

# Special Educational Needs policy

Platon School



## THE IB LEARNER PROFILE

*Pages from the IB learner profile booklet*

The aim of all IB programmes is to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world.

IB learners strive to be:

<b>Inquirers</b>	They develop their natural curiosity. They acquire the skills necessary to conduct inquiry and research and show independence in learning. They actively enjoy learning and this love of learning will be sustained throughout their lives.
<b>Knowledgeable</b>	They explore concepts, ideas and issues that have local and global significance. In so doing, they acquire in-depth knowledge and develop understanding across a broad and balanced range of disciplines.
<b>Thinkers</b>	They exercise initiative in applying thinking skills critically and creatively to recognize and approach complex problems, and make reasoned, ethical decisions.
<b>Communicators</b>	They understand and express ideas and information confidently and creatively in more than one language and in a variety of modes of communication. They work effectively and willingly in collaboration with others.
<b>Principled</b>	They act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness, justice and respect for the dignity of the individual, groups and communities. They take responsibility for their own actions and the consequences that accompany them.
<b>Open-minded</b>	They understand and appreciate their own cultures and personal histories, and are open to the perspectives, values and traditions of other individuals and communities. They are accustomed to seeking and evaluating a range of points of view, and are willing to grow from the experience.
<b>Caring</b>	They show empathy, compassion and respect towards the needs and feelings of others. They have a personal commitment to service, and act to make a positive difference to the lives of others and to the environment.
<b>Risk-takers</b>	They approach unfamiliar situations and uncertainty with courage and forethought, and have the independence of spirit to explore new roles, ideas and strategies. They are brave and articulate in defending their beliefs.

<b>Balanced</b>	They understand the importance of intellectual, physical and emotional balance to achieve personal well-being for themselves and others.
<b>Reflective</b>	They give thoughtful consideration to their own learning and experience. They are able to assess and understand their strengths and limitations in order to support their learning and personal development.

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## **1. Introduction**

The aim of this document is to describe the philosophy and structure of Platon World School's Student Support Team. In order for all students to be able to develop their social, emotional and cognitive potential, a Special Education Needs Policy is applied.

This document is designed to communicate to parents, students, teachers and administrators the processes, actions and the responsibilities of all involved applying the Special Education Needs Policy, so as to establish an effective educational environment for the students.

## **2. Our Philosophy**

Platon World School's philosophy and primary care have always been based on two factors; students' smooth integration and adjustment into the school environment and school's productive interaction with the local community.

Our aim is for students to have all necessary means to develop their way of thinking and mechanisms which will prove helpful to them during their adult life. Our school has created a learning environment suitable and adjustable to our students learning styles and psycho-social needs, helping them to develop their IB student profile.

In other words, we are acting based on our students' effective social integration within the school community as well as on their academic achievement.

We firmly believe that it is only through the identification, acceptance and respect of students' needs and personality characteristics that learning processes are effective.

Our school has always been giving priority to the students' feeling of accomplishment in all aspects of their student life. Furthermore, our belief is that everybody involved in the educational process, meaning students, teachers, administrators and parents, have to cooperate closely.

The processes followed by our school as far as students' inclusion is concerned, when dealing with special learning or other needs, are in accordance with the National Curriculum for Special Education 2008 provided by the Ministry of Education regarding evaluation and inclusion.

Our SEN policy follows the guidelines provided by the IBO handbook on students with Special Educational Needs (see documents "Meeting student Learning Diversity in the Classroom", 2013, "Program standards and practices", 2014, "Candidates with Assessment

Access Requirements DIPLOMA”, updated 2014 and “Candidates with Assessment Access Requirements MYP”, 2105).

### **3. SEN POLICY INTRODUCTION**

#### **3.1 Special Education Aims and Beliefs of Platon World School**

Considering that there is a need for a specialized group, which will support and act in accordance with the learning process, we formed a Student Support Team. The presence of specialists inside our school is of acute importance.

The Student Support Team is responsible to coordinate and apply the SEN POLICY.

#### **Students with Special Educational needs are the ones who exemplify:**

Attention deficit disorder/attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADD/ADHD)

Autism Spectrum Disorder

Dyslexia

Dyscalculia

Dyspraxia—developmental coordination difficulties (DCD), motor learning difficulties

Hearing impairment/deafness

Medical conditions/chronic illness

Mental health issues

Physical disabilities

Speech, language and communication needs (SLCN)

Visual impairment

Giftedness

### **4. SEN Policy objectives**

In order to meet the diverse and special educational needs of our students at Platon World School we must:

- follow the national and local laws regarding Special Education
- create a welcoming environment for the special education needs of each student
- identify children with diverse educational needs
- provide adequate intervention
- use differentiated instructions in order to ensure effective learning
- use resources to support children with SEN.

- assess and keep records of the progress of these children.
- provide counseling and support to teachers and children with SEN.
- work with outside agencies (public and private)
- inform and involve the parents of children with SEN so that we can work together to support our children.
- encourage active involvement by the children themselves in meeting their needs.
- provide training to all staff working with children with SEN.

It is important to note that faculty, staff and administration acknowledge that students achieve excellence in knowledge and skills at a different rate through different means.

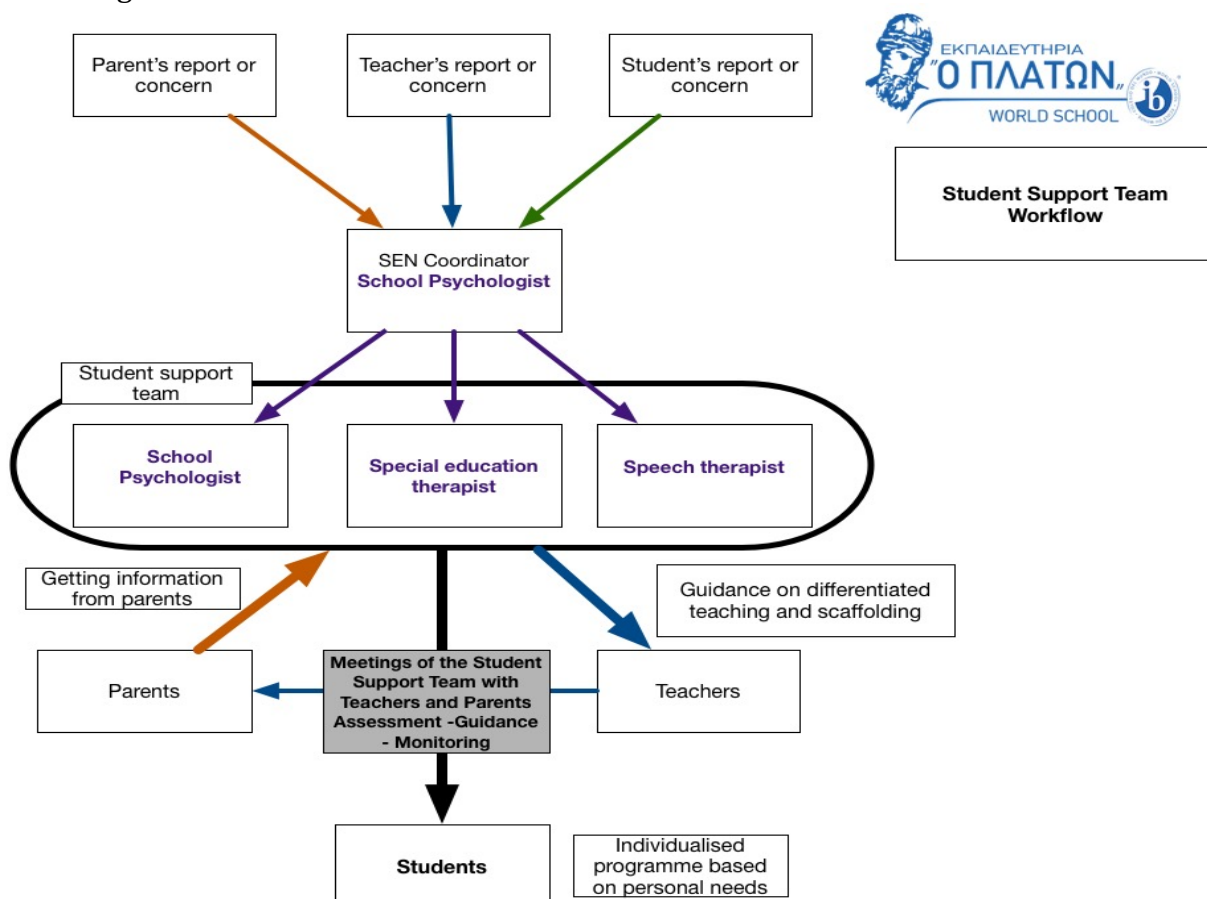
## **5. Student Support Team**

Student Support Team consists of the School psychologist, Ms. Tagkalaki Alik, the Speech therapist, Ms. Polymenopoulou Evi, and the Special Education Therapist, Ms. Karakomninou Marianna.

All our specialists work together as a team, supporting our students to the fullest.

Their main task is to evaluate, assess, design and apply intervention programs, thus helping our students to adapt successfully within the educational process. Furthermore they monitor the efficacy of these programs. (see Figure 1)

Figure 1



## 5.1 The roles of the Student Support Team members

### 5.1.1 The School Psychologist

- Is the SEN coordinator, organizing the procedures that follow parents, teachers or students' referrals
- Is responsible for organizing and applying prevention programs having in mind students' social and emotional needs
- Is responsible for evaluating students' psycho-emotional and intellectual needs
- Is involved in the School readiness assessment for students entering first grade in Primary School
- Provides guidance to teachers as far as differentiated instruction is concerned.
- Provides counseling to students and parents
- Organizes and provides ongoing training of school staff
- When there is a need the School Psychologist cooperates with outside professionals in the private and public sector



### **5.1.2 The Speech Therapist**

- Identifies language development difficulties
- Designs and applies individualized treatment programs
- Is involved in the School readiness assessment for students entering first grade in Primary School
- When there is a need the Speech therapist cooperates with outside professionals in the private and public sector

### **5.1.3 The Special Education Therapist**

- Is involved in identifying learning difficulties
- Designs and applies individualized educational programs
- Cooperates with teachers in conducting differentiated instruction
- Is involved in the School readiness assessment for students entering first grade in Primary School
- When there is a need the Special Education Therapist cooperates with outside professionals in the private and public sector
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## **6. The role of Teachers and Parents in the inclusion process**

Through their role teachers and parents facilitate students' adjustment and SEN's effectiveness

### **Teachers - Tutors**

- Share a wide aspect of the dynamics of the class
- Monitor both the academic progress and the social well-being of each student
- Act as a confidential advisor to the students
- Are responsible for the communication with the parents.
- If concerns and possible learning difficulties arise, they communicate their concerns to the Student Support Team through the Referral Document (see appendix 1)
- Are responsible for the application of any student-targeted or class wide intervention (tiered activities)

## **Parents**

- Are actively involved in their child's education
- Request application of any arrangements and services needed for the child with special education needs
- Communicate all information and documents needed
- Provide documentation needed for IBO accommodation requests
- Cooperate with the Student Support Team regarding intervention at home.

## **7. Functioning of the Student Support Team**

### **7.1 Student admission**

Students are accepted on the basis that our school is capable of providing them with all the necessary means for their full academic and socio-emotional development.

Before accepting a new student, the SEN Coordinator/School Psychologist gathers all the information necessary to identify the students' needs, such as school records and any previous evaluations.

Consequently our school admits students that we feel can benefit from the educational environment provided and are able to be actively involved.

### **7.2 Referral Process**

When there is a need, teachers, parents and students may submit a request/concern from to the Student Support Team regarding linguistic, learning and / or socio-emotional issues.

#### **Request/concern made by a teacher/ school staff member**

Teachers and/ or School staff use the Referral Document (appendix 1) to record their specific concern about a student.

The members of the Student Support Team then,

- Have a meeting in order to evaluate and decide collectively who is most suitable in responding to the request /concern. We always keep in mind if the case is related to psychological, learning or phonological issues.
- Have a second meeting with the teacher and/or members of the School staff who

submitted the request and discuss the matter thoroughly.

- The teacher will communicate to the parents his/her concerns and inform them that school specialists will be more actively engaged.
- It is only after the parents' consensus that the school psychologist, as the SEN coordinator, will contact the parents to discuss and inform them about the process which will be followed.

### **Request/concern made by parents or a student**

The school psychologist / SEN Coordinator meets with the parents/ student and discusses the concern, and then the procedure mentioned above is followed.

All information provided by the parents and students is strictly confidential.

## **7.3 Evaluation Process**

After parental consensus and relying on the student's general developmental record, the Student Support Team will proceed with an individual evaluation of the student.

The evaluation process includes the following:

- Psycho-social background
- Educational record
- Informal and standardized - formal tests
- Questionnaires
- Observation of students during class and / or recess time
- Previous evaluations provided by other specialists of the private or public sector
- Samples from the student's portfolio

All enclosed documents are strictly confidential and kept in a safe and locked location.

Information collected during the evaluation is personal and is communicated in order to involve teachers with discretion and confidentiality.

## **7.4 Intervention Process**

Once the evaluation is completed, a new meeting will take place in the presence of the teacher, so that he or she will be informed about the diagnosis and the proposed actions that shall be taken by him or her and the specialists.

Finally, the parents will be invited to a third meeting with the specialists and the teacher, and will be informed about the intervention that will be followed within the school. Parental involvement (if any) will be established as well.

An intervention may consist of the following actions:

#### Primary Years Program

Individualized program  
Differentiated instruction  
Student counseling  
Parent counseling  
A combination of school and home intervention

#### Middle Years Program-DIPLOMA

Individualized intervention  
Modifications to exam papers  
Special arrangements: Additional time, Rest periods, Computer Use, Amanuenses/scribe, transcription readers

## **8. Conclusion**

The presence and active role of a Student Support Team facilitates students' inclusion and adaptation, through the processes of evaluation and intervention. Feedback provided by stakeholders that have been involved in the SEN process provides the framework for continuous effective advancement of processes and services.

## **9. Appendix 1**

# Referral Document



Academic Rank: \_\_\_\_\_

## Request Form

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade / Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher / Field: \_\_\_\_\_

Request: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please describe briefly your concerns:

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Have you ever communicated your concerns with the specialists: YES \_\_\_\_\_, NO \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, when and with whom? \_\_\_\_\_

Student Support Team