

Statute: Pupils with special needs

Children and young people with their individual abilities are the focus of the German International School Dubai (DISD). Pupils with their various cultural and social backgrounds study here together successfully. Heterogeneity is recognised as being enriching. The school pursues an inclusive school system, enabling pupils with special needs to participate in normal lessons insofar as the requirements of the school permit this. The objective of this support at the DISD is to help pupils to achieve their full academic, emotional and social potential in spite of existing weaknesses.

The statute orientates itself towards the guidelines "Special Needs" issued by the school authority "Knowledge and Human Development Authority" of the host country Dubai and to the references on inclusion at German Schools Abroad in the resolution passed by the Federal Government and "Länder" Committee for school work abroad dated 11th /12th December 2014.

1. Diagnosis and admission of pupils with special needs

Some pupils have temporary or permanent special needs. This can be due to:

- particular physical features,
- particular features in the individual learning process,
- particular features in terms of social behaviour.

The school principal (in the following the masculine form will be used for the sake of simplicity) decides on whether a pupil will be admitted. When admitting pupils with special needs, he will be advised by a group of educational experts (class teachers, heads of school levels, if need be school psychologists and special needs teachers). The parents will be included in the admission process.

If a special needs requirement exists or existed, the parents are required to inform the DISD of this. The recognised special needs areas include the focal points "learning", "language", "emotional and social development" as well as "mental and physical development". These deficits are to be confirmed by relevant expert reports and attestations. If the parents make no statements or do not submit any valid expert reports, there shall be no claim to any compensation for disadvantages and relevant support.

The following applies to all submitted expert reports and attestations:

- The medical or clinical expert report must be issued by a doctor, clinical psychologist or school psychologist recognised in a German-speaking area.
- This expert report may not be older than 1 year when the pupil joins the school.
- The submitted clinical or psychological expert reports are to be submitted again every two years in order to record the current special needs requirements.

To assess the individual learning profile, each pupil who registers at the DISD for the first time shall participate in a standardised admission process:

- Admission Kindergarten: language test in German,
- Admission 1st class: school enrolment test,
- Admission classes 2 – 12: skills in the subjects of Mathematics and German, geared towards the curricula used in all German federal states.

Admission with special educational needs

The pupil attains below average results in the test for his or her age group. It is to be assumed that the pupil requires additional support during the lessons and an individual support plan. The admission depends on the prerequisites of the school and the range of external therapists from the host country. The DISD shall discuss realistic goals and framework conditions of the support with the parents. If necessary this will result in an individually designed acceptance contract. This additional support will be agreed with the parents. Should additional costs be incurred, these shall be borne by the school. The support provided by the support department is part of the service offered by the school.

2. Diagnosis of pupils with special needs during the school year

In the Kindergarten as well as the pre-school and the primary school, standardised screenings will take place during the school year, giving an indication of the individual learning developments.

If conspicuous learning behaviour or conspicuous social behaviour is ascertained on the basis of the screenings, a meeting will be held with the parents in which support possibilities within and outside of the school will be discussed and this will be recorded in writing. If need be, reference will be made to external advice centres (doctors, clinical psychologists, occupational therapists or speech therapists) in order to have a clarifying diagnosis carried out there. On the basis of this diagnosis, individual support plans will then be prepared for the pupil by the DISD. Should additional costs for therapies be incurred, these shall be borne by the parents. In addition a timeframe will be determined jointly with the parents regarding by which time the school and extracurricular measures are to have been carried out.

3. Measures within and outside of the school

All measures are recorded in the strategy paper "Inclusion of pupils with special needs".

The DISD has an Inclusive Education Action Team (school psychologist, special needs teacher, support teacher, German as a foreign language teacher and nurse) that with its specialised knowledge ensures the wellbeing of pupils with special needs. The support by the support department is part of the service offered by the school.

Each pupil with special needs receives a support plan with individual support targets. This plan describes the strengths and weaknesses of the pupil and defines measures of how these are to be supported. The pupils will preferably be supported within the class groups. Depending on requirements, the pupil will also be supported by working in small groups or having individual lessons.

For primary school pupils whose achievements in the subjects of German and mathematics are below the average of the targets and contents of general education schools on the basis of the accompanying diagnoses, the DISD offers systematic support clubs for spelling, reading comprehension and numerical comprehension subject to a charge.

The network of German-speaking therapists in Dubai is very limited outside of the school. In addition the costs for the therapeutic measures are to be borne by the parents themselves if their health insurance does not cover this.

The learning development of the child or young person therefore greatly depends on the active cooperation between the school and the parents. It is therefore vital that the parents also carry out the discussed diagnoses and measures at home.

4. Pupil requires integration assistant (learning support assistant)

Should the pupil require additional individual support going beyond the support measure in the framework of the lessons or Kindergarten group, this is to be discussed with the parents and the additional tasks and measures are to be agreed. These integrative tasks must be performed by a trained specialist (e.g. specialist trained in behaviour, specialist trained in special needs or educator). This specialist will be instructed in detail regarding the target agreements. The DISD will be involved in the choice of a suitable specialised learning support assistant. These additional costs are to be borne by the parents.

5. Compensation for disadvantages

The compensation for disadvantages in the case of a reading and spelling disorder is regulated in a separate statute.

Measures in the framework of a compensation for disadvantages can generally be divided up into four categories:

- School organisational measures,
- Technical aids,
- Didactic-methodical measures,
- Performance recording.

A compensation for disadvantages in the case of **performance appraisals** will be decided either by the class conference or upon application to the representative of the Conference of Ministers of Education responsible for the school (from class 10).

6. Responsibility

The Education Support Team of the DISD is responsible for implementing the statute. It comprises, depending on the school level, the following persons: the school principal (Inclusion Champion), the head of the learning centre (Governor for inclusive education), the support team (inclusive education action team) and external integration assistants (learning support assistant).

The German text shall prevail in case of ambiguities or in other cases where there is doubt or where there are problems of interpretation.