



Supporting the Needs of Students of Determination via Distance Learning at Safa British School

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Introduction

This policy acts as an appendix to the SBS Inclusion Policy (2019/20), More Able Gifted & Talented Policy (2019/20) and SBS Emergency Closure Policy (2020) and therefore, should be considered alongside these guidance documents. It aims to address inclusive provision at Safa British School (SBS) during an extended period of distance learning. This policy covers the array of aspects that must be considered during such a time. Ensuring that the SBS mission, *to unlock the potential of every learner*, is upheld throughout a period of distance learning. Equity of provision and opportunity continue to be a pillar of the SBS community.

We recognise that Students of Determination (SoD) can be particularly vulnerable as they cope with changes in their daily routine outside of the school environment and with not seeing their friends or teachers. Keeping the pupil connected to learning and to the school through engagement with their teachers, peers and the LINK team is critical for SoD at such a time. Taking this into account, SBS is committed to promoting the emotional wellbeing and successful progress of SoDs during a distance learning period. This document outlines the methods in which this will be achieved.

This policy is divided into 3 parts. The first part outlines the roles and responsibilities of all those involved with inclusive education during distance learning. The second part directly addresses KHDA guidance for SoD during distance learning. Here, we outline how SBS plan to fulfill these expectations. The final part provides details of all how distance learning will be implemented, covering aspects contributing to successful inclusion support during a period of distance learning.

KHDA guidance has been sourced at: <https://www.khda.gov.ae/en/safetyatschools> with ongoing reference to the policy documents: Dubai Inclusive Education Framework (2017), Implementing Inclusive Education - A Guide for Schools (2019); DIRECTIVES AND GUIDELINES FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION- A Handbook For Schools (2020)

Part 1 : Roles and Responsibilities

The Role of Mainstream Class Teachers

Class teachers continue to have overall responsibility for the education of pupils, including Students of Determination. During the closure period, mainstream class teachers should

continue to differentiate tasks appropriately to match the learning needs of students of determination. They should gauge the success of this differentiated approach through assessment of pupils' efforts. Where possible they should provide regular feedback to parents and guardians and pupils on days and times that have been agreed. Mainstream class teachers should consult with the LINK team to ensure a coordinated whole-school approach to supporting Students of Determination.

The Role of the LINK Team

The LINK team is pivotal in ensuring that there is continuity in the learning of Students of Determination under the guidance of the Director of Inclusion. The LINK team should therefore be regularly communicating and engaging with their LINK students. The LINK team's knowledge of their students' priority learning needs and agreed targets as outlined in the IEP will enable them to work with parents and guardians to choose appropriate supports in a remote learning environment. The LINK team carefully examine how progress on the existing learning targets can be reasonably extended by home learning. They should use this knowledge to communicate with the pupils and their parents and guardians and to establish what methods will work best to achieve continuity of learning for the pupils. In supporting the learning of pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, the following are important elements of the LINK team's role:

- Liaising with mainstream class teachers to ensure an appropriate programme of work for the Students of Determination; the program should, as far as possible, be personalised to the pupil's needs;
- Reviewing the student's IEP to identify aspects of the program that can be worked on in the home environment;
- Identifying and using technological and resource options available to the teacher and the student to support learning;
- Supporting parents and guardians, where possible and practicable, to use the technology and learning platforms used by the school to support student engagement with learning;
- Deliver ongoing interventions on a 1:1 and small group basis, ensuring that progress is maintained and developed during the home learning period.

The Role of the Senior Leadership Team

SLT will continue to have a key role in monitoring and affirming the whole school effort to ensure consistency and promote sharing of practice. This team, comprising: the Principal, Vice Principal, Director of Inclusion, Pastoral Lead, and those with assigned management or coordination duties, each have a defined role in encouraging and supporting teachers as they

develop their practices towards distance learning for Students of Determination and ensuring support for teachers' wellbeing as they engage with new challenges.

Part 2 : Distance Learning Planning

a. Individual Education Planning

All Individual Education Plans (IEP) will be altered to reflect the new context of the learning programme. For Students of Determination, who experience the most significant barriers to learning, this will mean that goals and activities will need to be altered so that they can be applied as part of a life-skills based programme in the home.

Monthly IEP meetings will take place via Zoom during distance learning. Parents will be provided with the opportunity to meet with members of the Inclusion Department and discuss progress, concerns, support and new goals each month. IEPs are monitored and reviewed throughout the distance learning period. IEPs are sent via Google Drive which provides a live document to ensure parents, teachers, therapists and specialists can stay updated on any amendments to IEPs.

b. Access to Online Learning

Teachers will adapt and differentiate the curriculum to consider the needs, abilities and learning preferences of students of determination. Teachers ensure that each lesson has a range of challenges available to meet the needs of all students. Students that require additional support during lessons will receive small group of 1:1 guidance following the lesson from the class teacher or teaching assistants.

Teachers will also ensure that they maintain their students' levels of engagement, participation and progress. Where concerns are raised surrounding pupil progress or engagement, the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) are informed. SLT follow up with a procedure to work with the family to alleviate any barriers and encourage attendance. Lessons are tailored to the student and small group alternatives may be offered.

c. Continued Specialist Support

For Students of Determination that access specialist services, such as speech and language therapy and ABA, as a key part of their educational programme we encourage this provision to continue where distance remote services are available.

Parents are provided with training opportunities from our partnered therapy centers via Webinar. For those parents that required bespoke guidance, our BCBA will provide individual consultations on how to utilise applied behavioural analysis (ABA) strategies at home. This aims to ensure all parents are equipped with the skills and knowledge to support their child's individual needs.

d. Learning Support Assistants and Teachers

Learning Support Assistants (LSA) and Learning Support Teachers (LST) make up the LINK team. The LINK team play a vital role in supporting the educational programme for Students of Determination. Under the supervision of the Director of inclusion and class teacher, the LINK team play a key role in supporting and monitoring the IEP program and the associated targets.

The LINK team provide ongoing interventions, small group and 1:1 support to SoDs throughout the distance learning period. All sessions are tailored to individual student needs and are a consistent continuation of the support received at school. LINK support is provided in various formats, including but not limited to: live Zoom sessions, informative videos, differentiated work tasks, 'virtual LSA' class support, targeted interventions for specific learning difficulties, mindfulness breaks and virtual social skills groups.

e. Non-Engaging Students

Where a SoD is unable to access distance learning, SBS provides alternative programmes that can be applied at home. Each programme is created in collaboration with the Director of Inclusion, parents and BCBA. The programme takes account of the students' needs and the parent's confidence in delivering home learning. Tasks may take the form of a life-skills based approach in which every day activities are used to embed skills. The parent is provided ongoing support and guidance from the LINK department and the approach is reviewed and adapted on an ongoing basis.

Part 3 : Implementation of Distance Learning

a. Interventions

The LINK team deliver interventions to all Level 2 and Level 3 students wherever possible and appropriate. Live interventions are delivered by specialist LSTs and LSAs via Zoom and pre-recorded video sessions are sent via SeeSaw. Each week, students will have live sessions

with each of their intervention teachers. All evidence-based intervention programs used at SBS will be tailored for distance learning and continue from the most recent point to ensure progress is maintained and advanced.

During distance learning, LINK interventions are provided to support the following areas of need: Social and Emotional skills, Maths, Literacy, Communication and Language, Mindfulness and with Motor skills. Each LINK student will receive a personal weekly LINK timetable to supplement their class timetable. This live document is updated with the activities and sessions they are to attend and complete each week, in response to their individual next steps.

b. Virtual ILSAs

Where a student is unable to meet the demands of the mainstream classroom, despite differentiation and LINK interventions, they may be provided with a Virtual Independent Learning Support Assistant (ILSA). In this instance, an ILSA will provide 1:1 teaching for core subjects and IEP targets each day of the week with the student via Zoom. The ILSA works in collaboration with the LINK team and class teacher to deliver daily lessons at the students' level and pace. This support is highly individualised and maintains a focus on IEP goals and core subject progression.

c. Monitoring & Evaluation

Quality assurance of LINK provision is crucial for ensuring the consistent provision required to drive SoD progress during distance learning. This is done by means of regular 'Learning Views' comprising: informal and formal observations of live lessons; ongoing monitoring of uploaded student work; regular review of tasks set; and parent and pupil feedback surveys.

The LINK team complete daily tracking documents which records student attendance and performance within interventions. LINK Seesaw files are monitored to evaluate uploaded student work. Students are assessed from individual starting points described in their IEPs on the work they complete during live sessions with the LINK team. IEP goal completion and engagement in live LINK sessions offers a measurement of progress and achievement during the home learning period.

d. Support for Parents

Supporting parents to successfully and confidently deliver home learning is key to its success. Parents are encouraged to communicate with the LINK team informally via the Seesaw platform's instant messenger. This is available to all LINK parents and responses

from the LINK team are swift. Each month parents are invited to a LINK team parent-teacher conference via Zoom as an addition to the monthly class teacher meetings. Therefore, parents of LINK children have fortnightly Zoom meetings with teachers. This provides regular opportunities to share successes, challenges and receive guidance and support.

SBS organises regular parent webinars with specialists such as councilors, therapists, psychologist and BCBA's. This offers all parents access to information on specific areas of need. SBS plans these talks in response to common parent and student challenges to provide guidance on a wider scale.

e. More Able Gifted & Talented (MAGT) Students

MAGT Students will continue to receive additional provision to ensure they are stretched, challenged and engaged with learning. Expectations are continuously high at all levels, individual student goals drive lesson planning and provision across school. Whole class differentiation offers challenge and extension tasks in each core subject, and all MAGT students are encouraged to complete these daily. The gifted students will continue to be a part of the *Highflyers* club, meeting weekly via Zoom to tackle advanced project-based challenges in English, Maths or Science from home. Specialist teachers also ensure extended tasks are provided to identified MAGT students via SeeSaw class. All class teachers provide their cohort with a MAGT SeeSaw folder, this contains an array of challenging tasks and is updated regularly.

f. Student Well being

Student wellbeing is of utmost importance and a key consideration in the provision of distance learning. Student wellbeing is monitored rigorously throughout, and concerns are responded to swiftly. SBS collects information on student wellbeing in many ways; via student and parent surveys, 1:1 student wellbeing interviews, parent teacher conferences and class teacher referral. All concerns are logged on CPOMS which centralises and shares information with the relevant officers and records all actions. Healthy wellbeing is encouraged daily through: 'Snack & Chat' opportunities to engage with peers, mindfulness breaks, physical exercise tasks, drop-in well-being clinics, and LINK social and emotional interventions for identified students. Councilors and external professionals are referred where required for bespoke support. Specialist webinars and 1:1 parent conferencing with the LINK team is in place to ensure parents are informed on strategies and guidance to support anxious children. In addition, SBS have created a Wellbeing website for students and parents to access advice, activities, guidance, video tutorials and tips on healthy emotional and physical wellbeing at home.