

Learning Diversity Policy

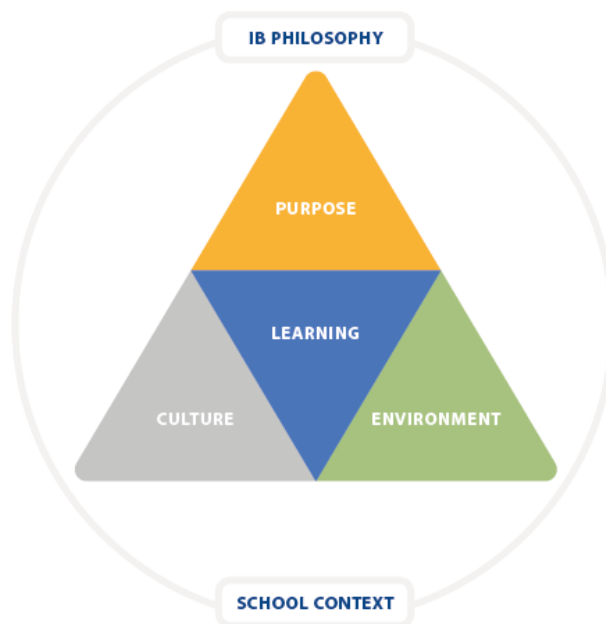
(Former Inclusion Policy)

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H-FARM International School empowers students to be internationally-minded citizens, shaping their own future in a rapidly changing global community. Through innovative learning environments and the development of relationships based on compassion and respect, we enable students to become confident, creative and collaborative. We are a community of active lifelong learners.

Learners and **learning** are at the heart of our school and everything we do on a daily basis. Our **purpose** is to provide an innovative educational approach that nurtures students' individual talents; thus allowing them to develop their full potential through a dynamic didactic programme driven by the use of innovative learning tools. H-FARM International School has a strong belief in and commitment to the IB mission and the development of the IB Learner Profile attributes across our school community. The school **culture**, shaped by the local context and our relationship with H-FARM, is centered on the holistic development of learners through the use of innovative pedagogies. The school **environment**, including highly effective practitioners within a state of the art campus, provides the resources and processes that allow us to offer a unique and enhanced learning experience for our students.



IB Programme Standards and Practices, 2020

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. To this end the organisation works with schools, governments and international

organisations 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.

H-Farm International School's vision for inclusion

Introduction

Beliefs and Values: At H-FARM International School (H-IS) we recognise that each child is unique with their own personal learning journey. We are committed to providing a supportive and nurturing environment that aims to help each child realise their full potential. In any group of students there are a wide range of learning styles and educational needs for the teachers to consider.

In accordance with the IB principles (International Baccalaureate Organisation, 2016), H-IS supports the following principles of an inclusive education where:

- **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;
- *all* students in the school community **fully participate** in an IB education and are empowered to **exercise their rights and accept their responsibilities** as citizens;
- *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* learners belong and experience **equal opportunities** to participate and engage in quality learning;
- **learning diversity** is valued as a rich resource for building **inclusive communities**;
- **multilingualism** is recognized as a fact, a right, and a resource.

With regard to the classroom environment, H-IS also recognizes and stands by the following statements:

- every educator is an educator of *all* students;
- learning has to be considered from a **strength-based perspective**;
- teaching must be designed to intentionally **address the students' needs and preferences**;
- assessment must provide *all* learners with opportunities to demonstrate their learning, which is **rewarded and celebrated**;
- *all* students should experience **success** as a key component of learning.” (International Baccalaureate Organisation)

- Summative assessments and report grades need to reflect IB criteria and standards. Tasks can be modified and modifications recommended in student IEPs should be applied. If students are still unable to access the course content or the assessment scale then the standards themselves should be modified to allow for the student to learn, but parents and students must be aware as soon as possible if the student is learning in line with alternative standards and will not be able to complete the mainstream course. Additionally it must be clearly indicated on the report (N/A) as a grade with other feedback in the comment) when a student has been unable to access a mainstream course and has completed an alternative.

Definitions

Inclusion

Inclusion is a continual process of increasing access and enhancing learning and participation for all students. Inclusion best practices involve identifying and removing barriers for all students to ensure access to learning and teaching. An organizational perspective of inclusion requires change and is facilitated within a culture of collaboration, mutual respect, support and problem-solving involving the whole school community. Inclusion addresses learning support requirements and questions the broader objectives of education, the nature of pedagogy, curriculum and assessment practices. The IB believes that inclusion is “an educational approach to which all schools should aspire.”

We aim to support the path of all students’ needs with an inclusive curriculum, with the skills of the teachers and with the help of the Pedagogical Department. The school is built on the development of relationships between students and teachers that allow personal growth first, followed by academic and cultural growth, capable of guaranteeing appropriate human skills to face the future paths of life, school, university and work.

With the support of the learning support teachers and external specialists, the school creates support for students’ educational needs. During the year, the school monitors and evaluates the progress and success of learning, intervening if there are opportunities or needs for changes highlighted by specialists, teachers and parents. In the process of supporting students with different learning needs, H-FARM International School aligns itself with the indications provided by the IB and, with regard to regulatory aspects, with the relevant Italian legislation.

We will use the [IB’s access and inclusion policy](#) as a guideline for best practice.

Special Educational Needs

In line with the Ministerial Directive of Dec 27th, 2012, H-IS acknowledges that the area of

scholastic disadvantage, commonly referred to as the area of Special Educational Needs (abbr. SEN; in Italian: Bisogni Educativi Speciali, or BES) includes, but is not limited to, the pool of developmental disorders certified by a diagnosis. Rather, it encompasses three major sub-categories: disability, specific developmental disorders and socio-economic, linguistic and cultural disadvantage. We do consider our students as “a whole, in a totality, in a bio-psycho-social perspective” and are aware that “[i]n this sense, every student, with continuity or for certain periods, can manifest Special Educational Needs for physical, biological, physiological reasons or even for psychological or social reasons.”

As recognized by the Italian legislation (nota MIUR 562, 03/04/2019), Special Educational Needs also comprise intellectual giftedness.

The definition of **gifted and talented** used by the Veneto region is taken from The National Association for Gifted Children (NAGK - UK - now called Potential Plus UK) defines gifted children as "... people that show or have the potential to show, an exceptional level of performance when compared with their peers in one or more of the following areas: general intellectual ability, specific scholastic aptitude, creative thinking, leadership, visual arts and performing arts." Following a strictly psychometric approach, a child who has a cognitive level higher than normal, that is, a child whose intellectual efficiency (assessed by standardized tests) is significantly greater than that achieved by most other children his age.' (Regione Del Veneto, 2015). We acknowledge that many gifted children are twice exceptional and that giftedness is often accompanied by poor performance in school.

Practices and procedures developed to remove barriers to learning

Teaching Differentiation

Most learning needs are met through the teacher adapting or “differentiating” the learning in the classroom. This is the practice of finding effective strategies for each child to achieve their goals. We adopt the four principles of good practice as set out in the IB document, “Learning diversity and inclusion in the IB programmes” (International Baccalaureate Organisation, Section 2).

These principles are:

1. Affirming identity and building self-esteem (Recognising and valuing the diversity in the classroom);
2. Valuing prior knowledge (Building upon the existing knowledge and understanding of the students);
3. Scaffolding (Using a range of teaching strategies to help students understand and complete tasks);

4. Extending Learning (Using a range of opportunities and contexts to use and apply learning).

Language Support (EAL/IAL)

Language Support in the PYP

The most common education need we find at H-IS is to develop proficiency in one or more of the languages of instruction. Children are supported in their development of literacy through the learning environment and daily interactions, however we also offer a fee based program that provides specific language support for those children entering the Elementary school, who do not have proficiency in English. This is managed through our ELS provision.

This language support is offered in small groups of similar age and ability, and may be sessions outside of the classroom or support within the class, alongside the class teacher. The sessions are planned and delivered in cooperation with the class teacher and are adapted to the needs of the individual. As the children grow more proficient in the language being supported, the support is reduced and eventually stopped.

Transition from PYP to MYP - Placement in Language Acquisition or Language & Literature

Transition from PYP to MYP1

Students from the PYP section at any of the H-FARM International School schools are automatically promoted to the MYP section of H-FARM International School Venice if they were able to access and complete the PYP 5 curriculum.

All transitioning PYP students are evaluated internally using class work, collaborative teacher feedback and, where necessary, the online-based standardised English test to confirm placement in the appropriate language phase and the corresponding MYP English course (Language & Literature, Language Acquisition).

Transitions in language phases within the MYP

Students who are placed in the MYP English Language Acquisition course are monitored according to the MYP (English) Language Acquisition criteria. The goal of this ongoing evaluation is to determine when each student will move into the next language phase. The movement to a new phase could happen throughout the school year or at the beginning of the next school year.

If a student is at the beginning of their English learning journey and they cannot follow lessons delivered in English (Science, Maths, I&S...), in addition to following the Language Acquisition class, they are also referred to Language Support.

Support in MYP

The most common educational need found at H-IS is a lower level of proficiency in one or more of the languages of instruction. We offer a fee based program that provides specific language support for those children entering the Middle school, who do not yet have proficiency in English.

This support may be provided for individuals or small groups, and may be sessions outside of the classroom or support within the class, alongside the class teacher. The sessions are planned and delivered in cooperation with the class teacher and are adapted to the needs of the individual. As the children grow more proficient in the language being supported, the support is reduced and eventually stopped.

Supporting students overcoming mild learning exceptionalities

Students with developmental disorders will each have their own particular needs and therefore the strategies used to support them may be different from student to student. The strategies and tools suggested by the IB in 'Meeting Student Learning Diversity in the Classroom' (International Baccalaureate Organisation) as well as suggestions by the School SEN specialist, Educational Psychologists and other third-party experts are implemented in daily practice.

Where guidance from external specialists has been provided, the school endeavours to ensure that it is followed and implemented as far as possible. Teachers will be supported with professional development in these areas. We will prioritise training and resources which are necessary to support existing students.

Support for Gifted & Talented students

Provision to ensure learning extension in areas in which the gifted student's abilities are demonstrated are provided, to ensure students are challenged to go deeper with the content taking into account pace, depth and complexity. Opportunities are created for students to undertake studies and or programmes at a higher level in areas of exceptional ability (via other organizations and universities). Gifted students' profiles often come with other difficulties that go beyond the intellectual skills and more related to the emotional sphere that the school will endeavour to recognise and address with the guidance of both the external professional(s) that assist the family and the SEN Department.

In addition, at H-IS there is an enrichment programme that allows students to undertake studies in areas of interest. The H-FARM Approach is an approach that binds the school to the environment from which it was born and from which it draws ideas and relationships.

Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs

Social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs are a type of special educational needs in which children/young people have difficulties in managing their emotions and behaviour. They often show inappropriate responses and feelings to situations. The degree of this difficulty can vary from mild to severe. These are some typical characteristics we have observed in children/young people with SEMH:

- Disruptive and uncooperative behaviour
- Frustration, anger and verbal and physical threats / aggression
- Withdrawn and depressed attitudes
- Anxiety and self-harm

Considering SEMH needs and attention to well being in general, the SEN provision focuses on:

- promoting well being and coping strategies for common school life difficulties;
- providing support of an emotional nature to any student to ensure the best possible environment for learning;
- helping students to adjust to the learning situations in school and to be more secure and effective in everyday living;
- promoting wellbeing as an integral part of all our lives and therefore providing ample opportunities for discussing and fostering a strong understanding of what mental health and physical health look like;
- responding to SEMH and wellbeing issues that organically occur promptly and effectively;
- respecting confidentiality unless a student is in danger or at risk to harm others;
- referring assessed situations to external help with appropriately delicacy and compassion.

Inclusion must not pose a threat to any student and cannot be implemented successfully in cases where inclusion risks harming other students.

Learning and inclusion needs of individual students and the resources the school has to support these students are subject to frequent changes, but the latest IB policy, at this time the September 2022 version ([HERE](#)) should be referred to when discussing implementation details and resource allocation.

The above policy is designed to support existing students. 'Inclusive' approaches must first be effectively practised with students who are enrolled in H-Farm International School. We do not have the resources to cater for all students and we are principally focused on supporting students with mild SEN needs. SEN specialists, counsellors, Heads of Programme and Principals will need to assess their resources and the extent to which they can support applicants with SEN profiles.

Admission to the school

H-IS recognises that there may be some students whose specific educational needs cannot be met within the particular context of the school. The bilingual nature of the school may create an additional challenge for some students better suited to a single-language environment.

As stated in the [H-IS Admissions and Promotions Policy](#) parents are requested to provide reports at enrolment from previous schools and details of any previous evaluations, diagnosis or certification (if available) for the school to evaluate if the necessary systems are in place to support the student's individual needs. Consultation with parents, teachers, the Head of School, Head of Programme and if necessary, external support services may be needed to decide the best course of action for children with more challenging educational needs. The school will reserve the right to withhold enrolment if it is felt that the school is unable to meet a particular student's needs.

H-IS is fully accessible for students and staff members who have mobility issues.

Identification of Needs

The SEN team has overall responsibility for SEN provision and liaises with counsellors, Heads of Programme, mentors, teachers and others supporting student wellbeing to ensure that adequate resources are being allocated to support students in our care. Meetings are carried out in collaboration with the class or subject teacher and the relevant Head of Programme. The details of all formal meetings will be recorded using school developed proformas (Appendices II-IV). These documents will be stored in the students' personal file.

- NB: Before any decision is taken with respect to acceptance into the school. The question we will ask is: "Is the school currently able to allocate sufficient resources to this student to allow for a high chance of student success?" No student will be accepted until we have sufficient resources to support them for the duration of their studies with us.

The school recommends that in order to effectively support a child, full collaboration and transparency from the parents is necessary. The school is aware that this can be a sensitive issue for parents and will treat all information shared with respect and confidentiality.

Current workflow:

1) If a student joins the school with a certification / diagnosis

- student file is shared with the counsellor, a member of the SEN team and the HOP or Principal .
- a PEP/IEP created with the teachers is issued

- application is monitored
- IEPs should be reviewed as necessary by teachers in collaboration with learning support teachers.

Through ongoing formative and summative assessments and daily observations, teachers will try to match learning engagements to the needs and abilities of the children in their care.

2) If teachers identify what could possibly be a SEN

- Observations in class / "Informal assessment" follows
- if needed, the parents are contacted, a formal evaluation is suggested
- if the student comes back with diagnosis / certification, back to point 1).

The School SEN specialist(s) may advise parents to consult with external specialists in the particular area of concern, either to provide an accurate diagnosis or because strategies implemented by the school do not appear to be making a significant improvement. The school will, wherever possible, provide support on who to contact and will make sure that teachers are able to meet and work with such specialists in order to improve the child's learning. Any suggestions, guidelines or action plans provided by external specialists will be put into action by the school as far as is feasibly possible.

Documentation

The IEP (Individual Educational Plan - different from grade level standards) or the PEP (Personalised Educational Plan) are written documents that address a student's specific individual needs.

It may specify accommodations, materials, or classroom instruction. Communication and collaboration with parents is essential for any such initiatives to succeed. The Human Development Department (SEN, Wellbeing etc..) is responsible for the coordination of the creation of this plan in collaboration with teachers and families, while the teachers are responsible for implementing the plan, with support of the Human Development Department.

In line with Italian law, an IEP is used for students with physical, sensory or cognitive disabilities (Legge del 5/2/1992, n. 104), whereas a PEP is used for students with specific learning needs, such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or dyscalculia (Legge dell'8/10/2010, n. 170).

Record Keeping

Any relevant documentation (parent meeting records, teacher observations/assessments,

reports/observation from outside specialists, ULSS certification etc) regarding a student is kept in their individual confidential file for the duration of their time at H-IS.

Transition

Where appropriate or when the child is in possession of a certification from a registered health authority relating to a specific learning need, the school will share this information with teachers and the IB to ensure that the assessment conditions are suitable for that student's needs.

During transition from class to class and especially from PYP to MYP and from MYP to DP, the particular needs and strategies, and all related documentation (specialist reports, IEP, PEP) for specific students will be shared with the appropriate teachers and support staff to ensure that, as the student progresses through the school, continued support is provided as needed.

Policy Review Cycle

This policy was created in collaboration with Elementary and EYU staff in July 2013.

Reviewed and modified with Middle School staff and MYP coordinator May 2015

Reviewed for Evaluation purposes by PYP staff Jan 2016

Reviewed for DP pre-authorization by DPC and DP staff visit May 2017

Reviewed for PYP and MYP Evaluation purposes June 2021

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Appendix I - Local legislation/Legal requirements

1992	Legge del 5/2/1992, n. 104 Legge-quadro per l'assistenza, l'integrazione sociale e i diritti delle persone handicappate.
	Law no. 104, dated Feb 5th 1992 Framework law for the assistance, social integration and rights of disabled people.
1999	Legge del 28/1/1999, n. 17 Integrazione e modifica della legge-quadro del 5/2/1992, n. 104, per l'assistenza, l'integrazione sociale e i diritti delle persone handicappate.
	Law no. 17, dated Jan 28th, 1999 Integration and modification of the framework law no. 104, dated Feb 5th 1992, for the assistance, social integration and rights of disabled people.
2003	Legge del 28/3/2003, n. 53 Delega al Governo per la definizione delle norme generali sull'istruzione e dei livelli essenziali delle prestazioni in materia di istruzione e formazione professionale.
	Law no. 53, dated March 28th, 2003 Delegation of powers to the Government for the definition of the general norms on education and the essential levels of performance in education and professional training.
	Legge del 15/7/2003, n. 189 Norme per la promozione della pratica dello sport da parte delle persone disabili.
	Law no. 189, dated July 15th, 2003 Norms for the promotion of the practice of sport by disabled persons.
2006	Decreto del Presidente del Consiglio dei Ministri, 23/2/2006, n. 185 Regolamento recante modalità e criteri per l'individuazione dell'alunno come soggetto in situazione di handicap, ai sensi dell'articolo 35, comma 7, delle legge 27 dicembre 2002, n. 289.
	Decree of the President of the Council of Ministers, no. 185, dated Feb 23rd, 2006 Regulation containing procedures and criteria for the identification of students as being in a situation of disability, pursuant to article 35, paragraph 7, of law no. 289, dated December 27th, 2002.

2009	Prot. del 4 agosto 2009, n. 4274 Linee guida per l'integrazione scolastica degli alunni con disabilità. Protocol no. 4274, dated August 4th, 2009 Guidelines for the school integration of pupils with disabilities.
2010	Legge dell'8/10/2010, n. 170 Nuove norme in materia di disturbi specifici di apprendimento in ambito scolastico. Law no. 170, dated October 8th, 2010 New rules on specific learning disorders in schools.
2011	Decreto del 12 luglio 2011, n. 5669 e allegato Linee guida per il diritto allo studio degli alunni e degli studenti con DSA. Decree n. 5669, dated July 12, 2011, and attachment Guidelines for the right to education of pupils and students with specific learning disorders.
2012	Accordo Stato-Regioni del 25 luglio 2012 Indicazioni per la diagnosi e la certificazione dei Disturbi specifici di apprendimento (DSA). Country/Regions Agreement dated 25 July 2012 Indications for the diagnosis and certification of specific learning disorders.
	Direttiva MIUR del 27 dicembre 2012 Strumenti d'intervento per alunni con bisogni educativi speciali e organizzazione territoriale per l'inclusione scolastica. Directive of the Ministry of Education, University and Research, dated December 27th, 2012 Intervention tools for students with special educational needs and territorial organization for school inclusion.
2013	Circolare ministeriale del 6/3/2013, n. 561 Direttiva Ministeriale 27 dicembre 2012 "Strumenti d'intervento per alunni con bisogni educativi speciali e organizzazione territoriale per l'inclusione scolastica". Indicazioni operative. Ministerial Circular no. 561, dated March 6th, 2013

	Ministerial Directive dated December 27, 2012: "Intervention tools for students with special educational needs and territorial organization for school inclusion". Operational guidelines. Decreto ministeriale del 17/4/2013, n. 297 Linee guida per protocolli regionali per l'individuazione precoce dei casi sospetti di DSA. Ministerial Decree no. 297, dated April 17th, 2013 Guidelines for regional protocols for the early detection of suspected cases of specific learning disorders. Nota MIUR del 22/11/2013, n. 2563 Strumenti di intervento per alunni con Bisogni Educativi Speciali. A.S. 2013/14. Chiarimenti. Note of the Ministry of Education, University and Research no. 2563, dated November 22nd, 2013 Tools of intervention for pupils with Special Educational Needs. School year 2013/14. Clarifications.
2014	Prot. del 10/2/2014, n. 2065/A41a Protocollo d'intesa Regione Veneto - MIUR USR Veneto per le attività di individuazione precoce dei casi sospetti di DSA. Protocol no. 2065/A41a, dated February 10th, 2014 Memorandum of understanding between Veneto region and the Regional School Office for Veneto, regarding the activities of early detection of suspected cases of specific learning disorders.
2019	Nota MIUR del 3/4/2019, n. 562 Alunni con bisogni educativi speciali. Chiarimenti. Note of the Ministry of Education, University and Research no. 562, dated April 3rd, 2019 Pupils with special educational needs. Clarification.