

SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS (SEN) POLICY

1 INTRODUCTION

École Jeannine Manuel (“the School”) is an independent co-educational school for pre-K-12 students with campuses in Paris and in Lille. The School is consubstantially a bilingual French school and an international school. As a French school, it is accredited and subsidized by the Ministry of Education. As an international school, it is a UNESCO “associated” school, and an IB World School also accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) and by the Council of International Schools (CIS).

The School’s aim is to admit a balance of boys and girls and to encourage applications from candidates with as diverse a range of backgrounds as possible. This enriches our community and is vital in preparing our students for tomorrow’s world. The School is committed to equal treatment for all, regardless of an applicant’s sex, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation or social background.

2 PHILOSOPHY

The School’s mission statement is: **To promote international understanding through the bilingual education of a multicultural community of students, and to foster pedagogical innovation by exploring best practices in an ever-changing global environment.**

We do not discriminate in any way regarding entry, but we are an academically selective school.

Providing that we can support students according to their needs, we will do what we can to accommodate them. We welcome students with physical disabilities provided that we can make the site suitable. The School may require a copy of a medical report or psychologist’s report to support any request for special arrangements. The number of students with special educational needs/ specific learning difficulties is necessarily limited.

Some children have special education needs if they have a learning difference or disability that calls for special educational provisions. Learning differences are constituted by persistent neurodevelopmental difficulties that can hinder the acquisition, the comprehension, the usage and the treatment of verbal or non-verbal information. They can appear in a child of normal or high academic potential who is regularly schooled. This excludes children experiencing difficulties solely because the language or form of language of their home or prior educational system is different from the language in which they are taught at School (see Language Policy).

Through its mission statement, the School emphasizes its commitment to provide an open and inclusive environment where all students are given the opportunity to achieve their full potential. The School supports the principle of inclusion for students with SEN and believes that a policy of inclusive education benefits all students. Students who learn, live and grow together are much more likely to embrace their differences and include one another.

3 Aim

Positive adult attitudes and examples serve to develop and increase this potential. It is our aim for all teachers and staff to have high expectations of all students, including those with SEN.

The purpose of this SEN policy is to detail how the School will strive to ensure that the necessary provisions are made for students with SEN and that those needs are made known to all who are likely to teach them.

3.1 For Teachers

The School will endeavour to ensure that all teachers in the School are able to provide for SEN students, to allow them to join in the activities of the School together with students who do not have SEN, so far as is reasonably practical and compatible with the student receiving the special educational provision and the efficient education of the students with whom they are educated.

3.2 For Parents

Partnership with parents plays a key role in enabling students with SEN to achieve their potential. The School recognizes that parents hold key information and have knowledge and experience to contribute to the shared view of their child's needs and the best ways of supporting them. All parents of students with SEN shall be treated as partners and supported to play an active and valued role in their children's education.

3.3 For Students

SEN students often have a unique knowledge of their own needs. Their views about what sort of help they would benefit from are key. They are encouraged to participate in all the decision-making processes and to contribute to the assessment of their needs.

4 IDENTIFYING SEN

The School realizes the importance of early identification of students who may have SEN in order to ensure early intervention. The purpose of identification is to work out what action the School should take, not to fit a student into a category.

The needs considered are those of the whole person, not just his or her SEN. The School recognizes that other students, such as the Gifted and Talented or those with Autism Spectrum Disorder may also require specific approaches, which the School endeavours to provide for or to accommodate.

5 PROVISIONS FOR SEN STUDENTS

Students with SEN have a learning need that requires special education provisions to be made for them which is additional to, or different from, the differentiated curriculum provision made for students in the classroom.

When learning issues are discovered after admission, usually through outside testing triggered by emerging learning issues at school, the School helps parents seek remediation with outside specialists. The School makes every effort to adapt to the needs of the student in coordination with outside remedial specialists, including through the implementation of flexible assessment procedures, extra-time or computer-assisted examinations.

5.1 The Individual Education Plan (IEP)

For an IEP to be developed, students must have formal documentation of a specific diagnosis from a medical doctor. The IEP will be approved by the Head of School in consultation with the parents and, where appropriate, the student. The IEP will include the diagnosed difficulties, the student's strengths and needs, and accommodations required to assist the student's learning.

Students who start their education at the School with formal documentation of a specific diagnosis will be supported by an IEP within the first term of arrival at the School.

Students who are not meeting academic expectations or showing signs of distress will be identified through the School's on-going internal assessment procedures. Teachers suspecting a learning difference in a child should report this to the appropriate senior leadership team member. Senior leadership team members discuss possible actions during the weekly Steering Committee meetings and inform teachers as needed.

For students who do not have a diagnosed SEN, the School undertakes a graduated approach to the identification, assessment and support of students with SEN. The approach recognizes that there is a continuum of SEN and that, where necessary, increasing specialist expertise should be brought to bear on the difficulties that a student may experience.

The IEP will be reviewed on a yearly basis.

The IEP will be shared with all School staff that work with the child.

5.2 Graduated Response

The educational needs of the most students are met in the classroom. Teachers tailor instruction to meet each student's individual needs. Teachers plan activities at the appropriate level to enable progress to be achieved. Teachers differentiate the content, the process, the learning environment, learning outcomes and expectations in the spirit of the "growth mindset."

If, after an appropriate period of time, a student does not achieve reasonable academic goals or shows behavioral issues or distress, or if the School believes that the student might have undiagnosed SEN, parents will be advised to seek professional assessment. If the resulting diagnosis identifies a SEN, an IEP will be prepared by the Head of School in consultation with the parents and, where appropriate, the student.

5.3 High Potential (or Gifted and Talented) Students

High potential students might have been tested and diagnosed prior to enrolment or after they have joined the School. Those tests and their analysis by specialists guide our educators. We strive to challenge those students academically, but also by offering specific activities that cater to their interests.

Our objective is to ensure the wellbeing of these students and this frequently entails paying particular attention to the development of their social skills. As is the case with students with learning issues, the School's ability to help is embedded in its pedagogical principles and practice, which promote collaborative work, group work and differentiated learning.

6 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

6.1 Parents

Parents of a SEN student meet with the relevant senior leadership team member(s) within the first months of a new school year to discuss how to meet the individual needs of their child.

Parents inform the School upon entry that their child has a specific, diagnosed SEN, or inform the School if their child later develops SEN. Parents provide the School with all information and documentation relating to their child's diagnosed SEN.

Parents work in partnership with the School to provide support for their child. Parents attend meetings to formulate and review their child's IEP; they are responsible, in liaison with the School, for requesting accommodations for formal examinations from testing agencies.

6.2 Head of School

The Head of School ensures that staff members are kept informed of best practice and relevant developments with regard to teaching students with SEN. Continuous professional development will be provided by outside experts. Opportunities for class teachers to share good practices and teaching strategies with each other are provided.

The Head of School works with staff members to identify areas for development in SEN. The Head of School regularly reviews the quality of teaching for all students and aims to improve teachers' understanding of the strategies to identify and support SEN students.

The Head of School signs all IEP.

6.3 Nurse

The school nurse has an important role in the provision of health services to students. She facilitates positive student responses to normal development, promotes health and safety, intervenes with actual and potential health issues and actively collaborates with others to build student and family capacity for adaptation, self-management, self-advocacy, and learning.

The school nurse plays a key role in providing preventive services. With respect to students with identified SEN, she shares in the implementation of the IEP.

6.4 Teaching Staff

Teachers are responsible, following accommodation guidelines provided by the senior leadership team, for modifying and/or differentiating the curriculum for students who have a diagnosed SEN. Teachers are responsible for bringing students who are not reaching expected academic goals or whose behaviour is of concern to the relevant senior leadership team member.

6.5 Students

Students are involved in the development, implementation and evaluation of their own learning programme. This constitutes an effective way to develop self-management and independence.

Students should contribute to the setting of the learning targets on their IEP, become familiar with their learning goals and reflect on their progress by participating in various assessments.

7 INCLUSIVE ARRANGEMENTS FOR DP STUDENTS

IB policy states: "The International Baccalaureate believes that all candidates must be allowed to take their examinations under conditions that are as fair as possible. Where standard examination conditions and assessment procedures would put candidates at a disadvantage, and would prevent them from being able to demonstrate their skills and knowledge adequately, reasonable forms of access arrangements may be authorized."

The Head of IB and the DP Coordinator will cooperate with parents, teachers, students and staff on a case-by-case basis. The School will ensure that all IB conditions have been met before allowing a student to benefit from inclusive arrangements. Inclusive arrangements include but

are not limited to: exams printed with larger text, extra time on exams, access to a smaller and quieter exam room, additional break time or the use of a computer for typing extended responses on exams.

7.1 Requesting extra time on IB exams

In dealing with issues concerning reading fluency, reading comprehension, writing fluency or written expression, sometimes extra time can be requested on exams. This is a multi-step process to be completed in the first year of the IB. The deadline for requesting extra time on exams is in November of Year 2, six months before the exams start. The steps are as follows:

- First, a parent, teacher or staff member concerned about a student contacts the Head of IB or the DP Coordinator. Parents will be asked to have their child tested by a specialist if this has not already been done. The testing must present a diagnosis of a particular condition or be standardized for items like reading fluency, reading comprehension, writing fluency, or written expression. A note from a family doctor saying the student needs extra time is not sufficient. The report from the specialist can be in English or in French. The school has a list of professionals to provide when families do not have their own.
- Second, parents provide a copy of the report. If the report shows the need for extra time, the Head of IB and the DP Coordinator will continue with the procedure. While the school is working on the administrative aspects, parents and students can follow the suggestions on the report in dealing with the specific issue. If the report contains scores that do not show the need for extra time, the School does not move forward with the request.
- Third, educational evidence is gathered from the student's teachers. The IB does not accept medical (or psychological) evidence alone and requires evidence from the teachers working with the student. If only one of the two types of evidence suggests that extra time is necessary, it will not be granted. It sometimes happens that students who have struggled with a particular issue manage to find effective strategies to overcome it. This allows them to complete exams without the need for inclusive arrangements. As mentioned above, the specialist's report makes many suggestions for how to improve performance and extra time on exams is just one of many possibilities.
- Fourth, the DP Coordinator prepares a report under the control of the Head of IB to make a request and submits both the evidence from the specialist and from teachers. At this point, the IB Organization decides whether or not to grant the extra time. Depending on the scores from the specialist's report, the IB Organization can award 10%, 25%, or 50% extra time. The IB Organization may also decide that the use of a computer would speed up the student's work and cancel the need for extra time. In some cases, the extra time might only concern certain subjects and not others.

In the case where extra time is granted, the arrangements are applied for all subsequent mock exam weeks and officially scheduled school-based tests so the student learns to use the extra time, which is why it is best to make the request in Year 1. It is important to note that inclusive arrangements such as the use of a computer, rest breaks, or a separate exam room, are not necessarily always associated with extra time.

7.2 Requesting other arrangements on IB exams

Students, families, teachers and administrators may request other arrangements for students such as the use of a computer, separate room in exams, rest breaks, a prompter, etc. Students will benefit from these arrangements at the Head of School, Head of IB and DP Coordinator's discretion based on relevant interviews with the student, family, teachers and senior administrators.

When a student benefits from inclusive arrangements, these apply to all timetabled school exams and tests, and students receive a separate schedule from the exams officer.

7.3 Adverse circumstances - the D2 form

For issues that might include a physical injury due to an accident, a prolonged illness or an especially difficult personal or family situation that could have a negative impact on the student's school work, whether it be the final exams or work done during the year, a D2 form is filled out and sent to the IB Organization by the Head of IB or by the DP Coordinator. This is a special form for adverse circumstances, which the IB Organization takes into consideration when awarding the final marks on the diploma.

Parents should notify the Head of IB and the DP Coordinator and provide any medical documentation associated with the issue. The School should also be informed of which components of the diploma programme would be adversely affected by this issue, such as the Extended Essay, Theory of Knowledge work or Internal Assessment work. If the circumstances are expected to impact the final exams in May, the school should be made aware of this as well. The deadline for requesting a D2 form is the last day of classes in Year 2.

8 COMPLIANCE WITH NATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

This policy complies with the following French statutory requirement:

- Loi 2005-102 du 11 février 2005,
- Article L. 351-1 du code de l'Éducation,
- Scolariser les enfants présentant des troubles des apprentissages (TSA), Direction générale de l'enseignement scolaire, Août 2012.

9 SEN POLICY AND IB STANDARDS

The development of this policy has been informed by several IB publications, including principally *“Learning diversity and inclusion” in Diploma Programme: From principles into practice (2015)*; the current *Handbook of procedures for the Diploma Programme*; and *Learning diversity in the International Baccalaureate programmes: Special educational needs within the International Baccalaureate programmes*.

10 POLICY REVIEW

This policy was revised in March 2019; it has been reviewed by the Head of IB, the DP Coordinator, the Head of School and the Chairman of the Board of Trustees in March 2019 and will be reviewed periodically, at least every three years, by the Board of Trustees and the Head of School after consultation with the School's senior leadership team, teachers, parents and students.