

Gymnázium a SOS Rokycany (G+SOS) is a state grammar school with more than a century of tradition and provides students with general education in a four-year and an eight-year programme. IB Diploma Programme (IBDP) is implemented in one of the four-year programmes, comprises the last two years of study there and is based on a curriculum called *Inspiration and Knowledge in Context*. The aim of the educational process is to guarantee universal and complex development for each student including motivation for lifelong learning, creative education and promotion of logical thinking and problem-solving techniques. We are not aiming for a particular focus or field; our priority is a satisfied student supported by an individual approach. The following policies (Admissions Policy, Academic Integrity Policy, Assessment Policy, Inclusion/Learning Support requirements Policy, Language Policy) have been elaborated to provide framework for the educational processes at Gymnázium a SOS Rokycany and to present our school's attitude towards learning and teaching.

Special Educational Needs / Inclusion Policy

Gymnázium a SOS Rokycany (G+SOS) offers 5 different programs one of which is the IB Diploma Programme. As such, we promote and value the IB philosophy and we realize that "Students are at the centre of international education in the IB, with their own strengths and challenges. Students aged 3–19 come to school with unique and shared patterns of values, knowledge and experience of the world and their place in it. It is the responsibility of the school and the leadership team to put in place processes to remove barriers to learning for every member of the school community." (The IB guide to inclusive education, 2019)

Additionally, our school also aligns with the requirements and regulations of the Czech legislation regarding students with SEN (Special Educational Needs).

Therefore, our mission is to provide the possibility of studying for all students potentially interested in the IB DP programme.

1. Purpose of SEN Policy

At G+SOS we understand that there are various barriers which students may experience in their learning process. Thus, it is our duty to provide support to all students to overcome the barriers, and to facilitate their learning process at our school. Hence, the main purpose of this document is to demonstrate how our school ensures equality and fair approach in the educational process. Furthermore, the purpose of this policy is:

- to ensure that all students are provided with equal opportunities to participate in IB DP
- to foster a curriculum which supports all students in order to reach their full potential
- to demonstrate that all stakeholders are well-informed about our approaches to students with SEN
- to accentuate that all staff members are encouraged to support all students equally

2. Definitions

In order to enable all possible interested parties to fully understand this policy, definitions of some important terms are provided below.

2. 1. SEN (Special Educational Needs)

Special Educational Needs refer to any student needing support and extra help beyond the general curriculum. More specifically, the term represents a broad range of possible learning and assessment needs. G+SOS recognizes that there are many possible needs and therefore, we aim to support both students with any learning disabilities, and also encourage talented students.

Such students may include, but are not limited to:

- autism spectrum/Asperger's syndrome
- attention deficit (hyperactivity) disorder
- medical conditions or chronic illnesses
- mental health issues
- physical disabilities
- visual impairment
- gifted and talented students

2. 2. Inclusion

“Inclusion is an ongoing process that aims to increase access and engagement in learning for all students by identifying and removing barriers. This can only be successfully achieved in a culture of collaboration, mutual respect, support and problem solving. Inclusion is the learner profile in action, an outcome of dynamic learning communities.” (IBO, 2010)

2. 3. Differentiation

“Differentiation is seen as the process of identifying, with each learner, the most effective strategies for achieving agreed goals.” (IBO, 2010)

G+SOS recognizes students as individuals, and we approach them as such. Any student with SEN is individually approached by our staff to support their specific needs.

2. 4. Individual Education Plan (IEP)

G+SOS designs IEPs for those students whose learning needs/difficulties require one. Each plan is constructed separately and answers specific needs a student may have. Furthermore, each plan is consulted and shared with any involved teachers, leadership team and parents. These plans are also constructed with close collaboration with local psychological/pedagogical facilities, and they accurately reflect the student's diagnosis.

3. Leadership and governance

G+SOS has established a team to oversee this policy, review it annually, and ensure that it is put into practice by all staff. The team includes the school leadership team, the IB coordinator, the career counsellor and SEN consultant. As such, this team is responsible for:

- monitoring the effectiveness of this policy
- ensuring that it is put into practice by all members of the school's staff
- ensuring that all staff are fully informed about all changes and updates in this policy
- informing any new staff members about this policy, its purpose and content
- supporting the staff with continual professional development
- ensuring that all needs are met

4. Confidentiality and documentation

All documents concerning SEN, IEP, or inclusion data and information about our students are kept in both written and digital forms. All these documents are also strictly confidential and can be viewed only by involved parties. Digital documents are also stored in a secured data warehouse and each document can only be accessed using a password. We also acknowledge the requirements stated in the document Candidates with assessment access requirements (2017) and our school ensures that all essential documents required by the IB are uploaded well in advance. Parents will also be informed and asked to provide a consent which will allow the school to publish/upload the documents to the IB.

5. Accessibility of school premises

Our school provides support for students with various SENs. The school is wheelchair accessible and equipped with elevators. Any further equipment which might be needed will be acquired according to individual needs.

6. Support / Responsibilities

6. 1. Student support / responsibilities

The school provides relevant and appropriate learning support to all our students. We also foster and care for the students' well-being and we provide them with necessary guidance to help them succeed in their studies. For the support to be fully effective students are asked and encouraged:

- to express their feeling and needs regarding the learning process and their school life
- to inquire about any ambiguities
- to involve in discussions concerning their needs
- to be active in utilizing the proposed learning process methods and approaches

6. 2. Teacher support/responsibilities

G+SOS provides its staff with all the necessary information about all students with SEN. All teachers are also asked to improve their knowledge and become more educated in this field.

All our teachers are requested to:

- comply with the IB philosophy
- comply with the national legislation and regulations concerning SEN
- participate in SEN training and workshops
- implement any methods and approaches stated in the IEPs, or other documents concerning SEN
- collaborate with the School Advisory Centre and the IB coordinator
- monitor the effectiveness of methods and approaches along with student's progress
- provide feedback in reviews of SENs

6. 3. IB philosophy alignment

To demonstrate alignment with the IB mission statement and the IB philosophy, G+SOS implements four key elements:

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

These principles support all the students in their learning process and help them to work in a positive environment which enables them to have a good learning experience. We also work with and utilize students' prior knowledge.

6. 4. The IB DP coordinator

The IB DP coordinator is always fully informed about all SEN matters well in advance by the School Advisory Centre, and all necessary adjustments for the final examinations are discussed with him. The IB DP coordinator is responsible for obtaining approval from the IB in order to make necessary assessment arrangements.

7. Approaches to assessment

Since there is a wide spectrum of learning disabilities and special educational needs, the school realizes that it is vital to adjust assessment according to individual needs. As such, there is a list of suggested modifications (not exhaustive):

- all teachers utilize different formative assessment approaches
- all teachers adapt to individual needs of students
- summative assessment is differentiated to meet individual needs of students
- school ensures that all modifications can be provided by the IB for students' final assessments (internal and external)

G+SOS also offers a wide range of inclusive assessment arrangements based on individual needs, such as:

- access to modified papers
- additional time
- extension on deadlines
- access to modern technology (e.g. electronic devices, recorders, etc)

All the modifications and arrangements support individual needs of our students but are also in agreement with the regulations and requirements listed in the document *Candidates with assessment access requirements* (2017).

8. Approaches to admission

Our school accepts students with SEN in the Diploma Programme and provides them with the standard school resources and services. Information on any SEN which students might have before enrolling into the programme should also be part of the application within the admissions process. More details about our school's admission process are provided in the Admissions Policy.

9. Review of the policy

This document needs to be reviewed regularly and it is vital that all stakeholders are informed after every review. This document was prepared in cooperation of the school leadership team, the IB coordinator and the School Advisory Centre.

This document is reviewed and updated at the beginning of each school year (end of August/beginning of September).

10. References

The IB guide to inclusive education: a resource for whole school development (2019)

Candidates with assessment access requirements (2017)

Programme standards and practices (2016)

Vyhláška č. 27/2016 Sb., o vzdělávání žáků se speciálními vzdělávacími potřebami a žáků nadaných (2016)

Special Educational Needs in IB programmes (2010)

Learning diversity in the International Baccalaureate programmes: Special educational needs within the International Baccalaureate programmes (2010)

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