



Criteria for integration children with disabilities In nurseries

Introduction:

Several studies stress the importance of integrating certain groups of children with mild disabilities or developmental delay into nurseries so that they can make use of the positive effects in developing their language abilities and social skills. This would prepare them to KG stage and general education afterwards, in addition to the countless advantages to the family as a result of enrolling their disabled or developmentally delayed child in a nursery.

Within this context and upon the directives of HE Mariam Mohamed Khalfan Al Roumi Minister of Social Affairs , Child Department in the Ministry of Social Affairs has launched an initiative entitled "We are All Children" which is aimed at enabling nurseries to admit children with developmental delay or disability. In cooperation with the Department of Welfare and Rehabilitation of persons with disabilities.

Several criteria have been drawn up based on sound scientific bases. Such criteria are mandatory for all nurseries that admit children with disabilities or developmental delay.



Children with disabilities or developmental delay who can integrate them in nurseries and the criteria that should be taken into consideration:

1- Children with intellectual disabilities:

Mental retardation (MR) is a generalized disorder, characterized by significantly impaired cognitive functioning and deficits in two or more [adaptive behaviors](#) that appears before adulthood. It has historically been defined as an Intelligence Quotient (IQ) score under 70. Once focused almost entirely on cognition, the definition now includes both a component relating to mental functioning and one relating to individuals functional skills in their environment

Intellectual disabilities has different degrees ranging from mild to severe.

Mentally disabled child:

A family may suspect mental retardation if the child's motor skills, language skills, and self-help skills do not seem to be developing, or are developing at a far slower rate than the child's peers. Failure to adapt (adjust to new situations) normally and grow intellectually may become apparent early in a child's life. In the case of mild retardation, these failures may not become recognizable until school age or later.



Down Syndrome:

A child is categorized as one of the children with Down syndrome if a medical report is issued indicating that the child is suffering from Down syndrome or Trisomy 21.

Nurseries are allowed to admit children with mild intellectual disability, such as children with Down syndrome and other syndromes that cause mild intellectual disabilities, according to the following rules:

- 1- A medical report indicate that the child is suffering from a mild mental disability, provided that there are no behavioral disorders accompanying the intellectual disability.
- 2- A report is obtained from the Early Intervention Program or psychological report for the child containing the following information:
 - a. An express recommendation stating that the child should be admitted to a nursery .
 - b. Complete explanation of the nature of the intellectual disability affecting the child, including mental capacities and mental age.
 - c. The nature of services done or being done to the child and the place where such services are received.
 - d. Information on the individualized education plan prepared for the child with long and short term goals.
 - e. The nature of educational / behavioral goals which the nursery is required to apply to the child.

3- The nursery's staff should have sufficient knowledge on the fundamentals of special education, including the implementation of the individualized education plan prepared by education specialists for the child or applying behavior modification programs.

4- Language used in the nursery must be the child's mother language and the same language used to communicate with the child at home.

2- Autism:

A developmental disorder that appears during the first three years of the child's life due to a neurological disorder in the brain; it affects the child's social development and communication and other matters. This term is used to describe children who show eccentric(unusual) behaviors in different fields, especially social skills. children with Autism show disinterest in others or have abnormal social behavior, with the absence of verbal and nonverbal communication, in addition to other behavioral manifestations. There are different degrees of autistic disorder.

Nurseries are allowed to admit children with autistic disorders according to the following rules:

- 1- There is a psychological / educational / medical report indicating that the child suffers from autism .
- 2- Children with " High Functioning Autism" (the child has the ability to communicate verbally or nonverbally with no severe behavioral disorders, such as Tantrums or self injury behavior and other violent behaviors).
- 3- The psychological / educational or medical report recommends the child to be admitted to the nursery.

- 4- Language used in the nursery must be the child's mother language and the same language used to communicate with the child at home.
- 5- The nursery shall keep a complete record for the child and the developments that occur to him and his skills.
- 6- The educational report contains information on the individualized education plan prepared for the child, in addition to specific instructions on how to deal with the child.
- 7- The nursery shall keep a complete record the child and the developments that occur to him and his skills, especially his social development and maintaining relationships with those around him.
- 8- The nursery's staff should have the minimum level of knowledge on autistic disorder and how to deal with children with Autism .

3- Children with hearing loss or with Cochlear Implant:

The term "hearing impairment" is used to describe cases of hearing loss with its different degrees and types. The term includes children with complete hearing loss and hard of hearing. Hearing loss can occur before birth or after birth in the first years of life. A child is deemed to be suffering from hearing impairment when he is found to have hearing loss above 25 dB(Decibel).

Hearing disability according to the degree of hearing loss may be categorized as follows:

- 1- Mild : hearing loss between 25 and 40 dB.
- 2- Moderate : hearing loss between 40 and 70 dB.
- 3- Severe : hearing loss between 70 and 90 dB.



4- Profound hearing loss: hearing loss above 90 dB.

Nurseries are allowed to admit children with hearing loss using hearing aids or children who underwent a cochlear implant according to the following rules:

1- A report is prepared by a Speech – Language therapist (Pathologist) / special education teacher / educational institution for children with hearing loss or early intervention program, and includes the following information:

- a. The nature and degree of the child's hearing impairment (degree and type of hearing loss).
- b. Type of the hearing aids which the child uses / the cochlear implant device.
- c. Complete information on the rehabilitation program applied to the child and the language used in the Verbal - auditory program.
- d. An express recommendation to admit the child to the nursery.

2- Language used in the nursery must be the child's mother language or the same language used in the rehabilitation program for the child.

3- The nursery has an appropriate auditory environment (noise-free).

4- The staff of the nursery has basic information on hearing loss and dealing with the child who suffers from hearing loss and that who uses hearing aids and cochlea implant device.

5- The nursery keeps a complete record for the child.



4- Motor disabilities / physically impaired children:

Motor disabilities are disabilities that effect a child's ability to learn motor tasks (moving and manipulating objects) such as walking, running, skipping, tying shoes, crawling, sitting, handwriting, and others. To be considered a disability, the problem must cause a child to have motor coordination that is significantly below what would be expected for his or her age, and the problem must interfere with the activities of learning and daily living. Cerebral palsy is a motor disability.

Nurseries are allowed to admit children suffering from motor or physical disabilities according to the following conditions:

1- An educational report or report from an early intervention program containing the following information:

- a. An express recommendation to admit the child to a nursery .
- b. Information on the nature of the child's motor disability.
- c. A medical report.
- d. Intellectual abilities of the child.
- e. The nature of therapy received by the child (physiotherapy – occupational therapy – speech – language therapy).

2- The child is not suffering from repeated epilepsy fits (fits that cannot be

properly controlled by medicine), or those who has chronic diseases accompanying the motor disability, such as dyspnea or acute asthma.

3- The child should have normal mental capabilities.

4- The child is not suffering from Dysphagia(Feeding difficulties) .

5- The nursery's staff are knowledgeable about motor disability, its types, categories, special services needed by the child with motor disability and the ways of dealing with such a child.

6- The language used in the nursery is the same as the child's mother language (language used at the child's home).

7- The building of the nursery has the minimum accessibility to facilitate the child's movement in case he is using supportive devices, such as the walker or wheelchair .

8- The nursery shall keep a complete record for the child.

5- Children with visual impairment:

Means cases of complete or partial loss of vision in a way limiting the child's ability to use his sight in the daily activities of life.

Nurseries are allowed to admit children with visual impairment as per the following conditions:

1- An educational report / report from the early intervention program or a



specialist of visually impaired education recommending that the child should be admitted to a nursery, including the following information:

- a. Nature of the child's visual impairment (degree and type)
- b. Nature of educational services provided for the child or being provided at present to the child, the place and time of rendering such services.
- c. An educational recommendation to admit the child to a nursery.
- d. The child does not have multiple disabilities (such as hearing loss or intellectual disability).

2- The nursery's staff have minimum knowledge on visual impairment, the ways of dealing with children suffering from the same, and how to involve such children in the activities and events practiced by other children.

3- The language used in the nursery is the same as the child's mother language.

4- The nursery should be safe for the visually impaired children.

6- Children with Speech – Language delay:

A child is considered to be delayed in language, or speech if his language development (receive and expressive language) does not suit the child's age or the language development of the children in his age group.

Nurseries are allowed to admit children with speech – language delay as per the following conditions:

1- A speech – language report from speech therapist (Pathologist), early



intervention program or an educational institution containing the following information:

- a. Case history: Explaining the child's speech and language development , development difficulties with the child, pregnancy and birth history and the health status of the child.
- b. A recommendation indicating that the child should be admitted to a nursery to have language stimulation.
- c. A recommendation to follow up the child's language development following his admission to the nursery.

2- Language used in the nursery and spoken by other children in the nursery is the same as the child's mother language (language used in the child's home or that used during speech therapy sessions).

Important points to be taken into consideration upon admitting a child with disability to a nurseries:

- 1- All medical or educational reports or reports made by special education and supportive services specialists must be issued by an institution recognized by the Ministry of Social Affairs.
- 2- Any nursery that would like to admit a child with disability should apply to the Child Department at the Ministry of Social Affairs and enclose with the application photocopies of the required reports.
- 3- Every nursery shall keep a complete record for the child, containing all of the child's medical, educational or follow-up reports.
- 4- Nurseries must submit a regular report to the parents explaining the developments that occur to the child.



- 5- The nursery's management should accept to prepare a comprehensive report on the newly-admitted child.
- 6- The nursery shall not object to prepare any developmental report for any external body providing supporting services to the child with disability who is admitted to the nursery (Early Intervention Center or any other relevant body).