

CHILDREN EDUCATION SERVICES

Integration Facilitation Support Programme
Family Handbook





Borne out of love and devotion by a group of parents of children with Down syndrome, Down Syndrome Association (Singapore), is a primarily self-funding, non-profit social service agency established in 1996 to support and educate families, professionals, and the public about the genetic condition. The Association is committed to providing holistic support for families and caregivers; facilitating a person with Down syndrome to attain his or her full potential; and enabling them to contribute back to the society.

Vision

To be the Centre of Excellence for individuals with Down syndrome, their families and the community.

Mission

- Develop individuals with Down syndrome through lifelong learning and social integration.
- Support families through specialist services, information, and education.
- Advocate for equal opportunities, quality of life and their contribution to society.

Preface

This Family Handbook is written to help parents understand IFSP services and its processes. We hope it will help you to become fully involved in the team effort of obtaining the most appropriate educational outcomes for your child.

The information contained in this handbook does not create any contractual rights or obligations for staff or families. This handbook is to be used as a guide and is not inclusive of all policies and practices. Changes to specific policies and/or procedures will be distributed to families in writing. Any questions and/or concerns should be directed to the Head, Children Education Services.

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Children Education Services

In line with our vision in promoting a holistic developmental approach to education for young members, the Children Education Services aims to promote a range of support services and programmes for children with Down syndrome.

These services include:

- **Early Start Programme (ESP)**
Registered Early Intervention Programme with the Early Childhood Development Agency (Baby Bonus Approved).
- **Integration Facilitation Support Programme (IFSP)**
IFSP offers a continuum of itinerant special education services for preschool and school age children through in-class support and one-to-one pull-out sessions.

Integration Facilitation Support Programme (IFSP)

In 2007, DSA embarked on a two-year collaboration with NIE and St. Joseph's Institution Junior to explore the possibilities of including children with Down syndrome in mainstream school settings. Based on the findings, DSA launched the Integration Facilitation Support Programme (IFSP) in 2019 to support students with Down syndrome in mainstream Early Childhood Development Centres and Primary schools.

IFSP collaborates with the student, the family, and the mainstream teachers to adopt a learning atmosphere that meets each student's unique needs. Support provided through IFSP enables families to be active participants in their child's education, make informed decisions regarding the nature of supports, resources and services that promotes family self-efficacy.

IFSP adheres to the philosophy that each child with Down syndrome is entitled to the support necessary to maximize his/her potential. IFSP staff, in collaboration with classroom teachers and other educational professionals, have a commitment to the following objectives:

- To create an effective partnership for learning by sharing all available information about a child's strengths and challenges pertinent to the child's progress in an educational setting.
- To provide and implement program and testing accommodations as stipulated on the Individual Education Plan, where relevant.
- To facilitate each student's academic progress and social development by establishing appropriate goals and providing intervention.

Admission

IFSP supports children with Down syndrome enrolled in Early Childhood Development Centres and Primary schools.

Children are accepted into the programme on a first come, first served basis. Where necessary, admission can be needs-based.

Withdrawals and Transitions of Service

Families are required to provide four weeks written notice of their intention to withdraw their child from the program.

When transferring out to Special Education Schools, we will assist in the process and provide the required information and assistance.

Fees and Payment Methods

All fees are due within the first five business days of each month.

There is no pro-rating, waivers or discounts in fees due to absence for short-term illness, public holidays, school holidays, ECDC and MOE suspensions, shut-down, family vacations or personal reasons.

Payment for IFSP fees can be made via:

1. GIRO (highly encouraged)
2. Cheque
3. PayNow
4. Online Bank Transfers

IFSP welcome letter contains DSA's bank account details and fee payment instructions.

If you require any financial assistance, please reach out to the Head, Children Education Services.

Service Delivery

MOE School Calendar and Class Timetable

Due to MOE school administration processes and classroom timetable development procedures, IFSP will commence during the second or third week of January. The full monthly fee for January is still applicable.

Intervention Model

Support time is provided during curriculum hours and it varies according to student's educational need. Programme provision is 1 hour in-class support and 1 hour pull-out support.

The student receives support for the mainstream curriculum in the general classroom setting. The IFSP teacher facilitates the student's acquisition and generalisation of social skills needed across current and future environments.

Field Trips

IFSP teachers may accompany their students on field trips organised by school or ECDC, when required by teacher or parent. Parents are advised that any costs, such as transport cost and/or admission fee for field trips incurred will be borne by the parent.

Progress Monitoring

Your child's teacher will keep you up to date on your child's progress and interests during informal conversations and through text messages. Parent conferences will be scheduled to share information and concerns and to discuss the child's progress.

Parents may inform IFSP teachers or contact Head, Children Education Services to schedule a discussion if there is a need to discuss other concerns.

Attendance

When a student is absent from school, the parent should notify the IFSP teacher. If an extended absence is planned, parents should send a note or email indicating the dates the student will be absent and the reason for the absence.

Make-Up Sessions for Missed/Disrupted Services

IFSP offers a 'Make-Up' session to a student when there is a disruption to service due to teacher cancellation. No makeup sessions are offered for service disruption due to school events, field trips and cancellation by parents.

'Disruption of service' means IFSP teacher was unable to provide the agreed session due to medical leave or annual leave /unpaid leave.

'Make-up session' means an IFSP session that replaces a disrupted session.

Confidentiality

The individual dignity of learners, families, and DSA staff will always be respected and protected in accordance with PDPA. Information about learners and their families will not be disclosed to anyone other than persons who are authorised to receive such information.

Our staff is trained about confidentiality. We will do everything to protect your family's right of privacy and ask that you respect the rights of others.

Photography, Videos and Media

We may take photographs of the students for individual student schedules and personalised portfolios. Photographs may be used for progress evaluation, parent workshops, teacher in-services and media coverage such as DSA Facebook, Instagram and newsletters. The IFSP application form provides a space for you to designate your consent. We will respect the wishes of parents who do not want their child photographed.

Communication

Families are kept informed of IFSP session happenings through text messages, emails, and communication books. You may communicate with IFSP teachers through the same means and they will respond to your communication at the soonest viable time from 8.30 am to 6.00 pm, Monday through Friday.

You may direct your enquires or concerns to Head, Children Education Services from 8.30 am to 6.00 pm, Monday through Friday by text messages and emails. Your concerns or enquires will be addressed within three business days.

Grievances

All grievances may be lodged via face-to-face contact, telephone conversations, text messages or emails and a record will be kept of the complaint until resolved. All grievance will be fully discussed between the parents/student/mainstream provider and DSA staff involved and Head, Children Education Services.

In the event that the matter remains unresolved, it can be referred for further mediation to Assistant Director, Services.

Mutual Respect Policy

Creating the best outcomes for IFSP students requires the relationship between parents, family members, caregivers and staff to be based on the principles of care, integrity, trust and mutual respect.

The purpose of this policy is to provide a reminder to all parents, family members and caregivers about our expected conduct towards staff so that we can work together to ensure a safe and positive relationship.

Safety Protocol

IFSP teachers are responsible for ensuring student safety during pull-out sessions. Teachers ensure adherence to all safety protocols and procedures set by individual Early Childhood Development Centre and Primary school.

Children and educators are actively encouraged to practice good personal hygiene to minimise the instances of illness. If your child presents signs of illness, the teacher or personal responsible will be informed.

It is important that you familiarise yourself to MOE guidelines and Early Childhood Development Centre or Primary school policies and procedures on managing illnesses and risk of transmissions.

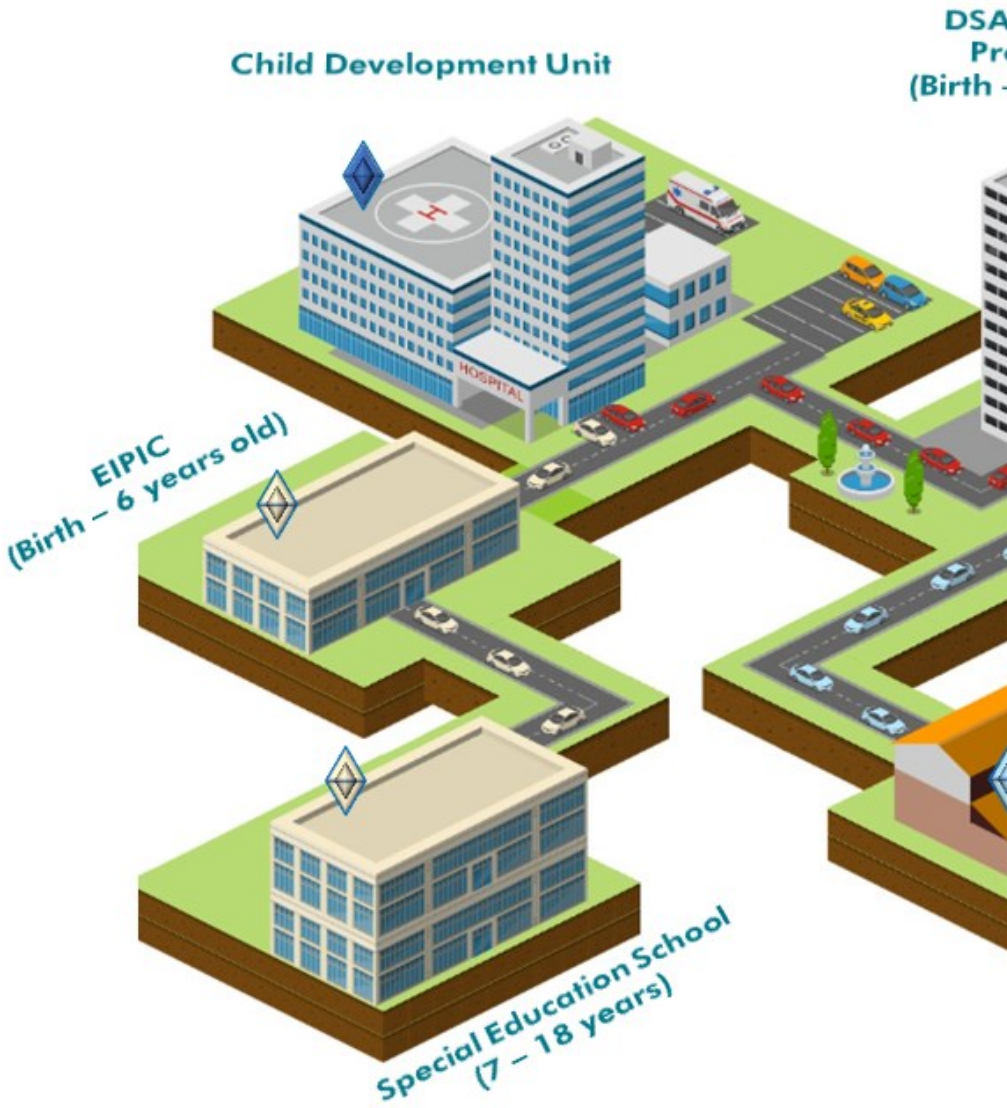
Lending Library

Our programme has a library of toys and resources to loan to families. This has been made possible through donations. You may request an item from IFSP teachers. To ensure that all families have an opportunity to use the toys and resources, we request you return the loaned item after four weeks.

Educational Pathways

Early Intervention Pathway to Success

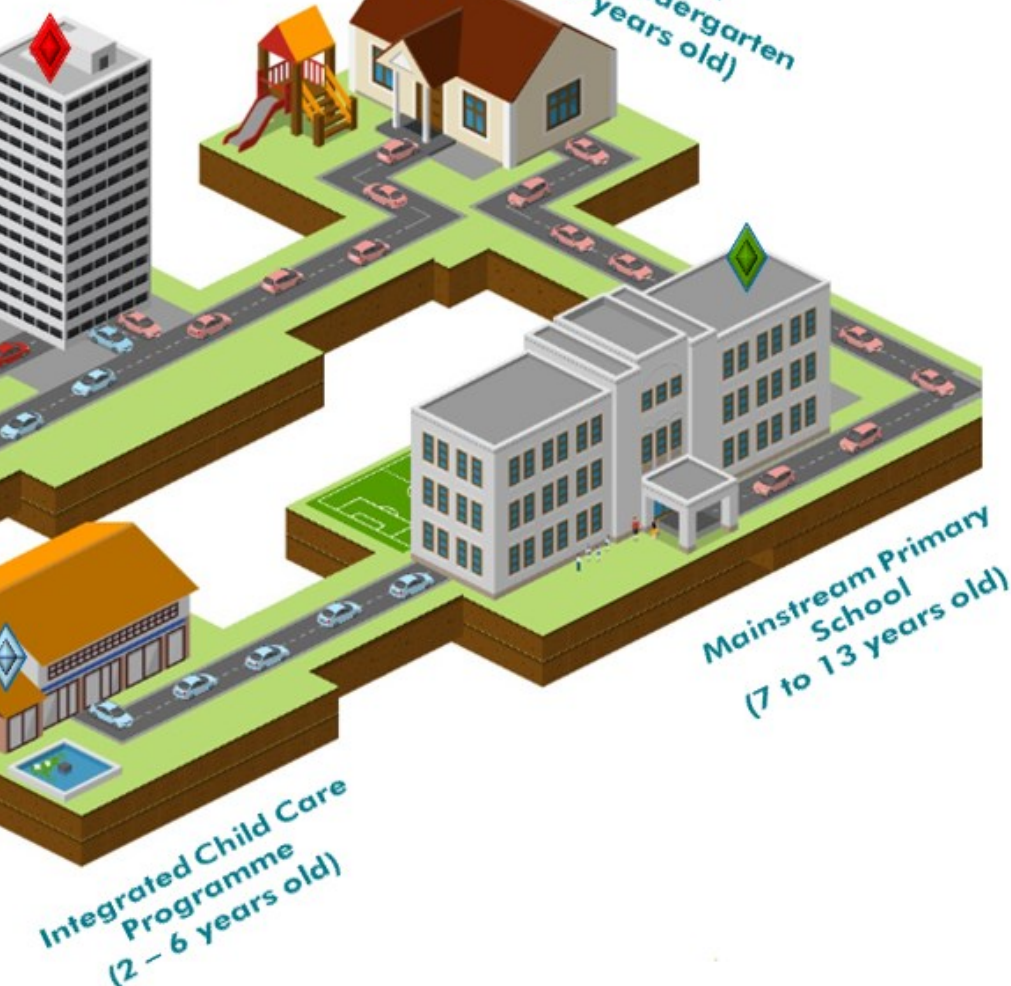
Information is critical to support children's success all along the way.



Children’s pathways to success are increasingly varied. No matter the path, parents must make choices that shape their child’s future options and opportunities. Families should be supported with information that can point them down the right pathway to get them where they want to go.

Early Start Programme
(0 – 3 years old)

**Mainstream
Preschool/Kindergarten**
(2 – 7 years old)



**Mainstream Primary
School**
(7 to 13 years old)

**Integrated Child Care
Programme**
(2 – 6 years old)



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