

WORLD ACADEMY OF TIRANA



SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY POLICY

Approved by: Mirlinda

Date: September 2025

Last reviewed on: August 2025

Next review due by: July 2026

Rationale

World Academy of Tirana aims to be an inclusive school where all students are able to access the same opportunities for learning, reach their potential and achieve maximum progress. Each student is valued as an individual, unique in their own right.

By way of compliance with the school's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy Article 23 UNCRC and equality legislation of Albania, the School acknowledges that a mentally or physically disabled child should enjoy a full and decent life in conditions which ensure dignity, promote self-reliance and facilitate the child's active participation in the community.

Legislative Compliance

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation including, but not limited to, the following:

- Law No. 69/2012 "On Pre-university Education in the Republic of Albania". It regulated the rights and obligations in pre-university education, including support for students with special needs.
- Law No. 10439, dated 09.06.2011, **"On the Rights of Persons with Disabilities."**
- It ensures the protection and promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities, including access to education.
- Order of the Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth No. 131, dated 30.10.2018, **"On the Organization of Support Services for Students with Special Educational Needs."** It regulates the provision of support services, such as psycho-pedagogical assistance, classroom assistance, etc.
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD).
- Albania is a party to this convention, which guarantees equal rights for persons with disabilities, including education.
- Order of the Ministry of Education and Sports No. 36, dated 18.03.2025, **"On the Criteria and Procedures for the Identification and Assessment of Students with Special Educational Needs."**
- It defines the criteria and methods for assessing students with special needs, as well as the organization of support services.
- Law No. 93/2024 "On Inclusion and accessibility of People with Special Needs" in Republic Of Albania.
- Common Guidelines Ministry of Education and Ministry of Economy of Republic of Albania, No. 20 date 13.08.2025

The Inclusion Policy is in accordance with Local Legal requirements and obligations which focus on:

- The establishment and operation of multidisciplinary committees for special needs children and appointing the SEN support teacher under the legislation in force.
- Drafting and implementing individual educational plans for children with limited skills, from teachers in collaboration with persons who utilize parental support for children, psychologists, social workers, professionals from health and specialized social services facilities.



- School needs to commit to inclusive education training.

School's structures and processes for compliance to legal requirements and obligations

WAT is an inclusive school that welcomes students from many diverse backgrounds and circumstances. WAT's philosophy for admission is to provide an education to any student who can benefit from an IB education programme without disrupting or diminishing the educational opportunities of other students.

We value the team decision-making process in regard to intervention, special education identification and the provision of support services. Some students require more specific interventions, as determined by the child study team (CST). Appropriate policies and procedures are followed to a) ensure parent(s)/guardian(s) consent, b) determine student needs and c) provide the required individualized student support services. Each student with identified special needs is provided with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) that has been developed by the school psychologist, child study team (CST) and in collaboration with parent(s)/guardian(s). Each IEP includes an aim and targeted areas of academic and social growth. It may also contain strategies and accommodations, which ensure student access to the curriculum.

Definition of SEND

The term 'Special Educational Needs and Disability' covers a wide range of students. Students are considered as having special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special education provision to be made for them. This provision may be additional to or different from that which is available in a differentiated curriculum.

Students have a learning difficulty if they have a much greater difficulty in learning than the majority of their peers, or if they have a disability which stops, or even hinders them from making use of the general educational facilities provided for students of the same age.

Conversely, special educational needs can also be used as a term for children who need extra provision because they have abilities significantly ahead of their peer group.

School Admissions

No student will be refused admission to the school based on his or her special educational need **providing we possess the facilities and expertise to meet their needs**. We shall not discriminate against disabled children in respect of admissions for a reason related to their disability. We shall continuously strive to provide effective educational provision for all our students.

Should the learning disability/difficulty prove to be too severe for adequate educational provision within the School's scope of competence, the parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be made fully aware of the situation so they could consider other options in the best interest of their child.

The School shall reserve the right to deny right of access in cases where the parent(s)/guardian(s) persistently fails to comply with the School's requirements in terms of providing relevant documentation



and medical evidence, as well as undertaking professional assessment to ascertain the presence and/or nature of the learning disability and/or difficulty. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Admissions Policy

Key considerations related to Admissions and recent Board statement.

- If your child has a disability or a special educational need you must ensure that the full details of the condition are disclosed when submitting your registration form.
- This information will also allow us to consult with you about any adjustments which can reasonably be made to allow us to fully support your child's safety and well-being, and meet their individual needs, should an offer of a place be made.
- Obtaining this information will support your child's best interests. Without this information we will not be able to assess your child's needs and therefore ensure that we have the resources necessary available to meet them.
- Our staff are qualified, experienced and skilled in offering learning support to students with certain needs. The amount and level of support is, however, not exhaustive and the school is unable to provide the resources to students with severe learning difficulties.

Roles and Responsibilities

Head of School and Senior Leadership Team

- To take overall responsibility for implementing the SEND policy
- To ensure that the SENDCo has sufficient time and resources to carry out their functions
- To ensure the wider school community understands the implications of the reforms for whole school improvement
- To put in place arrangements to ensure parents are regularly engaged in discussions about the progress of their child

SENDCo

- To oversee day-to-day operation of the SEND policy and coordinate provision for children with SEND, ensuring that all SEND records are up to date.
- To work with class/subject teachers to ensure that all children have the appropriate personalised support as outlined in SEND Support Plans and Intervention Timetables
- To co-ordinate and implement the access arrangements for SEND students
- To liaise with parents, other agencies and SLT
- NASEN SENDCo's handbook can be found [here](#)

Teachers



- To focus on outcomes for the child, ensuring high aspirations and meeting all legal obligations within the country you work in
- To provide Quality First Teaching; assessing, planning, doing and reviewing.
- To secure the involvement of parents, pupils and other agencies in planning and reviewing progress.
- To be fully aware of each child's needs and how they can be met.
- To undertake relevant Professional development
- Teachers will work closely with teaching assistants to plan, assess the impact of support and ensure that there are clear links to classroom teaching.

Learning Support Assistants

- LSAs will focus their support on the achievement of specific outcomes within the graduated approach to SEN support.
- LSAs will be aware of pupils' needs, their planned outcomes, the support provided and any teaching strategies or approaches that are required.

Areas of Special Educational Needs and Disability

The following categories may have an impact on progress and attainment, but do not constitute SEN:

- Disability
- Attendance and Punctuality
- Health and Welfare
- EAL
- Being a Looked After Child/Previous Looked After Child/In care

Students shall be identified as having a special educational need and disability (SEND) if they fall into one or more of the following categories ([2015 Gov.uk SEND Code of Practice: 0-25](#))

1. Cognition and Learning

The category of cognition and learning difficulties includes general learning difficulties and specific learning difficulties. Children with general learning difficulties usually have problems in many subjects. They usually have difficulty with basic literacy, numeracy and general understanding. They need more time to practise and review and consolidate their learning than their peers.

Specific learning difficulties include: dyslexia (reading and spelling), dyscalculia (mathematics), dyspraxia (co-ordination) and dysgraphia (writing).

2. Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties

A child is usually considered to have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties when the problem behaviour occurs in many different situations, occurs frequently, is severe and not age appropriate. These students need help to learn the appropriate behaviour and adults who understand why it is



happening. The category includes children who are withdrawn or isolated as well as children who are displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour. It also includes children who are impulsive, hyperactive and cannot focus.

Students with these difficulties may be diagnosed with Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

This category also includes mental health difficulties such as anxiety or depression, self-harming, substance misuse, eating disorders or physical symptoms that are medically unexplained.

3. Communication and Interaction Needs

Children with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) have problems with speech, language, communication or a combination of all three. Their problems can range from mild to severe. This group includes students with Autism Spectrum Disorder, such as Asperger's Syndrome.

The profile for every child with SLCN is different and their needs may change over time. Children with autism are likely to have particular difficulties with social interaction. They may also experience difficulties with language, communication and imagination, which can impact on how they relate to others.

4. Sensory and/or Physical Needs

Some children require special educational provision because they have sensory or physical impairments. These disabilities might not have an impact on their learning but might prevent or hinder them from making use of the educational facilities generally provided.

Many children with vision impairment, hearing impairment, physical impairment or a multi-sensory impairment (a combination of vision and hearing difficulties) will require specialist support and/or equipment to access their learning and all the opportunities available to their peers.

Gifted and Talented Provision (G&T)

According to the National Association of Special Needs teachers G&T does not fall into one of the classifications of SEN, however, they should be considered as 'exceptional children' with specific needs to be met.

This category includes children who have a particular talent or ability in one or more subjects. Children are considered gifted and talented when their ability is significantly greater than that of their peers, or if they show the potential to develop these abilities. Teachers need to challenge these students by providing them with work which has greater depth and breadth than that normally prepared for class.

Identification

Identification of students requiring learning support (either language or special needs) may occur:

- through information received from the student's parent(s)/guardian(s);
- through recommendations and observations from transfer documents from previous school(s);



- as the result of the day-to-day delivery of the curriculum. The class or subject teachers and assistants are in an excellent position to observe and assess each student's progress. Their experience and expertise should be used to make professional judgements as to the possible need for professional assessment and/or additional assistance.

In some cases, it may be necessary to seek assessment by or advice from an external professional such as a specialist teacher or educational psychologist. This will always involve discussion and agreement with the student's parent(s)/guardian(s).

When considering whether a student has a special educational need, any of the following may be evident:

- makes little or no progress even when teaching approaches are targeted particularly in a student's identified area of weakness;
- shows signs of difficulty in developing literacy or mathematics skills which result in poor attainment in some curriculum areas;
- persistent emotional or behavioural difficulties which are not ameliorated by appropriate behaviour management strategies;
- has sensory or physical problems and continues to make little or no progress despite the provision of specialist equipment;
- has communication and/or interaction difficulties and continues to make little or no progress despite the provision of an appropriate differentiated curriculum;
- has emotional or behavioural difficulties which substantially and regularly interfere with the student's own learning or that of the class groups, despite having an individualised behaviour support programme;
- has SEND or physical needs that require additional specialist equipment or regular advice or visits by a specialist service;
- has a communication and/or an interaction difficulty that impedes the development of social relationships and cause a substantial barrier to learning.

Communication

Any reports on students from outside services/organisations, in addition to internal testing conducted on students, should be made available to the staff concerned. Informal discussion between staff about student progress and areas of difficulty is an on-going and valuable source of information to all concerned. All meetings with outside parties (educational psychologists, etc.) should be recorded and kept confidentially. Similarly, meetings with parent(s)/guardian(s) to discuss student progress and performance should be recorded and kept safely.

Individual Education Plans (IEPs) shall be devised for selected students. They should have input from class and subject teachers, learning support assistant, student and parent(s)/guardian(s).

Assessment

SEND, EAL, ESL as well as gifted and talented students are noted on class education provision plans. Specific targets set for these students are reviewed and shared with parents at parent-teacher meetings. Students are assessed informally through observation and scrutiny of written work and discussion.



Progress is measured termly through continuous formative assessment. All students are given opportunities to review their achievement with a view to raising students' self-esteem and encouraging them to recognise their own strengths.

Professional Development

Meeting the needs of students with SEND requires a wide spectrum of skills and it is the duty of each school to plan for and provide suitable training for all teachers. There are two partnership platforms that can support staff:

1. The National College - this has around 70 training courses on all aspects of SEND
2. TES Develop

The policy should be read in conjunction with the WAT inclusion Policy

Monitoring and Review

This policy is to be reviewed annually, though any deficiencies or weaknesses in safeguarding arrangements will be remedied without delay.

This policy will be reviewed by SEND and SLT

This policy will be approved by the Board/ Orbital Education.

Date when policy was last approved:

Date when next review is due: July 2025