

**Special Needs Education Policy International Baccalaureate School 00703
Middle Years Programme
XXXIII Liceum Ogólnokształcące Dwujęzyczne im. Mikołaja Kopernika w Warszawie,**

IB programmes "encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right."
IB mission statement 2004

This MYP Special Needs Education Policy has been developed in accordance with the IBO Special educational needs within the International Baccalaureate programmes issued in August 2010.

Introduction

The term 'Special Needs Education' is commonly applied to the education of students with perceived individual differences, ranging from intellectual giftedness to autism, ADHD, dyslexia, learning disabilities, physical, developmental and communication challenges as well as behavioural and emotional disorders. Underlying the Middle Years Programme in World School 0703 is the belief that regardless of their individual needs, all students should be granted meaningful and equitable access to the curriculum.

Potential candidates for special needs education are identified on the basis of:

- their medical history
- noticeable discrepancies between their current level of academic performance and that of the same-age peers
- perceived difficulty in studying.

It is important to note, however, that if the identification of learning disabilities is based on observation, students are not classified as requiring special education until it has been demonstrated empirically that they do not benefit from the general education curriculum.

Teachers in the Middle Years Programme show their understanding and awareness of the issues relating to:

- the learner's cognitive system and its structure based on the mental hierarchical representation of the world,
- how the learner's cognitive system provides meaning and organisation to experiences,
- the processes by which meaningful learning takes place, specifically subsumption or progressive
- differentiation of the conceptual framework in terms of detail and specificity, and integrative
- reconciliations assisting in comprehension and recall,
- factors affecting students' learning processes, particularly with regard to inquiry-based learning,
- how best to attend to students' unique needs.

Procedures implemented by the school

Evidence derived from recent research clearly shows that "certain individuals or groups of children may benefit from adaptations to general teaching approaches, but in general pupils with SEN do not need qualitatively different pedagogy." (Kershner 2007:486) As a result, there has been a general trend away from employing specialist teachers towards collaborative planning by all teachers who participate in a student's education anywhere along the learning continuum.

IB School No 0703:

- safeguards interests of all students,
- provides all students with equal access to the curriculum by identifying and removing barriers,
- makes it possible for all students to achieve their full potential,
- creates an effective learning environment and a friendly and welcoming atmosphere, which facilitate the teaching/learning process,
- differentiates teaching and learning methods to provide a range of learning approaches for achieving common goals,
- activates students' prior knowledge and understanding,
- helps students extend their learning by combining high expectations with ample opportunity to use cognitively rich material,
- makes use of differentiated assessment strategies and tasks which support all students in gaining independence and becoming advocates for their own learning,
- affirms the identity of all students and builds their self-esteem,
- promotes attitudes and characteristics identified in the IB Learner Profile.

Additionally, in IB School No 0703 teachers and parents of students with unique needs are provided with psychological and pedagogical assistance, in which way they receive support not only in tackling child-raising and teaching problems, but also in developing their educational skills.

Besides that, at the initiative of the School Principal, teacher support teams are established. These are made up of subject teachers, homeroom teachers and psychologists who identify students requiring psychological and pedagogical help. The teams are responsible for developing support programmes for students having unique needs. They may take the form of:

- talent and creativity development classes,
- a wide variety of learning support classes,
- psychological guidance and counselling.

Conclusion

In IB School No 0703 there is a general understanding that teachers, students and their parents form a unique learning community working towards common goals. This belief affects the way in which special needs education is understood and provided in the school.