



# Inclusion Policy

**Latest Review:** September 2023

**Review cycle:** 3 years

**Next Review:** September 2026



# **Wellspring Learning Community**

## **Inclusion Policy**

### **Contributors to the 2023 review:**

**Head of School – Kathleen Battah**

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**Primary School Principal – Randa Basho Jawad**

**Early Years Assistant Principal – Samah Abou Ghazal**

**ESL Coordinator – Rola Kazem**

**Learning Diversity Coordinator – May Shbaklo**

**Wellbeing Coordinator – Joyce Sawaya**

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**Senior Executive Assistant – Sereen Ajami**

### **Related Policies:**

**Admissions Policy**

**Assessment Policy**

**Learning Diversity Policy**

**Teaching and Learning Policy**

**Promotion Policy**

**Language Policy**

### **Approvals - names and signatures:**

**Chairperson of the Board**

**Head of School**

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# **Wellspring Learning Community**

## **Inclusion Policy**

### **Wellspring Learning Community's Mission Statement**

Wellspring Learning Community aims to establish an inquiry-based learning environment in which students from diverse backgrounds are given every opportunity to optimize their social, emotional and academic capacities and talents. Our students will become confident, resourceful, creative, caring, responsible global and local citizens prepared to use their education to contribute in meaningful ways towards improving society, both locally and internationally.

### **Rationale**

Wellspring Learning Community (Wellspring) is a non-sectarian educational institution that has no political or religious affiliations. All Wellspring stakeholders are full partners in the educational process, and they are expected to be fully committed to supporting Wellspring's mission. Wellspring celebrates diversity, supports learning, and recognizes individual styles. This inclusion policy stems from the UNICEF 2017 definitions of inclusion, the International Baccalaureate (IB) Access and Inclusion Policy (2022) and the Lebanese Inclusive Education Programme (2018).

Wellspring strives to be an inclusive school where: nationality, ethnicity, socio-economic backgrounds and cultural or personal beliefs do not influence the admissions process. Wellspring stakeholders are expected to observe all ethical, professional principles and guidelines set by Wellspring. Wellspring neither condones nor promotes any form of personal beliefs or practices on others, but rather, is a community that encourages the appreciation of each other's differences, abilities and potential. Wellspring actively acknowledges differences and strives to empower students by granting them access, removing learning barriers and helping them understand themselves and others. Wellspring supports students' strengths and interests by providing equitable educational opportunities, within the school's curriculum, to optimize students' chances of personal and academic success. Wellspring clearly understands and acknowledges that even though we appreciate each other's differences and beliefs, these should not infringe upon: a) the rights and freedoms of other staff members, b) Lebanese cultural values and regulations of the Lebanese Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE).

### **Inclusive Practices and Support Systems at Wellspring**

#### **Access and Open Admissions**

As an international IB Continuum World School, Wellspring welcomes applicants with diverse background and profiles within the school's capacities and rigorous educational requirements. Wellspring communicates these in all transparency to parents/guardians during the initial application process. The student's learning variability, the academic requirements of the school's rigorous IB programs, the school's physical resources and the parents' expectations for enrolment are all considered carefully and transparently during the open application process.

#### **Wellbeing, Leadership and Character Building**

Wellspring values the students' social, emotional and physical wellbeing along with the

rigorous academic and social demands embedded in an international curriculum. Leadership and character building are important aspects of Wellspring's education, as demonstrated by the following practices: a social and emotional learning curriculum that is articulated across the three IB programmes (Personal, Social and Physical Education - PSPE in Primary School, Pastoral in Middle School and Student Advisory in Secondary School), qualified counselors and faculty for K to 12 individualized support and accompaniment, a homeroom instructional approach from Early Years till Middle School, a whole-school focus on service learning and action leading up to Creativity, Activity and Service (CAS) in Secondary School, the Houses system, co-curricular activities, and international programs, exchanges and experiences (MUN, UN Global Compact).

### **International Mindedness and Global Citizenship**

Wellspring firmly believes in cultivating in its students and other community members the sense of commonality and inter-dependence as well as a ready disposition for international mindedness as the students interact with their counterparts around the globe, through a number of international student exchange programs. Wellspring seeks to develop in students a sense of global citizenship that will nurture their sense of empathy and engage them in bringing about solutions to global and local challenges that involve citizens of the world. Students are exposed to rich international exchange opportunities that are an integral part of the education they receive at Wellspring.

### **Curriculum**

Wellspring is an IB Continuum World School that offers students a rigorous IB education with the integration of the Lebanese curriculum in Primary, Middle and Secondary School for Lebanese students who are required to study the Lebanese curriculum. Wellspring believes in offering all students opportunities to succeed. In Primary School, Columbia University's Teacher College Reading and Writing Project offers students individualized levelled access to reading and writing. In Middle School, the eight MYP subject groups have equal academic weight and are offered to students, providing them with a well-rounded education. Students have a wide range of courses to choose from in Secondary School that match their interest, strengths and course preferences. The language offerings cater to the students' various language profiles. Kindly refer to Wellspring's Language Policy for further details.

### **Learning Diversity**

Wellspring supports the notion that with tailored plans, strategies and personal support, students with formally documented diverse educational profiles can be supported in Wellspring's inclusive setting for learning. Parents/legal guardians and students are viewed by Wellspring as full partners in the educational process, and they are expected to be fully committed to supporting the school's use of additional program tools such as individualized educational plans (IEP), English as a Second Language (ESL) plans, or the commitment to external professional interventions that the school may request during and after the application has been approved.

Language barriers are removed for students who have struggle with the language of instruction or the host country language through translanguaging (refer to Wellspring's Language Policy) and the provision of various language learning phases designed to accommodate students' language profiles.

## **Differentiation**

The Wellspring learning and teaching philosophy aims to promote access to high quality learning for students. Unit planners across the programmes are differentiated to cater to the learning styles and needs of students so they can embrace challenges or difficulties and, thus, increase their learning opportunities. Wellspring's priority along with differentiated instruction, is to ensure that students feel safe and supported.

In the Middle and Secondary Schools, differentiation in assessments is aligned with Lebanese national curricula and IB approved accommodations.

## **Self-Expression**

Wellspring encourages and embraces the right of all its community members to self-expression with the clear understanding that self-expression in form and content should respect the school's secular and international identity and conform to Lebanese Law. Discourse or practices that infringe any of Wellspring's values, guiding principles, code of ethical conduct or any other school related policies are not tolerated. In addition, as an IB continuum school, Wellspring is mindful of cultural sensitivities of the context in which it is embedded and is committed to respecting them while ensuring that every student is given the chance to take part in all learning opportunities provided by the school.

## **Equal Opportunity Employment and Capacity Building**

Wellspring is an equal opportunity employer that prides itself in the diversity of its human resources. All applications for employment are treated fairly, transparently, and without any prejudice. Furthermore, Wellspring believes in capacity building and provides employees with professional development and mentorship schemes that will help them grow professionally.

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