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St. Nicholas

Access and Inclusion Practices and Procedures St. Nicholas School

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Access and Inclusion Practices and Procedures

The school is committed to fostering an inclusive and integrated environment for students with learning support requirements, and thus ensure their active participation in school activities and events. The school provides comprehensive access to a diverse, well-rounded education that includes an appropriate curriculum that is tailored to each student's needs. Our goal is to empower every student to reach their full potential and develop into confident learners.

In recognizing the critical importance of learning support, both staff and parents share the responsibility in supporting students' educational and specific needs. This collaborative effort is driven by a collective commitment to nurturing a supportive and inclusive learning community. In alignment with the IB framework, our school embraces the following four principles of good practice:

Valuing Prior Knowledge: Meaningfully assessing existing knowledge, strengths, and interests while incorporating prior learning when designing differentiated plans for new learning experiences.

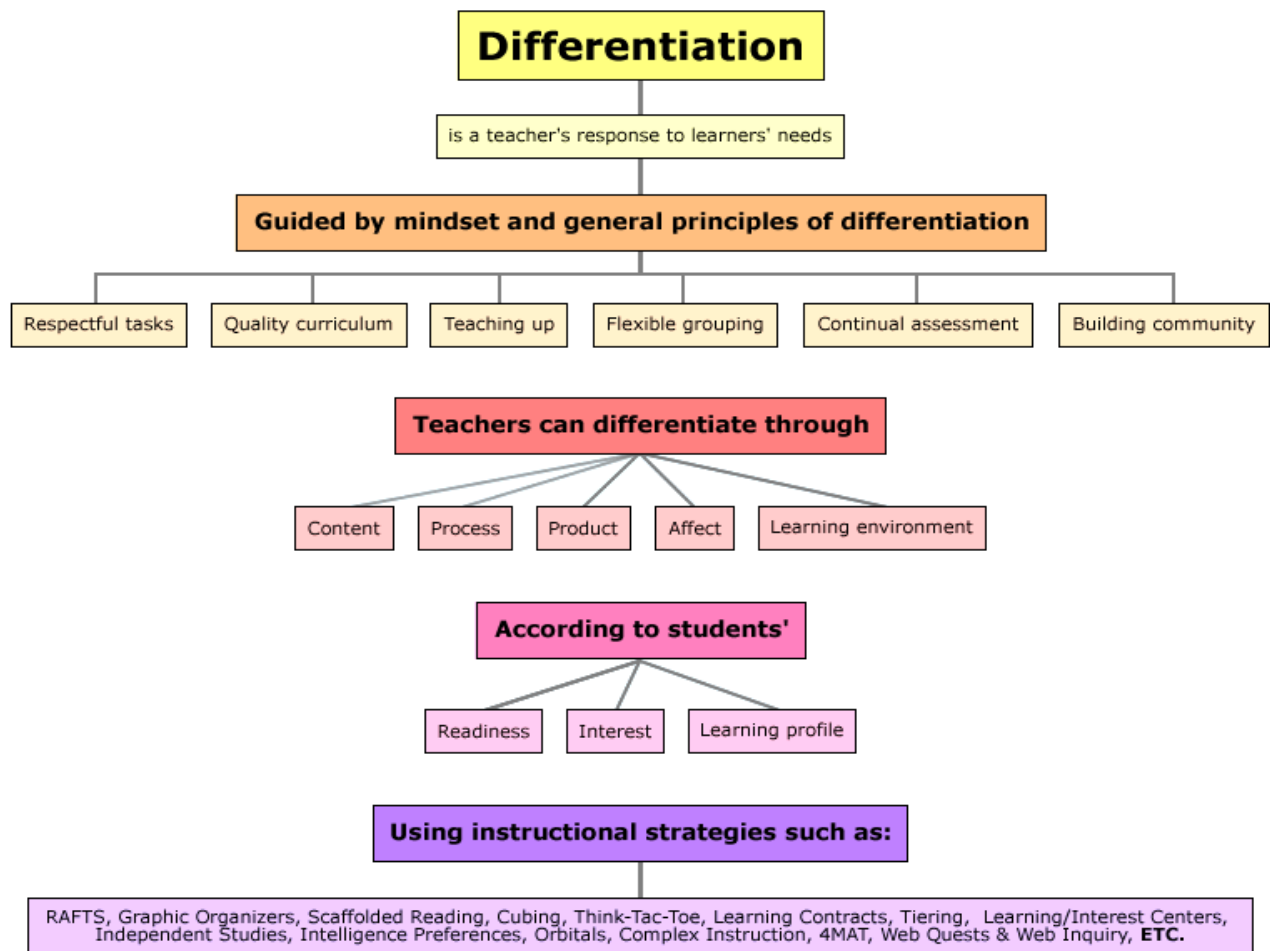
Scaffolding Learning: Assessing prior learning to enable smaller, manageable steps in the learning process. Techniques such as pre-teaching, demonstrations, experiential learning, information chunking, visual aids, templates, and graphic organizers are utilized for effective scaffolding.

Extending Learning Environments: Cultivating social and emotional conditions that foster learning, celebrating diversity, and creating inclusive environments that welcome and embrace differences.

Affirming Identity and Self-Esteem: Recognizing that students with a positive identity are more inclined to take necessary risks for successful learning. Ensuring visibility and value for all students within the learning community.

Model of differentiation

Differentiation, according to Carol Ann Tomlinson, is the response from a teacher to meet the students' needs. It is a mindset of hope, fluidity and high expectations. It involves knowing the students thoroughly, creating safe environments for everyone, using formative assessment effectively, planning creatively, being responsive when teaching, and providing clear and achievable feedback. (Tomlinson, 2010)



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Identifying barriers to learning

In accordance with the Access and Inclusion IB Policy Guide 2023, the process of identifying barriers to learning is essential in cultivating an inclusive educational environment. Barriers encompass various obstacles that may hinder a student's full participation or effective engagement in learning, teaching, and assessment. While learners may encounter transient barriers disrupting their learning temporarily, such as emotional disruptions or short-term medical issues, a deeper consideration for access and inclusion arises when persistent challenges, like reading difficulties, hearing impairments, or mental health concerns, are observed. Chronic medical conditions, lasting over 12 weeks, often necessitate access arrangements to support learning, teaching, and assessment. These arrangements aim to alleviate or eliminate barriers affecting a student's educational journey.

It's important to note primary and secondary barriers and their associated sub-areas, as outlined in the [\(Access and Inclusion Policy Guide, 2023\)](#). While this list isn't exhaustive, it provides a framework for understanding potential barriers, yet schools may communicate additional barriers to the IB for requests concerning access arrangements.

Primary or secondary barrier	Sub-area
Additional language (first or best language is not the language of instruction)	English /French/German/Japanese/Korean/Spanish (the IB response languages) as an additional language (first or best language is not the language of instruction)
Cultural variations	New or unfamiliar environmental contexts
	Socio-communication
Hearing	Mild or moderate hearing loss
	Severe or profound hearing loss
Intellectual exceptionalities	Cognitive delays
	Gifted and talented
Movement and coordination	Fine motor
	Neurological (cerebral palsy)
	Oral/verbal
	Physical/spatial
Medical	Asthma
	Cancer
	Crohn's disease/irritable bowel syndrome (IBS)
	Diabetes
	Epilepsy
	Muscular dystrophy
	Rheumatism
Mental health	Anxiety
	Depression
	Eating disorder
	Obsessive compulsive disorder
	Post-traumatic stress
Numeracy	Mathematical anxiety
	Numerical operations/Mathematical fluency

Processing	Attention and executive processing
	Auditory processing
	Information processing
	Language processing
	Long-term retrieval
	Scotopic sensitivity (Irlen syndrome)
	Short-term memory
	Visual-motor
	Visual-spatial
	Working memory
Reading	Reading comprehension
	Reading fluency
Seeing	Blindness (total)
	Colour blindness
	Low or partial vision
	Nystagmus
Social-emotional	Emotional disturbances (depressive, stress, etc.)
	Gender identity related
	Neurodevelopmental (autism, Asperger's, etc.)
	Sexuality related
	Withdrawal/isolation
Speech and language	Expressive language
	Receptive language
	Stammer/stutter
Writing	Handwriting/typing speed
	Spelling
	Written expression/fluency

Observation and Referral

To minimize or remove obstacles to learning, the first step in creating access arrangements is identifying these barriers. This involves observing the student in class, gathering insights from past educators, parents, or the student themselves about previously recognized challenges, and collecting anecdotal information from parents regarding current observations at home. Professional input from psychologists and doctors also plays a crucial role in identifying these barriers.

When teachers suspect a student needs extra support, they begin by submitting a detailed referral form to the PL department for further evaluation. The PL department then reviews these forms to decide if additional action is necessary. Once identified, students undergo a comprehensive assessment to understand not just their areas of need but also their strengths and preferred learning styles. This assessment includes formal testing as well as valuable informal assessments like observation and criterion-referenced testing.

Individualized Educational Plan (IEP)

After assessing a child's needs, an IEP should be created which includes background history, strengths, barriers to learning/areas of need, targets and strategies and a timeframe for review. This IEP should be communicated as appropriate to all relevant staff and family. Targets and strategies should be focused on the child's learning needs. The length of time each child will need in the PL department will vary. Once it is determined that a child no longer needs direct support from the PL department, the department should continue to monitor the child's learning experience for a period of time.

Referral for External Assessment

After the initial observation phase, a meeting convenes with teachers, the inclusion department, and parents to discuss feedback on the action plan's implementation. If the student demonstrates improvement, the teachers maintain the accommodations in class and periodically reassess them throughout the year. However, if there's no noticeable progress, the student will be directed to undergo a specialized assessment by a professional with expertise in the area.

Inclusive Access Arrangements

Once the need for added support is identified, inclusive access arrangements are promptly instituted, spanning the entirety of the learning process, encompassing both formative and summative assessments as advised by the inclusion department and professional report(s). These arrangements undergo continual monitoring, assessment, and periodic review by the school to ensure the sustained provision of optimal support. Given the potential for evolving circumstances or changing conditions that may impact access requirements positively or negatively, these reviews are crucial in maintaining fairness, equal access to learning, and teaching while upholding the validity and significance of assessments.

Application for IB Assessment Access Arrangements

Access arrangements may be granted in specific circumstances where their implementation can eliminate or diminish barriers for students, ensuring fairness without providing an undue advantage. Some arrangements necessitate approval from the IB and should adhere to acceptable practices within the assessment context. These requests must be submitted before the stipulated deadline outlined in the assessment procedures for the relevant programme(s). All access arrangements for IB assessments must align with the IB's access and inclusion policy while meeting the established eligibility criteria. In unforeseen and exceptional cases, the IB may authorize inclusive access arrangements outside the typical process to support students in the final six months leading up to official IB examinations. The coordinator submits applications for inclusive access arrangements on behalf of the student.

Supporting Documentation

The application for support must comprise two types of supporting documentation: an official psychological/medical report prepared by licensed, qualified professionals and educational evidence provided by the coordinator or subject teacher(s) to substantiate the need for inclusive access arrangements.

Educational Evidence from the School can take various forms.

- A letter or observational report from the candidate's subject teacher(s) highlighting any noticeable challenges observed in the classroom.
- A concise summary detailing the arrangements provided to the candidate for accessing learning and assessment.
- An Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) if available.
- A sample of the candidate's work completed under timed conditions without the specific assessment arrangements being requested.

Psychological/psycho-educational/medical report must have been undertaken no earlier than the previous academic year, from a psychological or medical service. The reports must comply with the following guidelines:

- Be legible, on paper with a letterhead, signed and dated.
- state the title, name and professional credentials of the person (or persons) who has undertaken the evaluation and diagnosis of the candidate.
- state specifically the nature of the learning support requirement, and the tests or techniques used to arrive at the identification.
- be consistent with the request for assessment arrangements.
- be based on the candidate's performance on nationally standardized psychological tests (where available and published, recent editions of standardized tests should be employed); report results as standard scores, which have a mean of 100 and a standard deviation of 15, and not percentiles or age/grade equivalents.

List of inclusive access arrangements in MYP and DP

Access arrangements in the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme (MYP) and Diploma Programme (DP) prioritize the identification and implementation of modifications aimed at breaking down barriers hindering student progress. Each student's unique needs necessitate individual consideration when devising these arrangements. This section outlines the diverse flexibilities and corresponding access arrangements available for learning, teaching, and assessment. While the section includes tables outlining standard access arrangements for IB assessments, it doesn't encompass the entirety of potential adaptations for mitigating barriers within IB education. Nonetheless, it serves as a valuable reference for IB World Schools, guiding them in supporting students and cultivating innovative strategies to eliminate or mitigate barriers during the learning and teaching process. Additionally, this segment provides guidance on adhering to specified rules and fostering good practices within educational institutions. ([Access and Inclusion Policy Guide, 2023](#)).

Flexibility in duration

Access arrangement	When will it be applied?	Applicable programmes for IB assessments	Is authorization required for IB assessments?	Criteria for eligibility
Additional time (10%)	Learning and teaching IB assessments	MYP DP	Yes Not available for listening comprehension examinations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A standard score of 90–100 in one or more cognitive processing measures that affect speed of working (e.g., working memory, processing speed, long-term/short-term retrieval, visual–motor coordination, etc.) • A standard score of 90–100 on an assessment of reading (reading fluency and/or reading comprehension) • A standard score of 90–100 on an assessment of writing (writing fluency and/or written expression) • A physical, sensory, psychological/medical challenge due to which additional time is required.
Additional time (25%)		MYP DP	Yes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only applicable for written examinations • Available for listening comprehension examinations for producing written responses but only if there is no request for additional time for listening • Not available for studies in language and literature and language acquisition examinations for additional language learners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A standard score of 90 or less on one or more cognitive processing measures that affect speed of working (e.g., working memory, processing speed, long-term/short-term retrieval, visual–motor coordination, etc.). • A standard score of 90 or less on an assessment of reading (reading fluency and/or reading comprehension) and there is no request for additional time for listening. • A standard score of 90 or less on an assessment

				<p>of writing (writing fluency and/or written expression) and there is no request for additional time for listening.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A physical, sensory, psychological/medical challenge due to which additional time is required and there is no request for additional time for listening • A language test composite standard score in reading and writing that is below competency level • A language test composite standard score in reading and writing, listening and speaking that is below competency level
Additional time (50%)		MYP DP	<p>Yes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only applicable for written examinations • Not applicable for additional language learners • Available for listening comprehension examinations for producing written responses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A standard score of 75 or less in one or more cognitive processing measures that affect speed of working (e.g., working memory, processing speed, long-term/short-term retrieval, visual-motor coordination, etc.) • A standard score of 75 or less on an assessment of reading (reading fluency and/or reading comprehension) • A standard score of 75 or less on an assessment of writing (writing fluency and/or written expression) • Standard scores below 90 in at least three measures (where at least one includes a score on an assessment of reading or writing) that affect speed of working and

				<p>there is no request for a scribe or reader/ screen reader</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A physical, sensory, psychological/medical challenge due to which additional time is required
Additional time for oral examinations (25%)	Learning and teaching IB assessments	MYP DP	<p>Yes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Available for oral examinations, including in the core subjects • Is applicable to both preparation and delivery of the oral examination, so the additional time could be split between the two 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A standard score of 90 or less in processing speed measures that affect expressive and/or receptive speech, long-term/ short-term memory or auditory processing • A standard score in a language test in speaking and/or listening that is below competent • Speech and communication challenges (e.g., stuttering) or psychological challenges (e.g., social phobia, anxiety, etc.)
Additional time for mathematics —applicable to mathematics and subjects that require mathematical calculations (25%)	Learning and teaching IB assessments	DP	<p>Yes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only applicable to students with challenges in mathematical operations • Not applicable to students who require additional time for all subjects 	A standard score of 90 or less in a test of mathematical fluency
Additional time for listening in listening comprehension (25%)	Learning and teaching IB assessments	MYP DP	Yes	A mild or moderate hearing condition or auditory processing disorder due to which the student would require additional time for listening and there is no other request for additional time
Rest breaks	Learning and teaching IB assessments	MYP DP	No	A physical, sensory, psychological/medical challenge or any other difficulty due to which

				rest breaks are required
Deferral	IB assessments	MYP DP	Yes	A physical, sensory, psychological/medical challenge or any other difficulty that would require the student to defer the examination to the next or future session
Extensions to IB submission deadlines	IB assessments	MYP DP	Yes	A physical, sensory, psychological/medical challenge or any other difficulty that requires this access arrangement
Additional retakes (exceptional—provided on a case-by-case basis)	IB assessments	MYP DP	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A severe physical, sensory, psychological/medical challenge or any other difficulty that requires this access arrangement • Access arrangements have been in place for the first three examination sessions
Extensions to homework and assignment deadlines	Learning and teaching	Not applicable for IB assessments		

Flexibility in presentation of material and resources/ reception of content

Access arrangement	When will it be applied?	Applicable programmes in IB assessments	Is authorization required for IB assessments?	Criteria for eligibility
Modified paper-based Examinations (see full list of modifications)	Learning and teaching IB assessments	DP	Yes	A physical, sensory, psychological/medical challenge or any other difficulty due to which the access arrangement is required and is the usual way of working
Modified on- screen examinations (see full list of modifications)	Learning and teaching IB assessments	MYP	Yes	
Vision aids and devices	Learning and teaching	MYP DP	No	

	IB assessments			
Hearing aids and devices (without Bluetooth)	Learning and teaching IB assessments	MYP DP	No	
Memory devices, organizers, written list of instructions and other visual aids	Learning and teaching IB assessments	MYP DP	Not applicable	
Sign language interpreter	Learning and teaching IB assessments	MYP DP	No	
Text of audio content (not applicable to listening comprehension)	Learning and teaching IB assessments	MYP DP	Yes	
Image descriptions or other adaptations to questions (for total or severe visual impairment)	Learning and teaching IB assessments	MYP DP	Yes	
Adaptation to questions due to colour blindness	Learning and teaching IB assessments	MYP DP	Yes	
Designated person for colour naming (for colour blindness)	Learning and teaching IB assessments	MYP DP	No	
Reader	Learning and teaching IB assessments	MYP DP	Yes Available for listening comprehension examinations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A standard score on a psychological test of 90 or less in reading speed/accuracy/comprehension
Reading software	Learning and teaching IB assessments	DP	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A standard score on a language test in reading that is below competent
Reading pen	Learning and teaching IB assessments	DP	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A medical, physical or sensory condition due to which a student either cannot read/has difficulty in reading

Script reader (for lip reading) For listening comprehension examination in the DP	Learning and teaching IB assessments	DP	Yes	A mild or moderate hearing condition that requires the student to lip read
Audio recordings of texts and lessons	Learning and teaching	Not applicable for IB assessments		

Flexibility in response

Access arrangement	When will it be applied?	Applicable programmes in IB assessments	Is authorization required for IB assessments?	Criteria for eligibility
Word processor	Learning and teaching IB assessments	DP	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A physical, psychological/medical or sensory condition due to which a student requires this access arrangement • A standard score in a language test in writing that is below competency level
Scribe	Learning and teaching IB assessments	MYP (for the eAssessment, the scribe will type for the student) DP	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A standard score on a free writing speed test that is below average for the student's age • A standard score of 90 or less in written expression/spelling/information processing/working memory • Handwriting that is largely illegible to someone who is not familiar with it • A medical, physical or sensory condition
Speech recognition software	Learning and teaching IB assessments	DP	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A standard score on a free writing speed test that is below average for the student's age • A standard score of 90 or less in written expression/spelling/information processing/working memory

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handwriting that is largely illegible to someone who is not familiar with it • A medical, physical or sensory condition
Graphic organizer	Learning and teaching IB assessments	MYP DP	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A standard score of 90 or less in written expression/ information processing/working memory • A medical, physical or sensory condition
Four-function calculator	Learning and teaching IB assessments	DP	Yes	A standard score of 90 or less in mathematical fluency
Text to speech	Learning and teaching	MYP DP	Yes	A challenge with speech that requires the student to use this assistive technology for the oral component of the course
	IB assessments	DP		
Transcriptions	Learning and teaching IB assessments	DP	Yes	A physical, psychological/ medical or sensory condition due to which a student requires this access arrangement
Verbatim transcript of student responses in oral examinations (speech)	Learning and teaching IB assessments	MYP DP	Although authorization is not required, the school must inform the IB in case this arrangement is implemented.	A physical, psychological/medical or sensory condition due to which a student requires this access arrangement
Talking calculator	Learning and teaching IB assessments	MYP DP	Yes	A medical, physical or sensory condition that causes difficulties in accessing standard calculators
Audio recording of responses	Learning and teaching	Not applicable for IB assessments		

Use of human assistance

Access arrangement	When will it be applied?	Applicable programmes in IB assessments	Is authorization required for IB assessments?	Criteria for eligibility
Care assistant	Learning and teaching IB assessments	MYP DP	No	A sensory or medical challenge or any other difficulty that requires a care assistant
Practical assistant	Learning and teaching IB assessments	MYP DP	No	A physical, sensory, psychological/medical challenge or any other difficulty that requires a practical assistant
Spelling assistant	IB assessments	MYP	Yes	Difficulty in spelling due to learning, psychological or other difficulties
Prompter	Learning and teaching IB assessments	MYP DP	No	A physical, sensory, psychological/medical challenge or any other difficulty that requires a prompter
Communicator (to clarify instructions or directions)	Learning and teaching IB assessments	MYP DP	No	A sensory or medical challenge or any other difficulty that requires a communicator
Designated person for colour naming	Learning and teaching IB assessments	MYP DP	No	Colour blindness
Designated person reading aloud, or oral language modifications	Learning and teaching	Not applicable for IB assessments		
Sign language interpreter	Learning and teaching	Not applicable for IB assessments		

Flexibility in equipment, setting or location

Access arrangement	When will it be applied?	Applicable programmes in IB assessments	Is authorization required for IB assessments?	Criteria for eligibility
Separate room (within the school) for class tests and IB examinations	Learning and teaching IB assessments	MYP DP	No	A physical, sensory, psychological/medical challenge or any difficulty due to which this arrangement is required
Specific seating location	Learning and teaching IB assessments	MYP DP	No	
Special lighting	Learning and teaching IB assessments	MYP DP	No	
Alternative venue (away from school) for IB examinations	IB assessments	MYP DP	Yes	
Noise-cancelling headphones	Learning and teaching IB assessments	MYP DP	No	
Adapted desk or seat	Learning and teaching IB assessments	MYP DP	No	
Medical aids and equipment	Learning and teaching IB assessments	MYP DP	No	
Small-group setting	Learning and teaching	Not applicable for IB assessments		

Communication of the Access and Inclusion Policy

The Access and Inclusion Policy at St. Nicholas School Alphaville is actively disseminated across the school community through various channels, ensuring widespread understanding and adherence. It is communicated during staff meetings, grade-level gatherings, and via the school's parent communication platform, iScool. Additionally, the policy is prominently featured on the school's website and is a focal point during orientation sessions for new staff members.

Outlined below are the strategies employed to effectively communicate and implement the Access and Inclusion Policy:

- **Website Integration:** The policy is prominently displayed on the school's website, offering easy access for parents, students, and faculty.
- **Parent-Teacher Engagement:** During meetings, the policy is discussed openly, addressing queries and concerns from parents and caregivers.
- **Orientation Programs:** Special sessions at the start of each academic year or for new students emphasize the policy's significance within the IB PYP, MYP, and DP frameworks.
- **Newsletters:** Send newsletters and emails summarizes key aspects, objectives, and integration of the policy across IB programmes.
- **Student-Centred Approach:** Tailored assemblies engage students with the policy through interactive activities, discussions, or videos.
- **Multilingual Materials:** Visual brochures and posters in multiple languages offer concise policy summaries displayed prominently throughout the school.
- **Professional Development:** Workshops for faculty ensure comprehensive understanding and effective policy implementation.
- **Parent Workshops:** Specific workshops help parents understand the practical implications and support their children's assessment journey at home.
- **Collaboration with Parent Associations:** Engage associations to encourage active participation and discussion on the policy within the parent community.
- **School-wide Communication:** Comprehensive meetings ensure all staff, including support members, are well-versed in the policy's content.
- **Utilizing Multilingual Staff:** Proficient staff assist in communicating the policy across diverse language communities within the school.

By employing a diverse range of communication methods and engaging all stakeholders, the St. Nicholas School Alphaville community aims to foster a unified understanding and commitment to the Access and Inclusion Policy. This approach creates a supportive and inclusive environment conducive to effective assessment practices for all community members.

Policy Review Process

This policy will undergo regular and official reviews, following the school's established policy review cycle, with a frequency of once every two years. The next scheduled review is set for 2025 and will involve key stakeholders to ensure comprehensive feedback and input. The review committee will consist of the following participants:

- **Senior Leadership Team:** Including all programme coordinators to assess the policy's alignment with the school's overall vision and objectives.
- **Representatives for the School's Teachers:** To provide insights from the educators' perspective and assess the policy's practicality and effectiveness in assessment-related matters.
- **Student Representatives:** To offer the student body's viewpoint, ensuring the policy remains relevant and considerate of their needs and experiences.
- **Parent Representatives:** To represent the parent community and provide valuable feedback on how the policy impacts students' education and well-being.

Links to other policies

St Nicholas School Alphaville Language and Literacy Policy

St Nicholas School Alphaville Admissions Policy

St Nicholas School Alphaville Assessment Policy

St. Nicholas School Alphaville Academic Integrity Policy

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