



Parents' Guide to the IBS Learning Needs Policy

We believe that good assessment is fair assessment. Our school admission policy includes making sure that we can fully meet our students' educational needs whilst they are with us. We monitor the regular year to year progression, paying particular attention to the evaluation of a student's level at key stages in academic development. The school can generally meet the needs of students diagnosed with dyslexia or dyscalculia and in the past we have helped students with attention and motor problems.

Students with special needs that have already been identified in previous schools, or who have undergone specialist diagnosis which has been discussed during parent interviews are followed closely by the Learning Needs Coordinator, Jessica Hagar, who will, if given permission by parents, inform that student's teachers. All such information is considered as private and confidential and is communicated in order to promote understanding and fair assessment. Naturally, parents are first asked if they wish the special needs teacher to help in assessing the problem (which generally means referral to a higher organization) or whether a personal follow-up is desirable. We feel that informing teachers early on is essential to the development of a student's potential.

The IB Diploma taken by many of our senior pupils is a particularly rigorous, demanding course and we make it clear to our students when they are interviewed that they will be expected to follow and meet these requirements and that there are limits to what schools are allowed to do to assist candidates. During this enrolment interview, which should be attended by both students and parents, advice is given on the possible choices of subjects and the IB coordinator judges whether or not suitable arrangements can be made for the student.

We have to ensure that parents agree on what special needs information should be shared with teachers and eventually IBCA and most importantly we have to notify parents of the possible necessity for an 'update' or recent documentary evidence if existing records are too old. We have to decide on a request for 'special needs allowances' early on since this gives time for students to practice taking internal exams with extra time or with a computer. Such requests need to be made 18 months in advance.

The IB Coordinator is particularly supportive of such students since he has 'engaged' his responsibility in accepting them into the school's programme in the first place. In the past, our school has made requests for extra time (25%), amanuensis support, large print exams and use of a computer for word processing. All requests were granted and the end results were successful, ensuring there was no unfair advantage or disadvantage to the students concerned.

Our school is strongly committed to ensuring equal opportunities and fair evaluations for all the students we accept and we are ready to be as understanding and supportive as we can, not only in working towards academic achievements but also in accompanying young people through the 'growing-up' process which is an essential element of school life.