

LEARNING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

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A. Connection with the school mission statement

“To nurture leaders with character and competence”

Fountainhead School's mission statement is strongly aligned with its commitment to promoting learning diversity. The school's primary goal is to nurture every student as a potential leader, instilling both character and competence while recognizing the importance of inclusive education. In order to align everyone with the mission, the school has a robust guiding policy that ensures the inclusion of all students, giving access to personalized learning opportunities and enabling them to realize their full potential.

The school's mission inspires all the stakeholders to proactively address each student's unique learning needs, fostering their strengths and facilitating academic growth. This approach significantly contributes to boosting self-esteem and helps in developing mental and moral qualities. The school strives to create a nurturing and empowering environment that uplifts every student and prepares them to thrive in an ever-changing world.

B. School Vision on Inclusion

At Fountainhead School, Inclusive Education is an ongoing process designed to enhance access and engagement in learning for all students by identifying and overcoming barriers. This achievement is rooted in a culture of collaboration, mutual respect, support, and effective problem-solving. The essence of inclusive education comes to life through dynamic learning experiences that embody the learner profile in action.

Guided by the Learning Diversity and Inclusion policy, the school is committed to creating a positive learning environment that aligns with the IB's four principles of good practice: affirming identity and building self-esteem, valuing prior knowledge, scaffolding, and extending learning. By adhering to these principles, Fountainhead School ensures that each learner's unique strengths are celebrated, and they gain academic growth. Through this inclusive approach, the school fosters a community that embraces diversity, fosters growth, and celebrates each student's accomplishments on the educational journey.

C. IB Learner Profile Attributes

Caring

The school aims to create a nurturing and inclusive learning environment where individuals feel valued and respected, regardless of their differences. The school community prioritizes the well-being of each student and actively works to remove barriers to learning for those facing challenges.

Open-minded

The school embraces diverse perspectives and adapts teaching methods to accommodate various learning styles. The school community is receptive to feedback and continuously seeks ways to improve inclusivity and equity in education.

Reflective

The school believes in regularly assessing and analyzing the effectiveness of our inclusive practices. Teaching methods, curriculum, and interactions are critically evaluated to identify areas for improvement in accommodating diverse learners.

D. Fountainhead School Values

Learner

The school emphasizes the provision of individualized support, accommodations, and teaching methods to ensure that every learner, regardless of their background or abilities, has the opportunity to thrive academically and personally. The school believes in every student's unique learning journey and therefore emphasizes on the idea that education should be tailored to accommodate diverse learning preferences, abilities, and backgrounds.

Respect

Respect underlines the necessity of treating every individual with dignity and honoring their diverse identities. The school is committed to creating a culture of acceptance and understanding where discrimination and bias are actively discouraged. The school believes that respecting differences and valuing the contributions of all members of the learning community are fundamental to fostering an inclusive learning environment.

Fairness

The school is committed to providing an equitable learning environment where all individuals are treated with respect and given equal opportunities to succeed. Our policies and practices ensure that diversity and inclusion are integral to our educational approach, fostering a culture of fairness and support for all.

E. Connection to IB standards and practices

Purpose (0101) :

The school community fosters internationally-minded people who embody all attributes of the IB learner profile. (0101-03)

Leadership and governance (0201):

The school organizes time for learning and teaching that provides a broad, balanced and connected curriculum and serves the changing needs of its community. (0201-03)

Student support (0202)

- The school provides relevant human, natural, built, and virtual resources to implement its IB programme(s). (0202-01)
- The school identifies and provides appropriate learning support. (0202-02)
- The school fosters the social, emotional, and physical well-being of its students and teachers. (0202-03)
- The school provides guidance and support that help students succeed in its IB programme(s) and plan for the next stage of their educational and/or career-related experiences. (0202-04)
- The school builds relationships with the wider community that are a source of wisdom and expertise to strengthen the implementation of its IB programmes (0202-05).

Teacher support (0203):

The school provides time and other resources for teachers to collaborate effectively in the implementation of IB programme(s). (0203-03)

Culture through policy implementation (0301)

- The school secures access to an IB education to the broadest possible range of students. (0301-01)
- The school implements, communicates, and regularly reviews an inclusion policy that creates cultures that support all students to reach their full potential. (0301-02)
- The school implements, communicates, and regularly reviews a language policy that helps to foster intercultural understanding through communicating in a variety of ways in more than one language (0301-04)

Coherent curriculum (0401)

- Teachers collaborate to design, plan and deliver the school's IB programme(s). (0401-02)
- Students as lifelong learners (0402)
- Students take ownership of their learning by setting challenging goals and pursuing personal inquiries. (0402-06)
- Students pursue opportunities to explore and develop their personal and cultural identities. (0402-07)

Approaches to teaching (0403):

Teachers remove barriers to learning to enable every student to develop, pursue, and achieve challenging personal learning goals. (0403-05)

Approaches to assessment (0404):

The school administers assessments consistently, fairly, inclusively, and transparently. (0404-03)

F. Practices and procedures to remove barriers to learning

Implementing inclusive practices and procedures aims to remove barriers to learning. The school keeps the following aspects in mind to ensure that it can remove barriers to learning:

School Organization and Resources:

- Ensure all practices align with the school's mission for inclusive education.
- Assist the leadership team in shaping and implementing these inclusive practices.
- Regularly review the curriculum to include diverse perspectives and meet the needs of all students, including those with learning disabilities.
- Use school-wide development processes to foster a culture of diversity and equity, supporting programs like Ramp and ALS classes.
- Ensure fair access to resources, particularly for students with diverse learning needs through systematic allocation of funds.
- Provide adequate human and material resources, such as maintaining a class size of 20 students and creating smaller learning groups supported by ALS teachers for Grades 1 to 5.
- Implement efficient lesson transitions to minimize disruptions and maximize learning time.
- Emphasize on providing ongoing training for teachers to better support diverse learners.
- Promote collaborative teaching methods where teachers share expertise and adapt instruction to meet diverse student needs.

Culture and Policies:

- Ensure staff adherence to school policies on diversity and equity.
- Provide training and support for teachers to address the needs of diverse learners effectively.
- Emphasize clear communication, training, and collaboration among staff and stakeholders.
- Foster a culture where everyone feels accountable for creating an inclusive environment.
- Encourage open dialogue and involvement in decisions related to diversity and equity.
- Encourage teachers to adopt a growth mindset to enhance student success and well-being.

Approaches to Teaching and Learning:

- Integrate diverse perspectives, cultures, and experiences into the curriculum to address human commonalities and diversity.
- Encourage teachers to design lessons that accommodate various learning styles and needs.
- Focus on inclusive teaching methods and awareness of diverse needs.
- Offer ongoing training for teachers, staff, and administrators to enhance strategies for student access and participation.
- Establish systems to share effective strategies, including resource repositories and regular training updates.
- Involve students, parents, and staff in developing inclusive practices to understand diverse learner needs.
- Ensure access arrangements and reasonable adjustments are consistently applied in educational programs to ensure equal opportunities for all learners.

Buildings and Physical Environment:

- Ensure school facilities are accessible to all community members.
- Encourage creativity and flexibility in reorganizing physical spaces and classrooms.

Community Relationships:

- Promote daily positive interactions to foster a supportive learning environment.
- Encourage open communication and active listening to ensure everyone feels valued and safe.
- Embed the learner profile into the school culture and curriculum to empower student agency and identity.
- Ensure educational practices align with learner profile principles to effectively support diverse learners.
- Promote collaborative practices among teachers, students, parents, and staff.
- Involve the school community in decision-making, problem-solving, and planning to enhance inclusion and belonging.

Primary Years Programme:

G) Additional Learning Support (ALS) Program in PYP

G.1 Objective of the Additional Learning Support Programme

- The school caters to a wide range of learning styles and challenges, including ADHD, communication, social, emotional, behavioral, and other learning difficulties.
- The school focuses on developing effective language skills for First-generation learners of English (FGL).
- The school provides academic assistance to any student who needs it, not limited to those with identified challenges.
- Depending on individual needs, the school may suggest external remediation or therapy.

Additional Learning Support (ALS) Roles:

- **Intra-Grade ALS:** Supports students with literacy, numeracy, and other learning needs within their grade.
- **Inter-Grade ALS:** Focuses on language development and assisting students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs).

G.2 Who can qualify for Additional Learning Support

A student who meets some or all of the following criteria can be considered for the ALS program:

- Learning English as first-generation or non-native speakers.
- Faces challenges understanding classroom instructions or grade-level texts.
- Does not meet expected language proficiency for their previous grade.
- Receives minimal English language learning support at home due to various reasons.
- Diagnosed with a condition hindering the learning process or facing medical challenges.
- Has needs affecting their own or others' learning consistently.
- Requires extra help in math to reach grade-level standards.
- Needs assistance within the classroom to stay on track academically.

G.3 Process to Identify Students for Additional Learning Support

The process of selecting students for the ALS program is designed to ensure inclusivity and fairness. In order to identify the appropriate level of intervention for each student, our school adopts the Response to Intervention model (RTI). RTI is a multi-tiered approach aimed at early identification and support for students with learning and behavioral needs. Key components of the RTI model, such as high-quality classroom instruction, ongoing student assessment, tiered and explicit instruction, and parent involvement are extensively implemented.

In addition to the RTI process, which examines a student's behavior and academic challenges in meeting grade-level learning outcomes, the selection criteria encompass various factors such as:

- Pre-assessment data
- Listening, Speaking, and Reading Assessment
- Class Observations
- Formal or Informal Testing Report
- Parental Involvement
- Review of the Individualised Educational Plan (if applicable)
- Consulting school counselor (if applicable)

This process is formally conducted twice in the year, initially at the beginning of year and subsequently in the middle of the year. The team involved in the process are students, ALS teachers and team leaders, Homeroom teachers, Counselors, Parents, and ALS Coordinator. Additionally, the school encourages and promotes active collaboration among all the individuals involved in the process throughout the year.

G.4 Access arrangement and support provided to the ALS students

- Provided to eligible students for task completion or assessments.
- Daily tasks and assessment worksheets provided with larger font size as needed.
- ALS teachers ensure explicit instructions and clarify expectations before tasks or assessments, including reading aloud questions if necessary.
- Students struggling with writing or organizing ideas are provided with a graphic organizer to aid learning and task completion.
- During assessments, a word bank sheet is provided to support students who may have difficulty recalling vocabulary.
- Students with mild dysgraphia may supplement written work with verbal expression as needed.
- Students struggling with math calculations are permitted to use a calculator for daily tasks and assessments.

G.5 Individualised Education Plan for the ALS Students

An Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is a document created for students with disabilities or identified as First-generation learners of English (FGL) to ensure they receive appropriate educational services and support. The purpose of an IEP is to:

- Tailors education to each student's needs.
- Identifies necessary accommodations.
- Sets goals and tracks progress.
- Specifies teaching strategies.
- Records meeting details and relevant family information.

The process involves:

1. Identifying the need for an IEP.
2. Meeting with parents and teachers to set goals.
3. Documenting strategies and details.
4. Regular observations and updates.
5. Quarterly summaries before parent meetings.

H. Responsibility of different stakeholders

H.1 Role of Additional Learning Support (ALS) Coordinator

- Organize ongoing training for teachers, including workshops on diversity and inclusion.
- Collect and analyze student performance and diversity data to identify and address gaps.
- Encourage teamwork among teachers, administrators, and support staff to implement inclusive practices.
- Ensure resources and support for diverse learners are maintained and advocate for their needs.
- Regularly evaluate the effectiveness of inclusive practices and provide feedback.
- Maintain open communication with parents and the community, encouraging involvement and feedback.
- Ensure student information confidentiality with the ALS team.
- Maintain data and records of students.
- Work with teachers, administrators, and support staff to implement inclusive strategies and accommodations.
- Help create and implement Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) for students with special needs.
- Guide parents on supporting their child's unique learning needs and facilitate communication between home and school.

H.2 Role of School Counselor

- Provide counseling services and interventions to address behavioral, social, and emotional concerns.
- Along with the Additional Learning Support teachers and Special Education Consultants, school counselors contribute in the development and implementation of Individualized Education Plans for students with special needs.
- Address issues related to bullying, discrimination, and social exclusion to create a more inclusive school culture.
- Work with parents to provide guidance on how to support their child's unique learning needs.
- Stay informed about the good practices in counseling and inclusion, attending relevant training and workshops to continually enhance skills and knowledge.

- Collect data to analyze students' well-being and social interactions; and track the impact of interventions.
- Organize events, workshops, and awareness campaigns that promote understanding and acceptance.

H.3 Role of teacher

- Modify teaching methods and assessments to meet diverse learning needs and abilities.
- Foster a welcoming classroom where all students feel valued, and bullying as well as discrimination are addressed.
- Work with the Additional Learning Support teacher to identify students with learning needs.
- Collect and analyze student performance data to identify areas needing additional support and adjust teaching accordingly.
- Design lesson plans using Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles to benefit all students.
- Maintain open communication with parents about their child's progress and how to support learning at home.
- Participate in ongoing training to improve inclusive teaching practices.
- Collaborate with colleagues to implement and promote inclusive policies and practices within the school.

H.4 Role of student

- Encourage respect and acceptance of diversity by valuing different backgrounds, abilities, and perspectives; opposing bullying or discrimination.
- Show kindness and support to peers, especially those with different needs or backgrounds.
- Speak up for their own needs and those of peers, communicating challenges to teachers or counselors.
- Offer help to classmates who may need it.
- Engage in discussions and activities, encouraging all classmates to contribute.
- Provide constructive feedback to teachers and administrators to improve the learning environment.
- Organize events or campaigns to promote understanding and acceptance of diversity.
- Report bullying, discrimination, or exclusion to maintain a safe, inclusive environment.

H.5 Role of parents

- Maintain regular communication with teachers and counselors to ensure their child's needs are met.
- Learn about the school's learning diversity and inclusion policies.
- Attend parent-teacher conferences, IEP meetings, and school events to stay updated on their child's progress.
- Be supportive of any accommodations or modifications made for their child or other students.

- Offer constructive feedback to teachers and administrators to help improve the learning environment.
- Demonstrate inclusive behavior and attitudes at home and in the community.
- Participate in school activities and discussions to support their child's education and inclusion.

Middle Years and Diploma Programme:

I. Addressing learning diversity in Senior School at Fountainhead School

I.1 Criteria to admit students with different educational needs in the Middle Years Programme and Diploma Years Programme

If the student's abilities don't affect his/her capability to meet the demands of the programme, then the school will admit the student. This will be assessed by looking at the psychological reports which are prepared by the relevant experts in the field as well as assessing students based on the school's academic requirements.

In addition, the following conditions need to be fulfilled for granting admission.

- The school and/or the parent is able to find the right supporting teacher (who is able to provide support as listed later in this document) for the same if a special educator is necessary. The school is committed to exploring various options to support the student effectively.
- The parents are willing to bear the expenses of any such support provided.

I.2 Approaches and strategies for meeting the needs of students:

Teachers' focus on:

- Student's key strength areas, to build their confidence and ensuring that students are motivated to learn.
- Assisting students in surpassing their learning difficulties through providing special assistance.
- Ensuring that students get first-hand learning experience by implementing active learning strategies.
- Providing a range of activities so as to ensure differentiation in learning.
- Matching the demand or expectations to the level of attainment.
- Using simple and clear language by starting with the student's mother tongue or the language they are most familiar with.
- Provision of extra time for completion of class assignments and assessments.

I.3 Access Arrangement for assessments ([Link to Assessment policy.](#))

- Early detection and identification is vital for access arrangements. The school wellbeing counselor stays in touch with the parents regarding the concerns and also encourages them for active help and participation for the identified cases, in terms of supporting the students as well as getting the necessary tests, reports and previous records as required.

- For early identification of critical cases, a checklist (refer [Appendix B](#)) is prepared for the teachers so that they can ask for well being counselor intervention or testing as applicable.
- The school wellbeing counselor informs the teachers about the nature of the support required for teaching and learning at the beginning of every academic year.
- The school well being counselor and the mentor teachers assess and monitor the students progress in line with existing school practices. This is an ongoing process.
- The student is provided with necessary access arrangements for school assessments. This may take the form of extra time for the candidate, usage of word processor / reader / writer and / or others as prescribed by IB [Access and Inclusion policy](#).
- The Senior School principal/Programme Coordinator and Assessment Coordinator (MYP) are part of this decision-making along with the counselor and teacher.
- While taking a decision on this, the student's past performance, educational evidence and medical report/ psychologist's report (if any) is taken into consideration.
- If there is no report available the well-being counselors talk to parents and inform them about the report requirement.
- In case, if the parent doesn't want to avail inclusive access arrangements then the parent has to send an email to the school that they don't require access arrangement although the school is ready to provide it.

Final IB exams

- Consent is taken from the parent for application of inclusive access arrangement as per IB requirement. ([Appendix C](#))
- Educational evidence is taken from the subject teacher, scanned and saved.
- Psychological report from a psychologist has to be provided. The report once provided is scanned and saved.
- The Inclusive access arrangement request is filled by the Programme Coordinator.
- Once approved by IB, an email is sent to students and their parents informing them about the access arrangements granted to the student.
- An email is also sent to all students and parents in case any student is suffering from color blindness.
- In case of students having medical issues or color blindness, a medical report is taken from the parents. Based on the medical report, access arrangements are provided.
- A print of this approval is taken and kept with exam material for IB exams for reference.
- In all cases, IB "[Access and Inclusion policy](#)" published in September 2022 is followed.
- In case of any adverse circumstances during the examination, the IB process of Adverse circumstances is followed.

J. Remediation and Therapy outside School

On a case to case basis the school may recommend additional support outside the school in the form of remediation or therapy.

K. Grade Repetition

The school may recommend a student to repeat a grade in the following cases:

- The student continues to make little to no progress in the identified areas of concern
- The student continues to have significant difficulty in acquiring and/or developing literacy and numeracy skills.

Parental agreement is needed for grade repetition.

L. Conditions that pose a risk to the student continuing education at FS

At any point of time, the school may decide to reconsider a student's admission if there is evidence of one or more of the following conditions:

- The student has emotional, behavioral or social needs which regularly and significantly affects the child's or others' learning
- The student has sensory or physical needs which require intensive additional specialist equipment or regular advice or visits from a specialist service which the school does not provide
- Parental support (emotionally, socially or otherwise) is not appropriate or as per expectations of the school, especially if this lack of support is actively hampering the student's growth
- The school is unable to add reasonable value to the student's education and overall development, whatever is the cause of the limitation.
- The school will be the final authority responsible for considering the above conditions and taking a final decision on cancellation of admission.

M. Professional Development of teachers

Teachers are given opportunities to attend workshops to build on their skills and work on their approach to cater to inclusion. Fountainhead School is closely associated with Gateway School of Mumbai¹ to receive guidance and training through visits and workshops. INSET (In Service training) by school counselors prepares teachers to screen students and cater to their needs accordingly.

N. Sensitization of teachers

School workshops are conducted to sensitize other teachers about different ways to handle a student's challenging behavior and at times students whose behaviors interfere with learning in the classroom. Regular meetings are conducted with the mentor teacher and subject teachers in the senior school and with

¹ The Gateway School of Mumbai (<https://www.gatewayschoolmumbai.org/>) is dedicated to empowering children with learning challenges - along with their families and the professionals that support them.

the homeroom teacher (HRT) and ALS teacher in the junior school to ensure a smooth transition between in-class teaching and pull-out classes.

O. Sensitization of students

The purpose is to explain to students about the needs of the differently abled and bring awareness.

Sensitization sessions take place in the classroom set up at regular intervals or as per need. The sessions are typically led by homeroom teachers/ mentor teachers/ ALS teachers / counselors as per need.

P. Connection with other school policies

a) Language Policy

Many ALS students fall under the category of First Generation English learners (FGL), having zero support for English at home or being diagnosed with a condition that inhibits learning process. Additional support enables students to access the school language curriculum in a manner that allows them to reach their full potential. The ALS programme initiated by school lays a lot of weightage on the developmental process of learning language through listening, speaking, reading and writing. The language policy clearly talks about the additional support in the PYP [FS Language Policy](#)

b) Assessment Policy

Student's diverse learning needs are monitored against personal and academic goals. Performance is measured at a given point of time to analyze data to inform teaching and learning. Evidence of the student's learning is compiled and documented. Reports allow to share progress and achievements of student's learning with relevant stakeholders.

Details of assessments are further available in the assessment policy [FS Assessment Policy](#)

Q. Policy Revision

The learning diversity policy is reviewed after 4 years based on the latest IB Inclusion and Access policy. The current policy has been reviewed in the year 2024.

The review committee is led by a member of the academic leadership team and includes representation from the school community. The review committee ensures that any revision to the policy is coherent with the beliefs and values of the IBO, the school's philosophy towards inclusion and additional learning support, changes in student and community demographics or other circumstances which justify the need for revision.

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S. Appendices

Appendix 1: Checklist for teachers to identify students who need counselor intervention in Senior School

The following checklist of "early warning signs" will facilitate identifying students who may need intervention. The greater the number of items that are checked, the greater the potential for behavior issues			
The steps in evaluation are as follows:			
Step 1	Teacher(s) and counselors make careful observation of the child's behavior in the school		
Step 2	Teacher informs the parents		
Step 3	Parents make careful observation of the child's behavior at home		
Step 4	Parents, teachers and counselors conduct a meeting about concerns		
Step 5	Counselor obtains complete history and suggests necessary strategies to both parents and teachers		
Step 6	Counselors review the behavior to check for improvement if any		
Step 7	Counselors refer the child for psychological testing if no improvement is seen		
Sr. No	Category	Indicators	Tick if present
1	Academics	Consistent academic failure in terms of scores, submissions	
2	Academics	Not interested in most of the classroom activities	
3	Academics	Has learning difficulties	
4	Academics	Non-English speaking home environment	
5	Academics	Sudden decline in academics	
6	Academics	Bunking the classes	
7	Addictions & Overuse	Engages in substance abuse like consumption of alcohol, drugs, cigarettes	
8	Addictions & Overuse	Overuse of gadgets like mobile, laptops in terms of internet and Social Media	
9	Addictions & Overuse	Addicted to Pornography	
10	Parental & Family	Family history of the existing behavior means anyone in the family showcasing similar behavior like extreme aggression	
11	Parental & Family	Conflict in the family	
12	Parental & Family	Sibling rivalry	
13	Parental & Family	Raised by a single parent	
14	Parental & Family	Non techno-savvy parent	
15	Parental & Family	No parental involvement in school	
16	Parental & Family	Numerous family responsibilities	
17	Socio-emotional	Presence of Rebelliousness / Opposition: - Being unusually angry and irritable - Being easily annoyed - Arguing with authority - Refusal to follow rules - Deliberately annoying people - Blame others for mistakes - Being vindictive	
18	Socio-emotional	Has friends who engage in problem behavior like bullying, substance abuse, etc	
19	Socio-emotional	Existing behavior has been noticed since childhood by the parents, other students or teachers	

20	Socio-emotional	Anger issues	
21	Socio-emotional	Indicators of lower self-esteem like scared while talking to people, think low about self	
22	Socio-emotional	Gets bullied frequently	
23	Socio-emotional	Tendency to take revenge	
24	Socio-emotional	Frequent lying	
25	Socio-emotional	Has attention-seeking tendencies	
26	Socio-emotional	Failure in personal relationships	
27	Socio-emotional	Getting uncomfortably physically close to the teachers/peers	
28	Socio-emotional	Children who are older in age as compared to their classmates	
29	Socio-emotional	Lack of psychological attachment with school: For example involved more in school for extracurricular activities	
30	Socio-emotional	Gets into fights frequently with many students/peers	
31	Socio-emotional	Tendency to harm self	
		https://childmind.org/article/what-is-odd-oppositional-defiant-disorder/	

Appendix 2 - Parent consent format for application of inclusive access arrangement (to be used for MYP eAssessments & DP exams)

Date: _____

I, parent of _____ give my consent to apply for inclusive access arrangements in the International Baccalaureate exams for _____ session. I authorize the school to use copies of my ward's medical/psychological testing records for IB exam registration. I also grant the IB permission to receive and review my ward's records, and to discuss the reports and needs with school personnel and other professionals.

The school will submit this request with the supporting documents to the IB solely for the purpose evaluation of the assessment arrangement request, and IB will treat all information about a candidate as confidential.

Parent's sign: _____