

# Rudjer Boskovic School Special Educational Needs/Inclusion Policy

#### Middle Years Program

Date of last revision: June 2023

#### **School Mission Statement:**

Rudjer Boskovic School inspires learners to become honorable, principled, knowledgeable and caring individuals, capable and willing to make considerable contributions to their local and worldwide communities.

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# **PURPOSE AND PHILOSOPHY**

This document outlines the special educational needs/SEN and inclusion practices at Rudjer Boskovic School and makes them available to the school community. As such, this document is part of the Basic Contract on Terms and Conditions of Enrolment and Education.

# International Baccalaureate and national requirements

We paid particular attention to the following International Baccalaureate requirements as published in Program Standards and Practices (2020):

- Student support 2: The school identifies and provides appropriate learning support (0202-02);
- Student support 4: The school provides guidance and support that help students succeed in its IB programme(s) and plan for the next stage of their educational and/or career-related experiences (0202-04);
- Student support 5: The school builds relationships with the wider community that are
  a source of wisdom and expertise to strengthen the implementation of its IB
  programme(s) (0202-05);
- Culture 1: The school secures access to an IB education for the broadest possible range of students (0301-01);
  - Culture 1.3: The school provides opportunities to access the program(s) for the broadest possible range of students;
- Culture 2.1: Culture 2.1: The school implements and reviews an inclusion policy that meets IB guidelines (0301-02-0100).
  - Culture 2.2: The school identifies in its inclusion policy all of its legal requirements and outlines the school's structures and processes for compliance(0301-02-0200);
  - Culture 2.3: The school describes in its inclusion policy the rights and responsibilities of all members of the school community and clearly states the school's vision for implementing inclusive programs (0301-02-0200);
- Approaches to teaching 5: Teachers remove barriers to learning to enable every student to develop, pursue and achieve challenging personal learning goals (0403-05).



This document also adheres to the Serbian Law on Fundamentals of the Education System (LFES: 2017). This law lays the foundations for inclusive education and has been further elaborated in 2018 and 2020.

 Culture 2.2: The school identifies in its inclusion policy all of its legal requirements and outlines the school's structures and processes for compliance(0301-02-0200);

LFES includes but is not limited to:

- The prohibition of discrimination, segregation and all forms of separation that are not in the child's best interest;
- The establishment of a new enrolment policy: screening and psychological testing are conducted with enrolled children to school to identify those in need of special/additional support;
- Education through a personalized approach to teaching or individualized education plans;
- The establishment of assessment and evaluation policy: formative assessment, IEPbased assessment, school exit examination based on an adjusted procedure, and external evaluation in accordance with quality standards, based on established indicators.

# Definition and principles of inclusion

"Inclusion is an ongoing process that aims to increase access and engagement in learning for all students by identifying and removing barriers. This can only be achieved successfully in a culture of collaboration, mutual respect, support, and problem solving. Inclusion is the learner profile in action, an outcome of dynamic learning communities." (Learning Diversity in the International Baccalaureate Programs, 2010)

At Rudjer Boskovic School, we understand inclusion as a continuous communal effort involving all school participants, aimed at reducing learning barriers. Inclusion practices rely on every student's strengths. We strive to offer every student an equal opportunity to receive a quality education, enabling them to reach their full potential. Our goal is to nurture honorable, principled, knowledgeable, and compassionate individuals who are both capable and eager to make significant contributions to their local and global



communities. Parents and students are encouraged to be open, inform the school of any learning difficulties and submit complete medical records when necessary. Collaborative work between teachers, the school psychologist, students, and parents allows for careful assessment, planning, and monitoring of student progress.

Rudjer Boskovic School and the IBO support the following principles of an inclusive education:

- education for all is considered a human right;
- education is enhanced by the creation of affirmative, responsive environments that promote a sense of belonging, safety, self-worth and whole growth for every student;
- learning is considered from a strength-based perspective;
- learning diversity is valued as a rich resource for building inclusive communities;
- all learners belong and experience equal opportunities to participate and engage in quality learning;
- full potential is unlocked through connecting with, and building on, previous knowledge;
- assessment provides all learners with opportunities to demonstrate their learning, which is rewarded and celebrated;
- all students in the school community have a voice and are listened to so that their input and insights are taken into account;
- all students in the school community develop the IB learner profile attributes and develop into inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect;
- diversity is understood to include all members of a community;
- all students experience success as a key component of learning

# LEARNING SUPPORT APPROACHES AND PROCEDURES IN RUDJER BOSKOVIC SCHOOL

Student support 2: The school identifies and provides appropriate learning support (0202-02).

Rudjer Boskovic School recognizes that learning diversity may take different forms. Upon admission or at the beginning of each school year, a committee that consists of class teachers, homeroom teachers, school psychologist, the MYP and DP Coordinators and the



Heads of School discuss the learning needs of the new student cohort. Having in focus the importance of early identification and early intervention, the school takes an active role in promoting the necessity of utilizing different tools and techniques to meet each student's learning needs. These initial observations, which include the description of the nature of the problem (learning difficulties, relationships with peers, behavior) are supplemented with the opinions of other relevant participants in the educational process. If it is needed, and with the parents' consent, educated psychologists can administer standardized psychological measuring instruments. The support/student inclusion team records the completed pedagogical profile of the student and decides on further strategies. Parents' consent is necessary for the implementation of suggested measures and strategies.

In order to meet each learning student's needs, we also provide study time classes at Rudjer Boskovic School, so the students can meet with different subject teachers and receive additional, personalized support when necessary. Core subject teachers have scheduled times in the library in order to provide students with learning support.

#### Students with learning support requirements

Candidates who require inclusive assessment arrangements may have learning support requirements due to one or more of the following: learning difficulties and disabilities, medical or mental health issues, social, emotional, and behavioral difficulties as well as gifted students.

## Phases and levels of learning support

Approaches to teaching 5: Teachers remove barriers to learning to enable every student to develop, pursue and achieve challenging personal learning goals (0403-05).

At Rudjer Boskovic School, we base learning support on differentiation, individualization, and the formal creation of individualized educational plans.

We differentiate the work; the level of support that the student receives varies – from additional assistance in class, through the usage of differentiated materials and tasks, to individualized learning outcomes in accordance with the student's needs. Moreover, the level of support provided for a student changes with the progress students make.

The procedure of providing support for children with specific educational needs implies a gradual approach. This approach is first implemented in the individualization of



teaching and extracurricular activities. If, despite these measures, the student shows no progress, an individualized educational plan is developed.

For some students, we provide support by scheduling time to work individually with the subject teacher or in small groups. We organize individual work in a classroom or in a separate room. This can refer to the current curriculum or content that is part of the student's individual educational plan. Certain students have a special timetable, which allows them to have more time for individual work with a particular subject teacher, whereas some of the students attend classes together with the rest of the class. This measure is rarely used and only when there are justified reasons. For example, when a student needs support that they cannot get within a group, or when a student works according to an individualized plan and in agreement with the parents.

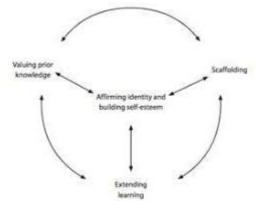
#### Differentiation

All teachers in Rudjer Boskovic School are fully informed and trained to incorporate effective practices of meeting learning diversity in planning and teaching.

Differentiation is "an approach to teaching that advocates active planning for student differences in classrooms" (Tomlinson & Allan 2000). We see differentiation as the process of identifying the most effective strategies for achieving personal learning goals for each learner. When considering pedagogical approaches to meeting individual

learning needs, teachers also need to consider each student's language profile.

The IB identifies four important principles to promote equal access to the curriculum for all learners and to support the development of the whole person through differentiated teaching and learning, as illustrated in the figure below.



	Promote environments that welcome and embrace learners.
Affirm	Foster high but realistic expectations.
identity-	Value and use the diversity of cultural perspectives.
build self-	Liaise and collaborate with parents.
esteem	Understand student learning preferences and interests.
	Identify and teach through student strengths.



	Identify prior knowledge and activate prior learning, including that
Value prior	learned in other languages.
knowledge	Map language and learning profiles.
	Build new knowledge onto existing knowledge.
Scaffold learning	Support new learning with graphic organizers (writing frames, Mind Maps <sup>®</sup> ), which are pictorial forms of promoting, organizing and constructing knowledge; visual aids, drama, demonstrations, etc. Encourage collaborative learning groups/peer support. Support and use best language.
Extend learning	Combine high expectations with opportunities for learner-centered, experiential practice and interaction with cognitively rich materials, experiences and environments. Use technology and assistive technologies to enrich learning and level the playing field for all learners.

# Individualization / Individualized Student Support Plan

If, by any chance, a teacher or a psychologist notices that the student is not achieving the expected educational outcomes, or the results are significantly below the general and specific standards, they collect the necessary data and documentation in order to provide adequate learning support.

We inform the student's parents about the perceived difficulties. Data is collected from various sources – from the student's parents/guardians, specialists outside the educational institution who are very familiar with the child and the problem, and from the students themselves. Different techniques, appropriate to the situation, are used: systematic observation of the student's activities in different situations, testing, interviewing, and questionnaires. If needed, medical findings can make an integral part of the documentation. If necessary, the parents will be asked for consent to have the School Psychologist conduct an evaluation of the cognitive functioning of the child. In case the school does not have adequate resources, an evaluation by the experts outside the school is proposed so that a more complete and accurate diagnosis can be obtained.

Wherever appropriate, the child will be involved in the assessment of their educational needs. Based on the collected data, a school psychologist, in cooperation with teachers,



prepares a pedagogical profile of the student, which contains a description of the educational situation and is the basis for planning an individualized approach to working with the student.

The first step in providing support to a child who does not achieve the expected educational outcomes is to adapt teaching methods, teaching tools, materials, learning space, and work schedule, without creating a formal, written document – an individualized educational plan (IEP).

This means that we provide the first level of support through individualization of teaching and extracurricular activities. Teachers can help and support a student in the classroom, in a smaller group of students, or individually. If necessary, the student can be included in the counseling work of a school psychologist. We determine areas where there is a need for additional learning support from the pedagogical profile of the student and plan how to overcome potential physical and communication barriers (individualized mode of work).

We facilitate the elimination of potential physical and communication barriers through an individualized mode of work within the institution by:

- Adapting the space and conditions in which the classes are taking place (removing physical barriers, designing additional and special forms of activities, creating a special schedule of activities, etc.);
- Adapting teaching methods, teaching materials and tools, didactic materials, especially when introducing new content; adapting the ways of assigning tasks, tracking the speed and pace of progress, ways of acquiring the taught content, checking knowledge, organizing learning, setting rules of behavior and communication;

Teaching staff record the success of used strategies and the progress made. Measures are regularly reviewed, the process in which both parents and students participate.

An expert team for student support employs an individualized approach to help students fit into the group, develop confidence, and feel safe and secure in all school situations. If the support provided through the individualization of teaching and extracurricular activities does not lead to progress, that is, a positive shift in the achievements of the child (typically during the first quarter), the next step is to propose creating a formal,



structured, written document – an individual educational plan. This plan will outline how the educational process for the student will proceed.

# Individual Educational Plans (IEP)

Rudjer Boskovic School adopts the recommendations from the IBO about learning plans including but not limited to:

- Learning plans acknowledge student strengths and interests;
- Learning plan development is a collaborative process and documented in the inclusion policy;
- Learning plans are focused on individual strengths and challenges rather than medical and psychological labels;
- Learning plans are properly integrated with the technologies the student uses in and out of the classroom;
- Learning outcomes are considered relevant by students, parents and teachers;
- Teaching and learning strategies are linked to the IB approaches to teaching and learning skills and the IB learner profile;
- Learning and learning progress are evidence-based;
- Learning plan meetings are student-led;
- Learning plans respect confidentiality;
- Learning plan development takes into account the local context and legislation, where appropriate.

The proposal for establishing the right to IEP can be submitted by an expert team for inclusive education based on an assessment of the needs for IEPs by teachers, psychologists or parents of students.

The team for student support creates the IEP, with the consent of the parents/guardian. If the parent/guardian happens to refuse to give consent, we inform the appropriate social services with the goal of acting in the student's best interest.

The IEP is developed based on the educational needs of the student and has three different forms:

 IEP 1 – the adapted teaching and learning programme which includes precise planning for providing support, adapting learning spaces and conditions, adjusting teaching methods, work materials, textbooks, and activities, as well as scheduling, and support personnel during the educational;



- IEP 2 the modified teaching and learning programme which, apart from the contents from IEP 1, includes the precise plans for adaptation of the general outcomes of education, adapting special achievement standards for students in relation to the prescribed, and adapting the content for one, more or all of the subjects<sup>1</sup>;
- 4) IEP 3 Enriched and expanded teaching and learning programme for students with outstanding abilities.

After the decision on accepting the proposal for determining the right to an IEP is presented to the Head of School, the expert team for inclusive education suggests the team members which will provide additional support to the student. After receiving the written consent of the parent or guardian, the Head of School establishes the team to provide additional support to the student.

The team for providing additional support to the student at the school consists of: the homeroom teacher, the subject teacher, the expert associate, the parent, or the guardian of the child; in accordance with the needs of the child the team chooses a pedagogical assistant, or an expert outside the school, at the proposal of the parents or the guardian. In order to propose an IEP with a modified teaching and learning programme, that is, adapted to specific standards of achievement, an expert team for inclusive education also obtains the opinion of the Interagency Commission for Assessing the Needs for Additional Educational, Health and Social Support. The school's professional team for inclusive education then submits the IEP to the educational leadership team for approval.

## **Exit support structures**

Student support 4: The school provides guidance and support that help students succeed in its IB programme(s) and plan for the next stage of their educational and/or career-related experiences (0202-04);

Transition to other educational institutions or to the next level of education in Rudjer Boskovic School is considered an important task for the families, SEN manager, university councilors and homeroom teachers. If a student is transitioning between two programmes, SEN manager communicates the plan implemented so far to the new teacher. If a student is transitioning to another school, families are offered support in

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The adoption of an IEP 2 is preceded by the adoption, application and evaluation of the IEP 1, as well as the opinion of the Interagency Commission for assessing the needs for Additional Educational, Health and Social support.



communicating with the new school if needed. Finally, when transitioning to universities, SEN managers and university councilor submit relevant documentation needed for the student If it can support them in the application process.

#### **ROLE OF SEN MANAGER**

*Culture 2.3: The school describes in its inclusion policy the rights and responsibilities of all members of the school community and clearly states the school's vision for implementing inclusive programs (0301-02-0200);* 

The School Psychologist acts as the SEN Manager and works collaboratively with teachers, families, and students to ensure that barriers to learning are minimized. Counseling services are available to all students through a comprehensive model that includes whole-class counseling lessons, small group counseling, and individual counseling support.

The School Psychologist/SEN Manager is responsible for compiling reports and informing subject teachers and students about student progress. Regular meetings are scheduled to discuss students' progress and if necessary, meetings with parents are arranged. Evaluating the actions of the school taken in order to provide students with support are done in teams, consisting of the MYP and DP Coordinators, Homeroom Teachers, Heads of Schools and the SEN Manager.

Referrals for group and individual counseling come from homeroom teachers, subject teachers, parents, and students themselves. For needs that are beyond the school's ability to meet, families are referred to the appropriate experts.

## **Psychological measuring instruments**

The School Psychologist is trained in psychological assessment. The following instruments are actively used:

**Binet - Simon scale** (New Belgrade Revision of the Binet - Simon Scale, 1985). The main purpose of the New Belgrade revision of the BS scale is assessing general intellectual development of children aged 4-14 years. The NBS can certainly provide a psychologist with information important for the prognosis and developmental assessment of general intellectual abilities.

**Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children**. REVISK is the adapted Serbian version, designed to test the intelligence of children aged 5-15 years, formed as a standardization



of the American WISC-R (1974). This instrument is in the prediction of school success and as a differential diagnostic tool in the detection of potential developmental difficulties in children.

**KOG3 – Cybernetic model of cognitive functioning battery**. This battery measures general intellectual abilities, and has been standardized for the adolescent population (15 years of age and above). It comprises three subtests: perceptual ability, verbal ability and reasoning, as well as visuo-spatial ability and reasoning.

## Data confidentiality

The collected data is protected against abuse and must not be used for other purposes without parental consent. The documentation is kept in both written and electronic form and only authorized individuals have access to it. The school psychologist keeps the pedagogical profile of students, support measures and IEPs. If the documentation is demanded by experts outside the school, this is done by following specific procedures. If these individuals serve as an additional support for the student, the information about the applied procedures will be forwarded, with parental consent. If, by any chance, a student is switching schools, the counselling service may submit an individual support plan or IEP as well as data from psychological testing with standardized measuring instruments, at the written request from the new school.

#### **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

Based on the evaluation, the educational leadership team collegium decides on further application, amendments and supplementation to the IEP, or its termination. The decision to continue the implementation of the IEP is made if it is determined that the planned activities align with the needs of the student, or that the results can be expected after a certain period. The IEP is ammended in accordance with the progress and development of the student: if they achieve the planned results before the expected deadline or does not achieve the expected results, or in other cases when there is a change in the behavior of the student and his / her environment.

The implementation time of the IEP can be extended, with the consent of the parent or guardian. The decision to terminate the implementation of the IEP is made if it is determined that further student progress can be achieved by applying an individualized approach to teaching and learning, with previously obtaining the child's opinion, in



accordance with age and maturity and with the consent of the parents or the guardian of the student.

Evaluation of the IEP within the school is done through the self-evaluation of the professional team for inclusive education and the team for providing additional student support during the first year of enrollment, every three months, and in all subsequent years at the beginning of each semester or a school year.

# **Observing student progress**

Adequate progress is determined for every individual situation. In each stage of support, the outcomes are defined by the SMART model:

- Specific (simple, sensible, significant);
- Measurable (meaningful, motivating);
- Achievable (agreed, attainable);
- Relevant (reasonable, realistic and resourced, results-based);
- Time bound (time-based, time limited, time/cost limited, timely, time-sensitive).

We periodically revise the outcomes that form part of the individual support plan and IEP. Output notes are stored with details of further actions to be taken. Depending on the student profile, progress can be defined as:

- Reduction of the difference in achievement between the student and peers;
- Prevention of lag in achievement to become greater;
- Improvement the student's initial level of progress;
- Leading to appropriate achievement in exams/final exams;
- Leading to a successful continuation of education.

If necessary, continual assessment is conducted in the areas of cognitive abilities, language and numerical skills as well as phonological abilities.

## Assessment

Students are marked according to the Assessment Policy.

Students who receive additional support for achieving the planned outcomes are assessed as all the other students, according to the same criteria.

A student who acquires education during the IEP application is assessed according to IEP, and in accordance with the bylaws on student assessment in primary and secondary education.



Where usual assessment conditions will put students with specific educational needs at a disadvantage and prevent them from demonstrating the level of competence in the areas being assessed, certain assessment adjustments may be proposed. (A list of accommodations can be found in the IB document "Candidates with special assessment needs").

The special measures taken in the assessment should only be put in place to help students in the sense that they allow them to demonstrate their level of ability, but they should not put these students at an advantage over others. The grade awarded to a student in any subject should not be a misleading description of the student's level of achievement. Conditions can be modified and temporary outcomes recorded in the reports established.

## IB diploma candidates with assessment access requirements

Changes or additional conditions during the assessment process for a candidate with assessment access requirements enable the candidate to demonstrate their level of attainment more fairly and are not intended to compensate for any lack of ability.

Because the IBO developed specific and detailed guidelines on inclusive assessment arrangements, parents and students are advised to meet the MYP and/or DP coordinator in order to obtain the full information about the process.

## **RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE WIDER COMMUNITY**

Student support 5: The school builds relationships with the wider community that are a source of wisdom and expertise to strengthen the implementation of its IB programme(s) (0202-05);

#### **Parents**

Rudjer Boskovic School encourages the active participation of parents in the education of students. We evaluate and encourage parental involvement. All the decisions we make regarding measures to help students in the educational process are made in cooperation with parents, from whom we expect constructive suggestions. Parents are invited to contact the Homeroom teacher, School Psychologist/SEN Manager, MYP coordinator or /Head of School, in case of any doubt, depending on the particular situation.



## **Student involvement**

We respect the student's opinion – students are actively involved in the decision-making process. Students are encouraged to present their views of learning difficulties, suggestions on how to overcome them, what type of help they would like to receive and what goals they want to achieve, as well as to monitor their progress and evaluate the support measures taken and participate in the revision of support measures.

## Institutions and experts

When needed, we consult with external consultants. There is a school infirmary, but we also closely cooperate with the local health center. We often work with special education teachers and speech therapists, who often conduct treatment with students in the school according to the available schedule. Parents are informed and asked for consent when the involvement of external institutions is planned.

Where necessary, experts from other areas are also consulted. These include but are not limited to:

- Pediatric health care service and other specialties;
- Department for psychophysical disorders and speech pathology;
- Children's and adolescent mental health services;
- Social Services Center;
- Ministry of Education.

## HUMAN AND MATERIAL RESOURCES

## **Professional development**

The management of Rudjer Boskovic School is committed to providing ongoing professional development for all teachers in the areas of special educational needs and inclusion. This includes, but is not limited to: International Baccalaureate face-to-face, online and in-school PYP, MYP and DP conferences/training, Rudjer Boskovic School teacher-led workshops, and any other professional development opportunities deemed necessary for the effective organization and delivery of the PYP, MYP and DP curricula.

## **Budget support**

The management of Rudjer Boskovic School is committed to providing financial support for the hiring of adequate professional staff, the purchasing of instructional materials, the maintaining and storing of student records and any other supplies, platforms or tools



deemed necessary for the effective organization and delivery of the PYP, MYP and DP curricula.

## **POLICY REVIEW PROCESS**

We review Rudjer Boskovic School's Language, Assessment, Academic Honesty and Special Educational Needs Policies on a two-year cycle. The PYP, MYP and DP Coordinators, in cooperation with a selection of teachers and the Heads of the Elementary and High Schools form the Policy Review Committee who will:

- Review current IB standards and practices as well as policy guidelines;
- Review the current policy to assess alignment with IB standards, practices and guidelines;
- Revise the current policy as needed;
- Share revised policy with all faculty;
- Review questions/comments/suggestions from faculty;
- Prepare the final policy draft;
- Submit the final policy draft to management for approval;
- Share the approved policy with faculty, students, parents and greater school community.

In addition, with particular respect to SEN and Inclusion, the Policy Review Committee will consider the extent to which:

- Staff know the content of the document and the procedures;
- Staff have sufficient knowledge of working with children with special educational needs;
- Staff work together and make joint decisions;
- Identification of students with specific educational needs is fast and accurate;
- Support measures are effective;
- All students have access to the curriculum that is sufficiently differentiated according to their needs;
- All students participate in all areas of school life;
- Students are active participants in all decisions that apply to them;
- There is effective cooperation with the students' parents;
- Good cooperation with external associates;



• There are appropriate resources.

Policy Review Procedures and Dates: Policy adopted: February, 2018 First revision: November 2020 Second revision: April 2021 Third revision: June 2023

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