



# Cambridge International School

## Alternative Pathways Policy and Procedures

NAME OF POLICY	Students of Determination Policy and Procedures
APPROVED BY	Principal
DATE APPROVED	30.09.25
DATE OF REVIEW	Created 2025 Next projected review 2026
RELATED POLICIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UAE MOE SEND Policy; General Rules for the Provision of</li> <li>• Special Education Programs and Services (Public &amp; Private Schools) "Schools For All"</li> <li>• Dubai Inclusive Education Policy Framework</li> </ul>

## Cambridge International School – Alternative Pathways Policy

### **Introduction**

Cambridge International School (CIS) is an International British Curriculum school for children aged 3–18 years, comprising FS, Primary, Secondary, and Post-16. Alongside our mainstream offer, we provide an Alternative Pathway for students who require a higher level of personalised support than the mainstream curriculum can provide.

The Alternative Pathway delivers a tailored curriculum underpinned by the British National Curriculum, ensuring that all students benefit from meaningful and engaging learning opportunities. Through carefully planned activities, students work towards relevant, challenging outcomes that enable them to maximise progress, generalise skills, and thrive within an inclusive environment.

At the heart of the Alternative Pathway is a philosophy of “Communication for Independence”. Communication underpins every aspect of learning, with classrooms and resources designed to foster independent, spontaneous interaction in a language-rich setting.

Our approach is aligned with GEMS Education’s inclusion vision and is rooted in empathy, innovation, and collaboration. By integrating evidence-based teaching methods, adaptive resources, and holistic support systems, the Alternative Pathway reflects our commitment to providing personalised opportunities that meet individual challenges while nurturing unique talents.

### **Policy Purpose**

This policy provides a framework for the design, delivery, and evaluation of Alternative Pathways across CIS and is aligned with KHDA’s:

- Dubai Inclusive Education Policy Framework (2017)
- Students of Determination Guidelines (2020)
- School Inspection Framework (2023/24)

*Its aims are to:*

- Ensure Students of Determination (SOD) have access to meaningful, individualised learning opportunities.
- Support holistic development — academic, social, emotional, and physical.
- Equip students with the skills and confidence to live independently and fulfil meaningful roles in their communities.
- Promote collaboration between educators, families, and external specialists.
- Ensure compliance with UAE regulatory expectations for inclusive education.

### **Inclusion Vision**

At CIS, the Alternative Pathways programme provides a personalised and inclusive learning experience tailored to the diverse strengths and needs of Students of Determination. Grounded in a multidisciplinary, collaborative ethos, the programme integrates specialist expertise into daily teaching, enabling students to access purposeful education both in school and the wider community.

Learning is designed to be joyful, functional, and empowering, equipping students with real-life experiences that foster confidence, independence, and belonging. Every learner is supported in a way that respects their individual journey, ensuring a strong sense of inclusion within CIS and beyond.

## **Rationale**

The Alternative Pathways serve students with a broad range of complex learning needs, who require an alternative route to learning due to their slower rate of progress through the typical curriculum.

*Students often require targeted support to develop:*

- Functional communication and interaction skills
- Understanding of abstract and symbolic concepts
- Attention, memory, and problem-solving abilities
- Physical coordination and fine/gross motor skills
- Behavioural and emotional regulation strategies
- Generalisation of skills across settings

By embedding frameworks such as SCERTS, ASDAN Personal Progress, Floppy's Phonics, Numicon, and LEGO Therapy, CIS ensures that every learner receives a curriculum that is both appropriate and aspirational.

## **Aims and Aspirations**

CIS aims to equip every student with the tools to live as independently as possible, enjoy a high quality of life, and participate meaningfully in their community. We are committed to:

- Creating inclusive environments where students feel valued, respected, and supported.
- Enabling each learner to reach their potential through adaptive, structured, and personalised provision.
- Fostering confidence, independence, and self-advocacy.
- Nurturing academic achievement alongside functional life skills.

*The curriculum focuses on:*

- Functional life skills
- Social communication and peer interaction
- Emotional regulation and self-awareness
- Independence in thinking, movement, and decision-making

## **Admissions and Access**

CIS is fully committed to KHDA's mandate that no child may be refused admission on the grounds of their determination status. Students are admitted following a transparent process of assessment, consultation with parents, and consideration of available provision. Transition planning is supported from the point of entry, ensuring students settle successfully into their pathway.

## **Reasons for Alternative Pathway Placement**

*Students may be considered for the Alternative Pathway if they:*

- Experience persistent barriers to accessing the mainstream curriculum.
- Benefit from smaller classes and/or specialised teaching approaches.
- Demonstrate functional strengths such as vocational or hands-on skills.
- Are at risk of underachievement or disengagement without tailored provision.
- Require additional support linked to diagnosed conditions or emerging needs.

## **Identification of Students**

*Students are identified through:*

- Internal assessment tools and standardised measures (e.g., CAT4, NGRT).
- Observations of disengagement from mainstream curriculum.
- Evidence of kinaesthetic or practical learning preferences.
- Specialist and multi-agency assessment, where appropriate.
- Consultation with parents and review of external reports.

## **Objectives**

- Individualised Learning Plans (ILPs/IEPs): Co-designed with parents, students, and staff.
- Functional Skills Development: Targeting communication, numeracy, self-care, and social interaction.
- Access to Resources: Assistive technology, adaptive tools, and specialist teaching resources.
- Progress Tracking: Robust APDR cycles with regular parent and student voice input.
- Staff Development: Ongoing CPD in evidence-based inclusion strategies.
- Collaboration: Close partnership with families, therapists, and external specialists.
- Equity: Full participation in school life, assemblies, and extracurricular activities, with adjustments as required.

## **Curriculum Framework**

The Alternative Pathway curriculum integrates IEPs, academic subjects, specialist sessions, and community-based experiences to provide a broad and balanced education. It is underpinned by the British National Curriculum and enriched through:

- SCERTS Framework – joint attention, symbolic communication, emotional regulation.
- ASDAN Personal Progress – accreditation of functional, social, and vocational skills.
- Floppy's Phonics – structured literacy foundations.
- LEGO Therapy – collaboration, problem-solving, and communication.
- Numicon – hands-on numeracy.
- Makaton and PECS – visual and symbolic communication.
- Zones of Regulation – emotional awareness and self-regulation..

## **Service Agreements**

Where provision goes beyond the standard school offer and requires additional fees (e.g., ASDAN accreditation or therapies), CIS ensures that:

- A KHDA Service Agreement is completed and signed by parents.
- The agreement is uploaded to the KHDA portal.
- Costs and services are transparent, with regular review of impact and value.

## **Therapy Provision and Integrated Support**

CIS partners with licensed external providers to deliver Speech and Language Therapy (SLT), Occupational Therapy (OT), and Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) on site up to four times per week. Therapists:

- Contribute to IEPs and multidisciplinary reviews.
- Deliver push-in support to model strategies within classrooms.
- Build teacher and LSA capacity to embed strategies throughout the school day.

This multidisciplinary approach ensures consistent, high-quality support that prioritises communication,

independence, and personal growth.

### **Safeguarding and Student Welfare**

*Safeguarding is fully embedded in the Alternative Pathway:*

- Health & Safety: Individual medical and care plans implemented where required.
- Supervision & Transitions: Risk assessments ensure safe movement across the school.
- External Providers: Safeguarding protocols apply to all therapists and agencies on site.
- Staff Training: All staff receive specialist safeguarding and inclusion training.
- Wellbeing: Student voice, parent feedback, and regular wellbeing checks inform provision.

### **Monitoring, Evaluation, and Accountability**

- Student Progress: Termly reports and IEP review meetings with parents and students.
- Behaviour & Engagement: Tracking systems inform early interventions.
- Provision Effectiveness: Annual review of outcomes and quality assurance by GEMS Corporate Inclusion.
- Governance: Oversight by SLT and inclusion governors, reported annually to stakeholders.

### **Transition Planning**

*CIS prepares students for transitions across key phases and into adulthood by:*

- Supporting internal transitions (EYFS → Primary → Secondary → Post-16).
- Linking ASDAN and functional skills to real-world and vocational readiness.
- Coordinating with parents and external agencies for life beyond school.

### **Compliance Statement**

*This policy is fully aligned to:*

- Dubai Inclusive Education Policy Framework (2017)
- KHDA Students of Determination Guidelines (2020)
- UAE School Inspection Framework (2023/24)

CIS is committed to ensuring that every Student of Determination has the opportunity to thrive, empowered with the tools, guidance, and confidence they need for lifelong success.