



REPUBLIC OF NAURU

File Ref:

At a Formal Meeting of Cabinet held on Tuesday 27th November, 2018 at 11:00am.

CABINET SUBMISSION NO: 990/2018

SUBJECT: NAURU INCLUSIVE EDUCATION POLICY AND GUIDELINES 2017

was considered and the following Decision made:

Approved as amended. It is recommended that Cabinet considers and approves:-

- I. note the draft Nauru Inclusive Education Policy and Guidelines 2017; and
- II. endorse the draft Nauru Inclusive Education Policy and Guidelines 2017, as submitted


SASIKUMAR PARAVANOOR,
SECRETARY TO CABINET

27/11/2018



Republic of Nauru, Department of Education

Nauru Inclusive Education Policy and Guidelines 2017



**Towards improving learning outcomes for all
students**

Acronyms

CRPD	Convention on the Rights of People’s with Disabilities
EFA	Education for All
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
PIFS	Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat
PRSD	Pacific Regional Strategy on Disability
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Background

Inclusion is seen as a practice of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners through improving participation in learning, cultures and communities, and decreasing exclusion within and from education. One primary goal of inclusive education is to move towards the education of all students with special needs in regular classrooms. Inclusion “involves a range of changes and modifications in content, approaches, structures and strategies, with a common vision which covers all children of the appropriate age range and a conviction that it is the responsibility of the regular system to educate all children” (UNESCO, 2005, p.13).

International anti-discriminatory legislation protects children’s educational rights, such as the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989). This document refers to children's rights concerning freedom from discrimination and the right for their voice to be heard. In 1994 the UNESCO Salamanca Agreement called for all governments to give the highest priority to inclusive education. Additionally, the UN CRPD (2006) urged governments to ensure an inclusive education system for all children at all levels. The Education for All movement was continued with the Incheon Declaration in 2015, with an emphasis on equality and access to education.

The CRPD is an international treaty that identifies the rights of persons with disabilities as well as highlighting the importance of promoting, protecting and ensuring those rights. This underscores a worldwide acceptance of disability as a human rights issue relevant to all countries. The CRPD reinforces the shift in thinking from disability being seen as a charity concern to being one of human rights.

A rights-based approach represents a paradigm shift from earlier charity or medical models. The CRPD is central to this approach. Persons with disabilities have argued that their ability to function as full and active citizens in a modern society is limited not by their disability but by society's failure to recognise them and accommodate their needs.

Additionally, as a member of PIFS, Nauru has helped to endorse the PRSD to promote the vision of “an inclusive, barrier-free, and rights-based society for people with disabilities, which embraces the diversity of all Pacific people” (PIFS, 2009, p.9).

Inclusive education in Nauru is mandated by Part 11 of the Education Act (2011, p. 42) which stipulates the principles of inclusive education and the provisions for children with special education needs.

The principles of inclusive education are:

1. All schools must adhere to the principle of inclusive education,
2. In determining whether it is practicable for a child with a disability to attend school, the principles of the school must have regard to:
 1. The extent of the child's special educational needs; and
 2. Ways in which the school can meet the child’s special educational needs; and
 3. The likely developmental and learning benefit to the child of being included in the school; and
 4. The wishes of the child’s parents; and
 5. If the child's parents consent to the Principal requesting advice from a medical practitioner in relation to the child - the advice of a medical practitioner about the extent of the child's disability and whether it would be in the best interest of the child to be included in the school.

Provisions for students with special educational needs are:

1. A school-aged child with a disability must not be excluded from access to free primary and secondary education on the basis of the disability.
2. The Government must use its best endeavours, with available resources to ensure that:
 - 2.1. The principle of inclusive education is implemented; and
 - 2.2. Reasonable accommodation of the individual requirements of students with disabilities is provided; and
 - 2.3. Students with disabilities receive the support required, within the general education system, to facilitate their effective education; and
 - 2.4. Effective individualised support measures are provided to students with disabilities in environments that maximise academic and social development, consistent with the goal of full inclusion; and
 - 2.5. An adequate number of teachers are trained in the use of appropriate augmentative and alternative modes, means and formats of communication, educational techniques and materials to support persons with disabilities.
3. The Minister must establish a Centre for special education of school-aged children with disabilities who cannot attend a school.

Nauru's provision of a Centre for special education for children with disabilities is the Able Disable Centre that serves to provide an education for a range of students from primary level and beyond. The Centre was established in 2002 and is resourced by teachers, with other potential teachers currently in training. The students engage in an academic programme concentrating on core subjects of reading, writing and mathematics. Lessons also include afternoon sessions in life skills. IEP's have been developed for each student. Work experience placements are also available for senior students.

Acknowledgements

Policy written for the Republic of Nauru, Department of Education by Dr Angela Page, University of New England, Australia

This policy was built on the Republic of Nauru Education Act (2011) Part 11 - Special Education.

Incorporating suggestions from:

Dr Maria Gaiyabu, Secretary of Education, Republic of Nauru

Mrs Emmaline Caleb, Disability Co-ordinator, Department of Education, Republic of Nauru

UNESCO Inclusive Education Policy Guidelines (2008, 2009)

Foreword

The Republic of Nauru Inclusive Education Policy is a policy to ensure that our education system is inclusive and accessible for all students where they will be valued and truly belong.

Preparing Nauru for Tomorrow is the motto of the Department of Education that aims to “provide a learning framework and environment that directs students on the footpath that leads them to leave school as confident citizens able to live in, and contribute to, both Nauruan society and a complex, global, networked society.”

The current policy is underpinned by The Nauru National Quality School Standards Framework (2011-2020) which provides the direction for education across four main focus areas: quality school governance, positive school environment, effective school management and quality learning outcomes. The Education and Training Strategic Plan further recognises that access to education of high standards will be available as a right to every Nauruan.

Through a process of collaboration, we can create opportunities for success for all.

Within the Nauruan educational environment, an important area that requires a concerted effort, co-operation and dialogue is Inclusive Education.

If we are to genuinely aspire to develop a learning framework that directs all students on a footpath of success, it is essential that our curriculum delivery in schools reflect quality, reveals equity, shows competency, is built on partnership, and is sustainable. Inclusive Education recognises the participation of all learners. ALL students are valued and belong. It is essential then that we all engage in the necessary mechanisms to ensure that access to equitable and quality opportunities produces success for all learners.

It is my hope that this policy will guide the future direction of Inclusive Education in Nauru so that it truly is all-encompassing and targeted to best meet the desired outcomes.

Dr Maria Gaiyabu
Secretary of Education

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1. Inclusive Education Context

Inclusive education has gained in importance over the last few years. It is increasingly understood over the world as a reform that welcomes the diversity of all learners. Another important global view is that inclusive education is a process of transformation towards schools that cater for ALL children.

The children who this policy serves includes boys and girls, children with disabilities, nomadic children, migrants, religious minorities, displaced children, abused children, child domestic workers, children affected by poverty, children suffering from AIDS/HIV, orphans, ethnic minorities, children from isolated regions, children in conflict and war zones, linguistic minorities, and indigenous children (UNESCO, 2009).

The Republic of Nauru Government Bureau of Statistics Disability Monograph of the 2011 Census (2015) stated that just over five percent of the population has some form of disability. Difficulty with mobility, movement (lameness) and sight are the most common types of disabilities.

In addition, the census reports that:

- People with a disability are more likely than the general population to have never been to school.
- Of interest, those who have had some schooling, there is no significant difference in the education level attained between the total adult population and the disabled population.

2. Definitions

1. Inclusive Education

Inclusive education is all education stakeholders working together to strengthen the capacity of our education system and combat discriminatory approaches and attitudes towards students, particularly those with disabilities. Inclusive education is about changing the system to suit the needs of ALL learners.

2. Special Learning Needs

Students with special educational learning needs are those students who for one reason or another, do not develop to their full educational potential. This includes students who are not extended by the curriculum and are regarded as gifted and talented. Students with special educational learning needs have usually been diagnosed with a disability, although not always.

Disability includes the following:

- physical, (mobility or functions requiring motor movement are affected)
- mental, (includes students with mental health issues such as depression, obsessive-compulsive disorder, anxiety)
- Intellectual (an intellectual impairment such as Intellectual Disability, cognitive delay, head injury) This category includes diagnoses such as Pervasive developmental delay, Global developmental delay, Developmental delay not otherwise specified, Down Syndrome). This category can consist of other neurological impairments such as Attention Deficit, Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and Dyslexia and other communication difficulties that are the result of neurological issues.
- sensory (auditory or visual disability, Autism Spectrum Disorder)

Students with Special Education Needs also include, for this policy, children who are *at risk* because they are 1. functioning at a level well below their

peers academically, 2. present with challenging behaviour in class which is affecting their learning and perhaps the learning of others. They may or may not have a formal diagnosis.

3. The IEP

An IEP is a learning plan for students with special education needs. The plan includes a set of priority goals that identifies the student's current learning level, the next learning step and how to get to that step. These goals are developed by the teacher, support staff, and parents/guardians. The IEP should be a strength-based approach, highlighting what the student can do rather than emphasise what the student is unable to do.

3. Nauru Education Schooling

Under the provision of the Republic of Nauru Education Act 2011, school is mandatory for all schools aged children between 5 and 18 years. Students with a disability can attend classes in the regular school system, or be enrolled in a Centre if deemed more suitable to address their extra needs.

3.1 Mainstream Schooling

Mainstream schooling is defined as special education students attending regular classes alongside their same-aged peers. Students participate in the same educational programme and activities as the others in the classroom, although adaptations may need to be made to the content of the lesson plan to accommodate learning difficulties or other learning needs.

3.2 Special School

The Able Disable Centre can be described as a *Special School*. A special school is a school catering for students who have special educational needs due to severe learning difficulties, physical disabilities or behavioural problems. Special schools are separate schools staffed and resourced to provide appropriate special education for children with additional needs.

4. Principles of Inclusive Education

The key principles of Inclusive Education include:

1. The Republic of Nauru school system is the foundation for inclusive education.
2. The belief that ALL students have a right to an education in the regular classroom.
3. Inclusive education at all levels benefits both the students with special educational needs as well as their peers.
4. Each student is unique and needs an individualised approach to meet their intellectual, spiritual, physical, social, emotional, cultural and career goals. Differences are valued as a resource to support learning rather than problems to overcome.
5. Parents are valuable contributing partners in the education system, and their involvement enhances the school's contribution.
6. The participation of each student in all aspects of school life is vital for a rich educational experience. All students feel that they belong and their views and values are respected.

5. Objective

5.1 What is the purpose of this policy?

The policy aims to continue to encourage dialogue and change towards improving the practices of inclusive education. It strives to support schools to develop a culture of inclusivity and build a system where everyone is valued and feels a sense of belonging.

While this policy promotes inclusivity for ALL children and young people, it recognises that there is an emphasis on disability over other inclusive education needs.

The policy also recognises that children who are identified as 'at risk' can be part of an IEP process if deemed appropriate according to the discretion of the Principal.

The IEP process for children, categorised as having special needs or at risk, will see the production by a multidisciplinary team, of an IEP working document that sets specific goals and an intervention plan that will include monitoring and evaluation and a review date set annually. The IEP document is a guide to be used by teachers, specialists, parents and other stakeholders for the child with special needs.

6. Rationale

There is a proportion of children who may not be meeting their potential within the education system as it operates currently. In order to achieve their potential, children require a fair and equitable education system. Equity applies to all levels of education across all settings, whether that be in the mainstream setting or the Able Disable Centre.

It is noted that this policy is written so that it can be recognised that children with disabilities may still be marginalised in Nauru. There are also some children who are “at risk” and have been disadvantaged by their geographical isolation and circumstances (e.g. access to specialist care and services). We need a policy that will ensure that the educational needs of all children from disadvantaged or marginalised groups are properly diagnosed and an IEP is written for students “at risk” of failing. There needs to be a clear pathway to maximising enrolment in regular education settings if the IEP team feels that a segregated/exclusive setting is in the best interest of the child.

We need this policy to guide the move towards inclusivity in the Republic of Nauru and to ensure that our education system will ultimately be equipped to cater for the needs of all children and be a tool for achieving the global goals. Additionally, a policy will serve to protect the rights of all children to a successful education free of all forms of exclusionary practices.

The ultimate aim of an inclusive education system is an inclusive Nauru society where all can feel that they truly belong.

7. Policy Aims

This document aims to:

- 7.1. Outline the responsibilities of the Department of Education, schools and key stakeholders to ensure the continuous engagement in inclusive processes that promote inclusivity in all that we do.
- 7.2. Provide schools with guidelines for developing procedures that cater to students with special learning and teaching needs and those children “at risk”.
- 7.3. Ensure that the Nauru Education system is ready to cater to the learning needs of Nauru students who have special educational needs.

8. Policy Directions

8.1. Support services shall be provided through the:

- 8.1.1. Employment of an Inclusive Education Advisor within Department of Education in Nauru.
- 8.1.2. Employment of Inclusive Education staff at the Able Disable Centre who access ongoing specialist training in inclusive education.
- 8.1.3. Employment of (where necessary and possible) teacher aides to deliver support programmes in mainstream settings and in the special school setting
- 8.1.4. Regular and ongoing access to a team of specialists or the sharing of specialists with other government ministries e.g. psychologists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, dentists, audiologists, paediatricians, doctors and nurses etc.
- 8.1.5. Maintenance of a resource centre at the Department of Education that:
 - a. Keeps an up-to-date database of students with special needs and their disability.
 - b. Keeps a range of up to date inclusive education materials including information on inclusion, tips for teachers and parents of children with disabilities or special learning needs teaching pedagogies and teaching-learning process and related topics, and other resources- including assistive devices, equipment, computers and computer software or programmes available for use by teachers and stakeholders.
 - c. Contains a registry of local, national and international resource people.
 - d. Contains a registry of stakeholders in special/inclusive education to facilitate communication and provide a means of ongoing support;
 - e. Contains a toolkit for schools and other useful resources to enable schools to build inclusive settings and self-regulate how inclusive their school and classrooms are becoming.
 - f. Contains a range of assessment tools ranging from the early years through to secondary school for assessment purposes and planning. (e.g., Nauru Department of Education School Readiness Checklist).
 - g. Provision of additional resources and assistive devices for students with special needs where necessary and possible.
 - h. Empowering of school staff across the Curriculum key learning areas to ensuring the strengthening of inclusivity across subject areas so they can, in turn, encourage the teachers' preparation and planning for children with special educational needs.

- i. Appointment of an Inclusive Education Advisory Group consisting of stakeholders to supervise these policy directions.
- j. The development of a satellite Inclusive Education Unit complete with resources and user-friendly environment within a school for intake of students with special educational needs who can be transitioned from the Able Disable Centre into Mainstream classes.

8.2. Teacher Education programmes shall be provided including the:

- 8.2.1. Provision of professional development in inclusive education practices for in-service teachers through school-based professional development sessions.
- 8.2.2. Ensuring that inclusive education practices and processes are an integral part of teaching and learning advisory support.
- 8.2.3. Training of teacher aides to support teachers in the education of students with special learning and teaching needs.
- 8.2.4. Preparation and development of course materials aimed at up-skilling in-service teachers on special topics such as:
 - a. The Inclusive Education Policy and school-based policy development;
 - b. Child Development- understanding how children learn in the early years;
 - c. The IEP process and identification of students that warrant assessment;
 - d. Early Identification and Intervention;
 - e. The Effective Inclusive Teacher;
 - f. Remedial Teaching Strategies;
 - g. Strategies for Teaching Children with Disabilities;

8.3. Identification and assessment programmes shall be provided through the:

- 8.3.1. Development and application of procedures for the early identification of students with special learning and teaching needs,
- 8.3.2. Use of a multi-disciplinary approach to identifying and assessing children at risk in schools; (use of health, education and other professionals in assessing and identifying student need),
- 8.3.3. Referrals to health and education professionals or specialists where needed;
- 8.3.4. Maintenance of confidential records of assessments and results and reporting of this information to the principal, DoE, parents/ caregivers and the students themselves.

8.3.5. Formulation and development of a Memorandum of Understanding between DOE, and Health departments for the sharing of resources and personnel for identification, assessment and diagnostic tests and processes and the sharing of a common central database for children with disabilities.

8.4. Educational Strategies shall include the:

- 8.4.1. Provision of amended assessment and teaching procedures to ensure that students with special learning and teaching needs are not disadvantaged;
- 8.4.2. Enrolment of all students;
- 8.4.3. Promotion of students with special learning needs through the education system with their peers;
- 8.4.4. Provision of a learning environment where children are safe, valued, respected, encouraged, and where they experience success;
- 8.4.5. Adjustments to teaching programmes for students with special learning and teaching needs so that they can take part (as far as possible) in the regular classroom programme; and
- 8.4.6. 6.4.6 Provision of alternative programs for the education of students who are not able to be included in the regular classroom [Note: this should only be done after careful consideration of all issues and challenges posed on a case by case basis and as a result of consultation with all stakeholders concerned]

8.5. Teacher Aides Role Definition

Teacher aides work under the supervision of a teacher/teachers and in accordance with defined school procedures to support teaching programmes and student learning. Educational outcomes for students are defined in an IEP developed by the key team working with the student including teachers, teacher aides, parents and caregivers, and specialists. Where appropriate, the student is also involved in developing the programme.

The roles and responsibilities of a teacher aide vary from class to class, school to school and primary to secondary settings.

The Professional Requirements of Teacher Aides are to:

- a. Work in partnership with students, teachers and specialists
- b. Work effectively as a member of a team
- c. Be flexible (e.g. working where the teacher requires so that at times the teacher can work with specific students)

- d. Maintain confidentiality except where withholding information is likely to be harmful to the student

The Role of a Teacher Aide may include:

- a. Participating in IEP planning
- b. Following the programme prepared and supervised by the teacher
- c. Supporting group and/or one to one learning
- d. Following programmes provided by specialists
- e. Contributing information to support assessments
- f. Liaising with parents and appropriate professionals where requested by a teacher
- g. Providing direct support to students in a range of areas, e.g., self-care, building self-esteem, personal safety, mobility, medication
- h. Helping to build students' skills
- i. Promoting independence in the student

9. Guidelines

These guidelines are to assist schools in the development of procedures for the identification, education and assessment of students with special learning needs. There are seven key areas which should form the basis of planning and procedures for students with special learning needs. The key areas are:-

- Identification
- The school curriculum
- Partnerships in education
- The learning environment
- Evaluation and improvement
- Reporting
- Professional development

9.1. Identification

To accurately identify students with special needs, an assessment must be regular and across all years of schooling. Each student who has been identified as having special needs should have a portfolio tagged with a Student Profile which has details of identification data, and specifications on the conditions affecting the child and includes diagnosis by specialists and previous intervention plans or IEPs. Students' needs should be regularly monitored, as should change in their achievement level, and if their behaviour differs noticeably over time or to that of their peers.

9.1.1. Outcome

Students with special learning needs are identified and assessed in their early years and throughout their schooling.

9.1.2. Schools achieve this by:

- a. Regularly assessing students at all levels using class assessments, teacher observations and student achievement profile and portfolios;
- b. Analysing results of assessments such as diagnostic tests and other curriculum-based assessments to identify students who may have special learning needs;
- c. Recording other information such as attendance, participation and behaviour; and
- d. Monitoring and recording changes in students' rate of progress and if their behaviour differs noticeably in a sustained manner from past performance or that of their peers.
- e. Making a request to the Department of Education through the Inclusive Education Advisor to request for assistance in assessment

and identification of children of concern to them that have not been previously identified or cases that are new to Nauru and unknown to the Department of Education.

9.2. The School Curriculum

The planning and delivery of classroom lessons must reflect the requirements of the Nauru Curriculum and be relevant as well as challenging for students and be flexible in meeting the needs of students with special learning needs.

9.2.1. Outcome

Whole school activities and class lessons are planned and delivered in ways that responds to the needs of, or developmentally appropriate, for all students.

9.2.2. Schools achieve this by:

- a. Providing opportunities and encouraging all students to participate in school activities to the best of their abilities;
- b. Providing resources for students with special learning needs at the appropriate developmental level;
- c. Ensuring all students have access to class materials and resources at their appropriate level;
- d. Identifying and catering for individual learning needs through the delivery of the curriculum in a variety of ways and strategies;
- e. Delivering education programmes which teach children to accept and include people who are different; and
- f. Actively promoting non-discriminatory language and by teachers' role modelling inclusive language when referring to individual differences and diverse groups.

9.3. Partnerships in Education

Effective education occurs when all key stakeholders are included: the student, the parent/caregiver and school staff. Each stakeholder is able to provide essential information and support in educating students with special needs.

9.3.1. Outcome

Education plans that most effectively meet the learning needs of all students.

9.3.2. Schools achieve this by:

- a. Communicating and consulting with parents and caregivers at an early stage when children are identified as having special learning needs;
- b. Involving parents, caregivers and the students where possible in

- planning, implementing and reviewing programmes for students with special needs; and
- c. Collaborating where appropriate and necessary with government departments such as the DoE, non-government organisations and specialists to provide relevant services and support to children with special learning needs. [e.g., relevant government departments and specialists].

9.4. The Learning Environment

All students learn best in an environment that is supportive, safe and engaging. Students need to be valued, respected and valued. Students need to experience success in school in order to achieve their full potential. The classroom and the school as a whole plays a major role in the educational development of students with special learning needs where they must feel respected and feel that they do belong.

9.4.1. Outcome

The learning environment meets the needs of ALL learners

9.4.2. Schools achieve this by:

- a. Ensuring students learn in a safe environment;
- b. Making the school buildings and facilities [in consultation with DoE] are accessible to students with physical impairment;
- c. Encourage all students to work with children with learning needs and people with disabilities with appropriate support, resources and information; and
- d. Providing support for students in need of emotional care.

9.5. Evaluation and Improvement

Programmes designed for students with special learning needs must be monitored to ensure their success. Data such as attendance, participation, behaviour and academic performance is important in monitoring the effectiveness of programmes.

9.5.1. Outcome

Schools use student data to evaluate the success of programmes and to plan for improvement.

9.5.2. Schools achieve this by:

- a. Recording and assessing students' academic development in relation to the goals, achievement objectives and outcomes in IEPs;
- b. Analysing other data such as attendance, participation and behaviour to determine the progress of each student's performance; and
- c. Using all information to respond to programmes and make changes where necessary.

9.6. Reporting

All schools should have procedures for the reporting of student progress and achievement. Parents, caregivers and other stakeholders should be notified as soon as teachers identify that a student's achievement level, or rates of progress or behaviours change noticeably. Stakeholders must be given regular feedback with regards to the progress of students with special learning needs.

9.6.1. Outcome

Stakeholders regularly receive meaningful feedback about student progress.

9.6.2. Schools achieve this by:

- a. Regularly providing feedback to all of the key people involved through a range of means including work samples, written reports, interviews or telephone conversations.
- b. Ensuring that IEP documents are completed and distributed to relevant stakeholders

9.7. Professional Development

Schools have procedures in place where teacher professional development is delivered. Professional development is essential for teachers to improve the educational outcomes for students with special learning needs.

9.7.1. Outcome

Teachers have the knowledge and skills to meet the special learning and teaching needs of ALL students.

9.7.2. Schools achieve this by:

- a. Working with all staff to meet the learning needs of ALL students;
- b. Providing professional development to support teachers to address the needs of students with special needs; and
- c. Meeting professional development needs using local and international resources.

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