

Nursery Inclusion Policy

Approved on: October 01, 2024

Approved by: Bertrand Ferret, Principal

Implementation date: October 01, 2024

Revision date: NA

Purpose

This policy establishes a comprehensive framework for the implementation of inclusive education at LFITM, ensuring that all children particularly those with additional learning needs receive equitable access to high-quality education and developmental support. It acknowledges the unique and diverse needs of learners and promotes an environment that supports their academic progress, emotional wellbeing, and social inclusion. The policy reinforces LFITM's commitment to fostering a culture of acceptance, belonging, and support for every child. By outlining specific guidelines and expectations, the policy ensures a unified and consistent approach to inclusive education across all LFITM programs. It provides clarity for all stakeholders, including school leadership, staff, families, service providers, and relevant regulatory bodies, in their shared responsibility to support every child's right to learn, grow, and thrive in an inclusive setting.

Policy

LFITM develops and implements an Inclusion Policy that details how the school meets the varied needs of the physical, sensory, social, emotional, communicative, health, and intellectual of all enrolled students. The Inclusion Policy at a minimum, includes the following components:

1. Philosophy of Inclusive Education: Affirming the right of all children, including those with additional learning needs, to inclusive education at LFITM.
2. Admissions Process: Clearly defined procedures for admitting children with additional learning needs, ensuring equitable access.
3. Staffing and Accessibility: Adequate human resources, accessible facilities, and learning support systems that cater to a range of needs.
4. Fee Transparency: Conditions under which additional fees may apply for enhanced support.
5. Leadership Responsibilities: Defined roles for school leadership in promoting inclusive practices.
6. Quality Assurance: Minimum standards to ensure consistency and compliance with inclusive practices.

1. Inclusion Policy Requirements

a) The school's vision, mission, and strategy for inclusive education.

b) Procedures supporting admissions of students with additional learning needs.

c) Details of LFITM's inclusive support systems:

- Inclusion staff and their qualifications.
- Physical accessibility and safe evacuation procedures.
- Support mechanisms for inclusive pedagogy, curriculum modifications, and a tracking system for student progress.

- d) Guidelines for additional fees if support goes beyond standard inclusive provision.
- e) Roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders involved in the provision of inclusive education.

2. Admissions

2.1 Admission of Students with Additional Learning Needs In line with Federal Law No. (29) of 2006 and subsequent amendments, LFITM will not deny admission to any child with additional learning needs, provided the school can accommodate the child in the appropriate age group.

LFITM ensures:

- Priority consideration for students with additional learning needs and their siblings.
- Request of original assessments from relevant health professionals.
- Smooth transitions for incoming students with additional learning needs.
- Adjustments to learning and physical environments based on the child's needs.
- A clear definition of circumstances in which the school cannot accommodate a child.
- Transparent communication with parents about the admissions process and inclusive practices.
- Early identification of accommodations required at the point of admission.
- Observation sessions to assess support needs (e.g., "stay and play").
- Use of standardized assessments.
- A designated point of contact for families throughout the admissions journey.

2.2 Inability to Accommodate

LFITM considers various factors before refusing admission:

- Legal obligations
- Educational needs
- Safety
- Available resources and staffing
- Financial implications
- Infrastructure

Only when all evidence-based options are exhausted may LFITM submit an 'inability to accommodate' notification to ADEK, with a 7-day notice to families upon a final decision.

2.3 Referral to Specialized Settings

Most students with additional learning needs will be supported within LFITM. In exceptional cases:

- LFITM shall contact ADEK before recommending specialized placements.
- Collaboration with ADEK-registered specialists will be ensured.

Students with severe autism may be referred to specialized centers if:

- There is a joint agreement between ADEK, LFITM, and parents.
- Intensive therapies are required that cannot be delivered on-site.
- Parents understand and consent to the referral process.

3. Inclusive Practices

3.1 Inclusion Staff maintains adequate staffing, including:

- An Inclusion Lead responsible for coordinating inclusive education.
- Provision for Individual Assistants if required, funded by parents and properly registered.
- Inclusion Educators where necessary to support teaching staff.

3.2 Accessible Environment ensures:

- Physical and sensory accessibility of all learning and play spaces.
- Emergency evacuation plans inclusive of all children.
- Risk assessments to address specific vulnerabilities.
- Anti-bullying measures for students with additional learning needs.
- Spaces for specialist support and interventions.
- Design considerations that support sensory needs.

3.3 Inclusive Pedagogical Support LFITM:

- Maintains a robust system for identifying, tracking, and referring students with additional learning needs.
- Develops personalized learning plans (DLPs) integrating input from families, staff, and assessments.
- Uses flexible teaching strategies.
- Trains staff in inclusive education methods.
- Coordinates with external specialists when required.
- Provides assistive technology as appropriate.
- Embeds inclusive values into recruitment and performance evaluations.
- Builds strong relationships between children and educators.
- Promotes peer understanding and collaboration among students.

3.4 In-School Specialist Services at LFITM

Identification and Documentation:

The Inclusion Lead and educators at LFITM are responsible for identifying children who may benefit from specialist services. The entire referral and support process must be clearly documented from the initial concern to the start of service delivery. Documentation should include:

- Type, frequency, and duration of service provided.
- Current situation and SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) goals.
- Intervention targets embedded in the child's learning plan.
- Regular progress updates.
- Practical recommendations for educators, if necessary

Center Registration, Selection, and Agreement:

LFITM selects external specialist service providers, provided they are duly registered with the Department of Health (DoH) and ADEK. A formal agreement is signed between LFITM, the service provider, and parents. This agreement:

- Clarifies how confidential information is documented, stored, and managed, in line with Federal Law No. (45) of 2021 regarding the Protection of Personal Data.
- States procedures for addressing any damages in accordance with relevant laws and policies.
- Outlines the full referral process from initial concern to service implementation.
- Describes the nature of services, including baseline assessments.
- Defines agreement duration, payment terms, grievance procedures, and termination clauses.

- Explains monitoring methods and how service progress will be communicated between all parties.

Provision of On-Site Designated Space:

LFITM provides a designated and safe area on campus for the delivery of in-school specialist services. Suitable locations may include: the Director's office, meeting rooms, learning support spaces, the clinic, or a first aid room. This area must:

- Be compliant with DoH requirements and applicable regulations.
- Include space for resources and child-sized furniture where needed.
- Not include staff pantries or inappropriate locations.

4. Additional Fees

In line with inclusive education principles, LFITM strives to meet the needs of all learners within its existing fee structure. Where clinical assessments indicate a need for specialist support beyond standard provision, the school may:

- Provide detailed justification and documentation of the need and associated costs.
- Clearly itemize all additional charges and update eSIS records accordingly. Parents will receive termly financial statements itemizing these charges.
- Ensure all charges are transparent and pre-approved by ADEK.
- Review charges termly to assess their continued relevance and effectiveness.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

LFITM's Inclusion Policy outlines the roles and responsibilities of leadership and staff to ensure a culture of inclusive education. These responsibilities include:

Governing Body:

- Sets the strategic direction of LFITM with a clear commitment to inclusive education.
- Appoints a board member to oversee inclusive provision.
- Ensures the school environment is accessible for children with physical disabilities and sensory impairments through necessary adaptations or future planning.

Director:

- Ensures inclusive education is a standing agenda item at senior leadership and/or governing board meetings.
- Embeds inclusive goals and measurable outcomes within the school's development plan.
- Appoints a member of senior leadership to oversee inclusive education provision.
- Provides ongoing professional development (CPD) opportunities focused on adaptive teaching, child protection, and safeguarding, with particular attention to identifying needs in children with additional learning needs.
- Oversees risk assessments of all LFITM facilities, addressing potential hazards for children with mobility, sensory, communication, or behavioral challenges.
- Submits requested data to ADEK regarding children with additional learning needs.
- Ensures all incidents of bullying or discrimination towards children with additional learning needs are documented and addressed appropriately.
- Develops and maintains emergency evacuation procedures for all children of determination, ensuring staff are trained and aware of their roles.

- Maintains responsibility for the safe evacuation of all individuals with additional needs during emergencies.

Inclusion Lead:

- Coordinates all aspects of support—educational, behavioral, social, sensory, and emotional—for children with additional learning needs in collaboration with teachers and professionals.
- Partners with educators to track and support each child’s development in alignment with program expectations.
- Ensures all documentation is securely stored, regularly reviewed, and appropriately shared.
- Maintains and updates the internal register of students with additional learning needs, including DLPs and Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs).
- Develops and reviews PEEPs in collaboration with the Health and Safety Officer, especially when needs or environments change.
- Evaluates the physical accessibility of LFITM facilities and ensures emergency procedures are inclusive.
- Reviews and updates data and eSIS information as needed.
- Conducts termly quality assurance reviews of inclusive teaching practices and service impact.
- Holds regular meetings with parents to review student support and promote consistency between school and home.
- Coordinates and assesses the effectiveness of both push-in and pull-out specialist interventions.
- Collaborates with on-site specialists to deliver services efficiently within the school.

6. Documented Learning Plan (DLP)

LFITM creates an individual Documented Learning Plan (DLP) for every child requiring a tailored approach to learning. Each DLP:

- Is customized to the child’s specific strengths and needs.
- Includes personalized, incremental, and measurable learning targets.
- Is reviewed regularly within set timelines.
- Is developed collaboratively with parents and specialists (where applicable).
- Clearly outlines necessary accommodations, teaching strategies, or modifications to ensure access to the learning program.

7. Registering and Maintaining Records

LFITM utilizes ADEK’s Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Module on eSIS to register and track all children receiving additional support. This includes:

- Recording all accommodations and modifications noted in the student’s DLP.
- Ensuring sensitive information is stored securely and only accessible to designated staff (e.g. Inclusion Lead, Inclusion Educators), with parental consent.
- Submitting data to ADEK as required, ensuring accuracy and confidentiality.

8. Parental Engagement at LFITM

- LFITM recognizes that meaningful parental involvement is key to supporting children with additional learning needs. In the best interest of each child, LFITM is committed to fostering strong partnerships with parents through open communication, collaboration, and shared decision-making.

LFITM:

- Engages in open, respectful dialogue with parents regarding any specific learning or developmental needs their child may have.
- Encourages parents to share any relevant specialist assessments or diagnostic reports to support tailored strategies for their child's development.
- Involves parents in setting personalized learning goals and co-developing plans to address the child's needs.
- Provides parents with clear, accessible information about LFITM's standard inclusive provision and available support structures.
- Clearly communicates how LFITM regularly shares updates on their child's progress, in line with the Nursery Parent Engagement and Communication Policy.
- Creates a safe, supportive environment for parents to express concerns and work collaboratively toward effective solutions.
- Provides parents with evidence-based documentation and observations when concerns about a child's progress are identified.
- Supports parents by sharing relevant online resources, connecting them with local support networks, and guiding them toward professional assessment and advice when needed.
- Collaborates with parents to develop smooth transition plans for children joining LFITM, as well as those preparing to move on to primary school settings.

Reference

2024 (September) ADEK_EEI_Inclusion Policy_v.1.0 Department of Education and Knowledge, Abu Dhabi (ADEK)