INCLUSION

IN
SCHOOLS

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN AN INCLUSIVE SCHOOL

The inclusive school landscape in Pakistan is constantly expanding and evolving. To ensure that your child has a positive learning experience once they have received admission in an inclusive school, it is your responsibility to ask relevant questions, observe the school, and determine whether it is the right fit for your child.

When your child feels safe and comfortable going to school, their academic and social growth comes naturally. When a school is open to students with special needs and willing to learn the skills required to accommodate diverse learners, it improves the experience for both parents and school staff and encourages them to support inclusive education.

Here's how you can assess whether a school has a positive and inclusive environment to support your child's academic journey.

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP AND PRACTICES

☐ Does a component of the school's mission statement mention opportunities for all students to learn and have success (e.g. inclusion, diversity, equal opportunity)?

☐ Does the existing school policy allow students to feel safe (emotionally and physically) in their learning environment?

☐ Is the school policy successful in reducing barriers to learning and increasing student participation?

☐ Are there technical tools and support resources in place for all students according to their individual needs?

☐ Does the school provide flexibility and variety in how learning activities are presented?

☐ Does the principal/administrator(s) model an appreciation for inclusion and work to support collaborative opportunities between teachers and within classrooms?

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP AND PRACTICES

☐ Does the school provide therapies/extra help for students with special needs and learning disabilities?

☐ Are the views of parents and teachers taken into consideration to assess whether remedial teachers and special needs resources are working?

☐ Do students have a positive social experience at school (e.g. children have friends, engage in playdates after school etc.)?

☐ Do school personnel partake in respectful and engaging interactions with students?

☐ Does the school exhibit a welcoming, inclusive atmosphere where students show pride and responsibility for their learning community?

☐ Does the school have a school-wide approach used to develop positive relationships among students with and without disabilities?

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT AND SUPPORTS

☐ Do students with disabilities spend the majority of the school day with typical peers?

☐ Does the school create IEPs (Individualized Education Plans) to cater to all student needs and academic levels?

☐ Is collaborative learning with peer models (learning with buddy system) encouraged?
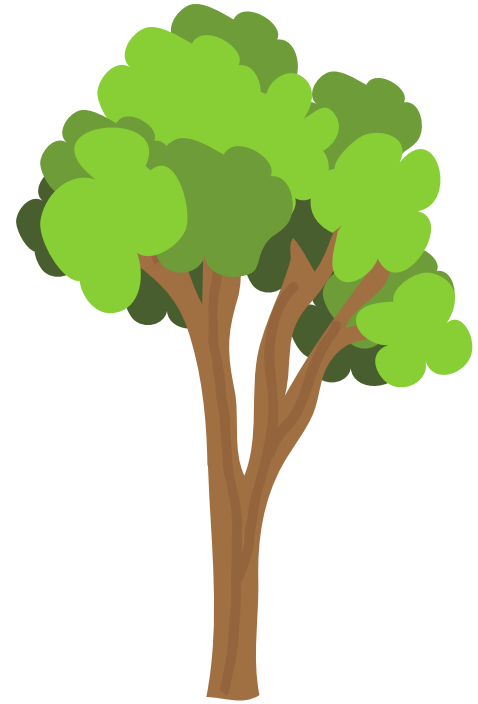
FACULTY AND STAFF

☐ Are lesson plans and homework shared in advance?

☐ Are TAs and special educators/resource teachers involved in curriculum planning?

☐ Are parents included in the creation process of IEPs for their child?

☐ Do all staff members supervise all students, with or without disabilities, freely with positive, meaningful interactions during instructional and non-instructional activities?

☐ Are special needs coordinators (SENCO), remedial teachers, and teacher assistants present in the school?

LESSON PLANNING AND RESPONSE TO STUDENT NEEDS

☐ Are there tailored activities and lesson plans within the general education classroom?

☐ Is there an emphasis on activities outside of school, with home-to-school links for communication?

☐ Are there different strategies used in the classroom to support diverse learning such as:
  1. Cooperative Learning
  2. Teaching Assistants working with everyone in class
  3. Peer tutoring?

☐ Are parents provided access to a collection of effective and personalized learning strategies (e.g. manual) to use across subject areas?

☐ Are parents consulted on the quality of learning activities in the classroom?

☐ Does the staff include parents/caregivers in the goals and objectives set forth for their child?

Click here to read more on guidelines for inclusive education.