

SPECIAL NEEDS POLICY

Founded in 1902, Robinson School has been renowned in the community as a school that aims to provide each student with the best learning environment. The school mission statement – Academic Excellence, Christian Values, Respect and Dignity for all - is strongly supported by the school’s Special Needs policy. At Robinson, we believe that all students can learn and that each student has a unique learning style. In order to meet the needs of diverse learners, the school provides a variety of services to ensure that the educational needs of students are met and that each student feels he is a valuable member of the school community.

Robinson School Special Needs Policy provides a well-designed network of services to students that may benefit from additional learning support. The school strives to offer these services within the least restrictive environment.

The school is committed to making the most appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities. Students in the regular program that have a documented disability which requires special accommodations, receive them according to Robinson School guidelines for reasonable accommodations. Available to all students, the school also provides educational therapy services. The educational therapy program endeavors to work individually or in small groups with students referred by teachers and/or professionals to these services. Educational therapists work within areas such as: mathematics, reading, visual processing skills, perceptual and motor skills, attention and concentration, visual, auditory and working memory. Moreover, the therapists work closely with teachers developing strategies and possible accommodations to be implemented in the classroom in order to increase the effectiveness of therapy and ensure the student’s progress and academic performance.

As part of the commitment of the school to the well-being of all students, there is a school psychologist on campus that strives to help students, parents, teachers, and members of the school community understand and resolve problems that children and adolescents face. Robinson School psychologist collaborates with teachers, parents, school administrators, and other professionals to find the best solution for each child and situation by using different strategies to address the psychological factors that have an impact on learning and behavior within the school context.

Robinson School has access to testing and screening tools such as the Woodcock-Johnson Achievement Test, the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC IV), and the Bender-Gestalt, among others. However, the school does not administer the testing and screening tools to learners, it refers them to licensed professionals in the community for assessing their development and needs. The school holds an open door policy welcoming professionals in the field of clinical psychology, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy and math and reading specialist, whom are allowed to offer their services on campus to

students. The school provides a space and time during the school day for the services to be provided. Parents are responsible for the arrangements and the cost of the services. Professionals are required to submit copy of their professional license, insurance and complete a contact information form before being authorized to provide the services.

The school welcomes meetings with mental health professionals providing services to students that are enrolled in Robinson, facilitating communication between the professionals, teachers and administrators through the coordination of meetings, completion of questionnaires and observation visits.

In order to address the needs of our learners in the IB program, the school has implemented guidelines to ensure those needs are addressed. A team consisting of the Division Head, the School Psychologist, Educational Therapist, and the Special Education Specialist meet and revise each particular case along with their professional evaluations and educational recommendations. Members of the team have an initial meeting with parents and student where those evaluations and recommendations are discussed, and reasonable accommodations are determined. The team's determination and instructions regarding the educational needs and the strategies to meet them are shared for implementation with the teaching team. Periodical feedback and follow-up, monitored by the Division Head, Special Education Specialist, and the School Psychologist, is provided to ensure the learner is meeting his educational goals.

The school ensures that the learner's needs are met by documenting an initial meeting with the teaching team to discuss the student's particular needs, and establish plan to meet them. The school also elaborates an accommodation document for those students in an inclusive setting, and sets up and document periodical follow-up meetings with the teaching team to monitor the student's progress. This information, along with other confidential information such as the student's psychometric, psychoeducational, and neuropsychological evaluations, is kept in the student's file. Files are managed by Division Heads, the School Psychologist, Admissions Director, and Special Education Specialist. The students' files remain in the Admissions Office and/or the Special Education Office of the School. Under special circumstances, teachers may have access to educational information in the file under the supervision of the Division Head and/or the Special Education Supervisor. When a student is transitioning from one program to another, the Division Heads of the respective levels meet and provide each other with a status report for each particular learner in an inclusive setting.

In its pursuit to provide services for all learners, Robinson School established a program for students that need to be serviced within a more systematic and skill based educational program. The Pathways Program, as it is known, receives students that have failed to respond to the accommodations and adaptations provided in a general education setting due to a specific learning disability that requires specialized teaching. Enrollment is for students who have been diagnosed with a learning disability and aims to provide services within the least restrictive environment. By offering a skill based instruction within the school's curriculum, the

program aims to develop strong reading and writing skills in students with a language based disability, teach compensatory strategies and give each student an awareness of his/her particular learning style so as to be able to advocate for themselves beyond their Robinson School years. In response to the complexity of this neurological disorder, students are given the opportunity of a diverse range of pathways to help them be successful through the curriculum, opening opportunities for mainstreaming into the regular classroom while respecting that inclusion will always be contingent to the unique learning challenges of each individual.

Robinson School highly values and acknowledges the importance of the wide range of support services it has available for students. Therefore, provisions for inclusion and special needs are sustained by providing teaching personnel with professional opportunities, mostly through special education courses and workshops provided by specialists in the field of Special Education. By developing and implementing the Special Needs policy, the school lives up to its mission statement as it recognizes the need to provide each student with the learning support needed in order to become independent learners.

