



Inclusion Policy

This policy is made in accordance with both Serbian legislation and IBO guidelines on developing school inclusion policy. The purpose and objective of the Inclusion Policy is:

- to ensure that all students make the best possible progress
- to explain our philosophy regarding learning support requirements of our students
- to describe the practices used to early identify students with learning differences and ensure that their learning support requirements are met
- to enable students with learning differences to join in appropriate school activities
- to facilitate provisions to reduce barriers to learning
- to ensure that students are actively involved in the development of the Individual Education Plans
- to inform the stakeholders about the inclusive assessment arrangements available for candidates with assessment access requirement during their preparation of work and in their examinations
- to Identify roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders and to promote effective partnership

What is inclusion?

Inclusion is an ongoing process that aims to increase access and engagement in learning for all students by identifying and removing barriers. Inclusion is an organizational paradigm that involves change. It is a continual process of

increasing learning and participation for all students. It addresses learning support requirements and questions the broader objectives of education, the nature of pedagogy, curriculum and assessment. It is an educational approach to which all schools should aspire. Inclusion is facilitated in a culture of collaboration, mutual respect, support and problem-solving involving the whole school community.¹

The IB supports the following principles of an inclusive education where:

- education for all is considered a human right
- education is enhanced by the creation of affirmative, responsive environments that promote a sense of belonging, safety, self-worth and whole growth for every student
- every educator is an educator of all students
- learning is considered from a strength-based perspective
- learning diversity is valued as a rich resource for building inclusive communities
- all learners belong and experience equal opportunities to participate and engage in quality learning
- full potential is unlocked through connecting with, and building on, previous knowledge
- assessment provides all learners with opportunities to demonstrate their learning, which is rewarded and celebrated
- multilingualism is recognized as a fact, a right and a resource
- all students in the school community fully participate in an IB education and are empowered to exercise their rights and accept their responsibilities as citizens
- all students in the school community have a voice and are listened to so that their input and insights are taken into account
- all students in the school community develop the IB learner profile attributes and develop into inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect
- diversity is understood to include all members of a community
- all students experience success as a key component of learning

¹ Learning diversity and inclusion in IB programmes, IBO, January 2016

Gimnazija "Svetozar Marković" is committed to meeting learning diversity of its students. Our school is open for students with special educational needs through the collaborative work between teachers, counselors, school psychologist, students and their parents which allows careful assessment, planning and monitoring the students' progress. The parents and legal guardians are encouraged to inform the school of any learning difficulty and submit the medical record if it is necessary so that the school leadership can meet the needs of each student using the developed systems and practices. Over the years, students, parents and teachers have been encouraged to develop a positive, respectful and caring communications and mutual relationships as they have been given many opportunities to interact properly within everyday school life or extracurricular activities and actions which include the entire school community.

Learning support

Gimnazija "Svetozar Marković" aims to provide support for all learners through collaboration, open communication and shared understanding between students, parents and teachers in a safe learning environment designed for specific learning needs. We understand that all students have different learning requirements and at the beginning of each school year the learning support committee consisting of the class teachers, homeroom teacher, school psychologist, Head of School and IBDP Coordinator discusses the learning requirements of the new student cohort.

Having in focus the importance of early identification and early intervention, the school takes an active role in promoting the necessity of using different techniques in order to meet each student learning needs because early identification and early intervention are the most important in obtaining successful learning process. It is the responsibility of every teacher, as a teacher of all students, to make sure that each student is exposed to teaching and learning that reaches them as individual learners.

For Gimnazija "Svetozar Marković", as for the other state-owned schools in Serbia, school psychologist within Students support service, is an expert with relevant trainings, employed on full time, and has an important role in counseling and guiding students. The Students support service works collaboratively with students, teachers and families to ensure that barriers to learning are minimized and that learning needs are met for every student. Counseling services are available to all students through a comprehensive model that includes individual and group counseling. The homeroom teachers,

subject teachers, parents, and students themselves can provide the referrals for group and individual counseling.

In the cases of students with needs that are beyond the school's ability to meet, families are referred to the appropriate experts. The school psychologist is responsible for:

- keeping all medical documentation, reports and plans confidential
- writing reports about student's progress
- informing the subject teachers and students about the students' progress.

The committee organizes regular meetings to discuss the students' progress and if necessary, meetings with parents are organized. The necessary evaluation of the actions of the school taken in order to provide students with support are done in teams, which consist of the IB DP Coordinator, the homeroom teacher and the head of school.

Individual Educational Plans (IEP)

IEP is created when a learning difference is identified. The IEP is based upon the recommendations of the classroom teachers and a psycho-educational assessment and it is developed by the learning support committee and the student, in a timely manner. IEP must be approved by the parents and signed at a formal meeting. Review of the IEP occurs yearly.

Gimnazija "Svetozar Marković" adopts the recommendations from the IBO about the learning plans.

Learning plans acknowledge student strengths and interests.

Learning plan development is a collaborative process and documented in the inclusion policy.

Learning plans are focused on individual strengths and challenges rather than medical and psychological labels.

Learning plans are properly integrated with the technologies the student uses in and out of the classroom.

Learning outcomes are considered relevant by students, parents and teachers.

Teaching and learning strategies are linked to the IB approaches to teaching and learning skills and the IB learner profile.

Learning and learning progress are evidence-based.

Learning plan meetings are student-led.

Learning plans respect confidentiality.

Learning plan development takes into account the local context and legislation, where appropriate.

Effective practices of meeting the learning diversity

All teachers in Gimnazija "Svetozar Marković" are informed and trained to incorporate effective practices of meeting the learning diversity in teaching. The school practice implements the IBO guidelines on differentiated learning.

Differentiated learning

The IB identifies four important principles to promote equal access to the curriculum for all learners and to support the development of the whole person through differentiated teaching and learning.

1. Affirm identity—build self-esteem Promote environments that welcome and embrace learners. Foster high but realistic expectations. Value and use the diversity of cultural perspectives. Liaise and collaborate with parents. Understand student learning preferences and interests. Identify and teach through student strengths.
2. Value prior knowledge Identify prior knowledge and activate prior learning, including that learned in other languages. Map language and learning profiles. Build new knowledge onto existing knowledge.
3. Scaffold learning Support new learning through the use of graphic organizers (writing frames, Mind Maps®), which are pictorial forms of promoting, organizing and constructing knowledge; visual aids, drama, demonstrations, etc. Encourage collaborative learning groups/peer support. Support and use best language.
4. Extend learning Combine high expectations with opportunities for learner-centered, experiential practice and interaction with cognitively rich materials, experiences and environments. Use technology and assistive technologies to enrich learning and level the playing field for all learners.

Differentiation is seen as the process of identifying, with each learner, the most effective strategies for achieving personal learning goals. When considering

pedagogical approaches to meeting individual learning needs, teachers also need to consider each student's language profile.

Identification and admission

Identification of a student with learning differences can occur at any age and learning differences may become apparent as a student progresses through the school. There is a clear process for referral when a classroom teacher observes that a student may need additional support. The procedure includes parental consent, pre-screening, the development of interventions on behalf of the learning support committee, the recommendation for a psycho-educational assessment, as appropriate.

The admission of the students with learning differences implies decision which are based upon review of the student admissions documents, including the admissions forms, an IEP or corresponding documentation and other related documents. Admissions decisions for students with learning differences are made by the school principals in consultation with the school psychologist and the learning support committee. A candidate with assessment access requirements is a student who requires access arrangements in assessment conditions to demonstrate his or her level of attainment.

Inclusion and Assessment

A candidate with assessment access requirements is a student who requires access arrangements in assessment conditions to demonstrate his or her level of attainment.

Changed or additional conditions during the assessment process enable a candidate with assessment access requirements to demonstrate his or her level of attainment more fairly and are not intended to compensate for any lack of ability.

Candidates with learning support requirements

Since the IBO has developed specific and detailed guidelines on inclusive assessment arrangements, the parents and students are advised to meet the IB DP coordinator in order to obtain the full information about the process.

Candidates who require inclusive assessment arrangements may have learning support requirements due to one or more of the following:

- Autism spectrum/Asperger's syndrome
- Learning disabilities

- Medical conditions
- Mental health issues
- Multiple disabilities
- Physical and/or sensory challenges
- Social, emotional and behavioral difficulties
- Specific learning difficulties
- Speech and/or communication difficulties

Roles and responsibilities

Responsibilities of the School

- to provide training for staff and faculty to successfully implement and support learning differences
- to provide resources for the implementation of the Inclusion Policy
- to raise staff awareness of the needs of students identified as having learning differences
- to provide guidance to students with learning support requirements
- to make sure the program is in compliance with Serbian laws regarding students with learning support requirements
- to respect the confidential rights of the student and family
- to properly review student progress to inform decisions regarding continued enrolment

Responsibilities of the Learning Support Committee

- to obtain permission from parents for the release of learning differences documentation to the IB
- to provide information about inclusion and differentiation and to make them available to teachers and students in order to encourage communication among teachers, and between teachers and students
- the learning support committee, led by the school psychologist has specialised role in the identification, support and development of an IEP for students with learning differences
- to communicate IEP to teachers and to assist students and teachers with implementation of IEP
- to review and store documentation from parents/psychologist for internal implementation

Responsibilities of the IB Coordinator

- to communicate documentation of learning differences to IBIS for Diploma Programme
- to provide examination accommodations as needed and approved by the IB
- to maintain discretion and confidence in providing special education needs services
- to communicate the approved Inclusive Access Arrangements to parents, student, student support services (school psychologist)
- to work collaboratively in order to support students with learning support requirements
- to ensure that Access Arrangements are implemented for IBDP exams and mock exams

Responsibilities of the Teachers

- to maintain the high level of collaboration and communication
- to identify learners with specific learning difficulties and refer the student to the school psychologist or IB coordinator
- to maintain accurate records of students' progress
- to participate in all required training when available
- to maintain discretion and confidentiality in providing special education needs services
- to implement the accommodations stated in the IEP
- to work with the learning support committee to monitor student's progress towards the goals specified in the IEP
- to participate in a review of the progress of students with learning differences at the end of a term

Responsibilities of the Students

- to develop self-management and independence through contribution to the development of the IEP and active participation in classes and meetings
- to follow IB policies and procedures
- to accept their responsibilities and exercise their rights while respecting other people
- to understand the accommodations and to self-advocate for these when appropriate
- to strive to improve based upon their goals.

Responsibilities of the Parents

- to play an active role in student's education and to be included in the learning support plan or IEP, when needed
- to communicate to the school all information and documentation regarding student's learning support requirements
- to provide documentation needed for IBO accommodation requests
- to discuss their student's progress with the school psychologist.

Review process

This policy document will be reviewed no later than 5 years from the date of publication, as and when programme coordinator considers it to be necessary. Programme coordinator will ensure its implementation through planning meetings and classroom visits. The document is shared with all stakeholders.

References:

1. Learning diversity and inclusion in IB programmes, IBO, January 2016.
2. MONITORING FRAMEWORK FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN SERBIA, the paper created within the project titled *Development of Comprehensive Monitoring Framework for Inclusive Education in Serbia*, initiated by UNICEF and the Government of Serbia's Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit, with the support of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia and the Fund for an Open Society Serbia., September 2014.
3. Diploma Programme: From Principles to Practice, IBO
4. Candidates with special assessment needs, IBO
5. Special educational needs within the International Baccalaureate programmes, IBO