

Ambassador International Academy

Inclusion Policy

Ambassador International Academy works towards creating responsible universal citizens who will be bright leaders of the 21st century by laying a superior foundation through quality education. We believe that every child is unique and strive to provide a well-rounded educational programme that is suitable for the diverse intellectual, social, emotional and physical developments of all the students irrespective of their starting points. We work comprehensively with a wide range of learners including Able, Gifted and Talented, and Special Educational Needs. The school ensures maximum benefits from counselling and related services for all so as to ensure that each child is allowed a life with dignity and care.

Aim

At Ambassador International Academy we aim to inspire all children, including the determined ones, to be passionate lifelong learners through a curriculum with pedagogical integrity, which allows them always to inquire, innovate and contribute in meaningful ways to society. The learning environment encourages and supports the active involvement and inclusion of every student; physically, academically, socially, emotionally and culturally. All are provided with equal opportunities for quality education and to become independent, valued, competent, skilled members of the school and wider community. They are given the opportunities to live with dignity and care in a fully inclusive environment.

Policy Statement

It is the policy of Ambassador International Academy to appreciate the individuality of each student who comes into our care, and to support and nurture their physical, intellectual, emotional, social, and cultural development, irrespective of their starting point. The school believes in treating everyone as individuals and welcomes students with a range of learning and related difficulties.

The school has the duty of recognising children with special education needs as fully participating members of a community of learners and believes in the Social Model. All students should have equitable access to learning, opportunities for achievement, and the pursuit of excellence in all aspects of their educational program. The school will ensure that full inclusion of the determined learners is facilitated through adherence to the Special Education guidelines adopted by the school.

Objectives:

- To provide detailed information about the arrangements for identifying, assessing and making provision for all the Determined Learners by establishing learning environments that encourage and support the active involvement and inclusion of every student, physically, academically, socially, emotionally and culturally;
- To ensure equality of provision for all the determined learners;
- To take into account legislation related to DETERMINED LEARNERS including the new inclusion framework and UAE federal law 2006 and 2009 and Dubai Law no.2 (2014) which clearly demonstrates the commitment to ensure the educational and social inclusion of all children, adults and families experiencing Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). These laws reflect the international best practices and align with UAE's Ratification Of the UNCRPD, Particularly article 24, on the rights of Inclusive education. (Annexures of article Executive Council Resolution No. (2) of 2017 Regulating Private Schools in the Emirate of Dubai and Law No. (2) of 2014 Concerning Protection of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the Emirate of Dubai (attached for reference);
- To provide full access to all students to a broad and balanced curriculum according to their needs;
- To ensure that the Determined Learners are identified, assessed, supported and regularly reviewed to improve outcomes;

- To enable determined learners to achieve their potential in all the areas of development, by raising their level of progress, irrespective of their abilities;
- To ensure parents/care givers are fully engaged in decision making;
- To consider the views, interests and feelings of students;
- To embrace Inclusion for all students and ensure integration in all the activities of the school;
- To ensure effective collaboration with parents, teachers, specialized professionals and other service providers, including the members of the multi-disciplinary team working with Determined Learners.

Practice and Procedure

Whilst it is acknowledged that children have different starting points and progress at different rates, particularly during their early years, we consider that reasonable adjustments may have to be made to the school environment, curriculum or delivery in order to make the experience of learning more successful for some children. This may be a transient or an ongoing need. We also acknowledge that students who have been identified as determined learners may also be second language learners or Able, Gifted & Talented.

We consider a student to be Determined Learner if he or she:

- Is experiencing significant difficulties achieving his/her learning goals, when compared with his/her peers (though it is acknowledged that this may be a developmental delay rather than a learning difficulty or it can be a challenge in reading, writing, numbers or comprehending the instructions);
- Has a disability which may prevent him/her from making use of our educational facilities due to sensory or issues like difficulties in attention span, organizing skills or completion of tasks etc;
- Experiences significant communication and/or social interaction difficulties;
- Persistent emotional and/or behavioural difficulties;

Identification

A student might be identified as having a Special Educational Need/Individual Need as a result of any of the following:

- Referrals are accepted from the Teacher/Head of Academics/Principal/Parents/Student;
- Parent referral or self-referral will proceed for intervention by just signing in the consent form;
- Teachers may notice problems in terms of academics or behaviour;
- Teachers will provide differentiated activities, make their observation, anecdotal notes for two to three weeks depending on the child's need;
- Observations by the Inclusion Team to confirm the challenges reported by the teachers before approaching the parents;
- To identify the child's needs informal testing tools are used for assessment apart from CAT4 /ASSET/Internal Assessment and Observations from teachers/Counsellors/Special Educators;
- The Head of Inclusion/Special Educator/Counsellor may suggest to parents/guardians that an assessment of the student's needs should be conducted by an outside agency, such as by an Educational Psychologist, Speech and Language Therapist or Occupational Therapist. Head of Inclusion will liaise and support as appropriate;
- Apart from referrals from teachers/parents/students, the inclusion team also keeps a track of academic and related performances of children across the school. These are continually monitored against the CAT4/ASSET and Summative and formative assessments. When a student fails to meet the minimum target expectations, a referral is made by the teacher;
- Some children may already have been identified as having Special Educational Needs by outside agencies, on entry to the school.

Admissions to the School

At Ambassador International Academy, an assessment is made on entry to ensure that new students have the potential to meet academic standards and the school has suitable structures to cater to their educational needs. Additional assessments may be set where there is doubt over a prospective student's ability to achieve the School's normal academic standards. These additional assessments for school readiness are carried out by the Head of Inclusion or Special Educator.

To ensure total compliance with the regulation stated in the Federal Law 29(UAE) & the new Inclusion Policy, certain other factors which may influence the admission decisions for the students with determination at Ambassador International Academy are as follows:

- Type of support required;
- Full disclosure of medical history;
- Parental support and compliances to specific recommendations from school;
- Level of difficulty (Current level of functioning lower than 2yrs from expected. In the case of Autistic children, the level of autism may play a significant role);
- Recommendations by professionals;
- Facilities/resources available in the school to meet the child's specific needs;
- Child's readiness to be included in the mainstream school.

Teaching and Learning

We aim to provide a graduated approach to the support we provide for children who have been identified as having a Special Educational Need and/or Disability that ensures:

- Any individual's Special Educational Needs and/or Disability are identified early, and each student has his/her individual need met (where appropriate);
- Action is determined in consultation with the parents and classroom teachers;
- The views of the child are taken into account (wherever possible);
- Provision and progress are monitored and reviewed regularly;

- A collaborative approach to challenges is adopted, using the experience and expertise of all the staff and the child's parents/guardians, plus outside agencies (when appropriate);
- Disciplinary procedures are NOT used inappropriately to deal with children whose behaviour may not fit the norm or who have congenital conditions (such as Asperger's Syndrome, ASD, Tourette's Syndrome);
- Support provided will be in line with UAE Federal Law on special education;
- Ensure that classroom teachers and other educators working in an inclusive common learning environment will be able to;
 - i. Demonstrate and apply knowledge and understanding of values and principles of inclusive education;
 - ii. Be proficient in inclusive education techniques, curricular modification, personalisation of learning objectives and assessment strategies;
 - iii. Work with parents, caregivers and professionals to develop appropriate individual education plans for individual students who have SEND;
 - iv. Collaborate effectively with parents, other teachers, specialized professionals and other service providers, including those working as members of a multi-disciplinary team;
 - v. Unite with support teams to create opportunities that facilitate the meaningful participation of all students in the common learning environment (e.g., lesson planning, classroom set-up, student groups);
 - vi. Prioritise student relationship building, followed by familiarity with the student's learning characteristics, performance levels, and personalized learning outcomes;
 - vii. Apply formative assessment, universal design for learning, differentiation and other learner-centered activities, so that students can pursue and achieve curricular-based learning goals.

Differentiation and Inclusion

It is the whole school approach which ensures that all students are catered through modifications in content/process/assessments and accommodations to meet the needs of individual student. The teachers, in consultation with Special Educators, ensure they have knowledge of the student's level in order to differentiate according to each student's individual needs. In most cases, a student's individual need will be met within the classroom by the class/subject teacher. At this level the students may not be included in the SEND register.

- A solution focused approach will be adopted whenever possible.
- The student's progress will be monitored and reviewed regularly.
- Parents will be kept informed of their child's progress and are invited to contribute to termly reviews.
- The Head of Inclusion or Special Educators will be available to offer advice on home plans, strategies and interventions to both the teachers and the parents.

School Action

- Student placed in School Action may or may not have formal diagnosis.
- IAP (Individual Action Plan) for each student provides strategies to the teachers to work with the student.
- Training and awareness are promoted through in-service training.
- In class support may also be provided through a Modified Curriculum/Differentiation/Accommodations.
- Students will be provided pull-out and in-class sessions for short period of time and receive small group or 1:1 session at Learning Centre.
- Withdrawal from sessions will only be considered if the support deemed necessary cannot be delivered within the classroom situation or if the student has an outside agency report.

School Action Plus

- Students with diagnosis will be placed in School Action Plus.
- IEP (Individualised Education Plan) will be prepared which will provide detailed Support for differentiation, modification and accommodation.
- In class support may also be provided by an LSA (if appropriate) along with Modified Curriculum/Differentiation /Accommodations.
- Special Educators will be responsible for maintaining the student's profile; a record of their educational history, identification, intervention and progress.
- Students will be provided pull-out and in-class sessions for short period of time and/or also receive small group or 1:1 session at Learning Centre/ Happiness Centre.
- Withdrawal from sessions will only be considered if the support deemed necessary cannot be delivered within the classroom situation or if the student has an outside agency report.
- A student requiring a significant level of academic support may elect not to study Arabic or Second Foreign Language, but rather use this time to work on their additional learning program. Such exemptions in Arabic are sought through KHDA in coordination with school Arabic PRO or secretary as per the KHDA guidelines.

Behaviour Intervention

Behaviour intervention is provided by the counsellor to those with challenging behaviour. At primary school level an Individualised Behaviour Plan (IBP) is provided which will provide strategies to handle the behaviour. The A-B-C (Antecedent – Behaviour - Consequence) factors and the frequency of challenging behaviour are recorded to help plan the IBP.

Provisions

Provisions and exemptions may also be provided as per the needs of the student. The following is the list of provisions available:

- Modified curriculum – curriculum is simplified to the student's level;
- Modified assessment - tailored to concepts that the student has been taught and methods they will be able to attempt;
- Exemption from languages;
- Learning Support Teacher (shadow) in class;
- Peer Mentoring for the students.

Assessment and Record Keeping

Review

At the end of each term, IEP/ IAP meeting with the team comprising parents, teachers, special educators, LSA is scheduled to evaluate student progress and discuss new goals. The Student may have goals in the classroom environment to be handled by the teacher, TA, LSA or special educator depending on the specific, and need which are tracked and monitored consistently.

Weaning off Learning Centre Support Criteria

Student may be weaned off support services if found to be making consistent progress in IEP goals and grade marks over a period of consecutive 3 terms.

- The aim is to make the student an independent learner and avoid dependency on people and prompt.
- The cut off mark for goal achievement is 50% in class grades and 70% in IEP goals.
- The student may also be placed in the appropriate level according to the SEND graduated response – Moving from School Action to Differentiation, School Action to School Action Plus or vice versa.
- However, they will be closely monitored for any regression and appropriate support will be provided by the team - parents, teachers, therapists and special educators.

Goals are tracked on a tracking sheet with the keys WT - Working Towards, ME - Met Expectation, EE- Exceeding Expectation by the respective personnel.

Record Keeping, Differentiation and Inclusion

It is the responsibility of the Inclusion Head to keep an updated register (Determined Learners Provision Map) of the Determined Learners and their Needs/ Disabilities. The Determined Learners Provision Map of every child is shared with and explained to the Head of School, Heads of Academics and teachers. It is the responsibility of individual teachers to ensure they have knowledge of the Provision Map and to create differentiation for students with individual needs.

Students on the Determined Learners Provision Map will have a summary of need and strategies for support. Students who are withdrawn from lessons to attend specific teaching with the special educator at the department will have an Individual Educational Plan (IEP). These are reviewed termly and contain specific targets and advice for support, differentiation and inclusion strategies.

The Special Educator will maintain adequate records for each student receiving interventions with details of their students' case history, therapy logs, class observation logs, communications logs, IEPs, term reports, LSA records (where appropriate), daily logs etc.

Staffing and Resources

The Inclusion Head (Inclusion Champion) who is accountable to the Inclusion Governor is being supported by the Inclusion support team. The Inclusion support team involves the Principal, specialists from Special Education, Counsellors, Therapists, Support Assistants, Subject Heads, LSA's and the Student Council Inclusion Head who provides support for the students through classrooms on all matters related to academic/behavioural challenges. The Inclusion department aims to be a whole-school resource that covers an ever-changing, diverse set of needs. The department is issued with an annual budget for basic materials and training.

Training

1. Teachers

- Whole school CPDs are conducted at the beginning and end of each term to impart awareness on different categories of SEN that the teachers can expect in class and the SEND policy giving details on the intervention process & strategies.
- Grade wise teacher meeting along with the respective SLT are conducted to discuss and coordinate individual student needs. Transition meetings are held during the beginning of academic year to handover student files and information is shared to help prepare the new teacher to welcome the student.
- Meetings are held between the individual teacher and special educator on a need basis other than the scheduled ones to help with any challenges like behaviour, accommodation, modification.
- CPDs and meetings are conducted for the teachers, and other educational staff, to train them in inclusive education techniques, or if not, develop a personal learning plan to acquire this knowledge and skill within a time bound period. School budget has provision for exclusive budget for Inclusive Training of staff.
- Ensure that each teacher, and other educational staff, demonstrates confidence and proficiency in fulfilling his or her professional responsibility towards each student in an inclusive setting, given appropriate resources, coaching and support.
- Ensure that teachers have access to and use new technologies, including information and communications technologies, mobility aids, devices and assistive technologies considered essential for meeting the needs of individual students, specifically those who require SEN.

2. Support for LSAs

- Regular meetings with LSAs to discuss the challenges faced by them in the classrooms and helping them with the resources and links according to each child's needs.

- Peer Mentoring for LSAs through classroom observations for learning specific techniques of behaviour management.
- Modelling the LSAs for smooth transitions in the classrooms and to make them understand about fading and prompting.
- Mentoring on progress tracking and data collection in relation to the child.

3. Parents

- We strongly advocate the role of productive parental involvement in the education of their children. Parents are welcome to approach the Learning Centre at any point in time other than the scheduled meetings, with a prior appointment preferably.
- The support group for the parents of determined learners has been created to facilitate parents with the information required for the overall development of the children.
- It also provides us with opportunities to provide a triangular support to the students. It is a step in this direction with the intent of meeting periodically to work towards the following objectives:
 - i. Enhance the progress of students through better understanding of the processes implemented;
 - ii. Develop mutual support systems for the parents that will be facilitated by professionals in school;
 - iii. Share and seek information which will facilitate student.

COUNSELLING POLICY

Counselling at Ambassador International Academy is offered to assist students to develop appropriate skills and attitudes, to resolve problems in academic, psychological, emotional, and/or social contexts and achieve a balanced quality of life. Counselling is done within the framework of the whole school community, involving staff, parents and professionals as required.

Aims:

- To work at preventive, promotive, curative and rehabilitative levels;
- To render personalised and general counselling;
- Early identification, assessment and adequate treatment plan;
- Comprehensive coordinated treatment, rehabilitation and aftercare;
- In-depth analysis and subsequent intervention at various environmental levels, such as; personal, family and school;
- Effective handling of counselling work at clinic, community and organisation level;
- To liaise with special educator, teachers, parents, and the Principal for effective student functioning and easy school adjustments;
- To coordinate with different professionals and para professionals;
- General and Specific Personality Workshops with children and adults of all age groups pertaining to their developmental stage;
- To create a happiness team to promote holistic wellbeing;
- Talks during Assembly time;
- Ethics sessions;
- Orientation and Training Workshops with teachers and parents;
- Arranging training and workshop for students, parents & teachers by eminent resource professionals;
- Case work & group work;

- Tie-ups with External Professionals and Centres to support therapies and assessments;
- MOU's/Agreements with other centres, for encouraging social inclusion
- Identification of and support to Gifted and Talented students.

Preventive and Promotive Role

- Rapport building: To establish rapport with students during class-interactions, class-observations, informal visits and occasional meetings.
- To develop trust, confidence and conviction among students towards the guidance and counselling centre.
- Implementation of anti-bullying team led by the student body.
- Class-Interactions: An opportunity for early screening of students exhibiting symptoms of Asperger's, Autism, ADHD, speech and language problems, poor cognition and comprehension, specific syndromes, social, emotional, moral and behavior problems, different learning disabilities, academic problems, etc. It also allows the counsellor to inculcate students with positive personality traits, problem solving techniques, study skills, values, morals, good academic skills and overall success.
- Class-Observations: To observe class dynamics, student's inter-personal and intra-personal skills, relationship with teachers, school & its property and class-room behaviour. It also helps to recognise children with poor school adjustments.
- Assembly talks: To promote healthy lifestyle among students for overall development (e.g. 5 minutes relaxation exercises, healthy sleep hygiene, etc.).
- Trainings & Workshops:
 - i. Students: Arrange for periodic workshops and interactive sessions, by external professionals or to students from Grade 1 and above on different topics like friendship, self-discipline, developing own value system, self-esteem, study-skills, anger-management, bullying, memory, mind-mapping, time management, communication and social skills, etc.

- ii. Parents: Arrange for workshops and interactive sessions, by external professionals or for parents of students from grade 1 and above on topics like stress free parenting, effective communication, positive parenting, parenting in nuclear family, behaviour management of common growing up problems, helping children with different developmental needs etc.
- iii. Teachers: Training teachers with classroom management skills, effective handling of ADHD, anger management, behaviour, social & emotional concerns, dyslexia, autism spectrum disorder, oppositional defiance disorder, conduct disorder & other special educational needs, effective communication, work ethics etc.

To give timely recommendations to teachers and parents to support their students/child for more effective practices at school & home respectively.

Personal counselling for staff members to deal with stress and improve their efficiency and performance.

Curative and Rehabilitative Role

Case Work

- Short or long-term case work with individual students, teachers, families regarding issues including mental health, poor academic performance, low self-esteem, behavior, emotional, substance abuse, physical abuse, rehabilitation, social adjustment, child care, and/or medical care.
- Counsellor uses different techniques either alone or in combination like play-therapy, cognitive behavior therapy, art therapy, emotion-focused therapy, mindfulness-based therapy, group therapy and psychotherapy.

Group-Work

- Group work is an extensive intervention where counsellor works with two or more clients with similar or common problems.

- Group counselling sessions provide support in such areas as grief, stress, dependency (parents of determined learners). This method is a popular format for support group, where group members can learn from the experiences of others and offer advice.
- It is common for those suffering from problems to feel alone, isolated or different. Group therapy can help clients by providing a peer group of individuals that are currently experiencing the same symptoms or who have recovered from a similar problem. Group members can also provide emotional support and a safe forum to discuss and practice new behaviours.

Other Important Areas

- Consult with parents, teachers, and other school personnel to determine causes of problems such as truancy and misbehaviour, and to implement solutions.
- Counsel parents with child rearing problems, interviewing the child and family to determine whether further action is required.
- To provide teachers with checklist to identify students with various problems
- Develop and review service plans in consultation with clients, and perform follow-ups assessing the quantity and quality of services provided.
- Collect supplementary information needed to assist client, such as formal assessment.
- Arrange for medical, psychiatric, and other tests that may disclose causes of difficulties and indicate remedial measures.
- Serve as liaisons between students, homes, schools, family services, child guidance clinics, protective services, doctors, and other contacts, to help children who face problems such as disabilities, abuse, or disadvantage.

Procedure

- The student can be referred by the teachers, parents or guardians, student self-referrals, or any member of school staff.
- Counsellor can screen students during their class observations and class-interactions.

- Counsellor assesses the students' problem and devises a plan of action according to their individual needs. (IBP).
- Counsellor refers students showing special educational needs to the coordinator at the Learning Centre for further follow up. The special educator devises an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) or Individual Action Plan and start one to one remediation after parental approval.

Records

Maintain detail records of case work, group work, workshop, sessions & trainings, class observations, class interactions, trainings, events, student referral log book etc.

Confidentiality

Counsellor maintains complete confidentiality of all the clients as per the code of counselling ethics. Sometimes the necessary information is shared with Principal/Heads of School if the sharing of information is deemed necessary & is in the best interest of students.

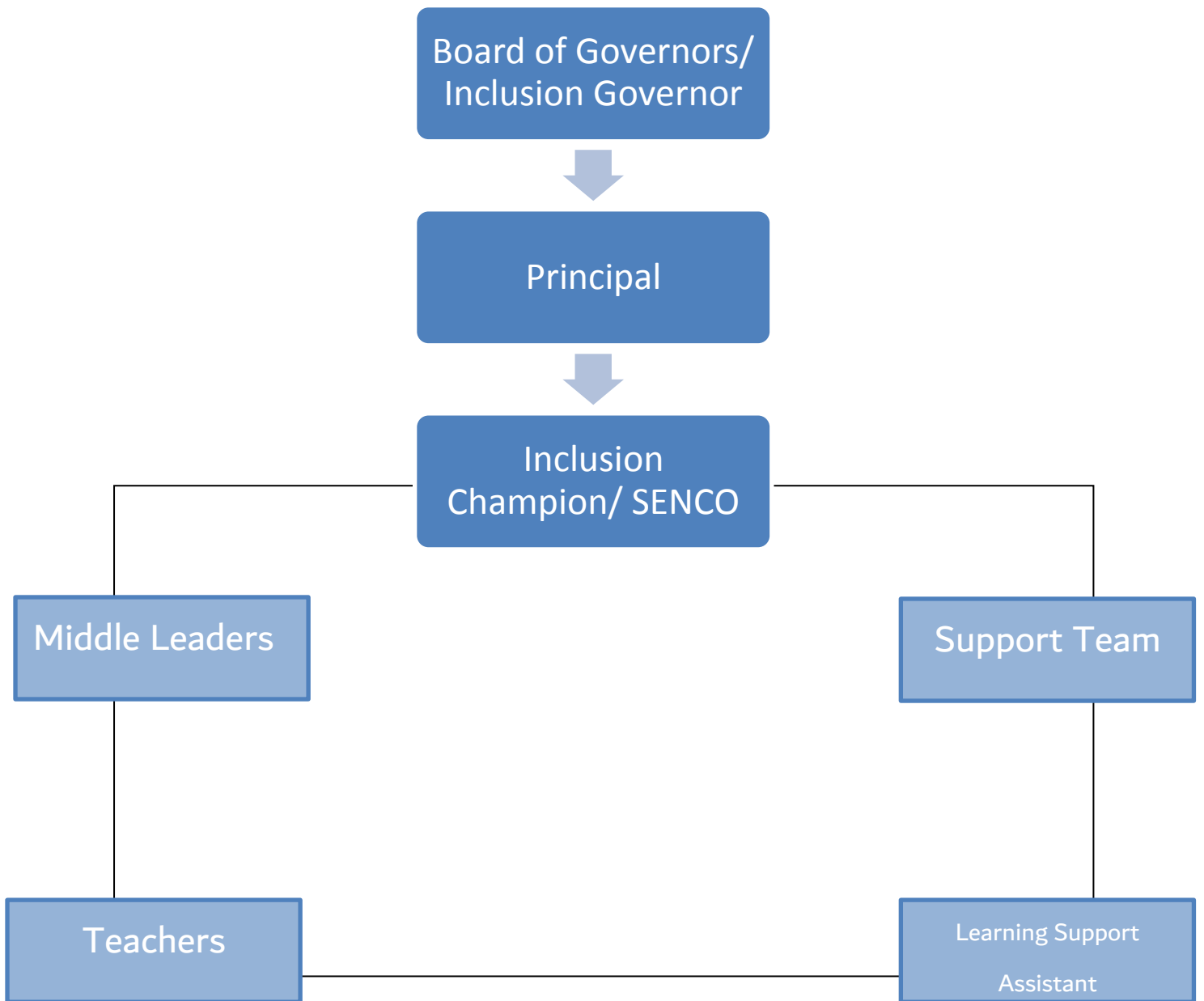
Monitoring and Review

The School's Leadership Team along with the SEND department is responsible for ensuring the annual review of the Inclusion policy.

Process Chart for Referral to Special Educators and Counsellors



Organisation Structure on Inclusive Education Support Team



September 2019

Review September 2020