

AFRICA COMMUNITY SCHOOL AND AFRICA INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE

ABILITY GROUPING POLICY

Africa Community School and Africa International College are committed to providing a Christ-centered, inclusive, and academically excellent education. Our ability grouping policy is designed to recognize and nurture the unique gifts and abilities of each student while fostering an environment of love, acceptance, and support.

Principles:

1. Individualized Education:

The importance of recognizing and nurturing each student's unique abilities and talents as part of a Christian commitment to valuing each individual.

2. Inclusive Approach:

An inclusive environment that reflects Christian values of love, acceptance, and support for all students and pupils, regardless of their academic abilities.

3. Biblical Foundation:

This ability grouping policy is grounded in biblical principles, such as the parable of the talents, to emphasize responsible stewardship of the gifts and abilities given to each student.

4. Christian Character Development:

Incorporate the development of Christian character traits, such as humility, compassion, and patience, into the curriculum and teaching methods, regardless of ability grouping

5. Parental Involvement:

Encourage parental involvement in the educational process, fostering a partnership between parents, teachers, and the school community to support students at all levels.

6. Differentiation Strategies:

Implement differentiated instruction within ability groups to meet the diverse learning needs of students. Provide opportunities for students to excel and challenge themselves academically, regardless of their initial placement.

Ability grouping can be defined as an instructional practice with three key features, namely,

- i. It involves placing students into different classrooms or small groups based on their initial achievement skill levels, readiness, or abilities;
- ii. The main purpose of such placement is to create a more homogeneous learning environment so that teachers can provide instruction better matched to students' needs and so that students can benefit from interactions with their comparable academic peers;
- iii. Such placements are not permanent school administrative arrangements that lead to restrictions on students' graduation, destination, or career paths.

Ability grouping results in students with similar abilities being aggregated into smaller groups or classes. The purpose is to provide instruction that is better aligned with students' current levels of knowledge and skills. This can lead to a more customized learning experience for students. It plays a significant role in shaping the educational experience of students. It equally helps teachers to provide repetition and reinforcement as necessary for lower-achieving students and an advanced level of instruction for higher achievers.

The Ability grouping types adopted by both schools are stated below:

- i. **Between-class ability grouping**, which involves assigning students of the same grade/set into homogenous groups based on their prior achievement or ability levels. This is the type of ability grouping done in Africa Community School/Africa International College, Abuja. This is however not done for JSS1 and SS1 students because they are introduced to a new curriculum.
- ii. **Within-class ability grouping (small-group instruction)** involves teachers assigning students within a class to several small homogeneous groups for instruction based on student's prior achievement or learning capacities. This type of grouping is done in our Early Years classes in Africa Community School

CLASSES AND THEIR NAMES

CLASS	NAMES
JSS1	TOPAZ
JSS2	ONYX
JSS3	SAPPHIRE

SS1	EMERALD
SS2	DIAMOND
SS3	GOLD

How are the Students Assigned to Ability Groups?

There are various methods we use to assign students to ability groups. These methods include standardized test scores, teacher evaluations, previous academic performance, or a combination of these factors. The classes are divided into the Graceful and Dynamic classes except JSS1 and SS1 classes. Our goal is to ensure that students are placed in groups that align with their current skill levels and learning needs.

What Type of Instruction Happens in an Ability Group?

When students are grouped by ability, instruction can be planned to meet their specific needs. Common instructional approaches we have in the schools' ability-grouped settings include:

- i. Pacing: Groups can progress through the curriculum at different speeds, allowing advanced learners to move more quickly and struggling students to receive additional support.
- ii. Differentiated Instruction: Teachers can adapt teaching methods and materials to align with the abilities and learning styles of each group.
- iii. Peer Interaction: Students in similar ability groups can collaborate and learn from each other, fostering a supportive learning environment.

Benefits of Ability Grouping

Ability grouping can bring about many positive effects for both students and teachers. Some of the potential benefits of this educational practice are:

- i. Targeted instruction: Ability grouping permits teachers to plan their instruction to the needs of a group of students with relatively similar levels of knowledge and skills. Instead of trying to meet the diverse needs of students in a full-sized classroom, teachers can focus on delivering instruction that is specifically designed for the abilities and learning styles of students with similar or almost similar needs. This targeted approach can lead to more effective teaching and improved student outcomes.
- ii. Individual attention: Students with similar needs often receive better attention from teachers compared to students with different needs and levels of knowledge and skills. This is because teachers can provide personalized support and address the specific needs of the students more effectively instead of trying to meet different levels of knowledge and needs in the same classroom at the same time. This kind of individualized attention can enhance learning and promote academic growth.
- iii. Increased participation: When students are grouped based on similar skill levels, they may feel less intimidated and more comfortable participating in discussions and sharing their work with others in the group. This can create a supportive and inclusive learning environment where students feel encouraged to actively engage in the learning process.