



International School of the Gothenburg Region

Middle Years Program

Special Education Needs / Inclusion Policy

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Philosophy

Two of the central, published goals at ISGR, under the heading “Differentiated Learning,” are: “teachers support students to learn at their own level and speed” and “teaching is adapted to suit the individual learning styles of the students.” Inclusion, then, must be a fundamental tenet of our teaching and learning practices.

Inclusion involves accepting and embracing all students and striving to meet their individual needs. Inclusion allows students to grow, learn, contribute and feel part of their community at school. We recognize that mainstream classroom approaches do not suit all students all the time but our approach aims to develop lifelong learners holistically.

Inclusion has a physical component - physically welcoming all students in mainstream classes. Inclusion also has pedagogical and ideological components, which involve planning, teaching and assessing in ways that encourage and allow all students to demonstrate their learning.

Further, we strive to incorporate IB definitions and practices of inclusion into our organizational structures and our day-to-day teaching and learning. Specifically, we recognize IB’s definition of inclusion, taken from *Learning Diversity and Inclusion in IB Programmes*:

“Inclusion is an ongoing process that aims to increase access and engagement in learning for all students by identifying and removing barriers.

Inclusion is an organizational paradigm that involves change. It is a continual process of increasing learning and participation for all students. It addresses learning support requirements and questions the broader objectives of education, the nature of pedagogy, curriculum and assessment. It is an educational approach to which all schools should aspire.

Inclusion is facilitated in a culture of collaboration, mutual respect, support and problem-solving involving the whole school community.”



Standards and practices

Meeting special education needs for inclusion addresses practices from *Programme Standards and Practices*:

- A9 The school supports access for students to the IB programme(s) and philosophy.
 - B1:5 The school develops and implements policies and procedures that support the programmes.
 - B2:8 The school provides support for its students with learning and/or special educational needs and support for their teachers.
 - C1:6 Collaborative planning and reflection incorporates differentiation for students' learning needs and styles.
 - C3:10 Teaching and learning differentiates instruction to meet students' learning needs and styles.
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School Organization and Development; Links to Other Policies

The spirit of inclusion is present in our general policy documents:

- The Assessment Policy requires that teachers vary assessment tasks, allowing students to demonstrate understanding in different ways.
- The unit planning template specifies a focus on differentiation.
- Within the Language Policy, there is a mandate that students be grouped whenever possible by experience and readiness level. While this alone is not evidence of inclusion, it does speak to tailoring instruction to match the specific needs of the students.
- Also, when considering a violation of the Academic Honesty Policy, we instruct teachers to be aware that students may be acting from a place of insecurity or need and to act accordingly.

School planning and professional development

- School Elevhälsoteam (Student health team) meets weekly to discuss students with special needs.
 - Teachers work collaboratively in year-level groups (with members of the Elevhälsoteam) at least once every six weeks to discuss student needs and identify strategies that have had or might have success.
 - Additionally, at least 4 team meetings (90 minutes) per year focus on collaboratively planning for differentiation.
 - At least 2 team meetings per year allow representatives from student support to update staff on student needs and seek feedback on student IEP's and specific practices designed to reach those students.
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Resources

- The school will utilize the input and expertise of the following school members when discussing and revising inclusion policy and practice: School psychologist, counselor, nurse, school doctor, special needs teacher and EAL teacher.
 - Additionally, the school will seek out experts to provide additional expertise and training for teacher professional development as needed, when scheduling and resources permit it.
 - The school has created diagnostic tests for all MYP year levels for both Math and English. This will help us to have a more accurate idea of students' readiness levels.
 - Additionally, members of the EHT administer screening tests when deemed necessary to help provide information about student needs.
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Communication

- Teachers will read the Inclusion Policy at the start of every school year, reinforcing their understanding of expectations. Parents will have all policies shared with them through the digital Parent Handbook at the start of every school year. Students will also have the Inclusion Policy shared with them.
 - New staff will have all policies shared with them as part of our digital shared network.
 - The school will be in regular contact with parents of students in learning support. In addition to the normal occasions of contact (developmental talks, progress reports, grade reports, as detailed in the Assessment Policy), the learning support teacher will have regular contact, providing updates on students' work, emotional well-being and progress.
 - During the annual transition meeting between PYP and MYP teachers, special attention will be paid to those students with special education needs.
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Confidentiality

- Information regarding special education needs will only be kept in the ProReNata system.
- The only staff members with access to these files are members of the school's EHT - elevhälsoteam.



- However, some aspects of student needs will be communicated through student IEP's (individual education plan), which are stored on our internal "Shared" network. All teachers have access to this network.
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Learning

- Whenever possible we try to include students in mainstream classes, particularly while learning. (Students with special needs have the option to complete assessments in the safety and comfort of the LS room.)
 - There is a process for the identification of students with special needs, which can be found at "[Learning Support Identification Process](#)."
 - We ensure that student needs are being met in the following ways.
 - Student support team presents a list of learning accommodations for each LS student to the teaching team at the start of each school year, which are reviewed and discussed regularly.
 - Year-level teacher meetings with EHT reps at least every six weeks, which focus on strategies that have worked or may work.
 - EHT/Student support meetings - weekly discussions within the student support team of student cases that have been flagged in the year-level meetings as needing additional support
 - IEP's are reviewed at mid-year and end-of-year. Each IEP has three short-term goals (approximately one term) and three long-term goals (one to two school years). These are reviewed and "assessed" by the LS teacher and student.
 - Even students without IEP's (but within learning support) participate in learning support goal-setting with LS teacher, student and parents.
 - These goals are created at the start of each term and reviewed before the following term.
 - By year 9 (MYP 4), we ask students to write their own IEP goals whenever possible.
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SEN/Inclusion Documentation

- Documentation of accommodations - specific student accommodations are documented in student IEP's and in our minuted year-level EHT meetings, which happen every 4-6 weeks.
- Accommodations are created in response to IEP's and shared with teachers by the EHT. Additionally, accommodations may be updated throughout the year in response to discoveries during EHT meetings.



- As much as possible, we strive to give all students access to the same curriculum. We may focus on different skills or practice different delivery methods, but the end goals should be consistent.
 - We use the IB's "four principles of good practice for promoting equal access" as guidelines in this goal:
 - "Affirming identity and building self-esteem
 - Valuing prior knowledge
 - Scaffolding
 - Extending learning"
 - In some rare cases, students will need assessment tasks to be significantly modified. In these cases, students may have their work assessed according to modified criteria. If this happens, it will be noted in the student's reports that he/she is working on a modified curriculum.
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Policy Processes

- **Review of Inclusion Practices:**
 - At the beginning of the school year in August teaching teams review special education expectations and practices. At the end of the school year in June, teaching teams reflect on special education/inclusion practices, as well as individual student progress and IEP's.
 - **Review of the SEN/Inclusion Policy:**
 - The SEN/Inclusion policy is annually reviewed by the programme coordinators and principals and reviewed every 3 years by the school community including teachers and parents.
 - The programme coordinators are responsible for ensuring this process is done collaboratively and by all stakeholders.
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IB guiding principles for inclusive education

- "education for all is considered a human right
- education is enhanced by the creation of affirmative, responsive environments that promote a sense of belonging, safety, self-worth and whole growth for every student
- every educator is an educator of all students
- learning is considered from a strength-based perspective
- learning diversity is valued as a rich resource for building inclusive communities



- all learners belong and experience equal opportunities to participate and engage in quality learning
- full potential is unlocked through connecting with, and building on, previous knowledge
- assessment provides all learners with opportunities to demonstrate their learning, which is rewarded and celebrated
- multilingualism is recognized as a fact, a right and a resource
- all students in the school community fully participate in an IB education and are empowered to exercise their rights and accept their responsibilities as citizens
- all students in the school community have a voice and are listened to so that their input and insights are taken into account
- all students in the school community develop the IB learner profile attributes and develop into inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect
- diversity is understood to include all members of a community
- all students experience success as a key component of learning.”

- from *Learning diversity and inclusion in IB programmes*

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