

Inclusion Policy

Rationale

Kongsberg International School seeks to make it possible for each student to develop to his or her full potential, to be versatile, effective and responsible citizens of the world. We do this within a secure and stimulating environment based on the programmes of the IB.

Our inclusion policy is aligned with the KIS Mission Statement:

Our Mission

Kongsberg International School is committed to developing reflective, creative, and divergent thinkers in the service of an evolving global society.

We aspire to excellence, recognizing all stakeholders as lifelong learners. We aim to maximize the potential of each individual, fostering holistic development and leadership. We value the synergy of collaboration as innovators, communicators and conceptual thinkers. We commit to putting learning into responsible action.

KIS is an IB World School, and our mission is in alignment with the International Baccalaureate Organization mission statement:

The International Baccalaureate Organization aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end, the IBO works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

Developing each individual in an inclusive environment

We seek to give our students the means to know who they are as individuals not only in an intellectual dimension, but also in a moral, social and physical sense.

We believe that the most important academic lesson for each young person is learning how to learn and then applying what one has learned. We believe too that an individual must be able to live as a successful member of a community in order to achieve a balanced and happy life. Our aim is to encourage each student to serve and to learn not just from the school community but also from the wider world.

Aims of the Inclusive Educational Needs provision at KIS

Our aim is to identify and support all students' diverse educational needs so that they can benefit to a satisfactory degree from the teaching offered. We do this by:

- Identifying students' diverse educational needs, through benchmarking, testing, observations and documentation.
- Differentiating teaching, learning and assessment
- Collaborative approach to teaching and learning where teachers see themselves as teachers of all students
- Providing support internally, where possible, by tailoring programs and approaches to meet individual needs.
- Referring students, where necessary, to professional agencies to gain further expertise and support.
- Working in partnership with outside agencies and parents.
- Fostering active student participation and evaluation in learning experiences, strategies and outcomes

Inclusive Educational Needs Provision

As an IB school we believe that all students should be allowed to learn and to demonstrate their ability under conditions that are as equitable as possible. According to Norwegian law, the school leadership and the teachers have a duty to provide education that is based on the ability and needs of the individual, irrespective of the student's background. If it is not possible to differentiate normal teaching in such a way that the student can benefit from it to a satisfactory degree, then the student has the individual right to special needs education. This right is determined by the municipal Pedagogic-Psychological Services (see "PPT" below) and is free of charge for the student. Some students will require particular arrangements due to educational needs, such as:

- Learning difficulties
- Specific learning difficulties and language disorders
- Emotional and behavioural difficulties
- Physical, sensory and medical conditions
- Mental health problems

Raising Concerns about Individual Students

Concerns or questions about individual students can be addressed at any time with the appropriate Contact Teacher, Student Support Coordinator, Head of Programme or Head of School. Conversations about students may include the following information:

- Observations and assessments made to date
- Approaches for gaining more evidence and observations internally of the student's specific needs
- Suggestions of ways to support the current situation
- Discuss need for involving additional staff or collecting further information
- Decision made on whether to arrange consultation with external agencies

The Contact Teacher, Student Support Coordinator and appropriate Head of Programme will arrange to meet with the parents and discuss the concerns in cases where the situation requires. All staff concerned will implement suggestions made at the meeting and continue to make written records of observations and assessments to build a clear picture of the nature of the student's needs and their response to the different strategies used. All staff concerned will then meet again in person to discuss progress made and to decide on the next step.

Communication with Parents/Guardians

The school communicates throughout the year on each individual student's progress, strengths and challenges through parent/teacher and three-way conferences, as well as through official semester reports. Parents are free to contact the school at any time regarding their child(ren)'s educational needs and progress, preferably scheduling a meeting with the contact teacher and/or other appropriate teacher(s).

The school will contact parents in cases where more information is needed in order to properly meet the student's needs. This could be information from parents, or from external parties such as family doctor, previous schools, or agencies that the school works alongside. (See "Agencies that we work alongside") No information from outside the school is collected without parental permission.

Agencies that we work alongside

- PPT – Pedagogical - Psychological Service
- BUP –Psychiatric Agency for Children and Young People
- Helsesøster – School nurse
- Physical therapist
- Speech therapist
- Barnevernet – Child Welfare Services
- BTI – Better Multi-Agency Collaboration Team
- Other relevant agencies, e.g. ADHD – foreningen

Collaboration with external agencies

The school collaborates actively with municipal services in order to utilize all possible expertise, as well as ensure that students receive additional support they may be entitled to by law.

PPT

PPT (Pedagogical-Psychological Service) is the external agency that the school works most closely with. PPT is able to offer advice for both the school and parents in addressing and accommodating for a variety of educational needs. They also make formal decisions on students' individual rights to special education.

If the school believes PPT can be of assistance in meeting the needs of a particular student, the following actions may be taken:

- The school may contact PPT to discuss strategies related to specific cases anonymously. This does not require parental permission, as no identifying information is shared.
- The school may schedule a resource group meeting that includes parents, contact teacher, Student Support Coordinator and any other staff that would be relevant in discussing the support the student receives or may receive. Parents will be consulted prior to such a meeting.

A resource group meeting is not a referral to PPT, but rather a chance for the school and parents to discuss a student's strengths and challenges, as well as ask for perspectives from PPT. If the PPT decide there is not the need for further investigation, they will provide guidance and can be called in for further meetings. If there is a need for further investigation by the PPT, the school and parents will complete a referral form. PPT will then contact the parents directly concerning the testing and further investigation of needs. Once PPT has concluded their investigation, a written report is sent to the school and the parents. The report may recommend support hours, or not, depending on their findings. After receiving the report, the Student Support Coordinator will arrange a meeting with all internal parties involved (Heads of Programme and/or Student Support Coordinator, class/contact teacher, relevant teachers) and the PPT representative(s), to discuss the report.

The PPT's recommendations are then sent to Oppveksttjenesten, in Kongsberg Kommune, who will award a number of hours of support, but not necessarily the whole amount recommended by the PPT.

The school uses the recommendations from PPT, in conjunction with observations from teachers and feedback from parents, in developing Individualized Education Plans for students with an individual right to special education. (See "Individual Right to Special Education and Individualized Education Plans" below.)

School Nurse (helsesøster) and Psychosocial Health Services

In situations where psychosocial concerns may be affecting a student's ability to participate fully in the programme, the school may recommend contact with the school nurse (helsesøster) or the psychosocial health team.

Parents may contact the school nurse on their own initiative at any time. The school nurse has a duty of confidentiality and only discusses cases with the school when the parents have given their consent (unless the case is of such a nature that life or health is endangered by not sharing information with the school). Information for the school nurse can be found on the school's website or by asking the contact teacher.

The psychosocial health team is also a part of the municipal health service provided by Kongsberg kommune which includes nurses with a background in mental health and cognitive behaviour therapy. Generally, a student will have been in contact with the Student Support Coordinator, school nurse, or both before the psychosocial health team is involved. Referral to the psychosocial health team is always done in collaboration with parents.

Physical Therapist

The school may consult or collaborate with the municipal physical therapy services in cases regarding motor challenges, disabilities, chronic illness or other complex challenges. Physical therapists may be involved in a holistic evaluation of a student's learning situation. Children requiring regular training or treatment may be referred to private physical therapists. This service is generally free of charge.

Speech Therapist

In situations where there is a concern about a student's speech development, the municipal speech therapist may be consulted. The speech therapist is a part of the early intervention/intensive education support provided by the municipality. Parents give consent for information to be shared with the speech therapist, who investigate the student's needs. Often the speech therapist will recommend specific exercises or training to be followed up by the school and/or at home. In cases requiring lessons or training with a qualified speech therapist, the speech therapist will write a report with recommendations that will be taken into consideration by PPT. The PPT may recommend speech therapy as part of an individual right to special education.

BUP - Psychiatric Agency for Children and Young People

The school itself does not refer students directly to BUP, nor is there often direct collaboration between BUP and the school, however the school, school nurse or PPT may suggest that parents contact BUP for further investigation or treatment of specific challenges a student is facing relating to mental health. It is the family doctor, child welfare services, or a psychologist who can formally refer a child to BUP.

Once referred to BUP, a child's situation will be evaluated and may or may not receive a formal diagnosis. Per parents request and consent, a representative from BUP may be involved in meetings with the school and parents in regards to meeting the needs of the student.

Barnevernet - Child Welfare Services

The Child Welfare Service has a responsibility to ensure that children receive appropriate care to support their health and development. The school works collaboratively with the Child Welfare Service in evaluating student needs in a holistic perspective, as well as where support for the parents or family are necessary. School employees are mandatory reporters

to the Child Welfare Service in cases where neglect or abuse are suspected. The Child Welfare Service is often consulted in cases regarding truancy or school avoidance.

BTI – Better Multi-Agency Collaboration Team

KIS participates in the municipal program “Bedre tverrfaglig innsats” or Better Multi-Agency Collaboration, which is intended to provide holistic, integrated services to children and families using a systematic approach. The school is part of a multi-agency team including representatives from PPT, Child Welfare Services, and the school nurse, who meet several times a semester to discuss and coordinate strategies to support students. This may be concerns specific to particular students or more general challenges. Individual student cases may be discussed with parents, or anonymously. More information about the program can be found in a number of languages on the school’s website.

Individual Right to Special Education and Individual Education Plans

If a decision is made that a student has the individual legal right to special education, they will also have an Individual Education Plan (IEP). The IEP is formed based on information from PPT, as well as feedback the contact teacher, other subject or support teachers working with the student, in addition to parents.

An IEP will include information about challenges and strengths, specific goals, content, teaching methods, and other accommodations. This is shared with the parents, and student if appropriate, and this must then be approved and signed by the parents. A copy of this IEP must be sent to the PPT and the Oppveksttjenesten. It is important that the IEP is written as soon as possible and is then reviewed by the end of each school year, in an årsrapport (yearly report). The yearly report must be sent to the PPT, the parents and the Oppveksttjenesten. This report secures the funding for the student concerned and therefore the deadlines for sending this in to the Oppveksttjenesten are very important.

There should be collaboration between all staff involved both in developing and implementing the IEP. Time should be allotted for this purpose, including meetings to discuss student progress.

Confidentiality

All sensitive information regarding students should be kept strictly confidential and must be restricted to those that need to be involved. All staff are responsible for making sure that confidential information is stored and communicated in a responsible manner. All documentation regarding students with special educational needs is stored in a locked cabinet in the Student Support Center or in a secure area of the local server, and not stored in the main student files in the School Office. This file is managed by the Student Support Coordinator.

All sensitive information communicated to external parties should be communicated by printed document and not by email. This is in order to restrict the spread of confidential information.

Passing on Information when a Student Leaves

When a student leaves the school, the parents will be approached for written permission to forward information regarding special educational needs to the student's new school. The parents have the right to choose which information should be sent. If permission is given, the Student Support Coordinator will put the documents in a sealed envelope and hand it over to the Office to send on to the new school. If permission is not given, the Student Support Coordinator will continue to store these documents until they are requested.

Bibliography

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The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training (2018) "PPT og spesialundervisning - rettigheter"

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