

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS POLICY

Every student is in the centre of the teaching and learning process. We believed that all students participating in the IB programmes ought to have equal access to the learning content. As it is stated in *Candidates with assessment access requirements*.2009 “The IB believes that all candidates should be allowed to demonstrate their ability under assessment conditions that are as fair as possible. Standard assessment conditions may put candidates with learning support requirements at a disadvantage by preventing them from demonstrating their level of attainment. “

The role of our school is to meet the students’ learning needs to reach the full potential in learning and assessment. Improvements in the standard of education for children with SEN is possible thanks to teaching staff and psychological-pedagogical help. The school implements a special education policy that is consistent with IB expectations to work most effectively.

More information www.ibo.org

Students may have learning support requirements due to one or more of the following:

- Autism spectrum/Asperger’s syndrome
- Learning disabilities
- Medical conditions
- Multiple disabilities
- Mental health issues
- Physical and/or sensory challenges
- Social, emotional and behavioral difficulties
- Specific learning difficulties
- Speech and/or communication difficulties

Due to the above challenges and based on substantial grounds, it is the responsibility of our school to provide access to:

- modified exam papers – size of font, coloured paper
- additional time
- information and communication technologies - word processor with spell checker
- calculators, practical assistance and alternative venues
- extensions to deadlines
- exemptions from assessment
- speech and communication
- assistance with practical work

The extent of the problem in our school

The percentage of students with special educational needs in our school is generally low. There can be found candidates with every type of need: specific learning difficulties, communication disorders, emotional and behavioral difficulties, physical, medical and mental health problem. The problems are usually connected with: dyslexia, dysgraphia, communication challenges, emotional and psychological conditions (depression), eating disorders, challenges with learning, allergies, heart diseases. There was also a candidate with Asperger's syndrome.

We have easy access to basic teaching materials like information and communication technologies, calculators, as well as to the practical assistance.

The process of teaching of SEN students is coordinated by:

→head of school

- All requests for special arrangements submitted by a coordinator must have the support of the head of school

→coordinators

- should consider whether suitable arrangements, for both teaching and assessment, can be made for that student,
- consults all teachers concerned at an early stage in a candidate's study of the Diploma Programme
- If special arrangements are requested, the coordinator must ensure that the candidate is, or becomes, familiar with those arrangements.

→teachers (Careful consideration should be given to a candidate's choice of subjects.)

→parents

- candidate and/or the candidate's parents or guardian should co-operate and support school

→school

- The school is responsible for making all arrangements for approving and appointing an amanuensis (scribe), a reader, prompter, practical assistant or communicator.
- The school is responsible for ensuring that all equipment authorized for a candidate with special assessment needs functions correctly and that there is a member of staff who is familiar with its use (for example, a Braille machine, computer software).

→psychologist and pedagogue

A detailed report on the nature of the condition is not normally required as well (e.g. a note or certificate from a medical practitioner, documentation of long-term disability)

Where do we need to improve our provision for SEN students?

-recognize the factors that affect learning of students with SEN

- recognize the special educational needs of students

-differentiate and match teaching approaches to individual students

-use technology to alleviate and remove barriers in learning

The tasks of the teachers:

Highlighting the importance in understanding the needs, strengths and weaknesses of each child can only be made possible if staff have the knowledge and training. This policy applies to candidates affected by a temporary, long-term or permanent disability or illness, including candidates with a learning difficulty. Between variety of teaching strategies based on individual needs can be find:

- undergo special training concerning the problems of young people: challenges with learning, communication challenges, emotional and psychological conditions (depression, suicide), physical, sensory challenges, and training how to motivate young people to learn
- consult parents of students with special educational needs (collaboration between school and home)
- participate in the organization of psychological-pedagogical help
- consult the school psychologist and analyze the background information about each student: past assessments, opinions of specialists about special difficulties, documents describing any interventions
- organize individual classes if necessary
- give extra time to complete tasks in class
- extend deadlines
- assist them students practical work if necessary
- coordination of classroom support
- facilitate using a computer with spell checker

Tasks of the team:

- plans and coordinates psychological-pedagogical help for student; describes range and recommended forms of help for a student;
- describes forms of help for students' parents ;
- describes range of cooperation with family counseling centre, teacher training centre, non-government organizations supporting family, children and youth;
- sets up and carries out a card of individual needs of a student;
- meets when necessary;
- evaluates effectiveness of p-p, especially the activities realized;
- carries out periodical multi-specialized assessment of the level of student functioning in society
- carries out assessment of effectiveness of activities prescribed before completing them;
- undertakes intervention or mediation if necessary ;
- undertakes tasks connected with vocational counseling

Stages of organization of psychological- pedagogical help at school

1. The head of school gets information about necessity of psychological-pedagogical care for a student ;

2. The head of school establishes psychological-pedagogical team;
3. The head of school appoints a team coordinator;
4. Meetings of team are convened by coordinator when necessary;
5. The head of school informs parents about meetings and invites specialists;
6. The team establishes the range of help;
7. The head of school on the basis of team recommendations establishes the number of hours, forms and period of help for a student.
8. The head of school informs (in writing) parents or adult students about established way, forms and period of help;
9. Teachers adopt educational requirements from educational program basis to individual needs of a student; also methods of work with a student statement
10. The team assesses the effectiveness of psychological-pedagogical assistance and identifies proposals and recommendations;
11. The team carries out periodical multi-specialized assessment of the level of student functioning taking into consideration effectiveness of psychological-pedagogical assistance and if necessary modifies assistance;
12. Adjustment of conditions of conducting internal and external examinations to individual psychophysical and educational needs of a student – such adjustment follows the opinion of the Teachers Council.

Steps available for DP candidates with assessment access requirements that are available for the DP examinations:

- A student with special educational needs is required to inform the school psychologist about his/her disabilities by submitting a certificate from a medical practitioner (documentation of long-term disability) at least 18 months before the DP examinations
- The document is further presented to the head of school and a form teacher
- The head of school establishes psychological-pedagogical team (the stages have been described so far – see: Stages of organization of psychological-pedagogical help at school)
- Parents are informed of the special arrangements the school provides (if requested) for the exam situation during individual meetings with a psychologist and/or parent-teacher meetings
- Before the exams the coordinator applies for the special requirements on behalf of the student, organizing the proper conditions (e.g. access to modified papers, additional equipment like information and communication technologies - word processor with spell checker)

Information about the SEN policy:

- The interest group (parents, teachers, students) are informed about the policy during parent-teacher meeting in September. The information is also available on the school website.
- The policy is mandatory for the may 2015 session onwards.

IB publications:

- *Candidates with assessment access requirements.*2009 <<http://occ.ibo.org/> 19 September 2014
- *Towards a continuum of international education.* 2008:28-32<<http://occ.ibo.org/> 19 September 2014
- *Guidelines for developing a school language policy.*2008<<http://occ.ibo.org/> 19 September 2014