



INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL
LUXEMBOURG

SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS/INCLUSION POLICY

MIDDLE YEARS PROGRAMME

Next Policy Review: November 2022

Our Mission

OTR International School provides quality education to pre-school, primary and lower secondary level pupils within an inspiring, challenging, multilingual and international environment by ensuring individual follow-up and the well-being of each student. Our students are encouraged to become active and lifelong learners who show empathy, compassion and respect and help to create a better world.

Our Vision

OTR International School seeks to create a community of lifelong learners who are confident, balanced, caring and inspired to thrive in their life and workplace. Our school accepts children from the age of three offering a multilingual education. Pupils develop their bilingualism every day with qualified teachers whose mother tongue corresponds to the language chosen. Our school puts more emphasis on students' personal development by encouraging them to be more creative and prepare them for life by making practical connections between their studies and the real world. We aim to further incorporate in our school's mission and vision and cultivate as many of the properties and values outlined in the IB learner profile.

Philosophy

This document has been created in order to outline the special educational needs and inclusion practices at OTR International School and communicate them to all school stakeholders.

The policy has been based on OTR International School Mission Statement, on the IB Learner Profile and on the Standards *A9, B1:5, B2:8, C1:6 and C3:10* as published in *Programme Standards and Practices (2014)* for the Primary, Middle Years and Diploma Programs:

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

OTR International School shares the IB belief that inclusive education is something every IB World School should embrace and work towards. Students are at the centre of the education in the IB, with their own strengths and challenges.

The school is committed in finding ways to remove or reduce the barriers that might exclude students from learning. *Barriers to learning may be found in the way schools are organized and resourced, their cultures and policies, the approaches to teaching and learning, the physical aspects of buildings and the ways in which individuals within the school community interact with each other.*

In OTR school, we share the commitment to provide equal access to learning opportunities for all students, taking seriously into consideration their individual learning profile. As such, both the material taught and the way that this is assessed is subject to continuous adaptations and accommodations so that it can address the needs of all our secondary school students. All educators in OTR school share the view that in order to meet the potential and optimize the results of our students, we need to put students at the center of the teaching process and match their needs. Teachers make sure that all material and resources are accessed in the most meaningful way by our students, no matter how demanding the material is. As such, both students with high academic potential and students with special educational needs can acquire access to the same content, with adjustments made based on students' needs.

The differentiation that takes place in OTR school can refer to the following aspects:

- Content
- Teaching process
- Exercises given to students
- Testing procedures
- Class environment

The aforementioned aspects and the relevant differentiation take place according to the needs of the students with the aim being to make sure that the results of the learning process are maximized.

Sometimes, professionals like school psychologists and assistant educators work together with the Direction, teachers, students and parents as needed and when students with identified special educational needs enroll in school. In these cases, the intervention of professionals occurs in collaboration with the educators of the school so that the individual needs of the specific student are assessed in the best possible way and so that appropriate strategies are developed and implemented depending on the needs of the students.

Policies and Procedures

All points outlined in the “Philosophy” section so far are developed and implemented both in all school cycles, from the early years to secondary school, with the purpose being for a continuity to exist regarding the inclusion policy of the school and relevant structures. As such, the inclusion policy aligns with the admission policy and the assessment policy of the school.

Moreover, in order for special arrangements to be discussed and agreed to be followed for any student of OTR school, a formal documentation of the student’s status and needs has to be submitted to the school by the family of the student. In order for this documentation to be taken into consideration, it has to be officially signed by relevant professionals (for example, licensed psychologists). Documents signed by experts from both the public sector as well as from private practitioners are equally taken into consideration in this respect.

“Inclusion” in OTR school can have many interpretations. The individual needs of students can be diverse and different, depending on the specific students involved. In this respect, the categories of students that are usually asked to present formal documentation in order for the Faculty of Teachers and the Direction to discuss and decide upon a more personalized approach may include:

- Students with physical disabilities (permanent or temporary, including hearing and visually impaired students)
- Students with formally diagnosed learning disabilities
- Students with formally diagnosed speech and language disabilities
- Students with formally documented special educational needs due to mental or emotional issues

A discussion of the details in a full faculty meeting constitutes the procedure that is followed once an official diagnostic document is submitted to the school. In this meeting, all teachers become aware of the specific individual needs. When specific accommodations are decided, then the parents of the student together with the individual student himself/herself are informed in personal meetings for any special accommodations authorized by the school (for non-official/IB exams).

The accommodations that are usually granted by the Faculty and the Direction to students who face diverse learning conditions include:

- The authorization of the use of laptops in class
- The adjustment of classwork during the teaching process in class
- The adjustment of assignments and tasks given for homework
- Any other adjustment discussed in official faculty meetings and approved by both the teachers and the Direction

The aforementioned adjustments may apply to both regular teaching hours and to formative and summative assessment conditions. However, if in the future students of the school sit for official IB exams, the authorization needs to be asked by the IBO by following the relevant procedure and by submitting all required documents.

Learning Support in OTR International School

Our School assists students who need special attention or an individual program. Among these students there are those who learn at a slower or faster pace than others and those who learn in a different way. Our support teachers are dedicated to creating a positive learning environment and encourage students to reach their full potential. They collaborate with students, teachers, families and specialists to foster healthy development and independent learning.

The types of Support we offer are:

- The most essential support is given in the classroom through differentiated education. The teacher assesses his or her students' requirements and adapts his or her teaching methodology to the needs of each one of them.
- General Support: It is offered to small groups of students for a limited period and is intended to cover students' specific shortcomings. At the end of this period, a joint evaluation made by both teacher and Support teacher will confirm if the General Support is to be continued or not.
- Individual Support: It is usually offered to an individual student and is intended to cover the specific needs of the child.

At the beginning of the school year the subject teachers, the MYP Coordinator and the Heads of School discuss the learning needs of any new and existing students. Early identification and intervention are of the utmost importance and therefore the school makes the initial observations and takes measures as early in the year as possible.

Any proposals are discussed with the parents whose approval is sought before any support lesson is offered.

If needed, the school may request a more detailed assessment of students by a psychologist or other special education professionals.

In order to promote equal access to the curriculum for all learners, OTR International School applies the four principles of good practice (*Learning diversity in the International Baccalaureate programmes* (2010)) as identified by the IB.

These are:

- affirming identity and building self-esteem
- valuing prior knowledge
- scaffolding and
- extending learning

Differentiated Learning

The first type of support offered to the students is through differentiated education. The teachers identify the most effective learning strategies for each student and learning plans are focussed on individual challenges. The student's language profile is taken into account and the learning plan is communicated to all teaching staff members.

The school fully aligns with the IB definition of differentiation which is stated as a process of identifying with each learner the most effective strategies for achieving agreed goals.

General Support

Students coming from other educational systems and various language backgrounds might need support for a limited period in order to cover specific shortcomings. In this case, support is offered for a period to one or a group of students facing the same difficulties. The support teacher in collaboration with the respective subject teacher will decide if the support should continue. In all stages of the procedure parents are kept informed and their approval is sought.

Individual Support

For every student requiring an individualised education plan, the MYP coordinator in collaboration with the subject teachers will prepare the plan from the very beginning of the year and teachers as well as the management of the school will be in a position to access readily available information regarding how each student is treated so as to optimize his/her performance.

For the individualised educational plan, the need of professional psychologists will be sought, so that together with teachers and the Direction of the school, an optimal teaching and assessing plan will be designed for every student.

The Individual Education Plan will be discussed with parents and they will be regularly informed of the progress and if any modifications are necessary to be made.

Cooperation with parents

In OTR International School parents are informed of all procedures related to any offer of learning support lessons. Parents receive detailed information in case a difficulty is identified. They are invited to participate in meetings and give their input. Our school considers of the

utmost importance an excellent collaboration between parents and the teaching staff and the school management.

Cooperation with experts

OTR International School cooperates closely with the health services of the country. If needed, our nurse contacts the paediatric health services and other specialists.

We often work with specialists from the private sector and with the parents' agreement we are open for observations of the students in class.

We are also in contact with the services in the Ministry of Education in Luxembourg and specifically with the National Inclusion Commission (Commission Nationale d'Inclusion (CNI)) and the Competences Centers (Centres de Competences) in order to organise a specialist's intervention in school and offer students with the support needed.

Confidentiality

All information related to a student's learning or other difficulties is treated with the strictest confidentiality and no details are discussed or disseminated outside faculty meetings.

Budget

The management of OTR International School provides the necessary teaching staff and resources in order to best meet the needs of students. The Professional development of the staff on Learning support areas and student's inclusion is also included in the school's budget.

Conclusion

The purpose of this document is to inform all stakeholders about the practices implemented with regards to the equal access of all students to the same teaching and learning processes at OTR International school. This policy has been created after carefully considering the relevant documents and publications of the IB Organisation and it is based on the relevant principles of inclusion of all students.

Review of the policy

The policy will be reviewed collaboratively with all MYP staff in 2022.

Resources

- IBO. IB Learner Profile. Print.
<https://www.ibo.org/contentassets/fd82f70643ef4086b7d3f292cc214962/learner-profile-en.pdf>
- IBO. MYP: From Principles into Practice, 2014. Print.
- IBO The IB guide to inclusive education: a resource for whole school development
https://ibpublishing.ibo.org/server2/rest/app/tsm.xql?doc=g_x_senxx_tsm_1501_1_e&part=1&chapter=1
- IBO. Learning diversity and inclusion in IB programmes, International Baccalaureate Organization, 2016. Print.
- IBO. Standards and Practices. International Baccalaureate Organization. 2014. Print.

- **JOURNAL OFFICIEL DU GRAND-DUCHE DE LUXEMBOURG MEMORIAL A, N° 664 du 8 aout 2018**, related to the creation of psycho-pedagogical specialised centres of competences in order to promote school inclusion.