



GEMS Cambridge International School

Abu Dhabi

SEN Information Report

Date of issue: September 2023

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SEN information Report

Introduction

This document is intended to give you information regarding the ways we ensure we support all of our pupils, including those with SEND, in order that they realise their full potential.

All GEMS schools have a similar approach to meeting the needs of pupils with Special -Educational Needs/Students of Determination and are supported by GEMS Corporate Office SEN Department and ADEK to ensure that all pupils, regardless of their specific needs, make the best possible progress in school. All schools are supported to be as inclusive as possible, with the needs of pupils with a Special Educational Need/s being met in a mainstream setting wherever possible, where families want this to happen.

The term special education describes the programmes and services designed for people of determination (people with special needs) in order to ensure that all students can reach their full potential.

The term 'special educational needs' is used to describe the educational needs of any one with a disability, disorder, difficulty, impairment, exceptionality or any other factor that may affect a student's access to learning and educational performance.

The government of the UAE strongly supports education and learning services for people of determination. In November 2006, the UAE signed the [Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Optional Protocol](#).

[Federal Law No. 29 of 2006](#), is the first law in the UAE to protect the rights of people of determination. Article 12 of the law provides: the country guarantees people with special needs equal opportunities in education within all educational, vocational training, adult education and continuing education institutions in regular classes or special classes with the availability of curriculum in sign language or Braille and or any other methods as appropriate.

Ministry of Education's (MoE) strategy is to adapt public schools to facilitate education for people of determination. Accordingly, people of determination are entitled to enrol in any school, without exception. These students are catered for by Department of Special Education, which was established in 2008 by MoE. This Department promotes the rights of people of determination and ensures that they have access to the same educational opportunities as students in the regular education system.

What do we do at GEMS Cambridge International School Abu Dhabi to make sure that all children feel welcome, feel included and achieve their potential?

We take steps to ensure SEND/SOD are not treated less favourably than other pupils. Please find further information within the SEN Policy.

The Principal and the SENCO have overall responsibility for SEND and Inclusion.

Inclusion issues are regularly discussed at Senior Leadership meetings. Provision for children with SEND is constantly under review and amended where and when necessary.

We monitor the quality of our provision, together with the progress and well-being of children with SEND. This includes teaching as well as support through our rigorous monitoring cycle and consists

of teaching observations, planning and book trawls, pupil interviews and discussions with teachers and support staff.

The progress of children with SEND is carefully monitored through termly pupil progress meetings and half-termly reviews as well as observations by leaders to support staff. The SENCO holds termly provision meetings, with all who work with the children, to review and set new Individual Learning targets for additionally funded pupils,

We fully involve our Local Advisory Board when the SEND policy is reviewed and revised.

What kinds of SEN do we provide for?

Children and young people's SEN are generally thought of in the following four broad areas of need and support:

- **Communication and Interaction:**
We utilise a total communication environment – visual timetables, now and next boards, Structured Teaching programme etc. Many of our Learning Support staff are trained in the use of Colourful Semantics. We have a Speech & Language Therapist on site and we have just introduced Gemini which uses video modelling to support language acquisition. We also use language displays, PECs and Communication Books. Most support staff have received training in supporting Autistic and spectrum disorders
- **Cognition and Learning:**
We are able to offer a range of intervention work designed to help children achieve their maximum potential e.g. Precision teaching, Read Write Inc, Alphabet Arc, Nessler, Toe by Toe, Power of 2. We also work with Amana Health and KidsFirst Centre to provide inschool therapy.
- **Social, Emotional and Mental Health:**
We have two full time counsellors onsite. These counsellors offer a range of healthy minds therapies – Lego therapy, well-being groups, play therapy, PSE support, Sensory circuits, yoga and meditation. We offer 1:1 counselling and also work with Lighthouse Arabia and Irish wellness centre for outside professional support.
- **Sensory and/or Physical Needs:**
Some staff have attended Sensory Provision Workshops provided by Sensation Station Occupational Therapy. Several staff are manually handled trained and able to deliver physiotherapy programmes

Who are the best people to talk to in this school about my child's difficulties with learning/ Special Educational Needs or disability (SEND)?

***The Special Educational Needs Coordinator – SENCO - Mrs Oliver Browning
s.oliverbrowni_cia@gemsedu.com***

The SENCO manages the day to day provision for our children with SEND.
Responsible for:

- Coordinating all the support for children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) and developing the school's SEND Policy to make sure all children get a consistent, high quality response to meeting their needs in school.
- Ensuring that you are:
 - involved in supporting your child's learning
 - kept informed about the support your child is getting
 - involved in reviewing how they are doing
- Liaising with all the other people who may be coming into school to help support your child's learning e.g. Speech and Language Therapy, Educational Psychology etc.
- Updating the school's SEND register (a system for ensuring all the SEND needs of pupils in this school are known) and making sure that there are excellent records of your child's progress and needs.
- Providing specialist support for teachers and support staff in the school so they can help children with SEND in the school achieve the best progress possible
- Ensuring adequate records are kept detailing the support that each child is receiving.
- Writing Individual Learning Plans (ILP), in order for class teachers to share and review these with parents at least once each term and planning for the next term.
- Attending Local Authority Briefings to keep up to date with any legislative changes in SEN

Class/subject teacher

All of our staff are experienced, reflective practitioners who are open to advice and are keen to develop their practice in order to ensure the best possible provision for all of our children including those with SEND.

Responsible for:

- Checking on the progress of your child and identifying, planning and delivering any additional help your child may need (this could be things like targeted work, additional support) and letting the SENCO know as necessary.
- Ensuring that all staff working with your child in school are helped to deliver the planned work/programme for your child, so they can achieve the best possible progress. This may involve the use of additional adults, outside specialist help and specially planned work and resources.
- Ensuring that the school's SEND Policy is followed in their classroom and for all the pupils they teach with any SEND.

Principal & Vice Principal: Mrs Hazel Govender & Mr James Hyland

h.govender_cia@gemsedu.com j.hyland_cia@gemsedu.com

Responsible for:

- The day to day management of all aspects of the school, this includes the support for children with SEND.
- They will give responsibility to the SENCO and class teachers but are still responsible for ensuring that your child's needs are met.
- They must make sure that the Governing Body is kept up to date about any issues in the school relating to SEND.

SEN Governor – Maliha Imran

The Local Advisory Board meet termly and challenge staff to ensure that the quality of the provision

is constantly being improved. The SENCO reports to the Principal and liaises with the Local Advisory Board on the progress of pupils with SEND.

Responsible for:

- Making sure that the necessary support is made for any child who attends the school who has SEND.
- Monitoring the effectiveness of the provision in place for pupils identified with SEND

How does the school identify children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities?

On starting school, we will talk with parents and carers about their children in order to plan effectively to meet their needs. As parents are the first educators of their child their knowledge is essential. On initial meetings we ask whether parents have any concerns about their children – for example, if they have a disability, special need or medical need. This helps us to plan how we will support their child once they start school.

Where a child has attended a previous setting, we use information from that setting to plan the best programme of support to develop a Transition Plan. We will also contact any specialist services that support your child.

The progress of all pupils is assessed and monitored regularly so that when a pupil is not making expected progress, the need for additional support can quickly be identified. School will monitor the progress of all children receiving additional support to ensure that the provision we have put in place is having impact. This means that we can support any Special Educational Needs arising.

Any child identified as having a special educational need and/or disability is identified on the SEND register.

We take great care to establish whether progress is affected because a pupil has attendance issues, has English as an additional language (EAL) or a hearing or visual difficulty.

We also work with specialist services who provide expertise in finding out the type and range of the student's needs.

We follow Abu Dhabi Education Authority's guidance for the identification of pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

What are the different types of support available for children with SEND in GEMS Cambridge International School Abu Dhabi?

Class teacher input via excellent targeted classroom teaching also known as Quality First Teaching.

For your child this would mean:

- That the teacher has the highest possible expectations for your child and all pupils in their class.
- That all teaching is based on building on what your child already knows, can do and can understand.
- Different ways of teaching are in place so that your child is fully involved in learning in class. This may involve things like using more practical learning.
- Specific strategies (which may be suggested by the SENCO or outside staff) are in place to support your child to learn.
- Your child's teacher will have carefully checked on your child's progress and will have decided that your child has a gap in their understanding/learning and needs some extra support to help them make the best possible progress.

All children in school get this as a part of excellent classroom practice when needed.

Specific group work with in a smaller group of children.

This group, often called Intervention groups by schools, may be

- Run in the classroom or outside.
- Run by a teacher or most often a Teaching assistant who has had training to run these groups.

Stage of SEN Code of Practice: Wave 2

School Support means they have been identified by the class teacher as needing some extra support in school and will receive interventions.

For your child this would mean:

- He/ She will engage in group sessions with specific targets to help him/her to make more progress.
- A Learning Support Assistant/teacher will run these small group sessions using the teacher's plan or planned intervention material.

This type of support is available for any child who has specific gaps in their understanding of a subject/area of learning.

Specialist groups run by outside agencies or to support specialist programmes e.g. Speech and Language therapy OR Occupational therapy groups

AND/OR Individual support for your child of less than 20 hours in school

SEN Support Diagnosis Wave 3

which means they have been identified by the class teacher/SENCO as needing some extra specialist support in school from a professional outside the school. This may be from:

- Local Assessment Centre
- Medical or cognitive diagnosis
- Outside agencies such as the Speech and Language therapy (SALT) Service, Occupational Health or Physiotherapy services.

For your child this would mean:

- Your child has an existing diagnosis from an outside agency or practitioner.
- Your child will have been identified by the class teacher/SENCO (or you will have raised your worries) as needing more specialist input instead of or in addition to quality first teaching and intervention groups.
- You will be asked to come to a meeting to discuss your child's progress and help plan possible ways forward.
- You may be asked to give your permission for the school to refer your child to a specialist professional e.g. Educational Psychologist. This will help the school and yourself understand your child's particular needs better and be able to support them better in school.

- The specialist professional will work with your child to understand their needs and make recommendations, which may include:
 - Making changes to the way your child is supported in class e.g. some individual support or changing some aspects of teaching to support them better
 - Support to set better targets which will include their specific expertise
 - A group run by school staff under the guidance of the outside professional e.g. a social skills group
 - A group or individual work with outside professional
- The school may suggest that your child needs some agreed individual support in school. They will tell you how the support will be used and what strategies will be put in place.

This type of support is available for children with specific barriers to learning that cannot be overcome through Quality First Teaching and intervention groups.

Wave 3 Specified Individual support - for your child of more than 20 hours in school.

This means that your child has a formal diagnosis that cannot be met unless substantial individual support is in place.

Usually your child will also need specialist support in school from a professional/therapist. This may be from:

- School provided therapy services such as Inclusion Support, Speech & Language, Behavioural Therapy or Occupational Therapy.

For your child this would mean:

- Once the school receives the diagnosis report a be-spoked curriculum or timetable will be put in place. An Individual Plan will be developed to support the barriers to learning. Usually these barriers are complex and lifelong and that they need additional parent funded support in school to make good progress. These plans will be reviewed termly. A breakdown of fees is available in our Inclusion Brochure.
- An additional adult **may** be used to support your child with whole class learning, run individual programmes or run small groups including your child.

This type of support is available for children whose learning needs are:

- **Severe, complex and lifelong**
- **Need more than 20 hours of support in school**

We recognise that each child is unique and so, each child will receive different support depending on their specific needs.

How can I let the school know I am concerned about my child's progress in school?

- If you have concerns about your child's progress you should speak to your child's class teacher initially.
- If you are not happy that the concerns are being managed and that your child is still not making progress you should speak to Sarah Oliver Browning –SENCO. s.oliverbrowni_cia@gemsedu.com and an appointment can be made to discuss your child's needs.

- If you are still not happy you can speak to the Principal.

How will the school let me know if they have any concerns about my child's learning in school?

- Annual reports and termly parents' evenings give all parents and carers regular feedback on their child's up to date academic levels, reading, writing and maths targets and any behavioural, emotional or social difficulties
- Pupils views are obtained when appropriate

If your child is identified as not making progress the school will set up a meeting to discuss this with you in more detail and to:

- listen to any concerns you may have too
- plan any additional support your child may receive
- discuss with you any referrals to outside professionals to support your child's learning

How is extra support allocated to children and how do they move between the different levels?

- The Principal decides on the allocation of the budget for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, on the basis of needs in the school.
- The Principal and the SENCO discuss all the information they have about SEND in the school, including:
 - the children getting extra support already
 - the children needing extra support
 - the children who have been identified as not making as much progress as would be expected

And decide what resources/training and support is needed.

- All resources/training and support are reviewed regularly and changes made as needed.

If a pupil meets the criteria for special educational needs or disabilities (SEND), a provision map will be created, detailing the exact support the children will receive. Our whole school and Year Group provision maps show the range of interventions in place in our school, which are used when we identify a need for additional support.

Who are the other people providing services to children with SEN in this school?

Directly funded by the school:

- Qualified and experienced Teachers
- Experienced and skilled Teaching Assistants
- Staff trained in moving and handling procedures
- SEN teachers
- Staff trained in ABA, PECS, Speech & Language, Occupational Therapy, Communication Books
- EAL Programme
- Counsellors
- Well-being Therapists
- Safeguarding and Attendance Officer

Provided by the school and working with schools to provide services:

- School Nurse and Health Visitors
- Occupational Therapy
- Speech and Language Therapy

How are the teachers in school helped to work with children with SEND and what training do they have?

- The SENCO's job is to support the class teacher in planning for children with SEND.
- The school has a training plan for all staff to improve the teaching and learning of children including those with SEND. This includes whole school training on SEND issues such as ASD and Speech and language difficulties, classroom management techniques.
- Individual teachers and support staff attend training courses run by outside agencies that are relevant to the needs of specific children in their class

How will the teaching be adapted for my child with SEND?

- Class Teachers plan lessons according to the specific needs of all groups of children in their class, and will ensure that your child's needs are met.
- All teachers are provided with information on the needs of individual pupils so that they can plan the learning to ensure that all pupils are able to make progress
 - Individual Learning Plans (ILP/IEPs) and Intervention recommendation overviews will be used alongside planning to ensure children with SEND needs are met, where necessary.
 - Specially trained support staff can adapt the teachers planning to support the needs of your child where necessary.
 - Specific resources and strategies will be used to support your child individually and in groups.
 - Planning and teaching will be adapted on a daily basis if needed to meet your child's learning needs.
 - Children will access the National Curriculum at an appropriate developmental level.
 - SEND pupils will have access to the same curricular opportunities as all other children

How will we measure the progress of your child in school?

- Your child's progress is continually monitored by his/her class teacher.
- His/her progress is reviewed formally every term and progress points are given in reading, writing, maths. Science is assessed against the National Curriculum and key skills for each Year Group.
- EYFS children are assessed against the Progress Matters developmental levels and against the Early Learning Goals
- level in more detail and will also show smaller but significant steps of progress.
- SEN children receiving additional interventions or support are identified on a Provision map which will be reviewed every term, as an integral part of Pupil Progress Meetings and the plan for the next term made.
- The progress of children with an IEP/ILPs is formally reviewed yearly, at an Annual Review with all adults involved with the child's education.
- The SENCO will also check that your child is making good progress within any individual work and in any group that they take part in.

What support is there for my child's overall well-being?

- Children are supported with their social and emotional development throughout the school day, through the curriculum and extra-curricular activities.
- We have a counsellor that supports the social and emotional needs of our children which have been identified through observation and referrals by teachers, peers or parents.
- Our moral education and recovery curriculum programmes support the SEMH needs of children
- Additional well-being support from trained staff is arranged as needed for individual pupils, both in and out of the classroom and a tailored personal plan may be put in place for pupils with high needs
- We are also supported by Lighthouse Arabia who provide Weekly Webinars, Support Groups and mental health check-ups on anxiety, depression and healthy living for our staff.
- Pupils are also supported through Lighthouse Arabia and Free Spirit Collective where more intensive support is required.
- Staff are sent daily wellbeing tips from the counselling team as well as opportunities for yoga, meditation and mindfulness.
- Students have access to well-being hub this is a self-help hub where they can search for common questions and contact the counselling service directly.
- Students and Staff can self-refer and peer refer if they have concerns using a QR code which puts them directly in contact with a counsellor.
- Our behaviour policy which includes guidance on expectations, rewards and sanctions is fully understood and followed by all staff
- We regularly monitor attendance, support pupils returning to school after absence and take the necessary actions to prevent prolonged unauthorised absence
- Relevant clinic staff are trained to support medical needs. We have a medical policy in place and children are supported by care plans where necessary
- Pupils views are sought throughout the school and its various committees

What support do we have for you as a parent of child with SEND?

- The class teacher is regularly available to discuss your child's progress or any concerns you may have and to share information about what is working well at home and school so similar strategies can be used.
- The SENCO is available to meet with you to discuss your child's progress or any concerns/worries you may have.
- All information from outside professionals will be discussed with you with the person involved directly, or where this is not possible, in a report.
- Homework will be adjusted as needed to your child's individual needs.
- A home/school contact book or a dedicated Microsoft Teams page will be set up for you to be able to communicate with the teacher or LSA. These modes may be used to support communication with you, when this has been agreed to be useful for you and your child.

How is GEMS Cambridge International School Abu Dhabi accessible to children with SEND?

The Admissions Team are responsible for the control of admissions to CIA this includes children with SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities). Children with SEND are admitted to school following a meeting with the SENCO where needs and provision available provision is discussed.

We have a site that is accessible to students with physical needs. On admission a risk assessment and emergency evacuation plan is put in place for the students.

The building is accessible to children with physical disability via ramps. The school has a lift to reach the first floor and evacuation chairs if necessary. There are specially equipped disabled toilets on each floor of the school building.

- Staff ratios and appropriately trained staff available as required.
- We ensure that equipment used is accessible to all children regardless of their needs.
- We endeavour to make all activities accessible for all and take steps to ensure children with SEND are not treated less favourably than other pupils.
- After school provision is accessible to all children including those with SEND.
- Extra curricular activities are accessible for children with SEND.
- Fire evacuation procedures include children with SEND

How will we support your child when they are leaving this school? OR moving on to another class?

We recognise that transitions can be difficult for a child with SEND and take steps to ensure that any transition is as smooth as possible.

- If your child is moving to another school:
 - We will contact the school SENCO and ensure he/she knows about any special arrangements or support that need to be made for your child.
 - We will make sure that all records about your child are passed on as soon as possible.
- When moving classes in school:
 - Information will be passed on to the new class teacher IN ADVANCE and in most cases, a planning meeting will take place with the new teacher. All ILP/IEP's will be shared with the new teacher.
 - If necessary your child will be helped by a transition booklet to support them in understanding moving on.
- In Year 6:
 - The Year 6 transition leader will work with the Year 7 Head of Year and discuss the specific needs of your child with the SENCO.
 - All children will go through a transition programme. This programme is modified for SEND students to ensure seamless transition into the upper school.
 - Your child will do focused learning about aspects of transition to support their understanding of the changes ahead.
 - Your child will visit their new classes on several occasions and in some cases take part in Secondary lessons.

We recognise that transitions can be difficult for a child with SEND and take steps to ensure that any transition is as smooth as possible

How can I be involved in supporting my child?

- Attending parent's evenings
- Ensuring your child has regular eyesight and hearing checks
- Helping them to complete their homework
- Ensuring your child gets to school on time and will all the appropriate equipment
- Talking to the class teacher when you have any concerns

- Providing lots of opportunities to have conversations with your child
- Read with your child regularly at home
- Practice number skills

Teachers are more than happy to share any ideas of how you can support your child's learning at home.

How can I access support for myself and my family?

By contacting Head of Student Support Sarah Oliver Browning who can put you in touch with relevant group, centres or professional therapists.

Who can I contact for further information or if I have a complaint about the SEN provision in this school?

Mrs Sarah Oliver Browning – SENCO; by appointment

Mr Hazel Govender – Principal, by appointment

Mr James Hyland – Vice Principal, by appointment

This information is written in association with and should be read in conjunction with other relevant documents including:

- SEN Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- School Evaluation and Development Plans
- Health & Safety Policy
- Fire Evacuation Procedures
- Transition Policy
- Behaviour Policy

Appendix to SEN Information Report in the light of COVID-19

This is an appendix to the SEND Information Report, setting out the arrangements in place to support our children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Since the situation in which we find ourselves is fast-moving; this report is based on current information available and is subject to change.

What are the entitlements of children and young people with SEN during the COVID-19 Pandemic?

For our children with complex needs, a risk assessment has been carried out to ensure their needs are safely met within in the educational environment.

Not all children with IEPs will have 'complex needs' whether or not a risk assessment was necessary has been determined by the school.

All children on Wave 3 or Medical register at GEMS Cambridge International School have had a risk assessment undertaken.

These risk assessments take into account:

- the potential health risks to the individual from COVID-19, bearing in mind any underlying health conditions. This will be on an individual basis and with advice from an appropriate health professional where required
- the ability of the individual's parents or home to ensure their health and care needs can be met safely, should the child need to self-isolate
- the potential impact to the individual's wellbeing of changes to routine or the way in which provision is delivered
- the views of parents and children will be considered in determining risk to the children

What are the entitlements of children and young people with SEN when self-isolating, or if school closes, due to Coronavirus?

During isolation school will endeavour to provide as a full a curriculum as possible for your child, on line. The range of activities on offer will be as fully in line with a child's IEP provision as possible.

All children can access remote learning via the internet: Primary via Seesaw and Secondary via Microsoft Teams.

All Wave 3 children, **in addition**, will have paper based work sent home that is provided by SENCo/SEN TA/Class Teacher if requested by the Parents.

Some SEN children who struggle to access their class based work without additional adult support will have paper based work provided by SENCo/SEN Intervention TAs. And video supported activities.

All children on the SEN register have been sent a letter signposting parents to SEN Resources.

All families with children who attend GEMS CIA and have an IEP plan will be contacted on a daily basis by the Student Support Team. This is to check that families can access appropriate help and advice during the self-isolation period and to ensure that any risks to a child or young person's health, well-being or safety if they are unable to receive a particular provision or intervention during isolation, are addressed.

If a child is isolating at home and requires direct therapy, it is not possible for this to be delivered in the home setting. It may, however, be possible for:

- A speech and language therapist to deliver sessions via video link or phone call
- An occupational therapist video linking to a child's home and modelling exercises that the parents could do with their child
- Advisory teachers from Inclusion support to hold a consultation with you via phone call

Please contact school if you have any enquiries about accessing any additional provision for your child or if you have any general queries about delivering home learning to your SEN child.

Please email the SENCo, Sarah Oliver Browning, direct at s.oliverbrowni_cia@gemsedu.com

How can I help my child cope with having to remain at home?

We understand that this is a significant change for many families. Please try to establish a home routine and give yourself and your children time to adjust to this new routine. Do not place too much pressure on yourself or your child to complete school work. Maintaining positive mental health and emotional well-being is very important.

What plans will be made for my child to re-integrate back into school after isolation?

We know that any changes to routine or transitions for many of our children with SEN can be stressful and needs to be well planned and should not be introduced abruptly. We understand that reintegration back in to school is going to be made even more challenging following a period. Furthermore, we know that children's reactions to returning to school will vary greatly and some children will need much more additional support.

As such, our aim will be to support transition and re-integration by working closely with you as parents/carers. Please contact school to discuss any additional measures that may need to be put in place.

Review

This addendum to the SEN information report will be reviewed in light of new ADEK/ SEHA guidance, and significant changes, as and when published.

If your child is moving child to another school:

- We will contact the school SENCO and ensure he/she knows about any special arrangements or support that need to be made for your child.
 - We will make sure that all records about your child are passed on as soon as possible.
- When moving classes in school:
 - Information will be passed on to the new class teacher IN ADVANCE and in most cases, a planning meeting will take place with the new teacher. All IEP will be shared with the new teacher.
 - If your child would be helped by a book to support them understand moving on then it will be made for them.
- In Year 6:
 - The AHT Inclusion will attend the Primary Transition Day to discuss the specific needs of your child with the SENCO of their secondary school, and the specialist session for students with an ASD, as appropriate.
 - Your child will do focused learning about aspects of transition to support their understanding of the changes ahead.
 - Where possible your child will visit their new school on several occasions and in some cases staff from the new school will visit your child in this school.