

SEN policy – UWC Waterford Kamhlaba



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SEN policy – UWC Waterford Kamhlaba

1. Introduction:

The Special Educational Needs department is involved with the entire school community to ensure that every student's individual needs are met. We recognise that each student is unique in their learning and will require meaningful and impartial access to the curriculum.

The Special Educational Needs department works alongside the Counselling, English Language Acquisition Support and Mathematics support systems, to provide for the needs of SEN students.

2. Our Philosophy and Vision:

We believe that a student's learning needs and barriers to learning should never be viewed as a limitation with regard to a student's potential, but should be utilised as a positive resource by all role players in the student's environment. By identifying a student's strengths; practicing differentiation in and outside the classroom; scaffolding the student's learning and differentiating the student's curriculum, we aim to cater for the needs of every student.

Through the practice of inclusion, we are able to provide equal curriculum access to a diverse student community, who has different individual needs, challenges and goals.

Some students do experience educational and behavioural needs of such a unique nature, that they do not benefit sufficiently from strategies applied in the mainstream classroom. These students are reliant upon all possible mechanisms of support that can be offered and activated by the SEN department, working hand in hand with the Waterford Kamhlaba school community as a whole.

We view the implementation of outstanding inclusion practices as key to making the inclusion of all students and their learning needs, a reality. This would involve the affirmation of the student's identity and building their self-esteem; valuing the student's prior knowledge; scaffolding their new learning and extending their learning opportunities (IBDP Special educational needs within the IB programmes 2010 p. 5, 6, 7).

As the Waterford Kamhlaba community, we strive to assist our students in any way possible, to become successful inquirers, thinkers, confident communicators, highly principled people, open-minded students, compassionate persons, risk-takers and well balanced, reflective human beings.

3. Aims of the SEN department:

- To provide a service where students can freely ask for assistance.
- To provide a service where staff and parents can ask for guidance and advice.
- To work directly with students who are experiencing barriers to learning and are in need of support.
- To communicate directly with parents and keep them informed, either in face to face meetings where possible, or via emails and telephonic communication.
- To guide parents through the identification, assessment and support provision processes as well as inform them of their child's progress.
- To operate a whole school approach to SEN by assisting staff with effective differentiation strategies, the implementation and integration of inclusion class practices, and catering to the needs of individual students.
- To provide a holistic service where staff collaborates with parents to enable us to work as a team towards a common goal. During these sessions, parents are assisted with strategies and healthy parental practices to improve the learning experiences of their children as well as remove/minimise the effects of learning barriers.

4. Aims of the SEN policy:

The SEN policy aims to be a functional document which can be practically implemented, to enable the SEN department and all role players in the Waterford Kamhlaba school community, to provide access to successful learning experiences to all students regardless of their abilities or barriers to learning.

5. SEN coordinator:

Ms Retha Cook

5.1 SENCo responsibilities:

- Day to day operation of the College's SEN policy;
- Maintenance of the SEN register;
- Identification of barriers to learning that students are experiencing;
- Managing provision for students with barriers to learning;
- Keeping tutors and teachers informed;
- Liaising with parents of students and keeping minutes of these meetings;

- Liaising with external agencies;
- Referring students to Mathematics and English departments to be included in extra help sessions;
- Communicating best practice guidance to staff;
- Attend all Academic, Pastoral and Staff meetings and utilise these meetings to coordinate matters pertaining to the SEN department;
- Providing relevant information for authorisation of special needs arrangements and accommodations in exams;
- Advise on the purchasing of aids and materials to meet the needs of specific individuals or groups of students;
- Carry out observations and basic academic assessments of individuals;
- Track pupils' progress using support plans/action plans and ISP's as well as classroom records and school reports.

5.2 **Rooms available:**

SEN office

6. **SEN Coordination Team members:**

SEN Co-ordinator

Head of Language B and Language Acquisition

Deputy Principal: Academic

Phase Co-ordinators

Heads of departments

Head of Residences

6.1 **Extended Coordination Team members:**

Deputy Principal: Pastoral

School nurse

Tutors

Heads of Residences

Counsellor

7. **Collaborative planning and reflection:**

7.1

Cycle meetings - termly:

Participants:	During the cycle meetings the Principal, all teachers of that particular phase, as well as members of the SEN coordination team and extended coordination team are present. This is due to the fact that we cannot view a student in isolation to his/her environment, in our case, boarding facilities.
Objective:	The accommodations, strategies, goals and progress of the students who experience barriers to learning, are then outlined and reflected upon. Possible solutions are discussed and brainstormed as a team. Teachers also use this opportunity to add new students of concern to the SEN register.
Duration:	3 hours

7.2 **Meetings with the Deputy Principal: Academic, when needed:**

Participants:	SENCO and Deputy Principal: Academic.
Objective:	To discuss developments within the SEN department as well as concerns with regards to specific SEN students, especially those who require access arrangements and accommodations. This meeting is also used to reflect upon inclusive strategies applied in the different departments and enables the participants to identify the needs of specific phases, from Form 1 to IB2.
Duration:	40 minutes

7.3 **Department meetings – twice a term:**

Participants:	Head of department, subject teachers of that particular department and the SENCo.
Objective:	The SENCo visits the meetings of different departments when invited to do so, or when the need arises for concerns to be raised and best practice guidance to be provided. Possible solutions are discussed and brainstormed as a team.

Duration: 1 – 2 hours

7.4 **Staff meetings – twice a term:**

Participants: All school staff of all departments are present.

Objective: The SENCo utilises Staff meetings to address staff or hold a presentation with regards to any changes or practices within the functioning of the SEN department. Helpful and outstanding practices and strategies for special needs students are then discussed and brainstormed.

Duration: 2 – 3 hours

7.5 **Academic council meetings – twice a term:**

Participants: Principal, Deputy Principals: Academic and Pastoral, Heads of departments and SENCo.

Objective: The SENCo utilises the Academic council meetings to air matters pertaining to the academic needs of SEN students and makes recommendations with regards to any academic needs within the student body. Possible solutions are discussed and brainstormed as a team.

Duration: 2 hours

7.6 **Pastoral council meetings – twice a term:**

Participants: Principal, Deputy Principals: Academic and Pastoral, Director of Residences, Phase coordinators, School Nurse, Life skills teachers, School Counsellor and SENCo.

Objective: The SENCo addresses issues with regards to SEN students of concern, to monitor and reflect upon their progress pertaining to residential life, health care and counselling. Possible solutions are discussed and brainstormed as a team.

Duration: 2 – 3 hours.

7.7 **Individual meetings with teachers:**

Participants: SENCo and subject teacher

Objective: Where and when necessary meetings are arranged with individual teachers to provide guidance and clarity.

Duration: 40 minutes

7.8 **Weekly Monday morning staff meetings:**

Participants : All teaching, administration, residential and departmental staff.

Objective: Urgent matters pertaining to SEN students and the functioning of the SEN department are highlighted and announced.

Duration: 30 minutes.

7.9 **Scheduled meetings with parents:**

Participants: SENCo, Student, Parents, Phase coordinator, Subject teachers and Counsellor if necessary.

Objective: To discuss support/action plan or IEP with parents.

Duration: 1 – 2 hours.

8. **Lines of responsibilities:**

- The SENCo arranges/instigates most meetings with SEN students and partners.
- Extra English and ESL provision is coordinated by the Head of Language B and Language acquisition.
- Additional Mathematics provision is coordinated by the Head of the Mathematics department.
- The dissemination of information on inclusion, access and differentiation as well as the implementation of inclusive practices into teaching and learning, is taken care of by the Deputy Principal: Academic, Phase coordinators and Heads of departments.
- The integration of inclusive practices into the Pastoral system will be taken care of by the Deputy Principal: Pastoral, the Heads and deputy heads of Residences, as well as the school Counsellor.

9. **Admissions in relation to Learning Support:**

Entry into Waterford Kamhlaba is highly competitive, particularly at the IB Diploma level. Yet Waterford wishes to allow any student who is completing the IGCSE programme and who has a reasonable chance of achieving a full

IB Diploma the opportunity to complete their secondary education at Waterford.

Waterford Kamhlaba will accommodate students with Special Educational Needs, **providing that it can offer the support required and provided the student is able to meet the requirements of the academic curriculum and self-manage in a way that enables his or her learning** (please see 17.5 'Provision for learner diversity at Waterford Kamhlaba, page 18).

The diversity, including learning diversity of the student body is a vital part of the identity and success of the school. We seek to maintain the right balance of students in order that the school can fulfil its objective of being the leading school in Swaziland, and a highly reputable "pan African" institution as well as a member of the UWC movement. (IBDP)

10. Identification:

Students can be identified on admission to Waterford as a result of parental communication and admission forms.

Students currently enrolled at the College can be identified as being in need of SEN as a result of:

- Self-referral;
- Referrals from subject teachers and tutors;
- Referrals from parents,
- Referrals from UWC national committees or sponsors;
- Reports from external agencies.

10.1 Identification process:

Subject teachers concerned with the student completes an online Special Needs referral form, which is available on the SEN Google classroom. This form provides a large scope for the indication of more in depth information pertaining to concentration, participation, observations and the highlighting of specific issues and barriers to learning.

If differentiated strategies in the mainstream classroom have been implemented, but are insufficient to meet the needs of the referred student, then the student needs to be assessed by the SENCo.

10.2 Informing parents:

The student's parents will then be informed of the student's needs for an assessment. Once the parents have granted their permission, the SENCo can continue with the assessment process.

11. Assessments:

11.1 Assessment results:

Once the assessments have been completed, this information is then compiled in an assessment report. The information gained is used to construct an ISP (Individual Support Plan) or action/formal support plan to support the student and advise the subject teachers, residential staff and tutors of mechanisms which need to be activated, to support the student efficiently.

11.2 Identification assessment provision:

The following quantitative and qualitative assessments are being used:

- WRAT 4 test battery, for the assessment of: Reading, Sentence comprehension, Spelling and Mathematics;
- Edinburgh Reading Test 4;
- Vernon Graded Word Spelling Test – 3rd edition;
- Writing speed test – Robyn Hedderly;
- Executive Skills Functioning questionnaire - Peg Dawson and Richard Guare
- Screening test – Specific Learning Difficulties;
- Dyscalculia assessment;
- Evaluation of books and projects containing completed work;
- Evaluation of past exam/test papers;
- The SEN referral form containing information from subject teachers;
- Reports from Residential staff/Tutors; termly and year end school report
- CEFR tests for additional language learners.

11.3 The main aims of the assessment procedure is to:

- Evaluate achievement-ability discrepancies to identify specific learning disabilities.
- Determine a minimal level of proficiency needed to perform in certain educational settings.
- Assess an individual's academic progress over time.
- Identify those who need to be evaluated more thoroughly by an Educational-Psychologist, Occupational Therapist or other Professional service;
- Shape a holistic picture of the student who is being assessed.
- To compare a student's performance at certain time intervals.

12. Levels of support:

Students are placed in bands on the SEN register, according to levels of need and seriousness. The motivation behind this is to ensure that every student's specific needs are being met, as the learning and teaching needs of a highly dyslexic student will be different to that of a student who only needs assistance with study skills.

12.1 Band 1:

Band 1 students are students who:

- o Face barriers to learning of a serious nature.
- o Experience specific learning disabilities, e.g. Dyslexia, Dysgraphia or other barriers to learning, e.g. Autism, ADHD.
- o Are in need of constant support in most subjects from most teachers, as their barriers to learning permeate all of their schooling.
- o Require accommodations without which they are unable to cope or progress successfully in the school curriculum.
- o Are in need of classroom and inclusive access arrangements.
- o Are placed on an ISP or action/ formal support plan.
- o Require close monitoring from the SENCo.

12.2 Band 2:

Band 2 students are students who:

- o Experience barriers to learning of a milder nature e.g. Reading, Spelling, Comprehension difficulties, or gaps within their learning.
- o Do not have a specific learning disability and is able to benefit from differentiated classroom teaching.

- Benefits from an aid/intervention program where necessary, as well as support from teachers and the SENCo.
- Benefits from an action/formal support plan which mainly contains classroom accommodations and strategies to ensure differentiated and inclusive teaching and learning.
- Do have access to inclusive access arrangements, where the need arises.

12.3 **Band 3:**

Band 3 students are students who:

- Experience a barrier to learning within a specific subject e.g. Maths, Biology and/or Study skills.
- Requires classroom accommodations with regards to a particular subject or skill he/she has difficulty with;
- Benefits from additional sessions with the specific subject teacher;
- Benefits from collaborating with the SENCo to plan a time management schedule and revise effective Study skills strategies.
- May require inclusive access arrangements in a particular subject.

13. **Entry and exit of learning support:**

Although the levels of support, function, by means of bands, students are evaluated on a case to case basis.

Students will be exited from the SEN register when they are achieving at the appropriate level required, or are demonstrating skills that display the absence of learning barriers.

14. **Record keeping:**

All SENCo assessment reports and Psycho-Educational reports are uploaded on the school's internal internet system, called ADAM. This system has a section allocated to matters pertaining to SEN.

To ensure confidentiality, only the Principal, Deputy Principals: Academic and Pastoral, Phase coordinators, the school Counsellor and SENCo, have access

to the reports on ADAM. Teachers request the assistance of the Phase coordinators to gain access to SEN documents on ADAM.

Learning and assessment protocols as well as additional guidelines and support plans where applicable, are available on the SEN Google classroom, but only to those teachers who are working with that specific student.

15. **ISP and student action/ support plans:**

The ISP (Individual Support Plan) contains the following:

- Dates of previous tests and evaluations;
- Student's barriers to learning and strengths;
- Student's present level of performance;
- Action points;
- Person/s responsible for offering support e.g. Teacher/parent/peer;
- Goals;
- Time frame for goals to be achieved;
- Learning and assessment protocols;
- Accommodations;
- Other aspects to keep in mind.

The action/formal support plans contain the following:

- Classroom and exam/test accommodations and access arrangements;
- Student's barriers to learning;
- Learning and assessment protocols;
- Action points where necessary.

16. **Support plans:**

The ISP and student action/formal support plans, are pliable and fluid documents. Reviews and amendments are made at least once a term. The results of termly reports, feedback from parents, students, teachers, tutors and residential staff have a large impact on the compilation of support plans, and necessitate immediate amendments to ensure the effectiveness of the document.

17. **Classroom accommodations and exam access arrangements:**

What are classroom accommodations?

Classroom accommodations are the mechanisms/adaptations put into place in the environment, curriculum format, teaching/learning methods or equipment which allows a student with barriers to learning to gain access to content, learn effectively and complete tasks. Accommodations enable students with barriers to learning to pursue a regular course of study.

What are exam access arrangements?

Access arrangements are pre-exam arrangements, made to external exam boards, on behalf of a candidate with particular needs.

The purpose is to remove any unnecessary barriers to the standard assessment, without compromising the standards being tested, in order for the candidate to receive recognition for his or her attainment.

The access arrangement may never give a student an advantage in relation to other students.

Please note:

The implementation of recommendations with regards to classroom accommodations and exam access arrangements, even on the production of an Educational Psychological/Psychiatric/Clinical Psychological/Occupational therapy/Physiotherapy/Medical practitioner/Other Professional service report, will nevertheless be dependent on the recommendation of the SENCo, the Counselling team and the relevant Phase Coordinator of the school.

17.1 **External exam boards – very important information:**

- Exam access arrangements, are subject to IGCSE and IBDP regulations, and are authorised at the discretion of the IGCSE and IBDP examination boards.
- **Candidates applying for exam accommodations have to meet the standard eligibility criteria for the requested arrangements.**

Please see the following documents for regulations:

Cambridge Handbook (International) Regulations and guidance for administering Cambridge exams – 2021

<https://www.cambridgeinternational.org/Images/604363-cambridge-handbook-international-version.pdf>

IBDP access and inclusion policy – 2018

http://www.kaiseribcp.org/uploads/8/9/3/3/89338304/access_and_inclusion_policy.pdf

- **Internal accommodations provided by the school are not a guarantee that the IGCSE and the IBDP examination boards will grant the same.**
- **Exam accommodations requested must be a student's usual way of working in classroom tasks and tests.**

17.2 Supporting documentation:

- To submit requests for exam access arrangements, supporting documentation is required.
- This can be in the form of a psycho-educational/psychological/medical report.

17.3 Educational evidence:

It is mandatory for the school to provide **Educational evidence** in addition to the Psycho-educational report, when submitting an inclusive access arrangement to the relevant exam centre.

- The Educational evidence has to contain the following information:
 - Details of assessments conducted and outcomes on which recommendations are based.
 - Evidence of treatments and periods of treatments.
 - Evidence of school providing those specific accommodations and access arrangements.

- 17.4 Applications

- Psycho-educational/psychological report results have to be in the form of standard scores.
- The report should state specifically the nature of the learning support requirement and the tests/techniques used to arrive at the identification.

17.3 Application for exam access arrangements:

- Applications should be made through either the SENCo or the School Counsellor, at least 12 months prior to the final exam.
- All applications for access arrangements will be completed by the IBDP and IGCSE Phase coordinators in consultation with the SENCo and School counsellors.
- Students applying for exam access arrangements need to commit to a program as stipulated by the SEN/Counselling department.

17.5 Provision for learner diversity at Waterford Kamhlaba

The following are strategies, accommodations and access arrangements applied when and where necessary, and are based on a student's individual needs, as well as taking into consideration the needs and requirements of his/her specific subjects, fellow students and classroom/boarding environments:

Barriers to learning	Classroom teaching strategies and accommodations	Exam accommodations/access arrangements
Attention Deficit Disorder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Previously discussed prompts. - Regular breaks. - Behaviour plan. Allow use of stress balls. - Appropriate seating arrangements. - Keeping pace, tasks and activities varied. - Encourage use of planners/diaries. - Reinforcement of positive behaviour. - Opportunities created for movement, where possible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Taking an exam in a separate room. - Regular breaks. - Clarification of test directions by invigilator or designated reader. - The use of a scribe/reader - The permitted use of noise buffers/headsets. - Additional time – 10%, 25%, 50%. - The use of a laptop, word processor with spell checker, speech recognition software/reading software and calculators – (students are responsible for providing own software). - Reading pens without in-build dictionary/thesaurus or data-storage facility can be used in IGCSE and IB exams. - Access to modified papers, e.g. changes to print
Autism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Behaviour, socializing and communication skills guidance. - Visual timetables and checklists. - Preview changes in routine. - Provide safe places and people. - Trustworthy classroom buddy. - We are not able to cater for students with severe autism though. 	
Dyspraxia	<p>(Please note, we don't have access to local OT's and PT's).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Speech to text technology - Use of laptop - Guidance with regards to executive functioning skills. 	

Dysgraphia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Utilize laptop for all written tasks. - Minimize spell checks. 	
Dyslexia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Class buddy. - Use of laptop with speech recognition/reading software; reading pens (<i>see exam accommodations</i>). (Students are responsible for providing own software). - Lesson plans to be provided to student in advance. 	
Severe dyslexia	We are not yet able to accommodate students with severe dyslexia.	
Language difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assistance from the English Language department, Pre-orientation language program and EE reading program. 	
Other learning disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Please contact the Special Needs Coordinator at retha.cook@waterford.sz 	
Physical disabilities (exam access arrangements are still valid unless otherwise stated)		
Speech	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We do not have a resident speech therapist at our school or in close proximity to the school. We will not be able to accommodate someone who requires speech therapy. 	
Hearing impairment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Severe hearing impairment/deafness</u> - We do not have access to someone who can provide visible communication modes e.g. sign language, finger-spelling, Cued speech. - We are not able to accommodate deaf students. - <u>Slightly hearing impaired:</u> - Where the hearing impairment is only slight, seating arrangements will be carefully considered, as well as the influence of background noises. Students will be required to wear a hearing aid with Bluetooth connectivity. 	
Physical disabilities (exam access arrangements are still valid unless otherwise stated)		
Visual impairment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Students wearing glasses:</u> - Seating arrangements that take lighting into account. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Layout changes to the environment where possible. - Access to modified papers e.g. Colour, print, contrast. - Colour naming for students who are colour blind. - <u>Students with severe visual impairment/blindness:</u> - <i>We will not be able to cater for someone who has a severe visual impairment/blindness.</i>
Student using wheelchair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A few of our classrooms are accessible by wheelchair, but not all. - Our student residences are not yet wheelchair accessible
Physical disabilities continued	
Amelia: Missing limb	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>A missing arm:</u> - The student will need to be able to type, using the existing arm. The greatest challenge would be time and pace, as the lessons are only 40min long and follow one another consecutively - there is very little time available for a student to catch up on unfinished work, or lesson content missed. - An assistant/aide is recommended, as long as the aide does not reduce independence; interfere in social contacts or the making of friends. - Tests can be taken orally/speech recognition software can be used as an alternative to writing.
Amelia: Missing limb	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>A missing leg:</u> - Most areas at our school and student residences are accessible by a student using crutches.
Mental health issues (exam access arrangements are still valid unless otherwise stated)	
General emotional and mental health issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Please contact the School counsellors.
Health impairments (exam access arrangements are still valid unless otherwise stated)	

**Epilepsy, Asthma,
Diabetes**

- We are able to cater for students with **mild** health impairments, but not students who are in need of daily, intensive care. We have two private hospitals in Eswatini, but the health care here is limited. Most serious health issues and emergencies have to be dealt with across the border in South Africa – with enormous cost implications. The safety of the student is of paramount importance. We would not like to put a student's life at risk, due to a lack of suitable medical attention or medical resources.

18. Policy review date:

The policy will be reviewed in October 2022

Signed by CMG: pp.



Date: 12 October 2021