Inclusion Policy

(2016)

1. Foreword

The aim of inclusion is to create an all-embracing societal ideology that according to the United Nations "ensures equal opportunities for all to achieve full potential in life."[1] In order to attain this human right of full development of the human personality (cf. Universal Declaration of Human Rights) IGS students aged 18 months to 18 years with various cultural backgrounds and differing educational needs have to learn alongside each other in a positive, inclusive school community. The IGS is a multi-ethnic school with a student body of 19 nationalities, who is speaking a variety of mother tongues, and is guided by an international staff from various continents. To ensure a holistic education and to secure equal opportunities for all the school's mission statement leads with the aim "to create a space in which learners acquire skills which enable them to lead a happy and fulfilling life" and it is therefore fundamental to the IGS community to further inclusion through removing barriers and ongoing school development.

2. Aim of this policy

At IGS all students are learning together in general education classrooms which foster an appreciation of diversity through support for a variety of learner's special educational needs and individual talents. Measures and principles have been formulated which are suited to ensure participation in communication and learning processes. These measures and principles relate to aspects such as:

- Learning difficulties
- Supporting physically or mentally disadvantaged members of the school community, including those with language or speech deficiencies, weaknesses in reading or writing (dyslexia), difficulties with numbers and calculating (dyscalculia)
- Gifted and talented pupils
- Conspicuous behaviour/behavioural difficulties

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[1] https://www.un.org/development/desa/socialperspectiveondevelopment/issues/social-integration.html

Moreover the programme offers additional support for students who show significant differences in performance for other reasons. These relate i.e. to areas such as additional help with newly acquired skills, especially in language/foreign languages.

Establishing a successful inclusive classroom varies in complexity in regard to the diversity of learning groups. Every member of staff, however, applies a knowledgeable approach and positive attitudes that shows an appreciation for diversity and an understanding for its enriching quality to the school community. The collaboration between parents and teachers proves vital to triumphing over any obstacles which may emerge.

3. Diagnostics of need for inclusion support

In order to provide optimal support for students inclusion needs have to be determined. The current system and procedures determine support by relying on the following tools:

- Regular developmental reports (Under-6 section) including a language portfolio
- School entrance examinations at the end of Pre-school with integrated language development survey
- Evaluations, reports and placement tests for school changers
- Language screenings (cf. Language Policy) and ongoing assessments
- Standardised testing in German, English, Maths in grades 3,6, and 8 (VERA)
- Recommended external diagnostic development reports (e.g. in the case of ADHD, dyslexia, autism, dyscalculia, gifted pupils, disadvantages regarding motor-skills, social-emotional or mental development, sensory perception, linguistic development)
- Diagnosis by the school psychologist
- General observation and evaluation of teaching staff during learning situations
- Parent/teacher meetings

4. Support measures

Depending on the developmental needs and the timeframe for support, the following practices and procedures are at IGS' disposal (within budgetary parameters) which are generally recorded in individual learning support plans:

a. General support measures to remove barriers

- Internal differentiated teaching (with regard to content, process, product)
- External differentiation according to language level (mother tongue/German as a Foreign Language groups)

- Self-regulated learning tasks which allows learners to decide for themselves on learning speed, order of tasks, the learning environment, and the way they present these tasks (e.g. weekly plans and language learning diaries)
- Determining mentors and peer mentors
- Synchronising pedagogical processes
- Advisory conversations/close parental cooperation
- Adequate design of the learning environment (quiet rooms, time outs, withdrawal opportunities, especially for ADHD-affected children)

b. Specific developmental measures to remove barriers

- Support in small groups/classes by an additional teacher
- Individual support by an additional teacher, teaching assistant or possibly an intern
- Providing an additional teacher for whole class lessons (team teaching)
- Permanently installing a care person/shadow teacher (to be paid by parents)
- Counselling sessions with the school psychologist
- Additional lessons, projects added to the timetable
- Access Arrangement – see ruling NS 251. BLASchA of 17 and 18/02/2010 (suitable task templates, extra time of up to 50%, granting breaks, making additional spaces/rooms available, use of technological aids, suspensions of marks, reduction in volume of tests, utilising learning aids such as notebooks, cue cards)
- Referral to or cooperation with a therapist
- Referral of private tutors
- Assistive technology: individualised learning applications for computers/phone, use of sports equipment to promote psychomotricity
- Children with an emphasis on intellectual development/learning can be taught "schulzieldifferenziert" (differentiated according to school leaving certificate).

5. Staff development

With the diverse setup of IGS it is very important for all academic staff to embrace that every teacher is a language teacher. Regular professional development is facilitated by language acquisition teachers to streamline language inclusion practices. Furthermore, department meetings regularly occur at IGS, as do class and subject meetings for planning and reflection, as well as senior management meetings. These meetings are held with a view to establish measures to ensure synchronicity with student transfers and i.e. adjust:

- Request to diagnose learning or behavioural peculiarities by a school psychologist
- Decisions on general and special assistive measures
- Coordinating learning processes in the different years

- Adapting school curriculum and entry tests
- Measures to promote social cohesion
- Evaluating development and decisions on corrective measures
- Evaluating need for further training of staff
- Use of staff/appropriation of additional teaching and learning materials

6. Cooperation between school and parents

For optimal collaboration between the school and parents IGS communicates through newsletters, weekly reports, school publications and the usual email/phone contact with parents. The school offers parents' evenings and individual consultation hours of teachers to enable close communication between parents and the school. The development of each student who is receiving additional support is recorded.