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RĪGAS VALSTS 3. ĢIMNĀZIJA

Rīga

Nr.SB3

Riga State Gymnasium Nr. 3 Policy of Inclusion/Special Educational Needs

International Baccalaureate Authorized School for :

Middle Years Programme and Diploma Programme

Overview

In our school the aim of inclusion will be to ensure inclusivity and equitability—allowing **all** MYP and DP learners to have equal opportunities to learning pathways, learning experiences and educational recognition. The school will follow the principles of equity and inclusive education through:

- designing and developing a universally designed curriculum that is inclusive, fair and accessible for all IB learners
- taking into consideration planned access and adaptations (inclusivity and accessibility for groups of students who would need specific access) and student well-being
- drawing upon the full range of ways of knowing and incorporating experiences, contribution and histories from across cultures, nationalities, backgrounds, identities and perspectives
- ensuring representation across cultures, nationalities, identities and experiences.

The above will allow all learners to feel represented and seen in the curriculum—to feel they each belong. Students will be encouraged to think critically and holistically about a subject with an awareness of their biases. This can help reduce or remove cultural bias, and expose learners to multiple co-existing narratives and ways of knowing.

IB assessments address inclusivity, equitability and accessibility by:

- using the principles of universal design of assessments, including cultural diversity and sensitivity to personal identity, in assessment design and development
- considering student well-being during assessment design and development
- providing inclusive access arrangements for students with access requirements
- supporting students who are impacted by adverse circumstances during examinations
- ensuring that evaluation of achievement is carried out in a reliable and valid manner by providing instructions to IB examiners to reduce or eliminate bias during the marking process.

(<https://www.ibo.org/programmes/equity-and-inclusive-education-in-the-ib>)

Thus, Riga State Gymnasium Nr.3 follows the IB requirements ‘that all candidates should be allowed to take their examinations under conditions that are as fair as possible. Where normal examination conditions and assessment procedures would put candidates at a disadvantage and prevent them from being able to demonstrate their skills and knowledge adequately, reasonable forms of assessment arrangements may be authorized. Candidates eligible for inclusive assessment arrangements are those with individual needs such as a specific learning difficulty, an emotional or behavioural difficulty, physical, sensory or medical conditions, or mental health problems.’

The Request for inclusive assessment arrangements must be submitted no later than 15 November/15 May, six months before the written examinations. Coordinators will be required to upload supporting psychological/psychoeducational/medical evidence and at least one piece of educational evidence.

Rationale

Training provision for students with special needs or disabilities policy aims to provide Riga State Gymnasium Nr. 3 students with access to the curriculum through two International Baccalaureate organisation programs. Latvian State Law states that general education schools do not ensure training for students with disabilities (it is carried out in special schools) and in this document only the cases which refer to students with some type of special needs are discussed.

Special education code of practice sets out guidance on policy and procedures aimed at enabling students with special education needs to reach their full potential.

Riga State Gymnasium Nr. 3 recognises that it has a statutory responsibility to be non-discriminatory against disabled students and prospective students in the admission process and in the provision of education and associated services.

The role and support of the teachers and the school staff

Support of inclusion students is carried out practicing the following key factors:

- Climate of acceptance of all students including those who have distinctive needs, ensuring that less favourable treatment does not occur in the following areas: curriculum, teaching and learning, timetabling, homework, serving of school meals, interaction with peers, assessment, school discipline, exclusion procedures, preparation of students for their next phase of education.
- Careful preparation of class or group placements, considering the students, their peers, parents and staff.
- The availability of sufficient suitable teaching and personal support by offering our students remote learning possibilities or in some cases, if the possibility to come to school is limited due to health, by offering free attendance.
- Widespread awareness among staff of the particular needs of students with significant needs and an understanding of practical ways of meeting them in classrooms and elsewhere.
- Precise allocation of teaching groups and careful modification of the curriculum, timetables and social arrangements.
- Documentation must be complete and up to date according to the requirements described in the document *Candidates with special assessment needs*.
<https://www.ibo.org/programmes/pd/special/documents/dpspecialassessment.pdf>
- The availability of appropriate materials and teaching aids

Support for learning – individual approach, tutorials, individual work, assistants help for disabled children to address various learning needs and to provide students with better access to the school curriculum.

- An active approach to personal and social development as well as to learning
- Involving parents in the decision making process and keeping them well informed about their child's progress.
- The school retains the right to refuse a place if it is felt it cannot meet the needs of the student (e.g. not appropriate specialist – special educator) and has the right to require the State Medical Teaching Commission's conclusion about the student's health.

The role and support of the school

The school recognizes the need for staff training on issues of Special Education Needs and Disability Act and, if necessary, includes this in the plan of staff training.

No method of identification can be entirely accurate since specific subject criteria will develop. We would endeavour to identify 'gifted and talented' students and students with learning difficulties through a

variety of methods. We obtain as much information about individual students as possible. The methods employed include:

- Information from any previous schools;
- Parental evidence;
- Internal and external assessment and testing if necessary (psychologist);
- Specific criteria developed by subjects;
- Teacher observation and recommendation.

At the beginning of each school year a register of students with learning difficulties or disabilities is created. The register includes students:

- Who have been assessed by an educational psychologist as having a mild learning difficulty (mild dyslexia, dyspraxia or dyscalculia);
- Who have ADHD and Asperger's syndrome tendencies.
- In defining what is meant by the term 'Gifted and Talented, we have adopted the following definitions:
- Those who show an exceptional ability in such areas as mathematics, music, art or sport or less easily acknowledged talents such as leadership, creative imagination or social maturity.
- Those students who are assessed as 'gifted' according to an educational psychologist's report.
- Those students who possess a general academic learning ability that is significantly greater than that of most of their peers.

Students may display exceptional abilities in a number of areas. Many of the students on our 'gifted and talented' student register are involved in extracurricular activities at the school which cater for their exceptional ability. All the students are offered an opportunity to attend extramural courses and workshops, which cater for 'gifted and talented' students' abilities and supplement knowledge. Students are also prepared and take part in various level subject Olympiads, research works, competitions and facultative sessions.

Individual education plans are generally determined by the class or subject teacher in collaboration with the school DP and MYP coordinators. Individual education plan will be reviewed twice a year in the basic school and once a year in secondary school.

Training provision for students with special needs or disabilities policy of Riga State Gymnasium Nr. 3 is introduced to International Baccalaureate DP and MYP students at the beginning of the school year in the first class teacher's lesson, parents in parents meeting, teachers in International Baccalaureate teacher's meeting. International Baccalaureate regulatory documents are available at the school DP and MYP coordinators.

The role and responsibilities of the coordinator

The IB coordinator works collaboratively with the MYP and DP teachers, support team, the school's administration and the parents to support the inclusion students with support requirements, such as Assessment access requirements (AAR), disability access, provision of examination accommodations approved by the IB, maintaining discretion and confidence of special education and needs services of a certain student.

The responsibilities of the parent

The parent should communicate with the school's social pedagogue providing the child's support requirements, inform the school about any changes in requirements and other issues regarding support in learning, provide documentation for IB accommodation request, be actively involved in the child's education.

The responsibilities of the student

The student should actively participate in the teaching learning process in the classroom, ask for assistance, if needed, from the teacher, IB coordinator, class teacher or social pedagogue, follow the school rules and regulations, and IB policies, know his/her rights and respect other students' and teachers' rights.

Links with Admissions policy

According to the school's Admissions policy, the prospective students of the MYP and DP will take the exams in Mathematics and English. If the student passes the exams and receives at least 70 % in English and 70 %- 80 % in Mathematics he/she can enrol in the IB programme. The assessment is followed by the interview between the student, the IB coordinator, the social pedagogue and the parent. It is the school who considers the capacity of the school to provide support of a certain applicant.

Conclusion

Inclusion policy was developed in collaboration with the leadership team, including the MYP & DP coordinator, MYP and DP teachers, Headmaster, Social pedagogue, school nurse, school psychologist and representatives of parents. This policy was written in line with the International Baccalaureate documents (see Bibliography). Inclusion policy will be revised throughout the implementation, revised once in two years in August, and developed further in accordance with the current IB requirements.

The school's policies will be communicated to the stakeholders and published on the school's website. The MYP and DP students and their parents will be informed about the Inclusion policy during informational meetings. The subject teachers will take into account the policy requirements in the classrooms. A copy of the policy will be given to the newly admitted students with the study agreement in the attachment.

The signed paper copy will be kept by the MYP and DP Coordinator.

Created by Ingrida Breidaka, DP coordinator

Approved by Andris Priekulis, Head of Riga State Gymnasium Nr.3

Two appendices are added.

Bibliography

What is an IB education?

Programme Standards and Practices (2014)

Access and inclusion policy (2018, Updated February 2021)

Access and inclusion policy (2022)

Learning diversity and inclusion in IB programme (2016)

Meeting student learning diversity in the classroom (2013)

The IB guide to inclusive education: a resource for whole school (2015)

The General Education Law of Latvia

Appendix 1

Special education needs definition and references to Latvian legislation

The statutory definition of Special Educational Needs is described in the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice as follows:

The General Education Law

Section 1 Terms used in the law

14) Special Education Needs – necessity to receive the support and rehabilitation which creates the opportunity for learners to acquire the curriculum without taking into consideration his/her health, abilities and level of development.

Section 53 Integration of learners with special education needs in general education institutions

In general basic education and secondary education institutions, where there is appropriate provision, it is allowed to integrate learners with special need. The requirements which must be placed in general basic education and general secondary education institutions to ensure the integration of special education needs students are determined by the Cabinet of Ministers.

The availability of appropriate support for students with special education needs who are integrated in general education institution is ensured by the education institutions. Education institution develops an individual education plan for each learner with special education needs who is integrated in the education institution.

Child Rights Protection Act

Chapter VIII Child with special needs

Section 53 Child with special needs concept

A child with special needs is a child, who by reason of illness, injury or congenital defect caused by organ system dysfunction requires additional medical, educational and social assistance, regardless of whether the due process of law has a disability.

Section 54 The right to a child with special needs to live a full life

A child with special needs has the same rights to active life, rights to develop and gain general and professional education according to his/her physical and mental abilities and preferences, as well as the rights to participate in public life as any other child.

Section 55 Special care for children with special needs

State and local government helps a child with special needs to enter into society and provide him/her education, health care and social services in accordance with the law.

Section 56 Education and social sphere employees training for work with children with special needs

Education and social sphere employees shall be specifically trained for work with children with special needs. To this end, the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Welfare develop special training programs.

Disability law

Section 1 Terms used in the law

Assistant – physical person who provides support for a person with very severe or severe functional restrictions to perform activities outside the house, which due to the disability cannot be performed independently – to get to a place where they learn, work and receive services, travel and take care of oneself in education institution or work place, be in touch with other physical and legal persons as well as helps the person with visual disabilities to acquire

basic education, vocational secondary education or higher education programs.

Functional restriction – disease, injury or birth defects caused physical or mental (body's ability, training, communication, orientation, mobility and self-care ability; one's behaviour, activity, participation controlling ability) disorder which restricts person's ability to work, take care of himself/herself and interferes him/her to enter into society.

Individual rehabilitation plan for a person with disability – the particular person is provided with optimal combination of measures which include treatment, medical, social and professional rehabilitation focused on person's ability to maintain or improve functional abilities so that the consequences of the person's disability are reduced.

Person with disability – person who according to the policy of this law has a disability.

Section 2 The aim of the law is to remove or reduce the risk of disability for persons with predictable disability and reduce disability consequences for persons with disability.

Section 5 Disability (1) Disability is long – lasting or persistent, very severe, severe or mild functional restriction which affects persons mental or physical abilities, self-care and social inclusion.

Section 2 Disability mitigation (1) Disability consequences for persons with disability are mitigated:

By implementing measures determined in individual rehabilitation plan;

By ensuring the rights for students – persons with disability - in primary education, general basic education, professional basic education, vocational education, general secondary education and professional secondary education institutions (except special education institutions which receive living expenses from the state budget) to receive a paid assistant services to carry out travelling and self-care activities from the state budget.

By carrying out other support measures determined in regulations.

(21) Assistant services mentioned in articles 4th section are entitled to a person with 1st or 2nd disability group on the basis of State Commission's conclusion of the necessity of the services of assistant, and person from 5 – 18 years of age with disability on the basis of State Commission's conclusion of special care need due to severe functional impairment.

Cabinet of Ministers terms No 709, Riga 16th October 2012 (protocol No 58 paragraph 16)

Regulation of Pedagogically Medical Commissions

Regulations determine State's Pedagogically Medical Commission (hereinafter - the State Commission) and Local Pedagogically Medical Commission (hereinafter – the Local Commission) competence, professional requirements for the State Commission and Local Commission members as well as criteria according to which education program is evaluated and recommended to students with special needs.

The State Commission's competence is to give a conclusion of the most appropriate special basic education or special secondary education program for learners with visual, hearing or physical disabilities from form 1 until 12, special basic education program for learners with somatic illnesses from form 1 – 9, special basic education program for students with mental disorders, severe disabilities, learning disabilities, language disorders or mental health problems from form 5 – 9.

34. Obligation of the State Commission

4.1. Based on the adult learner, minor learner's parents, orphan's court appointed guardian or guardians (hereinafter – parents) application or orphan's court decision and learners, parents or orphan's court handed in conclusions, in accordance with the provisions of Appendix 1 mentioned criteria, assess learners state of health, abilities and development level and advise the most appropriate education program for the learner:

4.1.4. General education program in accordance with the provisions of 4.1.1., 4.1.2. and 4.1.3.;

4.2. Promote students with special needs integration in general education institutions;

4.3. Consult the teachers, parents and other persons on special education issues;

4.6. Recommend necessary support measures in the organisation of learning and national testing for students with special needs in accordance with the provisions of 4.1.1., 4.1.2., 4.1.3. and 4.1.4.;

6.8. Coordinate the work of special education teacher, speech therapist and psychologist in municipal education institutions;

6.9. Provide methodological and organizational support for education institutions in corresponding administrative territory in the evaluation of learner's development level and abilities as well as preparation of individual education plan for learners with special needs;

7.4. According to the competence make recommendations and suggestions for special education and integrative education issues in corresponding administrative territory existing education institutions and methodically manage their implementation.

Appendix 2

Riga State Gymnasium Nr.3 ability to meet the special needs requirements now and in the future

Riga State Gymnasium Nr. 3 ability to meet the needs now and in the future.		
Accessibility strategy and plan.		
Disability/special needs	Current capability	Action required
Special needs Learning difficulties and disorders	Specialist appointed checking takes place. Class teachers are informed how to recognize special problems. The needs of the new student's determination through tester sessions and records checking.	If needed, staff training takes place to understand and adjust special / specific needs learning difficulties and disorders. Official induction of the new staff.

Hearing impairment (mild)	To be applied for the IB	The student should have individual hearing enhancement equipment
Visual impairment	To be applied for the IB	For mild vision disability the school may be able to support a child with a learning assistant, by careful classroom seating arrangements and by adapting resources
Speech impairment (very mild)	To be applied for the IB	Recommend consultations and necessary help outside the school
Poor manual dexterity	Access to laptops as a writing tool.	Recommend consultations and necessary help outside the school
Poor physical mobility	Special railings, disabled persons parking, available assistant for people with disabilities in education	If needed, assistants additional training.
Dietary food	Dietary food is available in the school's canteen in	At the beginning of each School year the nurse Identifies those students