma Programme, coordinators should consider whether suitable arrangements, for both teaching and assessment, can be made for that student.
- To inform the learning support department of any new student enrolments with possible learning support needs
- To encourage the implementation of IEP recommendations as well as a whole school inclusive learning approach
- To provide regular professional development opportunities for staff with regards to inclusion, student diversity and differentiation
- To support the formal learning support referral process that is implemented at ISN

- To apply to the IB in a timely manner regarding assessment accommodations for formal IB assessments

The Role of Teachers

Teachers are encouraged to provide and share learning differentiation strategies. ISN provides teachers with training in this area of support *yearly* to ensure that each teacher is up to date with new strategies to assist with the overall learning of each individual student. Through collaboration with learning support staff, teachers should be able to develop an understanding of:

- The use of appropriate and specific assessment in planning for students with learning needs
- How to differentiate and match teaching approaches to students needs
- Factors that affect students learning and how best to respond to them
- The use of technology to reduce the barriers to learning

Responsibilities:

- Teachers are responsible for the initiation of the learning support referral process to ensure that all relevant support is documented, outlined and collated
- Teachers will maintain accurate records of students' progress both for individual assessment and for the learning support team to gather future progress reports within the classroom
- It is the responsibility of the teaching staff to ensure that the support is contextual, relevant and consistent with both the school curriculum and the student's IEP, ensuring an inclusive approach wherever possible
- The teacher will maintain discretion and confidentiality in providing special education needs services
- All teachers will utilise a variety of formative assessments to determine individual student needs and abilities and to tailor subsequent instruction.
- Teachers will develop summative assessments that are differentiated to provide necessary modifications, challenges, and student choice.

The Role of Learning Support Staff

It is pivotal within ISN that we provide all students with access to a learning support team to ensure the success of students in regards to their educational pathways. This role may change or become adjusted as the student progresses within ISN and develops a greater level of independence in learning. However, the learning support staff are to ensure consistent communication with relevant teachers regarding student's educational needs.

At ISN learning support staff and teachers collaborate on planning in regards to student educational needs. Through this collaboration, planning can be made to accommodate differentiating units of work, co-teaching, introducing specific learning skills and/or strategies, facilitating and organising cooperative group learning. If necessary, after collaboration and all efforts have been made to ensure the student is involved in inclusive learning, it may be identified that the best form of learning support involves learning support staff working individually or in small groups of students. This method of learning is used to strengthen a specific area of weakness, ensuring acquisition of skills required to function at grade level. All elements of support aim to increase independent access to the curriculum.

Responsibilities

- Liaising and communicating effectively with staff in each department
- To initiate the formal IEP process once a student has progressed through the referral stages to ensure that the parent interview, student interview, observations and student IEP is completed
- To act as a consultant and collaborate with teachers to develop in class support strategies that ensure inclusion
- Ensure all Learning Diversity student documentation is maintained, secure and kept confidential at all times
- To ensure that students, parents and teacher are all involved in the process of support
- To meet with curriculum coordinators and administrative staff to ensure that learning support processes are relevant, up to date and effective

The Role of the Parents/Guardians

We view a student's education as a partnership between the student, the parents/guardians, and the school. Therefore it pivotal that the parents play a role in the delivery of learning support needs within ISN. This is reflected in the IEP development through parent interviews and the collaborative development of the support plan.

Responsibilities

- Monitor student progress using the school reporting system
- Discuss assignments and assessments with student frequently to show support and encourage student achievement
- Maintain effective communication with subject and learning support teachers to collaborate on support mechanisms and student progress
- Check student diary on a weekly basis to ensure that all reminders are conveyed and that all tasks are completed
- Attend all parent meetings and information evenings

- Parents will communicate to the school all information and documentation regarding their child's special education needs
- Parents will provide documentation needed for IBO accommodation requests
- If the level of support is greater than the scope of support provided at ISN, it is the responsibility of parent(s)/guardian(s) to provide additional external support

The Role of the Student

The learning support programme strives to increase self esteem and independence in learning as students progress through the learning support continuum. Therefore as the student progresses they are encouraged to adopt an increasingly proactive role in their own support.

Responsibilities

- To work in collaboration with the learning support team to identify and achieve learning goals outlined in the student IEP
- To attend any additional support sessions facilitated by either teachers or the learning support department
- To ensure that student diaries are used effectively and brought to every class to enable classroom teachers to specific tasks and communication to all teachers and all parent(s)/guardian(s)
- To strive to achieve the characteristics outlined by the IB learner profile

Supporting Learning Diversity in the PYP

All PYP staff/ subject teachers are responsible for recognising and supporting the individual learning styles of each student in their class.

At ISN we believe that Early Intervention is essential to the development of successful learning for students identified with learning support needs. Frequent assessment of students' development, both formative and summative are essential to planning effective intervention covering the cognitive, physical and social domains. Intervention designed to deal with identified weaknesses early on in the learning development stages provide a solid foundation for future success along the educational continuum.

Learning support is introduced when students demonstrate that they are not meeting their overall expectations of the language or numeracy scope and sequence documents for their appropriate chronological age. As a guide, students are deemed as requiring support if they are working at:

a) More than two years below the overall expectations for their chronological age

b) In excess of two years above their chronological age, where possible, will be placed on an extension program.

Students in the Primary school are provided support through an inclusive approach as much as possible. Where it is deemed necessary, students may receive additional support outside of the classroom in collaboration with parents, teachers and administrative staff. This additional support may be in small groups or on a 1:1 basis with the aim of working towards specific learning goals identified in the IEP. Learning support in the PRP programme operates on the basis of three tiers:

TIER 1: All Classroom learners
- All students are involved in daily classroom programs.
- All students are involved in regular screening benchmarking.
- Beginning, mid and end of year benchmarks recorded in
progressive/assessment folders in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The Class teacher identifies successful and struggling learners utilising the differentiation cone.

TIER 2: Learning Support Programs
- Referred by the classroom teacher.
- Individual Learning Plan (ILP) developed by learning support teacher in collaboration with classroom teacher, parents and student.
- Identify learning difficulties and teach additional strategies for students to apply in classroom.
- Additional testing may be required at this level.
- Students work on ILP according to the needs of the student.
- Small group work provided in 30 minute sessions 3 – 5 times/week where possible.
- Assessment of learning progress twice a year.
- Students move back to Tier 1 if the outcomes are achieved.
or
- Student continues learning support for another intervention period.
or
- Student referred to Tier 3 for further professional testing.

TIER 3: Individual Long Term Support
- Tier 2 students have demonstrated very little or no progress for 3 – 6 months.
- Student referred to overseas specialist.
- Student ILP reviewed according to test results.
- Students are diagnosed with a specific learning difficulty. E.g. dyslexia, dyscalculia.
- Continue to provide learning support according to Tier 2. (3 – 5 sessions/week for 30 minutes)
- Special Needs students (e.g. medically diagnosed, severe dyslexia, autism) who require a one on one teacher support on a daily basis will be provided assistance via extra funding from parents or their organisations. Funding will not be provided by the school.

Supporting Learning Diversity in the Secondary School

Our Secondary School offers the IB middle years programme (MYP) and IB Diploma programme (DP). The aim of the MYP is to equip students with the necessary skills and learning strategies to facilitate success in the Diploma program. The IB DP teachers work in collaboration with the MYP learning support team to ensure a smooth transition into the programme as well as future further educational needs.

For students who need support, procedures and processes are put in place to facilitate learning through the educational continuum. This may involve differentiating curriculum using specific instructional strategies such as scaffolding to encourage student success in all subject areas, in addition to the use of assistive technology that are in line with the IB accommodations. At ISN co-teaching is viewed as a valuable strategy to ensure an inclusive approach to support and facilitates collaboration between students, subject teachers and learning support staff. As part of the IEP, the learning support staff work alongside subject teachers to develop an in-class support plan which includes differentiation strategies based on individual student needs. Differentiated teaching attempts to maximize students' potential and also allows the student to demonstrate their learning in different ways (alternate assessments, project-based learning, authentic assessments) This in-class support plan is shared amongst all relevant subject teachers and is reviewed on a termly basis. Where it is deemed absolutely necessary, students may receive additional support outside of the classroom in collaboration with parents, teachers and administrative staff. This additional support may take place in after school sessions or in non-contact periods. The learning support staff will also meet with identified students briefly on a weekly basis to discuss in-class progress, assessment tasks and the development of their Approaches to Learning skills. Where needed, learning support staff will also offer guidance and coaching on effective time management and organisational skills. Diploma course students attend subject specific support sessions in lieu of attending Theory of Knowledge classes.

Teachers design learning experiences that allow all students, including all those who have special educational needs, to meet the rigorous standards of the IB Diploma Programme. Teachers provide all students with opportunities to achieve these goals by carefully constructed differentiated teaching strategies. International School Nadi also acknowledges the academic rigour of the programme and the importance of encouraging students to pursue the full diploma. The school asserts that barriers to student participation can be minimized as teachers strive to meet the educational needs of a diverse population by utilizing a variety of teaching and learning strategies as well as accommodations for assessment.

Support for English Language Learners

In class support is provided for English language learners through differentiation, scaffolding and the use of assistive technology. Co-teachers may be allocated to classes where there is an identified need for additional support.

As with any other aspects of student diversity, the provision of support aims to be inclusive where possible. Students may also engage in additional weekly English classes after school

where necessary. The ESL curriculum is designed to provide English Language learners with the knowledge and skills that they need in order to attain their goals and achieve success within the wider school community. ISN offers a comprehensive program where all ESL students have the opportunity to participate in our *New Inspiration* English program.

New Inspiration is a four level course that is designed to take students from beginner to intermediate level. The theme-based course aims to appeal to students through imaginative and exciting topics, increase confidence through learner independence activities and cater for different learning styles. The course also embraces the digital generation, offering multimedia and interactive solutions including interactive practice activities, videos and fun language games to support learning.

Accommodations for DP Assessment

With regards to DP assessments, the Diploma caters for special requirements to ensure that all candidates are allowed to demonstrate their ability under assessment conditions that are as fair as possible. Special arrangements that can be authorised by the IB include but are not limited to;

- The use of scribes and transcription readers
- Additional time and rest periods for examination
- Information and communication technology
- Modifications to exam papers (e.g. font size, coloured paper)

These requirements are outlined in the IB publication *Candidates with special assessment needs.* The identification of any student with a special educational need must be completed prior to starting the DP program. In order to qualify for special consideration, supporting documentation must be submitted to the IB in the form of a medical or psychological test. The documentation provided must be no earlier than the previous academic year. These arrangements may be used for both internal and external assessments, though the formal request is only required for external arrangements. Further guidance for additional assessment support is outlined in *IB Candidates with special needs.*

The DP coordinator plays a key role in special arrangements made on behalf of the student and is the signatory for all documentation, even if it is collated by others.

Inclusive Education Referral Process

The maintenance and use of formal referral process is supported and implemented by the learning support team in collaboration with curriculum coordinators and teachers. In regards to initial student referral to learning support needs, all other teachers who have contact with the student are required to provide details of formal assessments to assist with learning support evidence. The referral process and associated documentation is explained to all staff annually and is displayed in all classrooms. This process is also explained to parents/guardians before and during the initiation process.

Development of the IEP

For any student who goes through the formal referral process, an IEP is developed and supporting information is collected. The IEP includes:

- Teacher referral form
- Parent interview transcript
- Student interview transcript (where applicable)
- In class observation records
- Recommendations for in class support
- Short term and long term targets set for the student

Supporting information may include:
- Copies of past assessments
- Formal assessment results
- External assessment documentation (psychometric, psychological testing)
- Minutes of meetings with family, students, staff and other professionals

Each semester provision of support is reviewed with a reflection, which is developed in collaboration with all key stakeholders. All personal data is treated with the appropriate level of confidentiality and care. Those directly involved with the students are provided with relevant information including an overview of learning needs and recommendations for support.

Once the student has met the criteria set out In the IEP and has reached an appropriate grade level in the areas being supported, the student will leave the program. The student will continue to be monitored by the learning support department to ensure a smooth transfer back into the class.

Student Transitions

At the beginning of each year teachers are given relevant information on any students with support needs based on the previous year's assessments and observations.

Transfer of information out of the school is only carried out at the request of the parents and/or students.

Evaluation of the Programme and Policy

This policy will be reviewed on a yearly basis by the schools leadership team and the learning support department. This policy along with the IEP template and referral process will be reviewed at the beginning of 2016. At the end of every school year, teachers will be invited to provide written feedback on learning support. This policy will be seen to be successful when:

- All students with special educational needs are identified and supported
- Individual differences are recognised and valued by all
- All support is individualised according to each students identified needs
- IEP's and in class support recommendations are well defined and realistic
- Teachers are satisfied with the level of guidance and professional development they receive in terms of student assistance and differentiation strategies
- Parents/ Guardians are satisfied with the quality of support and work in partnership with the school to assist their child
- When the student achieves a positive outcome