

## **WINS SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS POLICY**

### **Introduction**

WINS is a non-selective and inclusive school that aims to offer high-level international programs to all students regardless of any learning difficulties or disabilities. One of its main objectives is to ensure that the school is a positive and enriching experience for all those who attend it.

We believe that the inquiry-based and experiential approach that characterizes teaching and learning at WINS allows for sufficient differentiation within the class to enhance the learning experience for all students involved, both high-achieving students and those affected by learning difficulties or disabilities.

### **Defining Special Educational Needs**

Students are considered to have Special Educational Needs (SEN) if they have a learning difficulty or disability that is either certified by a specialist or if they are observed to experience considerable difficulties in learning that hinders their progress significantly compared to children of the same age.

Students who are experiencing emotional and/or behavioural difficulties might be regarded as falling into this category at the discretion of the School Manager and Academic Dean and the school's SEN specialist consultant, in agreement with the family.

Any of the above situations will be discussed with the family beforehand.

Students whose level of English fluency is lower than that of their peers will not be considered as having SEN but will be supported and guided accordingly.

### **Aims of the Policy**

The SEN policy aims at setting clear standards and providing guidelines for all stakeholders to ensure that:

- SEN students are identified as soon as possible;
- The school meets the special needs of SEN students;
- Expectations are clear to all stakeholders;



- The school collaborates whenever possible and appropriate with parents and specialists who are helping the student;
- The students can be fully integrated into the classroom, and the teachers are informed and can provide suitable activities to meet the students' specific needs;
- Teachers are supported to ensure they are able to meet the specific needs of SEN students.

## **The WINS SEN department**

WINS SEN department is constituted by the SEN Coordinator, SEN assistants and a School psychologist (contracted by the school for ad-hoc interventions).

The Academic Dean is the internal point of reference and port of call for all teachers and families for all types of special educational needs. Under her supervision the school psychologist might be involved on specific cases following the procedure detailed below.

The SEN assistant(s) will implement SEN support measures, as per guidelines of the SEN Coordinator.

The school also actively collaborates with any specialists indicated by the families who already follow WINS students.

Being an inclusive non-selective school, WINS is open to consider enrolment for all students applying, regardless of their special educational needs. It will be the SEN referent and the program coordinators who will guide the students and their families in the choice of the most appropriate pathway.

## **Identifying SEN**

### **Students with a Known SEN**

Parents are expected to inform the school of any known learning difficulties or disabilities affecting their children upon enrolment. The school's Admissions Team will ask for the supporting medical documents and for the results of any tests the student has undertaken to get a full picture of the student's situation.

The Academic Dean and the SEN Coordinator will be available to meet with the student's specialist(s) to discuss the best possible teaching and learning approaches and strategies.

Throughout the school year, meetings will be held with the relevant teachers of the student in order to devise teaching learning approaches and strategies that meet the student's needs.



Should the student's condition require special accommodations that affect syllabus content and learning objectives, these will be discussed on an individual basis with the family.

### **Students Suspected of Having a SEN**

Teachers constantly monitor the students' progress in relation to the development progress of their age and grade level.

Should a teacher notice a student is consistently struggling and their rate of progress seems inadequate despite the different learning experiences proposed, the teacher will inform the Program Coordinator and the Academic Dean/SEN Coordinator, and the child will be monitored. Parents will be informed that the student is experiencing difficulties and is being monitored.

If the student continues to experience difficulties during the monitoring period and may have a learning difficulty or disability, the Academic Dean/SEN Coordinator will inform the family, and the school Psychologist will be called in to provide guidance to the family. After the family's consent, the relevant teachers will be notified.

Formal testing will be suggested to clearly identify the reasons for the lack of adequate progress. Formal testing should be considered as a suggestion to the families, as it requires additional payments and is up to the parents to decide what course of action to take.

### **Devising and Implementing Individualized Education Plans**

In the event of an acknowledged SEN, the school's academic team (the Academic Dean (SEN Coordinator, the Program Coordinator, and the student's teachers), after consulting with the School Psychologist and with the family's specialist(s), will be available to suggest an appropriate Individualized Education Plan (IEP) that can meet the student's needs.

In the event such IEPs considerably divert from the standard IB curriculum requirements, the School Manager and Academic Coordinator and the Program Coordinator will discuss the consequences with the family beforehand.

Once a formal IEP has been agreed upon, the SEN Coordinator and the Programme Coordinator will be responsible for informing the student's relevant teachers. The Program Coordinator will be in charge of supporting teachers in the implementation of the IEP.

The IEP will be revised and updated annually based on the student's progress and any difficulties or changes encountered.



The IEP will apply to students on the “Athletes program” as well.

## **Meetings regarding SEN students – all programs**

All students identified as SEN are monitored on a regular basis and specific meetings are held throughout the school year.

Prior to the beginning of the school year, the SEN Coordinator, holds a SEN meeting for each program (PYP, MYP and DP) where the known SEN cases are illustrated.

The aim of the meeting is to inform new teachers and provide the teaching staff with basic strategies to implement in the classroom. During the meeting the program coordinator will also inform teachers of any access arrangements that should be implemented (additional time etc).

SEN focused meetings will be held at least once a term to update the school specialist and support teachers.

Meetings with the student’s private specialists will be held throughout the school year as required to ensure the best possible support to students.

An end of the school year SEN meeting is held in June-July, to revise and update IEP.

## **SEN Students at MYP and DP Level**

All stated above applies to all sections in the school, and the same procedure is followed for both suspected and declared SENs at MYP and DP level.

In addition to what is stated above, to ensure fairness and consistency in the application of special measures, the Academic Dean/SENCO and Programme Coordinator will refer to the IB indications in terms of inclusive access presented in the following publications:

It is the Program coordinator’s responsibility to apply for special assessment arrangements in due time and guide the family and the student in providing the appropriate documents.

Following the IB guidelines, any assessment arrangement should be the student’s normal way of working, thus applied both during regular school activities as well as in examination settings.

## **High-Achieving, Gifted and Talented Students**

WINS aims at supporting high-achieving, gifted and talented students through differentiation and student-centered activities that allow each student to work at their own level and explore their interests at an appropriate level. Teachers are encouraged to set higher aims and



objectives for high-achieving students to ensure they feel challenged in their learning and to prevent them from getting bored.

Peer guidance and buddy programs are also used to provide further learning opportunities for gifted and talented students.

The WINS GEMS Scheme, as well as our AS/CAS programme will provide further opportunities for students to explore their interests and develop skills through experiential learning.

## **Role of the School Psychologist/SEN Specialist Consultant**

The internal referent for SEN students is the Academic DEAN/SEN Coordinator, who is supported by external consultants (School Psychologist).

The School Psychologist is asked to intervene when a case is flagged by teachers or when a SEN student enrolls at WINS. According to Italian law, the School Psychologist is not entitled to carry out therapy within the school context; they have the sole role of guiding and supporting the school, the family, and the student and suggesting external support if it is considered necessary.

When the school population requires it, an internal School Psychologist will be hired.

## **Confidentiality**

WINS is committed to student privacy and ensuring that all information is treated with confidentiality and respect. SEN documents are not shared among the staff, and teachers and staff are required to respect the privacy of all students by not sharing the information with parties other than relevant teachers, specified family members, and the specialists who are following the student's cases.

## **Policy Review and availability**

The Academic Dean and the School manager are in charge of the policy revision process that involves the Program Coordinator and the School Psychologist.

The Academic Dean, the School manager, and the School Psychologist, will be drafting the policy on the basis of indications provided by IB documents. Teachers will be asked to provide



feedback on the draft, and the policy will be updated accordingly if the input is consistent with IB guidelines and the school vision.

The policy will be revised on a yearly basis and either confirmed as is or modified accordingly. The School Manager and the Academic Dean will be in charge of approving the new version and sharing it with the school community through the school website and on Managebac.

The most updated version of the policy is made available to teachers and all stakeholders on Managebac.

The policy is also available for teachers on the Managebac Teachers' Group.

The policy was last updated in July 2020

### **Bibliography:**

General Regulations: Diploma Programme, IBO, Geneve, 2019

Diploma programme assessment procedures, IBO, Geneve, 2019