

## Matters to be addressed:

***B1. 5c: The school develops and implements an inclusion/special education needs policy that is consistent with IB expectations and with the school's admission policy***

***Evidence to be provided: A revised special educational needs policy that meets DP expectations, as published in the supporting documents. A description of actions taken by the school to implement the inclusion/special education needs policy. A description of actions taken by the school to communicate the inclusion/special educational needs policy to prospective and current parents.***

### **Revised description of actions regarding the school's special educational needs policy**

The Hermann-Böse-Gymnasium's mission statement includes the "values of a democratic and humane society as the basis of our education and teaching practices. These values incorporate consideration for others and tolerance". In this context, we appreciate the differences between individuals and do not only aim at integrating students with special educational needs but consider them a valuable addition to our school campus.

According to the IBO's publication *Learning diversity in the International Baccalaureate programmes* "inclusion is an ongoing process that aims to increase access and engagement in learning for all students by identifying and removing barriers". As a secondary state school in Bremen, we are bound to use the policy for special educational needs and inclusion as prescribed by the senator of education. Within these given boundaries, the Hermann-Böse-Gymnasium can develop and align its special education needs policy in accordance with IB prescribed criteria.

The city-state of Bremen was the first of the sixteen member states of Germany to introduce the concept of "inclusive schools" with the start of the school year 2009-10 by parliamentary resolution. Inclusive schools allow all students a comprehensive and unrestricted access to education.

All secondary schools (teaching from year 5 onwards) have to include students with special educational needs by parents request. This means that in these cases students with special educational needs learn in courses together with other students. The senator of education provides the framework for inclusion, including teacher-training, additional teaching-hour-equivalents for school and specially trained teachers.

According to the Hermann-Böse-Gymnasium's definition of special arrangements in the context of special educational needs the following applies:

Special arrangements are all necessary and adequate supportive measures that help to give students with special educational needs access to learning contents and tasks and the potential to show the gained competences and knowledge in assessment situations. The corresponding fundamental principle is that special needs must not result into disadvantages at learning and

at assessment situations. At the same time the special arrangements for individuals must not lead to a disadvantage of other students.

As we pointed out in our former special education needs policy there are numerous measurements the Hermann-Böse-Gymnasium is already offering when talking about our special education needs policy. These include primary diagnosis in the core subjects in grades 5 and 7, team teaching during years 5 and 6, language support strategies for students who are not native German speakers and/or show speech, language and communication needs (SLCN). Furthermore special education needs courses are offered for students suffering from Dyscalculia and Dyslexia, medical conditions, mental health issues and/or attention deficit disorder.

Special arrangements are decided in class conferences (in years 5 to 10, class conference members are all teachers teaching in the class concerned and parent's and student's representatives), teachers conferences (in years 11 and 12) or the evaluation committee for final examinations in the German state school system consisting of the head of school, the deputy head and one coordinator of the senior management team.

The introduction of special arrangements are always prepared by the teachers concerned and should be reviewed with the student's parents. The special arrangement takes effect only with a decision by one of the conferences mentioned above. The decision must imply all details of the special arrangement including an individualized educational plan and the continuous documentation of the chosen measures.

Prerequisite for an identification of an entitlement for special arrangements is only possible by continuous observation of the student in class and might require diagnostic tools. In many cases the diagnosis can be done by teachers, in other cases there might be a need of support and cooperation by internal school support centers like the *Zentrum für unterstützende Pädagogik – ZuP* (center for special educational needs) or external support centers like the *Regionale Beratungs- und Unterstützungszentren - ReBuz* (Regional assistance centers). Like the Hermann-Böse-Gymnasium, whose center for special educational needs is led by Jörg Spielvogel, every school in Bremen has an internal department for supporting pedagogy for children requiring special education. In case the school cannot manage the special education needs of their students, every school can get further support on demand by asking the regional assistance centers for special education needs. It is not permissible to solely base a decision upon special arrangements on a medical certificate because the medical consultant has no insight into the pedagogical context. However, the medical certificate might give an impulse for an enquiry about a special arrangement.

The personal entitlement for special arrangements has to be controlled on a regular basis, because the preconditions for the special arrangement might change. Some special needs might be temporary (e.g. sicknesses, temporary interferences), other special needs might be eased through special therapies (e.g. dyslexia).

Decisions on special arrangements for final examinations for the German Abitur are taken by the evaluation committee mentioned above. Requests for special arrangements for the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme are transferred to the International

Baccalaureate Organization according to the IB regulations after the evaluation committee has decided on the entitlement for special arrangements in close cooperation with the IB Diploma Programme Coordinator.

Examples for special arrangements can only cover some aspects, but could give an insight in the general nature of the arrangements.

Special arrangements at the Hermann-Böse-Gymnasium can include:

- changes in the student's working place organization
- modification of font sizes and colors of worksheets and examination papers
- spatial changes e.g. concerning acoustic and lights
- use of special tools like pens, rulers
- use of information and communication technology
- temporary suspension of spelling assessment (for students suffering from dyslexia in grade 5- 10)
- additional time
- rest periods

### **Description of actions taken by the school to communicate special educational needs policy to the public**

As a first consequence of the evaluation process of our school a steering committee consisting of the governing body of the school and interested teachers have met on August 17<sup>th</sup>, 2016 to discuss, take action and develop practices that specifically deal with the recommendations and matters to be addressed in the IB programme evaluation. We like to stress the fact that the city state of Bremen and along with it the public schools in Bremen are spearheading the processes of inclusion in Germany. As mentioned above, Bremen was the first state to formulate a mandatory school inclusion and special needs policy by law in 2009. We feel that the Hermann-Böse-Gymnasium has not communicated these policies to a sufficient degree to the IB, therefore we need to improve our communication regarding special educational needs policy at the HBG to the public.

Our special education needs policy can be accessed via our website below the tabbed browsing *Bildungsangebot* (educational offer) and *fördern* (special educational needs). Furthermore, the steering committee has decided to come up with a professionally designed school brochure allowing interested share and stakeholders to be informed about the different school policies.

Based on the practices articulated in the *Programme standards and practices* the Hermann-Böse-Gymnasium feels confident that our special education needs policy is already resting on

the five practices required by the IBO. As mentioned above the practices can be accessed via the school's and the ministries of education websites and will be part of the future school brochure. Via these communication channels the whole scope of practices implemented in Bremen's public schools is accessible by the public. Each one of the practices summarized below by the IBO already form part of the ministry formulated school inclusion policy for public school in the city state of Bremen:

1. *The school supports access of students to the German Abitur and IB programme(s) and philosophy*
2. *The school develops and implements policies and procedures that support the programmes*
3. *The school provides support for its students with learning and/or special educational needs and support for their teachers*
4. *Collaborative planning and reflection incorporates differentiation for student's learning needs and styles*
5. *Teaching and learning differentiates instruction to meet student's learning needs and styles*

The only impediment to students with special educational needs concerns students with physical disabilities. The Hermann-Böse-Gymnasium was founded in 1906 and enjoys a status as protected monument which does not allow for any constructional changes on the in- or outside of the building. The construction of ramps or elevators for students in wheelchair is therefore by law not possible.

## HBG special education needs policy

*The following policy will be communicated to the school community, share- and stakeholders alike with the help of our school webpage, the new IB school brochure and will be presented during the next staff meetings in November 2016 respectively February 2017. As such it becomes part of the school policies, valid for students and teachers alike.*

### General Overview

The Hermann-Böse-Gymnasium mission statement includes the “values of a democratic and humane society as the basis of our education and teaching practices. These values incorporate consideration for others and tolerance”. In this context, we appreciate the differences between individuals and do not only aim at integrating students with special educational needs but consider them a valuable addition to our school campus.

The city-state of Bremen was the first of the sixteen member states of Germany to introduce the concept of “inclusive schools” with the start of the school year 2009-10 by parliamentary resolution. Inclusive schools allow all students a comprehensive and unrestricted access to education.

All secondary schools have to include students with special educational needs by parents request. This means that in these cases students with special educational needs learn in groups together with other students. The senator of education provides the framework for inclusion, including teacher-training, additional teaching-hour-equivalents for school and specially trained teachers.

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### Purpose

IB World schools have a responsibility to provide access to the curriculum and academic rigor for all students, including opportunities to pursue individual interests, regardless of individual abilities and needs.

### Definitions

**Inclusion** is an ongoing process that aims to increase access and engagement in learning for all students by identifying and removing barriers. As a secondary state school in Bremen, we are bound to use the policy for special educational needs and inclusion as prescribed by the senator of education. Within these given boundaries, the Hermann-Böse-Gymnasium can develop and align its special education needs policy in accordance with IB prescribed criteria.

**Special Education Needs (SEN)** refers to students who show documented need of support or challenge beyond the standard curriculum. We recognize a wide spectrum of special education needs in accordance with IBO definitions such as attention deficit disorder (ADD), attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), autism, dyscalculia, dyslexia, dyspraxia, hearing impairments, medical conditions, mental health, physical disabilities, visual impairments, speech/language/communication needs and giftedness.

**Differentiation** is an instructional design model that modifies the written, taught, and assessed curriculum in order to meet individual needs.

## Principles

- All students can learn; all students have a right to a holistic, inclusive education in a caring and stimulating environment
- We place great emphasis on the responsibilities of all teachers to be aware of and provide for students with special educational needs
- We believe all students should be responsible for their own learning by taking an active role in identifying, monitoring, and meeting their own learning needs and abilities
- We view a student's education as a partnership between the student, the parent(s)/guardian(s), the school and teachers, and the community
- We recognize that modifying curriculum and coursework to meet an individual student's needs may be necessary and appropriate

## Assessment

All teachers will utilize a variety of formative assessments to determine individual student needs and abilities and to tailor subsequent instruction. Teachers will develop summative assessments that are differentiated to provide necessary modifications, challenges, and student choice. Students who appear to have special educational needs and abilities will be given further internal and/or external assessments to identify appropriate modifications as needed.

Decisions on special arrangements for final examinations for the German Abitur are taken by a special evaluation committee. Requests for special arrangements for the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme are transferred to the International Baccalaureate Organization according to the IB regulations after the evaluation committee has decided on the entitlement for special arrangements in close cooperation with the IB Diploma Programme Coordinator.

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## Support

Support for students with special education needs and abilities include and are not limited to curriculum modification. Enrichment activities, classroom accommodations, small group instruction, and one-on-one support. When it is determined that a student would benefit from additional support outside of the classroom, services are provided to meet academic, social, or behavioral needs. Additionally, paraprofessionals may provide further support to students.

There are numerous measures our school offers when talking about our special education needs policy. These include primary diagnosis in the core subjects in grades 5 and 7 concerning special educational needs, team teaching during years 5 and 6, language support strategies for students who are not native German speakers and/or show speech, language and communication needs (SLCN). Furthermore special education needs courses are offered for students suffering from Dyscalculia and Dyslexia, medical conditions, mental health issues and/or attention deficit disorder.

Special arrangements are decided during class conferences (years 5 to 10), teachers conferences (in years 11 and 12) or, when final exams are concerned, with the help of an evaluation committee consisting of the head of school, the deputy head and one coordinator of the senior management team.

The introduction of special arrangements are always prepared by the teachers concerned and are reviewed with the student's parents. The special arrangement takes effect only with a decision by one of the conferences mentioned above. The decision must imply all details of the special arrangement including an individualized educational plan and the continuous documentation of the chosen measures.

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*Pädagogik – ZuP* (center for special educational needs) or external support centers like the *Regionale Beratungs- und Unterstützungszentren - ReBuz* (Regional assistance centers). In case our school cannot manage the special education needs of their students, we get further support on demand by asking the regional assistance centers for special education needs.

## Staff Development and Collaboration

All our IB and non-IB teachers receive regular training to promote an understanding of the components of their respective programs consisting of a mandatory 30 hours per schoolyear. Teachers receive staff development on strategies to meet special educational needs in the classroom as well as in the general school environment. All teachers regularly meet horizontally and vertically to collaborate on curriculum and assessment, to reflect on student learning, and to plan for differentiation.

We refer to and follow current legislation and school board policies to guide our decisions regarding appropriate levels of support for students with special educational needs. Our target agreements with the supervisory school authority specifically contains the evaluation of assistance measures in the area of special educational needs in our school. This includes a two pillar approach by systematically promoting the performance of student with special needs and putting a focus on social learning.

The focus on special educational needs is a major part of the perennial development plan of the Hermann-Böse-Gymnasium.

## SEN Policy Review Process

This policy is a living document. It has been created using IB support materials, school district data and input from share- and stakeholders in the schools community. It is an ongoing process that will be systematically reviewed, evaluated and modified as needed by the IB staff, coordinators and administration. A special steering committee already is in place consisting of the school head, the IB coordinator, IB and non-IB staff. The purpose of the committee will be to review the current document, revise as needed, improve programme implementation and plan how to communicate current practices to the school community.