



BISHOP MACKENZIE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL
EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT POLICY

BMIS educates and inspires students to value integrity, cultural diversity, and the pursuit of well-being and excellence. Our school fosters an environment which empowers students to become creative, confident lifelong learners ready to take action in the local and global communities

EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT POLICY

Introduction

Bishop Mackenzie International School (BMIS) believes that all students are entitled to a broad and balanced curriculum, which is differentiated to meet individual needs and which enables them to reach their full potential.

Students may need educational support if:

- They have a greater difficulty in learning than the majority of students of the same age, or
- They have a disability that prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for students of the same age.

All teachers are considered to be teachers of children with special educational needs and the teaching of these students is a whole school responsibility requiring a whole school response.

Educational support can be defined as any educational provision additional to, or otherwise different from, that generally available to other students of the same age at this school. Support is offered to students whose needs and requirements fall within the following broad areas:

- English as an Additional Language (EAL)
- Cognitive and learning, specific learning difficulty
- Behavioural, emotional and social development
- Mild speech and language difficulties
- Mild sensory and/or physical, hearing or visual impairment
- Response to gaps in learning as a result of school transfers

Inclusion

BMIS promotes an inclusive approach to education based on a philosophy which views diversity of strength, ability and need as natural and desirable. The programmes of the IB are designed to be inclusive programmes, and as such, are ideally suited to provide differentiated learning opportunities for BMIS students. However, there are physical limitations to the resources and facilities available at the school which will impact on this diversity (see Admissions Policy).

The Educational Support and English as an Additional Language staff will support the inclusion of all students admitted to BMIS with specific educational needs.

Objectives

BMIS Educational Support Policy begins with leadership from the Board of Governors, the Director, Heads of Primary and Secondary Schools, who actively support Educational Support and English as an Additional Language staff in achieving the following objectives:

- To enable all students to access a broad, balanced, stimulating, challenging and differentiated curriculum, focusing on the needs, strengths, abilities, talents and individual learning styles of all students.
- To ensure early identification, assessment and provision for any student who may have special educational needs, English as an additional language or who is in need of any kind of learning support.
- To encourage and support students to participate in all decision-making processes, target-setting and review of their individual educational plans (IEP) where appropriate.
- To view parents as partners, and involving them fully in supporting their child's education, developing and implementing a joint learning approach at home and at school.
- To ensure that parents, students and teachers have a common understanding of the student's educational targets.
- To monitor, evaluate and record students' progress at regular intervals, discussing results with the student, their parents and their teachers.
- To provide training, advice, appropriate strategies and information to staff on how we, as a school, may meet the needs of students with learning difficulties or English as an additional language.
- To engage teachers in sharing best teaching practices for differentiation.

Identification Procedures

The process of identification of ES and EAL students includes the following:

- Information from previous schools and parents.
- Screening/assessment on referral from parents, teachers, or self-referral.

- English Language Proficiency Tests.
- Evidence from teacher observation.
- Speech and Language Therapist, Educational Psychologist's Reports, Diagnostic Assessments and Medical Assessments. (The cost of any external assessment will be paid by the parents).
- ISA and other externally validated assessment results.

Provision and Arrangements

Provision and arrangements for EAL students and students with special educational needs is a matter for the school as a whole. An Individual Education Plan (IEP) is created for individual students by the EAL teacher(s), the ES teacher(s) or the Counsellor (as appropriate). IEPs are created and reviewed in collaboration with the student, the parent, class teacher or form teacher and subject specialist teachers. Reviews of IEPs will take place at regular intervals as agreed on the previous IEP.

IEPs are confidential documents that are designed solely to support the individual learning needs of a student. Access to an IEP is restricted to BMIS educational and administrative personnel in their support of the needs of the student, and to the student and the parents.

Procedures have been adopted (as outlined below) to provide appropriate support in different sections of the school.

IB Primary Years Programme

In the PYP, the classroom teacher and specialist teachers, in close collaboration with parents and the Educational Support Department identify and understand the needs of individual students within their class, creating a learning environment that enables each individual student to learn and progress to his or her full potential academically, emotionally and socially. (Refer to *Primary Educational Support Services Procedures*).

At the end of PYP, clear recommendations will be given as to the type and nature of support that each individual student will require in the MYP. Collaboratively an appropriate IEP will be set up to continue effective support at the start of the new academic year in the MYP.

IB Middle Years Programme

The central role of the Areas of Interaction in the MYP, particularly Approaches to Learning (ATL), helps teachers and students respond in a flexible way to varied learning needs and skills, including EAL students and students with special educational needs and learning difficulties. The MYP curriculum can be used as it is written, without any alteration or modification.

EAL and EAP (English for Academic Purposes) programmes are delivered in the context of MYP Units in an effort to reinforce skills required in the MYP mainstream classes and enrich academic vocabulary. (Read further *English as an Additional Language Secondary Handbook*)

Specific arrangements that may be put in place to support EAL students and students with learning difficulties are guided by the support policies and recommendations of the IB.

IB Diploma Programme

The DP has well established support system outlined in the publication "Candidates with Special Assessment Needs" (IBO © 2011). The identification of any student with a learning issue must be completed prior to starting the programme. A medical or psychological evaluation must not be more than two years old. Evaluations are required as evidence to support an application for special arrangements for the external examinations administered by the IBO. (These arrangements may also be used for internal assessments or examinations.)

Counselling

While addressing the academic, social and emotional needs of students, the Secondary School Counsellor will also act as a bridge between teachers and parents, working to create an environment where every student will have the tools they need to be successful, working with students on a range of issues, including leadership habits; stress management; anxiety reduction; transitions; self-esteem; and management of peer pressure.

Similar age-appropriate counselling may be provided in the Primary School as well as mechanisms of peer mediation which form an integral part of the Education Support and EAL provision.

The Secondary School Counsellor meets with MYP and Diploma students regularly to coach them on issues regarding academic, personal, social and emotional issues and support them in their future career. College counselling is a key function of this role for older students.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be continually monitored and reviewed in line with BMIS Board policy review requirements, and as and when IB policies and practices are modified.

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