

American International School of Brazzaville

Inclusion Policy

First draft August 2022

Adapted from International School of London,

<https://www.isllondon.org/policies>

To be reviewed August 2024

Policy Context

The American International School of Brazzaville operates within Congo Brazzaville. As an International Baccalaureate (IB) Candidate School we offer educational programmes in accordance with the published IB standards and practices and accompanying programme requirements. In addition, the school has sought accreditation with the *Commissions on Elementary and Secondary Schools* of the Middle States Association (MSA-CESS) and must comply with the MSA-CESS standards for accreditation documents. The school policies and practices are designed to comply with the guidance from these different agencies.

Students enrolled at AISB will have equal opportunities to access the academic curriculum that meets their needs, to take part in co-curricular activities and to take part in the full life of the school. The school will endeavour to meet the needs of each individual so that they benefit fully from the education they receive and achieve their full potential. The school aims for a policy of inclusion as we seek to provide an education for any child while acknowledging that, in certain cases, for example, for students with significant academic or physical needs, we may not be able to provide the support a student requires with the resources available.

Education at AISB is holistic, aiming to support the growth of the child in all aspects, including personal and social development. All employees of AISB play a role and share a responsibility in this regard. We recognise the importance of establishing a constructive, working partnership between the school and parents, and the building of student self esteem to help them realise their own potential.

The student and staff population at AISB is culturally and linguistically diverse and great importance is placed on promoting international mindedness and multicultural understanding within the curriculum and various activities and school events.

At AISB there is an expectation that all staff involved in Admissions will be vigilant for any potential safeguarding concerns at every stage of the process in line with Keeping Children Safe.

Admissions

Equality of opportunity applies to all members of the school community and is based on the core values expressed in the school's mission statement. The School accepts children without discrimination of gender, religion, race, sexuality or nationality.

Upon receipt of the required and fully completed documentation, admission to the School will be determined by the relevant Principal and Head of Admissions, with the advice of the specialist teaching staff, based on information obtained with respect to:

- The potential of the applicant to benefit from the education that AISB can provide.
- The capacity of the School to meet the educational needs of the applicant.
- The eligibility of the student to reside and study in the Republic of Congo.

Applications for admission will be considered in order of date of application. Students are assigned to classes primarily on the basis of age (see below). However, factors such as previous records, measured aptitude and achievement, physical and emotional development and other relevant details are also considered. The final decision rests with the relevant Principal. If, in the judgement of the School, an applicant meets the criteria described above, and space is available, acceptance will be unconditional. However, under some circumstances, a conditional acceptance may be offered. The conditions of acceptance will be clearly stated. The School reserves the right to deny admission or re-enrolment to any applicant if, in its opinion, there were reasons to believe that admission or re-enrolment would not be in the best interest of the applicant or the School or if relevant information was withheld at the point of application. The School also reserves the right to postpone admission if the maximum class capacity has been reached in a particular year level. In this case, the applicant is placed on a waiting list. The qualified applicants are then accepted in order of date of application.

Documentation Required for Admission

The following documentation needs to be supplied for an application to be considered complete:

- Completed application form with two passport-size photos.
- School records for the previous two years and all available records for the current year, as available.
- The results of any and all standardised testing, including educational evaluations or psychological and any other medical reports.
- Completed Teacher Reference Form.
- Completed medical form provided by the school.

- Immunisation records
- Copies of the applicant's passport, birth certificate and Congo visa if applicable.
- Confirmation of payment of the school application fee.

Grade Placement

Students are placed according to their age at September 1st of their year of entry to AISB. Where it is considered to be of benefit to the student, they may be placed in a lower grade than requested. Only under exceptional circumstances will a student be placed in a higher grade than their age group. If a student is placed in a grade higher than their age group, the parents are clearly informed that this initial placement is tentative, and that the school may advise a change of grade after the student has been thoroughly observed.

Learning Support

AISB has a specialist Learning Support Team, tagged as the Student Support Team (SST) that supports students with a range of academic, emotional and language needs. Parents of applicants with a specific need must submit complete reports with the application, these may include Individualised Education Programs (IEPs), Educational Psychologist reports or speech and language reports. The school will only admit students whose specific academic, physical or other learning needs can be provided for by the existing resources and personnel at the school. Students needing Learning Support may be admitted if it is believed that the school can offer appropriate support and that the children can be placed in the regular classroom. When reviewing the application of a student with specific needs, the Admissions Team will consult with the Learning Support Team. Students may be admitted pending agreement to engagement in a programme of additional support, e.g. Individualised Education Plan, counselling, other kinds of learning support, as appropriate, which may incur additional fees.

In the case where a specific need has not previously been identified, the school reserves the right to review the situation in order to assess the appropriateness of the student's presence in the school based on our capacity to address their needs.

Differentiated Learning

Students joining AISB come from a variety of backgrounds with varying levels of English, prior educational experience and abilities. Differentiation is an expectation from teachers and this is evident in the teachers' planning. All students are expected to progress at a reasonable pace and achieve their full potential.

English Language Learners (ELL)

Learners Fluency in English is not a criterion for admission at AISB and therefore is not considered to be a 'special educational need'. Depending on the section of the school and the language level of the student a range and/or combination of in-class and withdrawal support is provided to students by EAL teachers and teaching assistants for English language development. In certain situations, an additional fee may be charged for intensive language support.

Entry into the Early Childhood Grades

It is expected that students joining Early Childhood pre-K3 (3 years old) are fully toilet trained and able to feed and dress themselves with a reasonable level of independence.

Appendix: Definition of terms

Disability:

According to the Americans with Disabilities Act (1990); **Disability is defined as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.**

https://ada.wv.gov/state_employees/pages/tilei--employmentdefinition.aspx

The definition includes a wide range of impairments, including hidden impairments such as dyslexia, autism, speech and language impairments, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

Inclusion:

The International Baccalaureate sets the following definition for inclusion and inclusive practice within IB world schools. “Inclusion is an ongoing process that aims to increase access and engagement in learning for all students by identifying and removing barriers. Inclusion is an organisational paradigm that involves change. It is a continual process of increasing learning and participation for all students. It addresses learning support requirements and questions the broader objectives of education, the nature of pedagogy, curriculum and assessment. It is an educational approach to which all schools should aspire. Inclusion is facilitated in a culture of collaboration, mutual respect, support and problem solving involving the whole school community.”

(International Baccalaureate, Learning diversity and inclusion in IB programmes, January 2016)

Special Education Needs

The UK Special Educational Needs Code of Practice identifies that children of school age are deemed to have special educational needs if they “have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age; or have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in schools”

Special educational needs: code of practice, DfES, 2001;
www.sen.ttrb.ac.uk/viewarticle2.aspx?contentId=12386.

Bibliography

International School of London (2021, 2022) *Inclusion and Admissions Policy*.

Retrieved from

<https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1638354500/islschoolsorg/ysn9v2nunc8bg580jhi5/InclusionAdmissionspolicy2021-22.pdf>