

SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS POLICY

1. General overview.

1.1. Kaunas Jesuit Gymnasium supports the IB Programme which encourages the students, involved in the Programme “to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right” (IB mission statement, 2004). Therefore, the Gymnasium community places special emphasis on the students’ physical and psychological well-being with a possibility to learn from multiple perspectives. For this reason, the Gymnasium aims to create the learning environment so that the students could improve their academic and social skills with the means of collaboration with each other in the classroom. At the same time the Gymnasium understands the importance of the whole-school reflection and analysis which leads to the constant process of self evaluation: “to what extent do our philosophy, our school structures and systems, our curriculum and units of work enable students, and the adults who implement the programmes, to develop into the learner described in the profile?” (*IB learner profile booklet*: p. 2)

1.2. The students with “special educational needs” are met in this documents:

- *Programme standards and practices*
- *Rules for IB World Schools: Diploma Programme, Middle Years Programme*
- *General regulations: Diploma Programme, Middle Years Programme*
- *Handbook of procedures for the Diploma Programme*
- *The Diploma Programme: From principles into practice (April 2009)*
- *Learning in a language other than mother tongue in IB programmes (April 2008)*
- *Towards a continuum of international education (September 2008)*
- *IB learner profile booklet*
- *Candidates with special assessment needs*
- *Teaching students with particular special educational and learning needs—a resource for schools*

2. The definition of the term “special needs”:

2.1. Specific learning difficulties, language and communication disorders:

2.1.1. significant difficulties in reading, writing, spelling or manipulating numbers associated with difficulties in processing symbolic language (for example, problems interpreting music notation, dyslexia, dyscalculia);

2.1.2. speech and language difficulties characterized by communication problems (for example, aphasia, dysphasia, articulation problems).

2.1.3. emotional and behavioral difficulties (EBD):

2.1.3.1. Includes: attention deficit disorder (ADD)/attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD); withdrawn,

2.1.3.2. depressive or suicidal attitudes; obsessional preoccupation with eating habits; school phobia; substance abuse; disruptive antisocial and uncooperative behavior; and anger, frustration and violence.

2.1.4. Physical and sensory conditions:

2.1.4.1. physical disabilities include a wide range of conditions that are not always immediately obvious, but affect mobility;

2.1.4.2. sensory impairments: hearing—embraces an extensive range of hearing loss from mild to profound and can present communication difficulties; visual—includes difficulties with either the structure or function of the eye, affecting vision;

2.1.4.3. medical conditions:

2.1.4.4. the most common being: congenital heart disease, epilepsy, asthma, cystic fibrosis, hemophilia, sickle cell anaemia, diabetes, renal failure, eczema, rheumatoid disorders, allergies, leukemia and other cancers.

2.1.4.5. Mental health problems:

2.1.4.6. a wide range of conditions that can affect a person's state of mind, ranging from psychotic conditions such as schizophrenia and manic depression to eating disorders, anxieties and emotional distress caused by circumstances in a candidate's life.

3. Supporting documentation.

3.1. The Gymnasium organizes a range of tests for 10th formers to evaluate their psychological, emotional situation as well as their academic abilities, the results of which are of great significance for the teachers while choosing teaching and learning methodology and strategies. At the same time, a student must provide the School with a document from the doctor indicating his/her health condition. The coordinator informs the teachers about the students' current situation and ensures that special arrangements are made for the candidate to be assessed for the Diploma. Some flexibility will be applied for candidates who have permanent disabilities.

3.2. The candidate provides the Gymnasium with the supporting documentation which is a formal assessment from a medical or psychological service. However, if there is no possibility to get a report from a specialist or clinical team, the coordinator consults IBCA (sen@ibo.org).

3.3. The supporting documentation for candidates with a long-term medical condition or permanent disability must:

- be legible, on paper with a letterhead, signed and dated;
- state the title, name and professional credentials of the person (or persons) who has undertaken the evaluation and diagnosis of the candidate;
- state specifically the nature of the special need, and the tests or techniques used to arrive at the diagnosis;
- be consistent with the coordinator's request for special arrangements.

3.4. The Coordinator is responsible for:

- reviewing the candidate's condition, updating and clarifying the situation;
- providing the staff with the details of special arrangements made by the school for class assignments, homework and examinations;
- pointing out which special arrangements are being dealt with;
- stating whether the same or similar arrangements have previously been authorized for the candidate by the IBO or another examination board.

4. Medical condition.

4.1. Temporary medical condition.

4.1.1. If a student experiences temporal health problems which do not allow him to attend lessons and take examinations, the student must provide the Coordinator with a note or certificate from a medical practitioner.

4.2. Long-term medical condition or permanent disability.

4.2.1. A detailed report from a medical or psychological service is required as supporting documentation for all candidates with a long-term medical condition or a permanent disability in need of special arrangements including a statement about the impact on the student's ability to learn.

4.2.2. If a candidate experiences a prolonged disease during the final year of the Diploma Programme, the coordinator notifies IBCA in the appropriate form.

In case of illness during a written examination (e. g. hay fever), immediately after the examination the coordinator submits to IBCA a completed copy of the appropriate form from the *Vade Mecum* with medical documentation confirming the illness.

4.2.3. The Gymnasium teachers collaborate with the Kaunas Psychological and Educational Centre, which provides advice how to cope with students' learning difficulties and make a successful education process.

5. Principles of an inclusive education:

5.1. Having analyzed the student's current medical situation the coordinator and the special staff:

- provide information how the candidate works in the classroom and under assessment conditions;

- if necessary provide the candidate with a separate room under supervision during the examination;
- advise the candidate on the choice of subjects;
- obtain consent from the candidate and/or the candidate's parents or a guardian before submitting appropriate documentation to IBCA;
- consult all teachers concerned at an early stage in a candidate's study of the Diploma Programme to develop all students cultures, policies and practices.
- ensure successful inclusion and differentiation in the contexts of learning to encourage and support problem solving.
- guarantee implementation of differentiation in differentiated assessment practices.

6. Supporting the process of education

6.1. Teachers are enabled to provide the students with special assistance to understand texts and tasks while employing such strategies as;

- visual aids;
 - demonstrations;
 - dramatization;
 - small, structured collaborative groups;
 - teacher language;
 - use of mother tongue or best language to develop ideas and initial plans.
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