

SEN/CWSN POLICY

SCHOOL VISION & MISSION STATEMENT: To inspire and empower children to think independently, integrate, excel and contribute to the progress of humanity.

To synthesize old world values with a futuristic approach, creating a perfect alignment of the body, mind and soul, producing thinkers and balanced achievers, who are sensitive to various social, ethical and environmental issues.

IB MISSION STATEMENT: The International Baccalaureate 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 organization 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.

UNIQUE MINDS

2018

Drafted by faculty of SEN/CWSN, Principal, Ms. Lalitha Naidu & IBPYP C Ms. Neerja Mony in November 2017 and reviewed by all stake holders. The Policy is to ensure RTE is in effect and Meridian stands by its philosophy of being an inclusive school.

2019

Reviewed jointly by IBPYP C Ms. Jyothi Malhotra, CWSN online support & core team of mentors. It was reviewed by the stake holders in Jan, 2020 during the pandemic when online classes were being held to understand the mental well being and physical well being of the learning community

2022

Redrafted in 2022 by Principal Ms. Karanam Bhavani, Ms. Jyothi [outgoing PYPC], Ms. Garima [Head - Health & wellness team, grade Reps along with core team who monitor the general behaviour of the students along with CWSN/SEN team members. Observations were crucial as students migrated from online schooling to offline after 2 years.





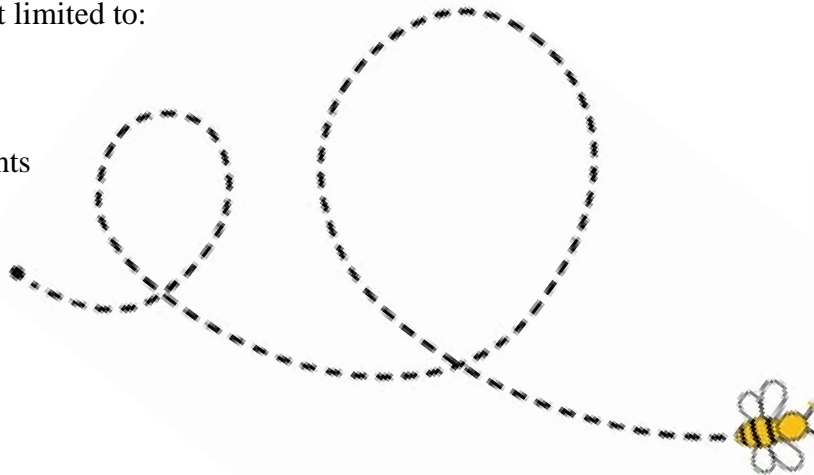
PHILOSOPHY

Meridian school believes that every learner should get an opportunity to learn in an environment suited to her/ his specific abilities and requirements. The school considers children with Special Needs [CWSN] as **UNIQUE MINDS** who have distinct path, process, learning and progression. We pride ourselves on being an **inclusive school**. We strive to cater to diverse needs of students by ensuring that each student gets equitable access to the learning curriculum. Students with special needs are supported primarily through remediation, accommodation and with certain exemptions especially during examinations, depending on the severity of the learning difficulty.

The policy provides for educational support to all learners at appropriate levels, based on their individual needs. The goal of the school is to prevent problems and intervene at the earliest so that learners can progress as per their abilities and strengths. We aim at providing an effective, friendly, welcoming, healthy, protective and gender-sensitive environment for all learners. While planning for inclusion takes an individual focus, it also occurs within an ecological context. This means taking into account the broader ecology of the student, that is, all those things that affect or are affected by the student. Families, the classroom, the teachers, other students, the physical environment, cultural influences, the school community, society in general are all part of the individual's ecology. In planning an **Inclusive curriculum**, we (as teachers) support students with enrichment, further support, and specific physical needs through a number of whole school structures and classroom-based approaches. All students irrespective of their caste, creed, religion, etc and special education needs have complete access to all curricula.

At Meridian, we are aware and recognise that students develop and mature at different rates and in different ways; and have varied abilities and interests. We also recognize and acknowledge our responsibility towards all students-the very able, the average and those with special needs. Students with special needs include, but are not limited to:

- behavioural concerns and issues
- language difficulties
- mild to moderate intellectual impairments
- physical impairments
- specific learning difficulties
- specific skills and talents
- speech and physical impairments



IDENTIFYING AREAS OF EDUCATIONAL NEED AND ENRICHMENT (KINDERGARTEN TO YEARS 11-12)

The basis for deciding that a child has special needs is when a child is denied full access to the mainstream curriculum through challenges, difficulties, insufficient materials, resources and understanding in any or all of the following areas:

- communication and interaction
- cognition and learning social
- emotional and mental health
- sensory and/or physical conditions

Students who require special assessment arrangements may display the characteristics of one or more of the special educational needs:

- Specific learning difficulties, language and communication disorders (e.g., dyslexia, dysphasia)
- Emotional and behavioural difficulties (e.g., ADD/ADHD, depression, anger, substance abuse)
- Physical and sensory conditions (e.g., sensory impairments, physical ability)
- Medical conditions (e.g., congenital heart disease, epilepsy, asthma, diabetes, allergies, leukaemia and other cancers)
- Mental health problems (e.g., psychotic conditions such as schizophrenia, manic depression, eating disorders, anxieties and emotional distress)
- Severe Emotional Disorder
- Mental well-being
- Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Physical Disability
- Behaviour Problems
- Speech Impairment
- Gifted and Talented

Currently, we are able to support learners with mild to moderate levels of difficulties such as academic and learning difficulties (dyslexia, dyscalculia and dysgraphia), emotional and behavioural difficulties, minor medical conditions and mental health conditions (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, eating disorders and anxiety related disorders) are recognised by our Inclusion policy.



It is imperative that prompt assistance is provided to every child in need and care of attention. It is important to acknowledge and spread awareness of the fact that 'one size fits all' cannot be followed in terms of education. Thus, the school aims at understanding the needs of each child to not only make the learning content diverse but also ensure that access to learning is made possible for all. As per the IB guidance, the learning support program is run by identifying the students' specific learning styles, scaffolding their learning and differentiating the curriculum.

PROCEDURE OF IDENTIFICATION OF LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS

For learners who show consistently poor performance, in case differentiated techniques also prove to be ineffectual, the respective class teacher will fill in a referral form and refer him/her to the school counsellor. Other teachers and the Principal too can refer the learner to the counsellor after discussion with the class teacher.

The counsellor will conduct several rapport building and observation sessions and draw out a plan of action keeping the teachers and the family members involved in the process. If the counsellor feels the need for further formal assessments, referrals will be made to outside professionals. Based on the results of these assessments the counselling and teaching process will start with an individualized educational plan (IEP), pertinent to the learner.

In case of learners exhibiting behavioural and emotional problems, referrals are made by the teachers or parents. For older learners, self-referral is also encouraged.

The teachers in case of referrals have to fill a referral form for counselling, to aid the learner history intake and feedback process. The parents of the identified learner are subsequently invited for a family session with the counsellor and discussions are held on the identified problem or difficulty. Parental consent is then taken for the counselling or further assisted academic help.

Counselling and IEPs are carried on with regular monitoring of goals set and progress achieved in association with the teachers and parents.





SEN/CWSN in the Primary:

For its primary learners the school embraces the PYP philosophy which acknowledges and accommodates the diverse learning styles of all children. To this end, we seek to offer a differentiated teaching and learning environment. The teaching learning methodology for such children is activity-based with which learners with varying educational needs find it easier to understand the concepts. Furthermore, if required, an individualized educational plan is also drawn out for the identified learner.



SEN/CWSN in the Secondary:

Similarly for its secondary programmes the school draws guidance from and follows the MYP philosophy. The 'Areas of Interaction', which are unique to the MYP, provide meaningful connections for learners. 'The Approaches to Learning' component assists teachers in identifying learner's learning styles in order to implement modifications. Teachers respond to diverse learning needs by differentiating their instruction. During the middle years, procedures and processes are put in place to support learners as they pass through the secondary checkpoint years. The counsellor plays an important role here for learners having behavioural and emotional problems. Learners are also encouraged to meet the counsellor with relation to their needs through self-referral.



SEN/CWSN in the Higher Secondary:

Learners are advised upon programme entry of the rigorous requirements to ensure appropriate placement and academic success. In addition to employing teaching strategies that include differentiation for learners with special needs, learners are also supported through special arrangements if necessary. The school counsellor helps the learners to deal with the stress related to the course and also if required, helps them improve their study habits. In addition to this, other mental health counselling is provided to the learners to deal with issues like stress- academic and personal, anxiety, peer pressure, relationship- management, etc. The counsellor also constantly works with the families to ensure a conducive environment at home. Again self-referral is encouraged among learners.

ALL COUNSELLING SESSIONS ARE STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL IN NATURE.

Individual learning programmes (ILPs) are introduced and will include:

GOALS: short-term goals established for the individual student.

STRATEGIES: teaching-learning strategies incorporated in the class

PROVISIONS: individualised provisions to maximise the learning potential



OUTCOMES: outcomes of the actions taken

TIME FRAMES: time frames and specific times to review targets and outcomes

Review of Individual Learning Programmes will be reviewed and reported at regular intervals with the respective student and their parents.

Assessment Access Arrangements:

Meridian believes that all learners should be allowed to demonstrate their ability under assessment conditions that are as fair as possible. Standard assessment conditions may put candidates with learning support requirements at a disadvantage by preventing them from demonstrating their level of attainment. The school in such cases provides inclusive assessment arrangements. This policy applies to candidates with long term or permanent challenges. Learners who require inclusive assessment arrangements may have learning support requirements due to one or more of the following lying in the mild to moderate range.

Autism spectrum/Asperger's syndrome
Medical conditions
Physical and/or sensory challenges
Specific learning difficulties

Learning disabilities
Mental health issues
Social, emotional and behavioural difficulties
Speech and/or communication difficulties

Requests pertaining to inclusive assessment arrangements must be submitted to the Principal along with the relevant medical/psychological/psychoeducational documents/ reports.

The following assessment access arrangements can be currently offered by the school. Other access arrangements can be discussed if needed:

- A separate room for examination
- Modification in the examination paper
- Appointment of a prompter, or practical assistant
- Scribe
- Additional time given to the learner- Additional time shall be permitted as per the direction from the Board.
- Assistive technology
- Rest breaks if required due to medical, physical, psychological or other conditions.

SEQUENCE FOR REFERRAL AND COUNSELING

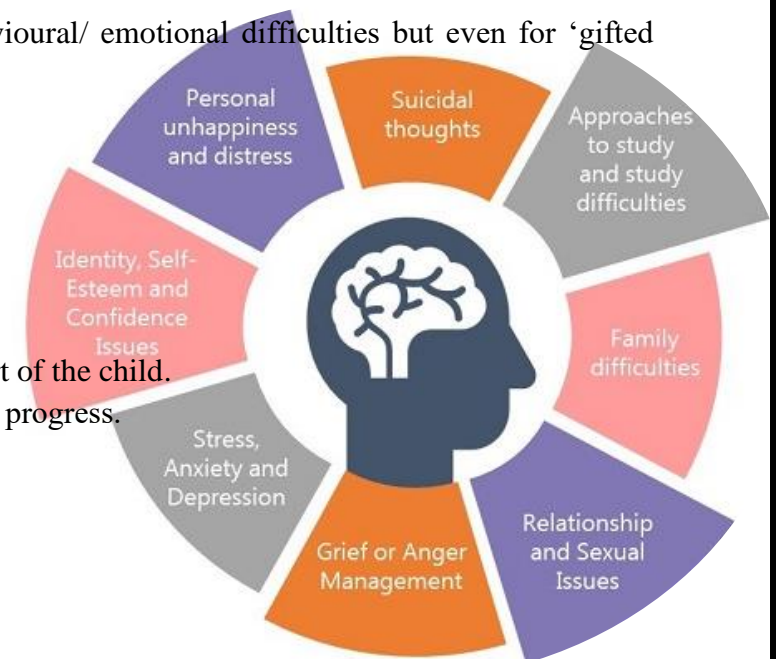
Step No. Sequence to be followed in case of referral for counselling and remedial programme:

1. Orientation to all the teachers and staff members on different areas of concern in academics, behaviour and emotions.
2. Checklist as per the section to be provided to all facilitators/ teachers for possible identification.
3. Based on checklist, facilitators/teachers can refer learners to the counsellor. They are asked to fill referral form for learners identified for counselling and further help.
4. Meeting with respective coordinator, counsellor and facilitator.
5. First meeting with the parents for case history and parental consent if not matching as submitted during admission.
6. Facilitator to prepare case history
7. Outside referral for assessment if needed.
8. Sharing of plan with respective coordinator, teachers and parents
9. Counsellor to prepare a plan of action- IEP/ILP if needed for counselling plans
10. Assessment on basis of goals planned.
11. Further course of action and follow-up

The above-mentioned procedure is not only followed with student having academic/ behavioural/ emotional difficulties but even for 'gifted learners' in the school.

PROCEDURE AT THE COUNSELOR'S ROOM:

- Taking initial history and family session
- Preparation of Individualized Education Plan (IEP) (Refer to Appendix A & B).
- Coordinating with the teacher/ facilitator to observe progress and results.
- In case of any medical history the parents should also submit a complete medical report of the child.
- Bi-monthly reports are made for reference and also to keep a check on the individual's progress.
- This helps in planning a better future plan for the learner.
- Periodical meeting with parents to update the parent with the progress of the child.



APPENDIX A
School Counselling

PARENTAL CONSENT SLIP

I give my consent for my child of Grade to receive counselling service from Meridian school counsellor for the academic year 20 - . I understand that the school counsellor will work with my child for a series of counselling sessions.

Parents' Name:

Parents' Signature:

Date:

APPENDIX B
Teacher's referral form

Date:

Grade:

Name of the class teacher:

Name of the learner:

Date of Birth:

RECORD:

Reasons for request for assistance (must be for school-based issues, e.g. academics, behaviour, school health):.....

Specific and descriptive observed behaviours (aggressive, submissive, pessimistic etc.).....

Directions: Please provide the information requested in the appropriate spaces below.

Current Academic Year Performance [subject specific]:.....Learner's strength:.....Area of improvement:.....

POSITIVE QUALITIES:

List 1-3 (or more) skills or other positive characteristics and strengths, both personal (e.g. talents, traits, interests, hobbies) and environmental supports (e.g. friends, family members, faith community) that you have observed or that apply to this learner:

Skills:

.....
.....

Positive Characteristics & Strength:

.....
.....

Forms currently the school is following to be included

References:

International Baccalaureate Organisation, “Special educational needs within the International Baccalaureate programme.”, Primary Years Programme.

International Baccalaureate Organization, “Candidates with special assessment needs.

International Baccalaureate Organization, “Teaching learners with particular special educational and learning needs - a resource for schools.

“Individualized Education Program”, Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopaedia