



III.GIMNAZIJA SPLIT

# SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS POLICY

revised: March 2022



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## Philosophy

The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. IB programmes aim to increase access to the curriculum and engagement in learning for all students. III.gimnazija, a school of equal opportunities, provides access to the full range of the curriculum for all students, including those with SEN, and encourages active participation in all areas of school life. We believe that all children have the right to achieve their full potential, regardless of their gender, race, culture, language, physical ability, special educational needs or socioeconomic background. We strive to create the opportunities that will enable our students to develop and to question their own personal values by encouraging open and positive communication. All students, irrespective of their ability, are encouraged to develop an awareness of and respect for individual differences. Our school strives to be an inclusive learning community as we identify and remove barriers to learning and participation. We define inclusion as “an ongoing process that aims to increase access and engagement for all students by identifying and removing barriers”. (from Learning diversity and inclusion in IB Programmes, 2016).

### TREMA Mission statement

Our mission is to contribute to the development of society by fostering curious, open-minded, responsible and capable young people who will develop understanding and tolerance for diversity and positively impact the lives of others. We want to encourage all students to reach their full intellectual and human potential by providing them with demanding assessment programs and methods and educating them using modern methods in a comfortable working environment with good communication between students and teachers.

Our goal is to create future citizens of the world who will be able to accept the challenges, act effectively in global reality, be active lifelong learners and competitive members of international society.

## Definition of Special Educational Needs (SEN)

A student with Special Education Needs refers to any student who shows a need for extra support or for a challenge beyond the general curriculum. This includes students with learning disabilities as well as the gifted and talented. Those students have the intellectual capacity to meet all curriculum and assessment requirements, but also have individual learning challenges that require special arrangements to demonstrate their level of achievement.

Gifted and talented students are those who demonstrate extended levels of proficiency in their learning and require further challenging, extension and inquiring tasks.

Students with learning disabilities have some kind of limitation on their full, effective and equal participation in the educational process with other students. Learning disabilities can be the result of physical, mental, intellectual, sensory and functional impairment, or combinations of several types of impairments and disorders listed above.

These individual needs may be diagnosed as having (but are not limited to):

- Specific learning issues, language and communication disorders
- Social, emotional and behavioural issues
- Physical and sensory conditions
- Medical conditions
- Mental health issues

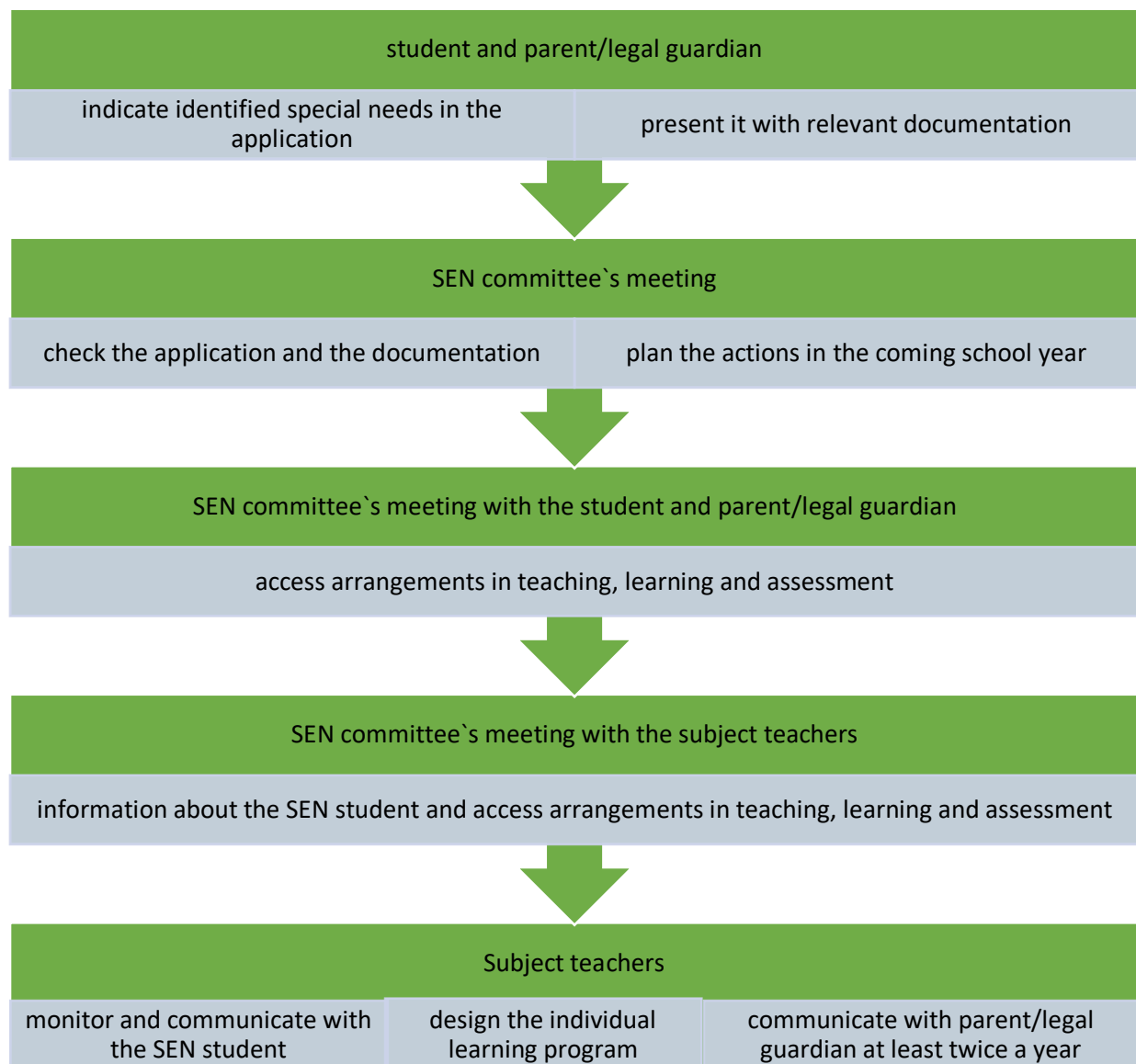
## Admissions and procedures

**SEN committee** is a school body responsible for ensuring that the student's learning support requirements are assessed properly, that teachers are informed about the appropriate approach to students with specific LSR (learning support requirements) and that there is continuous monitoring of the student's response to various teaching differentiation techniques.

SEN committee members are the IB coordinator, school psychologist/counselor and a core subject teacher. Staff meetings with the SEN committee are held at least twice a year and more when it is necessary. Students enrolling in the III.gimnazija Split IB Diploma programme must indicate any identified special needs in their application and present it with the relevant documentation.

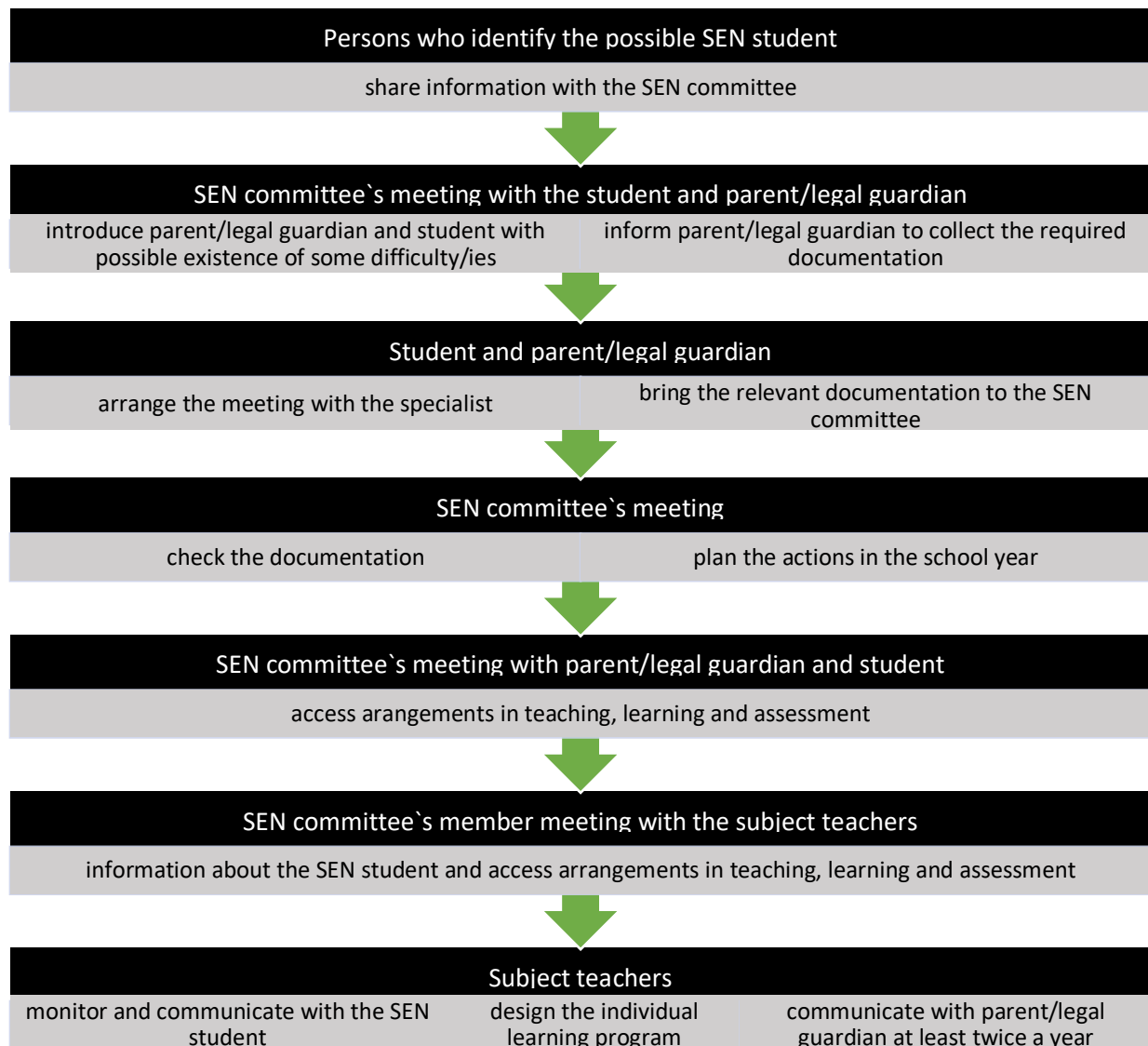
## Procedure when the school knows about the SEN before the school year starts:

If the school is informed about special needs in the candidate's application before the school year starts, the SEN committee will meet before or at the beginning of the school year to plan the actions to be taken in the coming school year. After that, SEN committee will meet with the applicants and their parent/legal guardian to talk about the subjects' choice, access arrangements in teaching, learning and assessments.



## Procedure when the possible SEN are identified during the school year:

If the student's special needs are detected when the school year starts, it is recommended to share any knowledge about the possible special needs with the SEN committee until the end of the first part of the DP1 (first DP year). The SEN committee will meet with the student and his/her parent/legal guardian as soon as possible to introduce them with possible existence of some difficulty/ies and to inform them about the upcoming procedure of collecting the required documentation. The school may seek additional documentation or request specific testing to ensure that the school is able to support the learning needs of the student.



Before accepting a student with special educational needs as a candidate for the Diploma Programme, the SEN committee must be satisfied that the candidate has the intellectual capacity to meet all requirements.

Careful consideration must be given to a candidate's choice of subjects, as some subjects may pose

particular difficulties for a candidate with special needs.

Daily, there is close cooperation between the principal, IB Coordinator, the school psychologist/counsellor and the subject teachers. It is of great importance that all teachers and staff are aware of the needs of SEN students. Also, it is important that parents share with us any knowledge they have concerning students' special needs and cooperate with us regarding professional documentation. The subject teachers work with the student and parents concerning how the student's needs will be met in each classroom environment to provide the best monitoring and communication of the student's progress and to make suitable arrangements for undertaking assessments. We at TREMA continue to strive to differentiate teaching and assessments so that students with different learning profiles have the best chance to reach their full potential. Parents' meetings with subject teachers or other school staff are held at least twice a year and/or when it is necessary.

Documentation is recorded and kept in the student's confidential file. The school psychologist/counsellor also keeps other confidential records that are shared with the principal only. It is important to note that, while all parties will strive to accommodate the special educational needs of the candidate, it is also necessary to keep in mind what we can't do and determine whether the school can effectively meet the student's needs to the best possible standard available.

## Support for inclusion of students with Special Educational Needs

The identification of SEN students is built into the process of monitoring the progress and development of all students. Our intervention is designed to help students become independent learners.

Strategies used in III.gimnazija for addressing the needs of SEN students:

- Identifying and assessing of individual needs
- Designing individual learning programs
- Advising and working with colleagues and external support services
- Communicating with students and parents
- Keeping in mind the welfare and self-esteem of students

Students with SEN are entitled to access arrangements. The purpose of access arrangements is to remove or reduce barriers that students may face in teaching, learning and assessment. All requests for inclusive access arrangements submitted by a coordinator must have the support of the principal. Before submitting appropriate documentation to the IB, the school must obtain consent from the candidate if he or she is at the age of consent in his or her country, or from the candidate's parent(s) or legal guardian(s). If a student has difficulties meeting any non-assessment requirements of a programme, the IB must be contacted to plan for inclusive access arrangements. Special access arrangements can be applied for if the student has the necessary documentation from a person from the medical profession. We, therefore, welcome all information and documentation concerning students with special needs, which will enable us to apply for the correct access arrangements and supply the appropriate learning support.

If needed, the school will make reasonable adjustments for disabled students to help alleviate any substantial disadvantage they experience because of their disability and will not discriminate against them. Students and their parents will be involved as fully as possible in the decisions that affect them. Inclusive assessment arrangements are changed or additional conditions during the assessment process for a candidate with assessment access requirements. These enable the candidate to demonstrate his or her level of attainment more fairly and are not intended to compensate for any lack of ability.

Inclusive assessment arrangements are:

1. Access to modified papers
2. Access to additional time
3. Access to writing
4. Access to reading



5. Access to speech and communication
6. Access to calculators and practical assistance
7. Access to extensions and exemptions

## **Recording and reporting on the attainment of students with SEN**

Teachers are expected to record their work with students with SEN. Educational evidence may include one or more of the following:

- Teacher(s) observations outlining any difficulties which may be apparent in class plus a summary about the arrangements provided to the candidate in order to access learning and assessment and the effects of such arrangements
- Sample of work done under timed conditions without the learning support/the assessment arrangements and with LS/AA
- Evidence of learning support and access arrangements in previous school or grades and their continuation in the DP
- Individualized educational plan

This documentation may be used to establish the evidence of the need for assessment access requirement (AAR) since the IBO requests that the decisions on the type of inclusive assessment arrangements to be provided for a candidate must be strictly based on current individual requirements.

## **Assessment**

“The IB believes that all candidates should be allowed to take their examinations under conditions that are as fair as possible. Where normal examination conditions and assessment procedures would put candidates at a disadvantage and prevent them from being able to demonstrate their skills and knowledge adequately, reasonable forms of accommodation may be authorized” (from *Handbook of Procedures for the Diploma Programme*, 2015).

**IB diploma candidates with assessment access requirements:** A candidate with assessment access requirements is one who requires access arrangements in assessment conditions to demonstrate his or her level of attainment.

**Assessment arrangements:** Students who appear to have special needs and abilities will have all their modifications addressed not only in the classroom but also will meet with the IB coordinator to ensure that their accommodations can also be provided on any IB internal or external assessments. Requests for inclusive access arrangements must be submitted six months prior to an examination session. Accordingly, SEN students or their parents/legal guardians have to submit the requests for inclusive access arrangements till the end of the first year of IB Diploma Programme or by 10<sup>th</sup> October of the second year at the latest. All requests for inclusive access arrangements must be submitted on IBIS and must specify exactly which arrangements are being requested.

Assessment will be differentiated according to the teacher's decision and discussed with the SEN committee if needed. All teachers will utilize a variety of formative assessments to determine the individual student's needs and abilities and to tailor subsequent instruction. These enable the candidate to demonstrate his or her level of attainment more fairly and are not intended to compensate for any lack of ability.

## Professional development

All teachers in IB Department of III.gimnazija receive IB training to promote understanding of the IB philosophy, the school's IB policies, and components of the IB programs.

The school makes plans for staff development and will include in that planning time for horizontal and vertical collaboration on curriculum, assessment, student learning and plans for differentiation.

School provides training for staff and faculty to successfully implement and support the SEN and differentiated instruction; professional development funds are available for faculty, staff, and administration to keep them updated on best practices and current research on all areas of special needs.

## Adverse circumstances

The principal, IB coordinator and counsellor at III.gimnazija Split (TREMA) must be contacted if any adverse situation should arise during the course of the education. That way the IB coordinator will be able to contact the IB for guidance.

Adverse or unforeseen circumstances are defined as those beyond the control of the candidate that might be detrimental to their performance.

These may include medical conditions/illness (with onset or occurrence up to three months before the IB examinations offered in May/November), accident or injury, severe stress/anxiety, exceptionally difficult family circumstances, bereavement (within the six-month period preceding the start of the examinations), events that may threaten the health or safety of a candidate (from Diploma Programme Assessment Procedures 2020, IBO 2019).

Adverse circumstances may also include events that affect the whole school community, such as civil unrest or a natural disaster (from Diploma Programme Assessment Procedures 2020, IBO 2019).

The school will consider possible adverse circumstances and will act according to the IB documentation.

## Confidentiality

TREMA regards confidentiality as an essential component of working together in an effective and supportive school community. Students in need are best supported when the adults working directly with the students have the most comprehensive information possible about their needs. Sharing information is necessary and parents are expected to share all information they have that will support teachers and administrators in meeting the needs of their children. All information received is regarded as confidential and is safeguarded according to GDPR. From the time of admissions or when a special need or learning difference is identified, there is every attempt to safeguard all communications. This includes exchanges between and among faculty, staff, parents, and the student. At all levels of the school, student files are kept in a locked area. Digital files are only shared within and among support staff and administration relevant to the student issue.

## Policy review

The SEN Policy will be reviewed regularly by the SEN committee and subject teachers as part of the curriculum review cycle and as part of the whole school improvement plan. This policy is available to stakeholders on the school website.

## Bibliography

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