



# AISL

American International  
School of Lagos

**STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES  
PARENT GUIDE**

# GUIDING STATEMENTS



## MISSION

AISL provides exceptional learning experiences within a global community where all voices count. We spark the inspiration in students so that they can joyously soar on their own paths of learning, growing, leading, and contributing as world citizens.

## VISION

Empowering our community of learners to create a just and sustainable world.

## CORE VALUES

### Respect

We are considerate of ourselves and others in order to foster an inclusive and equitable environment.

### Empathy

We honor our diversity, treat one another with kindness, and demonstrate compassion through service.

### Responsibility

We are accountable for ourselves, others, and our community.

### Integrity

We act morally, tell the truth, and feel good about what we do.

### Courage

We take on life's challenges with resilience and are confident in mind and spirit.



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# 1. STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

AISL is a private, secular American school in Lagos, Nigeria. It is a responsibly inclusive school which seeks to serve students with a variety of learning needs. The purpose of AISL Student Support Services is to provide both excellence and equity in inclusive services.

Responsible inclusion at AISL is defined as being included and participating in the school community using one's abilities in day-to-day activities. Responsible inclusion is being a part of what everyone else is doing, and being welcomed and embraced as a member who belongs. Students with learning diversity, English language needs, and social-emotional needs are supported by the school to make this belonging and participation occur. Responsible inclusion is being accountable to make this “inclusion” happen within the resources available to the school and within the abilities of the student(s).

Inclusion is facilitated in a culture of collaboration, mutual respect, support, and problem-solving involving the whole school community. AISL utilizes research-based best practices and programs to help facilitate responsible inclusion. Responsible inclusion also means ensuring admissions policies that enable AISL to responsibly include students wherein support is available in the school and the wider Lagos community.

The AISL Student Support Services is composed of four essential components: Learning Support, English as an Additional Language (EAL), School Counseling, and Medical Services.



## 2. PROGRAM SERVICES

At AISL we use a tiered approach to providing support. The first tier of support comes from rigorous, highly effective classroom instruction. The second tier of support comes from the classroom teacher with consultation from SSS and other invested stakeholders. The third tier of support is direct service from SSS in one of the programs listed below. Placement in the second or third tier is informed by progress monitoring data and the Child-Focus Team (CFT). The LIFT program is the fourth tier of support available at AISL.

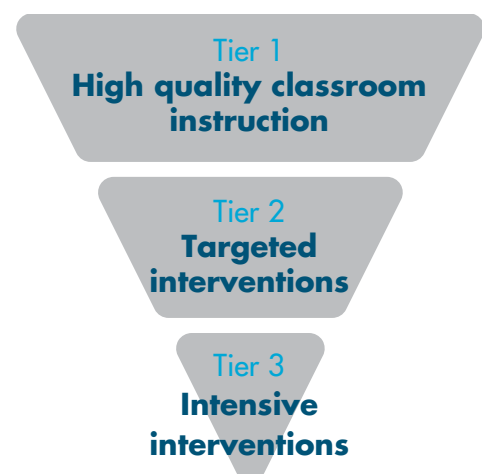
At AISL we provide the following services as an integral part of the overall commitment to inclusion and diversity, recognizing that a diverse and inclusive school provides an environment that is best for all learners. The definitions used by AISL are guided by Next Frontier Inclusion, an organization that supports inclusive education in international schools.

## 2. PROGRAM SERVICES

### 2.1 LEARNING SUPPORT (LS)

Learning Support (LS) at AISL is defined as support for students with learning gaps and learning disabilities which is provided by trained professionals in the delivery of consultative support, accommodations, small group instruction, or in-class support. This level of support is sometimes referred to as Tier 3 support, in reference to the model of tiered systems of support.

Student support models that use tiered systems focus on providing rigorous, highly-effective education at the first tier to meet the needs of all students in the classroom. Tiered models of support move away from what has come to be called the “medical model” and seeks to provide early intervention with multiple tiers or layers of support. It begins at the first tier in the classroom with high quality, classroom instruction. The second tier uses standards-aligned assessments to identify early strugglers and provides targeted interventions. Data is analyzed by a team of classroom teachers to assess if the students are responding to the intervention provided. If not, then changes are made. If evidence suggests that more intensive interventions are needed, the student is provided with the next tier, or layer, of support, providing three tiers of support to move the student toward success.



## 2. PROGRAM SERVICES

### 2.1 LEARNING SUPPORT (LS) - CONT'D.

The dimensions of Learning Support include:

- Consultative support from a learning support specialist
- Monitoring student performance
- Literacy support (reading, writing, speaking and listening)
- Mathematics support
- Pull-out, small group instruction
- Learning Support Center (strategies and skills classes)
- Assistive technology (e.g. voice to text software)
- Push-in collaboration

Students whose learning needs are moderate to severe are considered on an individual basis by the admissions team to determine if a high quality of education can be provided to the student at AISL within the services available.

There are four possible methods of entrance into LS:

1. A student is formally evaluated with an ed. psych. (or equivalent) assessment by a qualified evaluator and the evaluation recommends LS for academic intervention, then the student will be placed into LS services until appropriate progress monitoring data suggests that an exit from the program is the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE).
2. The Child Focus Team (CFT) evaluates the classroom progress monitoring data, along with teacher(s) input, and determines that the student is not responding to academic intervention at a less intensive level.
3. A student's admissions application indicates that they are currently receiving learning support upon application to AISL, even if they do not have formal assessments to support that placement. The default consideration is to trust our global education partners until our data suggests that the student should be exited from SSS.<sup>1</sup>
4. A student's admissions application includes admissions testing that indicates a level of need for immediate support.<sup>2</sup>

1. Some extenuating circumstances may apply (e.g. a student has not had access to education prior to AISL, but is being placed in a grade level Grade 1 or beyond)

2. This type of placement is rare and should be done with caution in order to safeguard to the Least Restrictive Environment. If at all possible, formal evaluation should be suggested prior to this type of placement, or as a condition of acceptance to AISL.

## 2. PROGRAM SERVICES

### 2.2 ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE (EAL)

English as an Additional Language (EAL) focuses on developing the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. EAL supports students in developing English language skills and to meet grade level expectations until students have sufficient proficiency to experience success in the general education classroom.

In Early Childhood through 7th grade, all students with any English proficiency level are supported. Beginning in grade 8, new students must arrive with a composite WIDA score of 2.0 or higher. This is to ensure the sufficient amount of time available to grow in English language acquisition prior to the demands of the Diploma Programme in grades 11 and 12.

AISL is an English language school and all instruction is completed in English. Students with little to no English language skills will receive additional support to bring up their skills and to ensure the full benefits of our academic program. Students are entered into English as an Additional Language (EAL) services by acknowledging that they are completely new to the English language, or by identification through a WIDA (World-class Instructional Design and Assessment) and looking at other available, relevant data. The WIDA assessment evaluates the student's overall ability to speak, listen, read, and write in English.

### Guidelines for Administering and Using WIDA for New Students

When a student is coming from an international school similar to AISL, the following serves as a guideline for the administration of a WIDA:

- ES: If the student has been attending a similar school for  $\leq 2$  years
- MS: If the student has been attending a similar school for  $\leq 3$  years
- HS: If the student has been attending a similar school for  $\leq 2$  years

There are variations in the EAL program per division, which are detailed below:

#### Elementary School

Screening for EAL services is conducted using the WIDA. This data is considered in triangulation with reading scores and teacher input.<sup>3</sup>

Additional measures may be used when requested by the Child-Focus Team (CFT).

The WIDA score for exit/entry for EAL services is a composite score of 4.<sup>4</sup>

Students scoring below a composite 4.0 on the WIDA assessment in addition to teacher (EAL and classroom teachers together) observation and recommendation will be considered for pullout English support in lieu of French or Spanish. After each semester, teachers will analyze student data and decide whether or not students have reached a level of oral English language (speaking and listening) which supports their readiness to begin attending French or Spanish classes.

3. No one data point should trump all others. There must be alignment with at least two of three. The number of years in an English-medium school is not a valid data point, but can be good contextual information.

4. The recommendation to use composite scores comes from WIDA. Jon Nordmeyer states that the composite scores are more valid and reliable measures to indicate academic readiness in English.

## 2. PROGRAM SERVICES

### 2.2 ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE (EAL) - CONT'D.

#### Middle School

Screening for EAL services is conducted using the WIDA. This data is considered in triangulation with EasyCBM, MobyMax, or MAP reading scores and teacher input. Additional measures may be used when requested by the Child-Focus Team (CFT).

The WIDA score for exit/entry for EAL services is a composite score of 4.5<sup>5</sup>

#### High School

Screening for EAL services is conducted using the WIDA. This data is considered in triangulation with EasyCBM or MAP reading scores and teacher input. Additional measures may be used when requested by the Child-Focus Team (CFT).

The WIDA score for exit/entry for EAL services is a composite score of 5.

## 2. PROGRAM SERVICES

### 2.3 COUNSELING

AISL counselors are student advocates who work within the academic, personal/social-emotional, and college/career domains with all stakeholders (students, parents, faculty/staff, and community) to foster an inclusive school environment that promotes students' well-being. Counseling services are comprehensive and flexible in meeting the needs of our diverse student population.

#### ES Counseling

In addition to classroom lessons, the counselor:

- Offers assistance in crisis situations
- Coordinates efforts with other school professionals in order to help students to be successful
- Acts as a consultant and referral source between school, parents, and community
- Assists in the process of admitting and orienting new families to the school
- Delivers parent presentations and/or workshops
- Supports academic difficulties due to personal/social-emotional concerns
- Acculturation/Transition
- Social skills

#### MS/HS Counseling

In addition to classroom lessons, the counselor:

- Supports academic difficulties due to personal/social-emotional concerns
- Course selection
- Acculturation/Transition
- Social skills
- External referrals
- University/Career Advising

5. Fifth graders, by the end of 5th grade, should use the Middle School WIDA score for their guide. Eighth graders, by the end of 8th grade, should use the High School WIDA score for their guide.



## 2. PROGRAM SERVICES

### 2.4 HEALTH SERVICES

AISL has a well-equipped health office that includes space and current equipment and resources to support medical assessment and basic medical care and treatment. Through a partnership with International SOS, the school health office is managed by a full time qualified Medical Doctor and Nurse. The Medical Doctor manages the Health Office and, with the nurse, conducts medical assessments, administer medication (with parent permission), and provide minor medical treatments, including first aid. The health office shall also serve as a health education resource, including providing public health information and health prevention promotion.

## 3. ADMISSIONS

At AISL we believe in being [responsibly inclusive](#). It is the responsibility of the parents to fully disclose all learning and/or social emotional needs to ensure that AISL has the proper support for the student. Unwillingness to properly disclose all known learning and social-emotional needs may be grounds for an immediate discontinuation of the application process or unenrollment from AISL. If the admissions team determines that a student may require additional support for learning, then the admissions process follows a special protocol to determine need. Admission is open to students whom we can support responsibly in our inclusion model. Families and previous schools must provide all records and evaluations upon application for admissions for a review by the Director of Admissions, divisional administration, the Student Support Director, the Superintendent, and others, as needed.

If a student requires additional supports outside of school, (i.e. speech-language therapy, occupational therapy, medical services, counseling, medications, etc.) the parents must demonstrate that these services are available to them in Lagos or have appropriate plans to ensure these supports are maintained in order for admissions to be approved.

Students with diagnosed behavior/emotional disorders and executive functioning needs must demonstrate that their needs are being met and maintained with appropriate external intervention, if needed, that is able to be continued externally while the student is enrolled at AISL.

## 4. EVALUATION AND PLACEMENT

The process for determining services for students with learning, EAL, and social-emotional needs is complex. At AISL, placement decisions, whether they are external from the point of admissions or internal from collected evidence, involve a team who know and advocate for the best placement of the student.

AISL provides an appropriate education for students with mild to moderate academic, EAL, and/or developmental disabilities, as well as some students requiring more intensive support due to lack of opportunity in previous education. Realizing that there are limited resources within the school and within the Lagos community, we can only admit students for whom we have the services and resources available.

## 4. EVALUATION AND PLACEMENT

### 4.1 PSYCHOLOGICAL EVALUATIONS

There are numerous reasons a student may need an Education-Psychological evaluation. Student Support Services are indicative that a student either already has an identified academic/EAL/social-emotional-behavioral need, or the student is not responding to the classroom intervention provided in the general education classroom. An educational-psychological (ed. psych.) assessment can help teams have a better understanding of why a student is failing to fully access the school curriculum and guide them to create programs and accommodations to increase opportunities for success. If a student is not responding to classroom interventions after 1 quarter and has not already undergone an evaluation to understand why he or she is not progressing, then they should be referred for an assessment.

## 5. REFERRALS

At AISL we often rely on valuable community members to help us in serving students' needs. We work with both local and international community service providers who offer reputable services for services we are not able to offer at school, such as, but not limited to, Occupational Therapy, Speech and Language Therapy, Physical Therapy, Mental Health and Behavior Support Therapists, and Educational Psychologists. Internationally, we work with [International Diagnostic Solutions](#). For a local list of providers please contact the Student Support Director.

## 6. LIFT PLACEMENT

The **LIFT (Learning Intensive Focus Tutor)** program is designed to provide support for students with more intensive needs who are not able to access the AISL curriculum without intensive supports. In order to be placed into the LIFT program, appropriate documentation is required to ensure that it is the LRE and that the types of services LIFT provides are appropriate. A team of professionals, known as the Child-Focus Team (CFT), is critical to determining if we can responsibly provide a program for the needs of the student. If the CFT determines that LIFT is the appropriate placement for a responsibly inclusive education, then the parents must agree to the placement or the student will be unenrolled from AISL. In order to remain responsibly inclusive, the LIFT program can only accommodate 1% of the AISL population.<sup>6</sup>

## 6. LIFT PLACEMENT

### 6.1 ELIGIBILITY

Students requiring support from the Student Support Services program are classified according to tiers of need based on service and intensity. A LIFT offers continuous assistance to the student in need of Tier 4 services, beyond our Learning Support Program. The placement of the LIFT in Tier 4 services is to ensure the student's continued enrolment at AISL.

Students enrolled at the Tier 4 level should meet the following criteria:

- Has a specific disability that regularly impacts the students academic and/or social/emotional performance across all multiple areas.
- Has a specific social/emotional disability that regularly impacts both social and academic progress across settings.
- Has a recommendation for full-time one-to-one support from a doctor, psychologist, or other qualified professional.

Academically, in order to qualify for LIFT, the student must be significantly behind the grade level of their same-age peers. Because of developmental differences in K12 instruction, the meaning of "significant" can vary more for younger students than it does for older students.

6. This does not mean that this dismissal is mandatory in the event of a full program. AISL may pursue other options until a spot becomes available.

## 6. LIFT PLACEMENT

### 6.2 LIFT SERVICES PROVIDED

As a part of this support the following services are provided:

- Increased communication -- the case manager will provide the parents weekly updates about the student's work, progress, and strategies.
- Planning - the LIFT will receive ongoing teacher plans so appropriate preparations can be made.
- Progress review -- the LIFT and case manager will meet weekly to discuss the student's progress and strategies to increase success and independence.
- Professional Learning - The LIFT will meet bimonthly with the SSS Director to review progress, and receive feedback and training.
- Exit plan - an exit plan will be created and reviewed regularly so all team members are clear about the plan to independence.

## 6. LIFT PLACEMENT

### 6.3 LIFT SELECTION AND FEES

- LIFT services are funded by the parent(s)/guardians.
- LIFT services require a separate fee and an additional contract which are managed by the SSS Director and the Business Office Manager. The financial and contractual plans for the Fees and Lift Selection are presented at the time of confirmation of services.
- LIFT candidates are interviewed and hired and supervised by the SSS Director and Human Resources.
- Fees are billed by the billing department at AISL and are paid by semester.
- For **2022-2023** the fee is \$7800 per year, or \$3900 per semester.

## 7. GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ACRONYMS

**AISL:** American International School of Lagos

**CFT:** Child-Focus Team

**EAL:** English as an Additional Language

**EBP:** Evidence-Based Practices

**ELL:** English Language Learner

**LIFT:** Learning Intensive Focus Tutor -- Special Education program for students with more intensive needs.

**LRE:** Least Restrictive Environment

**LS:** Learning Support

**MAP:** Measures of Academic Progress -- a standardized, normed assessment aligned with the Common Core State Standards

**NWEA:** Northwest Evaluation Association -- the organization that produces the MAP test.

**OT:** Occupational Therapy / Occupational Therapist

**SLP:** Speech-Language Pathologist

**SLT:** Speech-Language Therapy

**SSS:** Student Support Services

**WIDA:** World-Class Instructional Design Assessment -- the instrument used to assess a student's overall language acquisition in English.



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