PINEWOOD - THE AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF THESSALONIKI, GREECE

Learning Support Services - Procedures and Protocols

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Table of Contents

Introduction

The purpose of this document

This policy, procedures and guidelines document is intended for faculty, staff and all stakeholders of Pinewood American International School of Thessaloniki. Its purpose is to outline the policies and procedures that govern the granting of Learning Support Services (LSS) for students with any type of disability in Pinewood.

This document has been developed by the school's Learning Support Coordinator, and advice of the school's psychologist, teachers, parents, students and all stakeholders was also sought and feedback has been incorporated. The procedures and guidelines are also informed by national and international good practices and are subject to regular review[1].

Pinewood is committed to ensuring, as far as possible and within the framework of current legislative requirements, that students with disabilities have equal access to and participation in all academic and learning procedures.

Learning Support statement

Pinewood offers learning support for students with mild to moderate special educational needs (see Learning Support under School Programs and Services). Pinewood values learning diversity. However, the school may not be able to accommodate all needs beyond the regular curricular, facilities, and staff capacity without assistance from outside professional services. Any such needs, as determined by the school's Student Services Department, will incur additional costs to be covered by the family.

Pinewood is accredited by the IBO to offer the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program and is also a candidate school for the IB Primary Years Program (PYP) and IB Middle Years Program (MYP). In line with the IB's commitment to inclusive education, students are considered in terms of their strengths. The IB has moved away from the use of deficit labels to identify students and instead considers the areas of challenge that a student may experience. Therefore, Pinewood supports the following IB principles of inclusive education where:

- education for all is considered a human right;
- education is enhanced by the creation of affirmative, responsive environments that promote a sense of belonging, safety, self-worth and whole growth for every student every educator is an educator of all students;
- learning is considered from a strength-based perspective;

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[1] Information retrieved from U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services (2018). *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.* *https://sites.ed.gov/idea/*

- learning diversity is valued as a rich resource for building inclusive communities;
- all learners belong and experience equal opportunities to participate and engage in quality learning;
- full potential is unlocked through connecting with, and building on, previous knowledge;
- assessment provides all learners with opportunities to demonstrate their learning, which is rewarded and celebrated multilingualism is recognized as a fact, a right and a resource;
- all students in the school community fully participate in an IB education and are empowered to exercise their rights and accept their responsibilities as citizens;
- all students in the school community have a voice and are listened to so that their input and insights are taken into account;
- all students in the school community develop the IB learner profile attributes and develop into inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect;
- diversity is understood to include all members of a community;
- all students experience success as a key component of learning.

Removing barriers to learning

Principles of the LSS

The Learning Support Services (LSS) is organised to address academic, behavioural/emotional and/or other issues which may interfere with a student's ability to obtain a holistic education and is part of the Student Services (SS) department. There are many instances when a student may require the assistance of the LSS. The primary goal of the Procedures and Protocols document is to provide an avenue for SS and has been divided into sections designed to allow team members and school administrators to access procedures and processes related to serving the needs of the students.

The LSS provides support to both students experiencing academic and learning difficulties and their teachers in a regular educational setting. Through collaboration, the LSS designs and provides interventions to address academic issues in order to improve student performance for those who have been identified with a L.D. and/or disability and for those students who struggle academically.

Pinewood's LSS is committed to the highest standard of professional ethics and continuing quality improvement. Therefore, these procedures and processes are designed to ensure the proper use of valid data as a basis for the delivery of academic services.

The principles that guide LSS actions include:
- Address teaching and learning issues early to avoid escalation of difficulties or struggles;
- Regular active support and assistance is provided to parents and teachers;

- Parents and students will be provided with appropriate procedural safeguards.

The referral of a student to the LSS is for the purpose of making a concerted effort to meet each student's varied and individual needs in the least restrictive environment. Intervention is student outcome-based. Key techniques and methodologies are implemented and evaluated by the team members before further interventions are employed. Recommendations are based upon assessments that are free of personal, cultural, racial, gender, socioeconomic and professional bias.

Stakeholders

The primary role of the LSS is to empower teachers, parents and students with the ability to address academic concerns that interfere with the student's academic, social, emotional and general well-being. Additionally, they commit to creating affirmative and responsive environments. The LSS performs the following duties (but is not limited to):

- Manage referral processes for special education assessments;
- Manage school-based academic inclusive access arrangements and reasonable adjustment programs;
- Provide parents linkage to local community resources and/or outside services and resources;
- At the request of the parents, provide diagnostic assessment services;
- Develop and/or manage school-based and student-centred interventions;
- Act as a liaison with military agencies in the transitional support of military dependent children;
- Provide school administrators and staff with annual feedback on the efficiency, effectiveness and potential needs impacting LSS support and student-centred learning;
- Provide case management of IILPs and on-going documentation relative to referral actions, interventions and other LSS actions that follow a student from year to year and school to school.

Policy Procedures and Processes

Learning Support Planning

Step 1: Recognition

Although all students have different learning needs, the recognition of a discrepancy in the student's academic ability and his or her age and grade level by their teacher may signal the need for additional academic support.

During this phase, the class teacher informs the LSCo, administration and/ or the parents or guardians. The teacher should provide examples of the student's work and/or anecdotal classroom notes regarding the student's needs. The class teacher should continue to collect student work samples and keep assessment data relevant to the student's unique needs. The student's parents/guardians should be kept informed of any changes in the student's progress. If the class teacher, after a specific period of time (2-4 weeks), determines

the problem cannot be controlled with classroom interventions, then the class teacher should notify the parents/guardians they will be asking for outside help from the LSS.

Step 2: In-School Intervention

During this phase, it is important for the class teacher to call a meeting with the parents or guardians. The teacher should provide examples of the student's work and/or anecdotal classroom notes regarding the student's needs. Pre-referral intervention is to identify, develop, and implement alternative education strategies for students who have identified difficulties in the classroom before the student is formally referred to the LSS. The class teacher provides background information regarding the problem exhibited by the student to the LSS and the LSCo and/or LS works along with the class teacher to develop possible solutions. It is advised that a formal and systematic pre-referral process called Response To Intervention (RTI) is used at this point[2]. Whether the class teacher decides to use informal intervention and differentiation methods or the more formal RTI process, the intent must be to provide interventions that help the student achieve success without a formal referral to the LS. The implementation should last 30 days. However, if these interventions do not improve the student's performance, then the student will be referred to the LSCo for an assessment to determine possible eligibility for learning support services.

Step 3: Referral Process for LSS

If, after interventions in the class, the student continues to experience difficulties, the class teacher may refer the child for an academic evaluation. Referrals for determination of eligibility for LSS may be initiated by:

- Class/subject teacher;
- Child's parent(s) or legal guardian(s).

The teachers are required to provide the following documentation to the LSS:

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[2] RTI is a model designed to address the needs of all children through a continuum of services, which can include:
- High-quality instruction and tiered evidence-based or practice-based intervention strategies aligned with individual student needs
- Frequent monitoring of progress to make results-based academic or behavioral decisions
- Application of child response data to important educational decisions (such as those regarding placement, intervention, curriculum and instructional goals and methodologies).

RTI provides three levels of intervention for students who are experiencing difficulties. Generally, the first level (referred to as Tier 1) is focused on utilizing high-quality general education instruction in the core curriculum with all students. The second level (or Tier 2) provides targeted group instruction to improve performance. If performance does not improve in the second level, then students are moved to the third level (Tier 3) which consists of intensive, individualized interventions within the classroom and during pull out sessions.

- Intervention Records
- Parent/Guardian Learning Support Consent Form
- Work Samples
- Teacher Referral Form

The official referral begins the formal process of determining eligibility for LSS. Students referred for LSS receive a non-discriminatory evaluation. The evaluation will take place within 2 weeks of the referral date. The evaluation is to be conducted by the LSCo and/or LS who is qualified to conduct evaluations as well as informal observations. Most students will receive an informal evaluation that will measure their academic level based on curriculum and standards. Assessments will not be biased in regard to race, culture, language, or disability.

Step 4: Creation and Implementation of 4-Tier Academic Support Plan

Within 30 days of the completion of the evaluation, the support team will meet to develop an intervention plan, a timeframe for the intervention and to determine eligibility for LS services. A student is considered eligible for LSS if the student (1) has a LD and/or disability which negatively impacts his/her educational performance, and (2) needs learning support in order for them to gain educational support.

There are multiple reasons why a student may not qualify for LS services. However, these students may need extra support. In these situations, the school will provide the team-generated academic support assistance to these students.

If the student after 6-8 weeks of the intervention is progressing as expected, then support will continue until the student has progressed to grade level. If after 6-8 weeks, the student is not progressing as expected then the student may be eligible for LS services. A formal request will be made to the parents to discuss either the student's progress or the need for a formal psychoeducational assessment[3] to be conducted.

Step 5: Creation, Implementation and Evaluation of IILP

An IILP will be drafted for the student based on the psychoeducational report provided to the LSS. The initial IILP meeting is formed for the purpose of 1) discussing, reviewing and agreeing on the IILP; 2) overseeing the implementation of the plan; 3) evaluating the effectiveness of the plan annually; 4) developing future plans as needed. The IILP team can also meet as needed when unique issues (ie., failing grades) present themselves during the academic year. The IILP will include inclusive access arrangements and reasonable adjustments

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[3] The Pinewood Optimal Learning and Psychoeducational Assessment Center can provide psycho-educational testing services that can determine the strengths and challenges of each student, identify the learning style and create an individualised report and plan. The results of these assessments will be used to create a profile for the student, as well as develop an individualised learning plan that will enable them to perform at an optimal academic level.

and goals specifically tailored to the needs of each student. The support system that will be created will be based on the 4-Tier Academic Support Model.

The IILP team can be composed of, but is not limited to, the following:

- The **parent(s) or legal guardian(s)** of the student;
- **Teacher(s)** of the student;
- **The learning support coordinator;**
- **The learning specialist;**
- **The school psychologist(s);**
- **The principal;**
- **The student**, when appropriate;
- **Other individuals asked to attend at the discretion of the school or the parent** who have knowledge or special expertise regarding the student.

Once the IILP is developed and signed, it is the responsibility of the entire IILP team to ensure that the IILP is implemented. The IILP team may meet as frequently as needed to discuss the implementation of the IILP. The IILP document is an ongoing document and can be altered during the school term if needed. The IILP goals and benchmarks provide the objectives for the education of the student and describe what services will be provided by the school to achieve those objectives. It must be understood that the school is not required to meet all the goals within the school term.

At the end of each year, the IILP team is required to meet for the dual purpose of evaluating the implementation of the current IILP and developing the next annual IILP. The evaluation will focus on goal attainment, based on assessment data, what services should be provided in the upcoming school year. While the IILP is reviewed and possibly edited each year, at a minimum, the IILP team is to determine if formal evaluation is required every three years. The IILP team can ask that formal evaluations be conducted more frequently if needed.

Support Systems

LSS Support Systems & Classification of Students Receiving Additional Academic Support
Tier I: In-class Inclusive Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments & Consultations
- Tier I refers to individualised differentiated quality teaching in the regular classroom for the support of students with transient or mild learning difficulties.

- Tier I support occurs in the classroom and it includes differentiated instructional teaching techniques and methods. Students also work in small groups in the classroom as the teacher, elementary aide, and/or LSA uses differentiated instruction to target different skill levels and learning styles. Students might also consult with the LSCo weekly or bi-weekly regarding their progress and evolving needs. Class teachers are responsible for implementing all inclusive access arrangements and reasonable adjustments.
- Formal communication with parents will take place at the beginning and the end of the school year, when their IILP will be reviewed, progress will be discussed, and new goals will be set. In addition, communication between the professionals of the LSS is continuous and ongoing throughout the year via phone calls or emails as often as necessary.
- The LSCo can collaborate and meet with the parents and tutors ensuring that the differentiated learning provided to the students at school is continued at home. Exam inclusive access arrangements and reasonable adjustments are also coordinated, and the students are monitored and supported by the LSS during those times.

Tier II: Group level support
- Tier II consists of all Tier I services as well as individualised interventions for students barely not meeting grade-level academic expectations, or struggling students who need additional support. It includes increased collaboration among the LSCo/ LS and other stakeholders in order to facilitate teachers in making adjustments to instruction in response to student needs.
- Small groups (up to 4 students) pull out and push in sessions (4 weekly sessions for elementary and 3 weekly sessions for secondary) are also conducted by the LSCo/ LS. These sessions will take place during a specific block of time and will occur weekly. During these sessions, students will work on areas of identified weaknesses on grade level material.
- Furthermore, Tier II will function as a transitional support level, for students receiving Tier III and Tier IV support, prior to their release from the LS program. Tier II support will ensure the student's smooth transition, whilst building their skills to follow the grade-level curriculum independently.
- Placement for each group will be based on the needs, strengths and abilities of students at each grade level. Group placement will take place based on parental consent and will be subject to change based on the dynamics of each group.
- Additionally, the LSCo/LS checks up on their academic, behavioral, social and emotional progress monthly and creates progress reports bi-yearly. The LSCo/LS collaborates and frequently meets with parents and tutors ensuring that the differentiated learning provided to the students at school is continued at home. Exam inclusive access arrangements and reasonable adjustments are also coordinated for those with a psycho-educational assessment and the students are monitored and supported by the LS services during those times.

Tier III: Grade level support

- Tier III consists of all Tier II services as well as individualized interventions for students barely not meeting grade-level academic expectations, or struggling students who need additional support. It includes increased collaboration among the LSCo/ LS and other stakeholders in order to facilitate teachers in making adjustments to instruction in response to student needs. One on one pull out and push in sessions (3 weekly sessions) are also conducted by the LSCo/ LS. These sessions will take place during a specific block of time and will occur weekly. During those sessions, students will work on areas of identified weakness on grade level material.

- Additionally, the LSCo checks up on their academic, behavioral, social and emotional progress monthly and creates progress reports bi-yearly. The LSCo collaborates and frequently meets with parents and tutors ensuring that the differentiated learning provided to the students at school is continued at home. Exam inclusive access arrangements and reasonable adjustments are also coordinated, and the students are monitored and supported by the LSCo services during those times.

Tier IV: Individualised Curriculum Interventions

- Tier IV support provides all Tier III services as well as research-supported, individualized, intensive instructional intervention, and more frequent progress monitoring for students. Specifically, students receive 4 weekly sessions with the LSCo/ LS and individualized curriculums are designed and implemented. The educational environment is thus effectively tailored to their level and abilities, focusing and addressing their strengths, needs and academic requirements. The LSCo/ LS collaborates and frequently meets with parents and tutors ensuring that the differentiated learning provided to the students at school is continued at home. Exam inclusive access arrangements and reasonable adjustments are also coordinated, and the students are monitored and supported by the LSCo services during those times.

- Tier IV support will also be required to have a psychoeducational assessment completed. Additionally, an IILP will be drafted for them by the LS, which will include their yearly individual goals and inclusive access arrangements and reasonable adjustments.

Psychoeducational assessments

The Pinewood Optimal Learning and Psychoeducational Assessment Center can provide psycho-educational testing services to students located in Thessaloniki, Greece. Diagnostic assessments and evaluations can be defined as a collection of assessments and tests that are conducted in order to determine a child's strengths, weaknesses, learning style, learning needs. The results of these assessments can be used to create a profile for the child, as well as develop an individualized learning plan that will enable them to perform at an optimal academic level. The type of evaluations range depending on the needs, situation, age, and linguistic background of each child.

The Standardized Assessment that is offered in Pinewood, the American International School of Thessaloniki includes the following assessments:

- Wechsler Intelligence Scale - Fifth Edition (WISC-V): The WISC-V is a cognitive ability measure, which provides the School Psychologists working with children with information on the intellectual performance of a child, the cognitive processing strengths and weaknesses and learning difficulties/ disorders. In the Psychoeducational Report, the results presented will focus on the Verbal Comprehension, Visual Spatial ability, Working Memory and Processing Speed. The Full-Scale Intelligence Quotient will not be included.
- Wechsler Individual Achievement Test - Third Edition (WIAT-III): The WIAT-III is a standardized measurement of the academic strengths and weaknesses of a student. It gives information regarding the eligibility for educational services, placement and/or specific inclusive access arrangements and reasonable adjustments that should be provided. Through this test, our team will be able to design instructional objectives and plan interventions for each student.
- Raven's Progressive Matrices: The Raven's Progressive Matrices provides an assessment of nonverbal cognitive ability and will be administered to students whose English level is not yet age-appropriate. Through this assessment our team will evaluate the student's ability to make sense and meaning out of complex or confusing data; the ability to perceive new patterns and relationships, and to forge constructs which make it easy to handle complexity.
- Resiliency Scales for Children and Adolescents: The Resiliency Scales for Children and Adolescents provide information on the emotional strengths and vulnerabilities of the students, such as optimism, adaptability, tolerance, support and sensitivity, to name a few.
- Sensory Profile 2: The Sensory Profile 2 provides you with standardized evaluation of a child's sensory processing patterns in the context of home, school, and community-based activities. These significantly revised questionnaires evaluate a child's unique sensory processing patterns from a position of strengths, providing deeper insight to help you customize the next steps of intervention. The forms are completed by caregivers and teachers, who are in the strongest position to observe the child's response to sensory interactions that occur throughout the day.
- Childhood Autism Rating Scales 2 (CARS 2): The CARS 2 is a standardized assessment, measuring the ability of children from 2 years old and older, to relate to people, to respond visually and communicate verbally, to adapt to changes and stressful situation, as well as their nonverbal communication, emotional expression and regulation of emotions.

Confidentiality

Pinewood LS Department communicates its policies and procedures at the beginning of the year to all teachers and stakeholders, as well as every time sensitive and confidential information needs to be shared. All

information is held in digital form, in separate folders for every child, and according to their division, whether they are in the PYP or MYP. The LS Department and the Leadership Team have access to this information.

The information shared with teachers is limited to all that is relevant to providing an optimal learning environment for each specific child. Information that is considered strictly confidential is only accessible by the LS Coordinator and the Leadership Team.

No information is released by the school to any external party without written permission from the parent/guardian of the student. When information needs to be communicated and coordinated during transition stages or across divisions, it is done so following the guidelines and principles of our confidentiality principles.

IB Diploma procedures

a. <u>Identification of Students with Assessment Access Requirements</u>

Students with assessment access requirements identified prior to their enrolment in the programme, should inform the IB Diploma Program Coordinator (IBDPC) as early as possible in the application process and provide supporting documentation. In the case of students with a known learning disorder that will require a student to have inclusive education arrangements, the appropriate box should be checked on the AC IBDP application form. If supporting documentation stating an official diagnosis (such as psychoeducational assessment reports) are outdated and need to be renewed or are incomplete given what is requested by the IBO, then parents and students will be advised to renew, or seek additional documentation. This could either be done within the school with the responsibility of the Learning Support Specialists and the School's Psychologists, or by referral to a qualified specialist in the community. The Learning Support Coordinator, when reviewing applications (to check compatibility of subject choices with university applications and to note student-specific health or assessment access requirements) will call for a meeting between IBDPC, Learning Support Coordinator, school's psychologists, parents and possibly the student to gain insight into the specific learning/assessment difficulties and to inform faculty accordingly.

Students that face learning, behavioral or emotional difficulties after their registration to AC IBDP are referred to the school's psychologists. Diagnosis can be done within the school or by referral to a specialist in the community or in combination of both.

The formal diagnosis must be based on the candidate's performance on nationally standardized psychological tests (where available and published, recent editions of standardized tests should be employed) and include results as standard scores.

Assessment access requirements that can be accommodated within the programme are limited to Learning Difficulties and disabilities secondary to mental health problems (e.g., depression, anxiety). Other assessment access requirements, including motor disabilities or chronic health problems, need to be assessed on a case

by-case basis.

b. Inclusive Education Arrangements

Inclusive education arrangements comprise academic arrangements, which pertain to the educational process, and testing/ exam inclusive access arrangements and reasonable adjustments. When a student is formally diagnosed with learning, behavioural or emotional difficulties, the school's psychologists are responsible for calling a meeting (if/when advisable) between the IBDPC and the subject teachers to discuss the particular difficulties faced by the student and to suggest effective academic arrangements or examination inclusive access arrangements and reasonable adjustments. Furthermore, it is not mandatory to test in all areas.

Academic Arrangements could include such arrangements as preferential seating in the classroom, individual guidance by the teacher, supplemental material (e.g., notes, diagrams), use of technology, etc. Further, academic arrangements also include consultation with the Learning Support Coordinator, who meets regularly with the student for individual advising. Further, in the case of students with assessment access requirements who are residing in the AC dormitory, staff will be informed in order to provide special arrangements in the dormitory.

At the end of each term, a meeting is arranged with the participation of the IBDPC, Learning Support Coordinator, the school's psychologists, and the subject teachers. Parents and students are notified to attend if willing. The purpose of the meeting is to review the individual progress of students with assessment access requirements.

Inclusive Assessment Arrangements: are subject to provisions of the IBO handbook for candidates with assessment access requirements. They also depend on the functional limitations presented by the students. For in-school daily assessment purposes such as term tests, they could include extra time (up to 50%), breaks, the use of a scribe or a reader, use of a word processor with or without a spell checker, etc. The school will make an effort to grant these inclusive access arrangements and reasonable adjustments whenever possible but depending on the task, availability of teachers on duty, invigilators, etc. For the IBDP final examination, inclusive assessment arrangements are formally requested (by completion of the D1 form) and supported with the requested, relevant documentation in order to receive approval by the IBO. Before submission of this form, parents are requested to provide their written consent. Exam inclusive access arrangements and reasonable adjustments for formal school examinations, i.e., midterms and finals, are provided in accordance with the inclusive access arrangements and reasonable adjustments approved (or requested) for the final IBO examination. All invigilators are responsible for understanding and correctly applying inclusive assessment

arrangements applicable to in-school or the final IBDP examinations.

Inclusive practices

The development of inclusion practices has been an ongoing and reflective journey, one that was understood to be on-going. For this reason, "inclusion" was always a feature of the school development process and spearheaded by the LS Department and shared throughout the community. The school had been successful in its application for accreditations and for promoting inclusion, equity, diversity and justice. Pinewood commits to continuously strengthening inclusive practices and supporting teachers, parents, students, and all other stakeholders, in raising awareness and promoting inclusion, by supporting teachers and parents to meet the needs of all students. Pinewood evaluates its inclusive practices on a yearly basis and has been creating long-term strategy planning every three years, in order to prompt reflection and inquiry into the school's needs.

Action	Who is responsible?	To whom is it addressed?
● Plan small, manageable steps to support the school in developing strong inclusive practices. ● Define inclusion and identify which policies should be developed, who should be involved, and how success would be measured.	● Student Services ● Leadership Team	● Teachers
● Plan and conduct seminars, webinars and workshops to spread awareness and support the development of inclusive practices.	● Student Services	● Parents

● Plan and conduct seminars, webinars and workshops to spread awareness and support the development of inclusive practices. ● Plan, coordinate and implement a school wide advisory program which will spread awareness and support the development of inclusion to the entire student body. ● The creation of a differentiated, adjusted and modified learning environment to fit the strengths, needs and weaknesses of each student.	● Learning Support Services ● Student Services ● Teachers	● Students

Inclusive Learning

Learning needs

● Dyscalculia: Despite the provision of appropriate learning opportunities, students with dyscalculia will experience persistent challenges when dealing with numbers. Dyscalculia is to mathematics what dyslexia is to literacy: it is the general term used to describe a specific learning difficulty in mathematics. Significant difficulties will vary from student to student so that some will be able to multiply but not divide and vice versa, and others may be able to do maths at a high level but find it difficult to subtract simple numbers. What is experienced as a success one day may appear to have been forgotten the following day. The challenges do not always reflect the student's cognitive abilities and students will display strengths in other areas.

● Dyslexia: Despite the provision of appropriate learning opportunities, students with dyslexia will experience persistent challenges in learning to read, write and spell. Student strengths will usually be seen outside of the written curriculum. Significant challenges will vary from student to student and these

challenges do not always reflect the student's cognitive abilities. What is experienced as a success one day may appear to have been forgotten the following day. Students may well experience stress and tiredness which may exhibit itself in behaviors not conducive to learning: for example, work avoidance, playing the class clown or daydreaming.

● Gifted and talented students: Students identified as expert learners, highly able, gifted and talented, or exceptionally able, may be globally gifted, gifted in specific areas or indeed be gifted in some areas but experience learning challenges in other areas. This document will use the term "gifted and talented" for ease of reading. All talents need to be encouraged, nurtured and extended and students need to be challenged to think laterally about complex ideas, issues and situations even when a student is receiving learning support in other areas.

● Mental health issues: Teachers can be the first to realize that a young person is suffering from mental health issues. The emotional well-being of students and their good mental health is essential if students are to learn, develop and eventually become adults who can cope with life and its struggles. Mental health conditions include a wide range of conditions, including, but not limited to, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, depression, conduct disorder, self-harm, post-traumatic stress disorder, eating disorders, and obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD).

● Speech, language and communication needs: Difficulties with speech, language and communication are pervasive across the student's life and will impact on all areas of school life, including, but not limited to, understanding and being able to take part in school activities, reading and writing, thinking things through and managing feelings.

● Physical disabilities: The learning needs of students with physical disabilities will not necessarily correlate with the degree of their physical disability. Some students with severe physical disability will need minimal learning support and vice versa. Learning barriers may have more to do with students' concerns and worries about physical access, fatigue and belonging to their peer group. Be attuned to social and emotional states, especially if the condition is degenerative, and continue to foster social and emotional independence as physical dependence increases. Physical conditions that may cause learning disabilities include, but are not limited to, brittle bone disease, cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy, spina bifida, cystic fibrosis and accidental injury.

● Medical conditions or chronic illnesses: Medical conditions include but are not limited to: allergies, asthma, arthritis, lupus, epilepsy, petit mal seizures, grand mal seizures, diabetes, cancer, chronic middle ear infections, hypertension, anxiety disorders and HIV and AIDS. Each of these medical conditions is a chronic illness that interferes with daily functioning and the student's activities for more than three months in a year.

● Dyspraxia: This area covers developmental coordination difficulties (DCD) and motor-learning difficulties. Developmental dyspraxia is best described as an immaturity in the way the brain processes

information. This immaturity results in messages not being properly or fully transmitted and is associated with perception, language and thought, resulting in challenges with planning what to do and how to do it.

● Autism: Autism is a spectrum condition and, despite core similarities in areas of challenge, there can be vast differences. For example, some students may display significant challenges; some students may be nonverbal, and others may not be identified due to the hidden nature of their challenges. The difficulties experienced, often described as a "triad of impairments", affect social interaction, communication and imagination, and/or rigidity of thought. Many students experience sensory issues that impact on emotional and well-being states, and behaviours should be understood in the context of the environment, sensory issues and modes of effective communication. Challenging behaviours are usually not wilful or intentionally oppositional but may be the result of neurological, internal-processing difficulties or stressors. Students with Asperger's syndrome, while on the autistic spectrum and experiencing difficulties with social interaction, communication and imagination, display advanced language skills in areas of vocabulary and syntax but experience difficulties in areas of conversational skills and intonation. They, like all students, may also display advanced skills in other areas.

Inclusive design

Any inclusive environment must be effective, welcoming, healthy and protective, and culturally and gender-sensitive for all learners. It must challenge preconceived identities and consider "alternative ways of seeing, being and knowing" (Austin 2012). Pinewood has created the social and emotional conditions for learning and promoting an optimal learning environment. It is the responsibility of all educators, supported by the community, to develop optimal learning environments.

Inclusion is achieved through a culture of collaboration, mutual respect, support and problem-solving in dynamic learning communities. Pinewood is considered to be a dynamic learning community that incorporates the whole school community and takes into account the voices of all learners, their parents and caregivers, support staff, and nonteaching staff (The IB guide to inclusive education: a resource for whole school development, 2015).

Differentiation

Differentiation refers to the responses that teachers make to learners' needs. Effective differentiation functions on the premise that every student can do remarkable things with the appropriate guidance, resources and support. A commitment to high-quality differentiation is the foundation of instruction at Pinewood which serves students with diverse learning needs. Differentiation makes it possible to challenge and engage all

students equitably, and to empower students to understand themselves as learners and strive to achieve more than they think possible.

Differentiated instruction at Pinewood meets students where they are and provides them with challenging and respectful tasks that engage and empower them. It begins with a culture that recognizes and respects differences and enlists students as full partners in the teaching and learning process. It continues with encouraging a growth mindset in which it's okay for students to make mistakes, to learn from each other, and to try again.

Teachers differentiate through a range of instructional and management strategies. This includes classroom elements (content, process, product and learning environment) in relation to student needs (readiness, interest and learning profile). Differentiation practices and principles are developed and promoted by the LS services to all teachers, yearly through professional development opportunities.

Inclusive access arrangements and reasonable adjustments

Inclusive access arrangements: Access arrangements are changes introduced to teaching, learning and assessment to remove or reduce barriers. They do not change what the student is expected to learn and do not lower expectations, but instead provide the optimal support to address challenges and to enable the student to work around them. At a fundamental level, they address equal access and fairness to teaching and learning and in addition, validity and meaningfulness to assessment.

Reasonable adjustments: Changes or additional conditions to the assessment process which may not be standard and are not covered in the list of inclusive access arrangements. They are unique to a student based on their requirements.

● Alternative Location / Sit in a Separate Room

Students with L.D. and/ or disabilities receiving individualized inclusive access arrangements and reasonable adjustments normally take their examinations in a different venue to their peer group. This inclusive access arrangement and reasonable adjustment allows students to complete individual work in a different location. These venues are normally shared with other L.S. students. Only in exceptional circumstances will a student with a L.D. and/or disability take an examination in a room on their own. If there is a request for an individual room, that request will be discussed between the LSCo, secondary principal and teacher. They are responsible for all final decisions.

● Extra Time

Students whose performance is significantly impacted by a L.D. and/ or disability may require extra time on tests, in class tasks and examinations. Extra time may also be used by students who require a rest break or a break for medication during examinations. Extra time can be set at an extra 25%, 50%, or 100%. Students are only allowed a 1–2-day extension for at home assignments and homework.

- Computer

Students whose ability to write is significantly impaired may require a computer. They are to use their personal computer, or if they do not have one it will be provided by the school. A basic word processing package (Word) will be available on computers and the computer must remain offline for the duration of any test or examination. Any computer training required by the student will be provided by the school. A technician can also be available, only to assist for technical difficulties.

- Reader (Oral Testing)

Students whose ability to read is significantly impacted by a L.D. and/ or disability may require a reader. Most students will be accommodated together in the same venue with a shared reader. An individual reader will only be provided in exceptional circumstances.

The role of a reader in examinations is to read the examination questions only.

The reader will be able to read accurately, at a reasonable rate and will be proficient in English.

The reader will not provide content to the student or offer any suggestions.

The reader will not advise the student on which questions to attempt, when to move on to the next question, or the order in which questions should be attempted.

Instructions given on paper can only be repeated when the reader is specifically requested to do so by the student.

The reader will make no other comment or use any intonation which emphasizes any part of the questions, nor make any interpretation of the question(s).

The reader will not discuss any other matter with the student unless it relates to the re-reading of a question (having been requested to do so by the student).

- Scribe (Oral Testing)

A scribe is someone who writes down exactly what a student communicates to them. The use of a scribe is permitted for all forms of assessment where a candidate is unable to provide a handwritten response or use a computer. If a student is allowed both a scribe and a reader, the same person will fulfil both roles whenever possible.

A scribe must:

- transcribe the student's responses verbatim;
- draw all visual material (for example, graphs) according to the exact instructions of the student;
- not offer information that may be used to answer questions, including advice on which questions to answer, when to move on to another question or the order in which questions should be answered, not make notes about test questions, nor discuss the content of the test at any time;
- read back answers at the request of the student;
- alter or delete answers at the request of the student.

The student is allowed to review and edit what the scribe has written. Conversations between the student and the scribe will be confined to ensure that the student's responses are transcribed correctly. There will be no discussion about the examination paper or the student's answers. The scribe will be a qualified teacher.

- Transcriptions

A transcript is a student's response to a component, submitted in a form other than the student's own handwriting. Transcription is justified when a student with a L.D. and/or disability, has very poor handwriting skills and cannot use a computer. Transcription is not available to students with poor handwriting for whom some form L.D. and/or disability cannot be diagnosed.

It is not necessary to transcribe the whole of a candidate's script. Only those sections or words that are extremely difficult to read need transcribing. The transcriber will decide which sections or words need transcribing.

The transcription will be on a piece of paper separate from the student's script and must clearly indicate that it is a transcription and include the printed name and signature of the transcriber.

The student must be given the full time allotted to complete the entire test. It is allowable for the student to review the transcription and make any edits within the time constraints of the assessment. However, if the test administrator transfers the student's final responses onto the answer document after the testing period has ended, the student may not edit his or her response(s). It is recommended that the transcriber should ensure that he or she can read and understand the student's intended responses prior to the student leaving the testing room.

Secure test materials and associated student responses cannot be photocopied, scanned, or saved in order to use this inclusive access arrangement and reasonable adjustment. Any typed or handwritten responses that include student notes, answers to multiple-choice questions, or responses to short answer reading questions or the writing prompts must be destroyed after testing.

- Furniture in Examination Venues

Students with L.D. and/or disabilities may require alternative furniture (i.e., footstool etc.). This furniture will be provided by the student.

- Supervised rest breaks

Students with L.D. and/or disabilities may require supervised rest or movement breaks. They are allowed to have one 5-minute break for every 45 minutes. The break(s) should not count towards their total test time. During the rest break, they are to remain seated, with the exam papers closed. During the movement break they are to be allowed to go to the toilet and come back quietly.

- Calculator

Students with L.D. and/ or disabilities may require the use of a calculator during specific exams or tests, ex. mathematics. The calculators are to be checked before the exam or test, as to insure they are standard. If a student does not have one, the school will provide them with one. This could be subject to change at a future date, if and when the mathematics policy states that standard calculators will be provided by the school during examinations.

- Reduced Homework

Students whose performance is significantly impacted by a L.D. and/ or disability may require reduced homework. Reduced homework can be set at 25% or 50% less. They are to be directly and specifically instructed regarding which items/ activities to complete.

- Learning Support Assistant

Students who have a Learning Support Assistant (LSA) may require that their LSA is also in attendance in class and during tests and examinations. Parents, guardians, or other nominated fee paying representatives are responsible for finding, and providing the funding to meet the costs of such additional support. LSA's are to follow the class rules and support the student during the lesson. They can work together with the teacher to provide the student further support during the lesson, with homework and during tests.

- Preferential Sitting

Students who have a Learning Support Assistant (LSA) may require preferential seating. This inclusive access arrangement and reasonable adjustment means that a student's seat is placed in a location that is most beneficial for his/her learning in the classroom. Preferential seating may include placement in the classroom (e.g., up front by the teacher, away from a distracting doorway or fan, facing the wall) or in a separate defined area such as a study carrel. Preferential seating may be implemented in the same room as other classmates, or it may be located in a separate setting.

The teacher must:

- Review the room and identify all areas that may create distractions or provide best placements for individual students;
- Before asking a student to test in a location, make sure that both you and the student have tried to work in the space for an extended period of time;

- While a student may work well in a study class during regular instructional activities, he or she may not do as well during an assessment;

- Not penalized for spelling and grammatical errors.

A student with a L.D. and/or disability who has a reading, writing or spelling difficulty can be disadvantaged when assessment takes the form of a written timed examination. Student's written work may contain:

Surface errors in spelling and grammar such as inaccuracies in the use of tense, grammatical agreement, plurals, spelling and punctuation. **Structural flaws** include weak sequencing of ideas, paragraphs, and sentences; unclear expression of cause and effect; lack of competence in using abstract language or lack of awareness of writing genre.

The following guidelines should be taken into consideration by the examiner when marking the examination script of a student with a reading, writing or spelling difficulty:

a)   First, read the script quickly to judge the student's underlying understanding of the topic; then assess their performance against the learning outcomes. If the script contains all the required elements but does not introduce them in a clear logical order, avoid penalizing the student for a lack of structure in their writing unless this is a stipulated competency being assessed.

b)   Errors in **spelling** do not mean that the student is confused about the meaning of the word or its function in their writing. Generally, such errors do not lead to ambiguity and should not be penalized when subject knowledge is being assessed.

c)   **Lexical** errors, such as *coarse* for *course,* do not mean that the student is confused about the meaning of the words. This kind of error should not be penalized unless it leads to ambiguity.

d)   **Grammatical** errors, like incorrect tense endings, lack of subject – verb agreement and incorrect word order may not affect the meaning of the sentence. For example:

"Some of the features of Socratic dialogues where they seek definitions of abstract ideas, cross examining beliefs to expose contradictions and he used to use questioning to bring the pupil to recognize the truth." Here the student's meaning is clear, the errors do not lead to ambiguity and the student should not be penalized.

a) **Punctuation** may not be used as a tool for clarifying meaning. Scripts may contain long sentences that are difficult to follow with indiscriminate punctuation or no punctuation at all. Very short sentences or fragments of sentences might also be produced. For instance:

"The study considered three main areas of research. The effects of frequent drug use, the role of the family in the offender's behavior and the impact of custodial sentences on reoffending."

 In this case the student's meaning is clear, but errors in punctuation can lead to ambiguity which will be reflected in the mark awarded.

b)   Some students may have **restricted vocabulary** and use a far more limited range of words that one would expect. Avoid penalizing students who may have an immature style of writing, unless written communication is a specified learning outcome.

Where grammar and spelling are core competencies of a course a student's work must be marked on the basis of accuracy in the language and therefore these marking guidelines will not apply.

c)   In all subjects, if a student's errors make a material difference to the meaning of their work, it will not be possible to classify them as surface errors that do not incur penalty. For instance, if a student writes *hypertension* instead of *hypotension*, this will affect the mark awarded.

d)   In all subjects, if the surface errors or structural flaws make the student's work so ambiguous that it is impossible to decipher the meaning, then this diminishes his/her ability to demonstrate the module's learning outcomes and this would be reflected in the marks awarded.

Review

The Learning Support Services Procedures and Protocols will be reviewed on a yearly basis, at the end of every school year. During this review period, the limitations to inclusion and how future school development can address these limitations will be discussed.

At present, the limitations to inclusion include mainly facility restrictions, which could prove challenging for individuals with physical disabilities, mainly focusing on mobility challenges. Pinewood needs to address these needs and create further planning to accommodate all students.

Resources

[EYP Referral form](#)

[Elementary & Secondary Referral Form](#)

[IILP format and components](#)

[Secondary Exam Inclusive Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments Guidelines](#)

[Weaver of responsibility](#)

[Psycho- Educational Assessment - Information Leaflet](#)

[Psycho-Educational Assessment - Consent for Assessment](#)

[Psycho-Educational Assessment - Child Caregiver Intake Form](#)

[Psycho - Educational Assessment - Cover Letter](#)