



AARHUS
ACADEMY FOR
GLOBAL EDUCATION
DENMARK

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AAGE INCLUSION POLICY 2017-2018

International Baccalaureate (IB) Mission Statement

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 organization works with schools, governments and international organizations 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.

www.ibo.org

AAGE Mission Statement

The mission of Aarhus Academy for Global Education (AAGE) is to provide a high quality international education which enables students to become socially responsible citizens, enthusiastic inquirers, and lifelong learners in a challenging and nurturing environment.

Aims

The aims of this policy are to:

- Enable all students to have full access to all elements of AAGE's IB curriculum through inclusive practices and differentiation.
- Create an environment that meets the unique educational needs of each student.
- Ensure that the special educational needs of students are identified, assessed and provided for.
- Make clear the expectations of all stakeholders in the process (students, teachers, parents, leadership).
- Identify the roles and responsibilities of staff in providing for students' special educational needs and ensure they have the skills and confidence to do so.
- Ensure that AAGE is meeting the requirements of an IB programme, as set out in the "Standards and Practices for All Programmes."
- Ensure that our Inclusion policy is reflective of and aligns to current school practice and admissions procedures.
- Ensure that we actively engage in developing our professional abilities to meet our students' specific learning needs.

Admissions Policy

AAGE's Admissions Policy states that admission is open to students of all nationalities who demonstrate the ability to access and benefit from the challenging IB curriculum. AAGE is an inclusive school, and serves the educational needs of the international community in the Greater Aarhus area.

As a part of the admissions process, educational assessments will be conducted prior to enrollment and may include: record review and gathering of information from parents and previous teachers, academic skills assessments, developmental screenings, social/emotional assessments, and review of most recent report card. Admissions assessment results will be discussed with parents and dependent on outcome will result in: placement, probationary placement or placement not appropriate at this time. With this in mind, AAGE strives to ensure that we have the resources to, and are able to, meet the educational needs of all of the students we admit to our school. The school has an ethical responsibility to be open and honest with families and applicants in cases where we do not have the resources or facilities necessary to provide educational access to the IB programme for a student.

In our host country of Denmark, our PYP1-3 is viewed as a "børnehaven" or a kindergarten, and therefore functions under a different set of guidelines. In cases where a PYP1-3 applicant has previously identified special educational needs, we will partner with the family to be open and honest about the resources and facilities currently available. If seats are available, the parents then have the choice to enroll their son or daughter at AAGE.

“Mainstream education will not always be appropriate for every student all of the time. Equally just because mainstream education may not be appropriate at a particular stage, it does not prevent the student from being included successfully at another stage. “ (IBO, 2010)

Special Educational Needs and Inclusion

In alignment with IB philosophy, AAGE has a strong belief of inclusion and views inclusion as aiming to increase access and engagement in learning for all students by identifying and removing barriers to student success. Inclusion is an ongoing process, which responds positively to each individual's unique needs. It is the process of creating a culture of collaboration, mutual respect, support and problem solving. To this same end, AAGE believes in respecting each student's unique and individual development. Children are considered to have special educational needs if they have cognitive, social, emotional or physical difficulty that calls for special educational provision to be made for them. We also recognize that some students will have a unique combination of difficulties and that their phase of English language acquisition can affect their individual needs.

With our current programming and resources, AAGE is currently able to admit and offer an IB programme for students with mild learning difficulties. This includes students receiving counseling support, regular classroom instruction, and/or slight modifications to the curriculum or to the physical learning environment to accommodate physical, emotional, sensory, and/or medical needs. This may also include students with or without an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) or Action Plan/Handleplan who receive differentiated instruction within the regular classroom. Factors such as the student's age, learning style, cognitive strengths, skills, behaviour, and the individual circumstances are always taken into consideration when developing and implementing such plans.

At present, AAGE is unable to appropriately provide for students who require services beyond reasonable accommodation, including significant classroom monitoring, modification of the general curriculum or environment, intensive one-to-one support, or intensive pull-out support. Students who have been identified as having severe learning disabilities, severe physical disability, severe learning issues, or other diagnoses may not be able to receive the necessary support services to fully access the IB curriculum within our school at this time. As the school continues to grow, we expect continued growth in the special educational supports that we can provide and we strive to be able to accept and provide for a diversity of student need in the future.

Special Needs Pathway

At AAGE, we strive to create an accepting, inclusive environment for all students. Our teaching and pastoral goals reflect that commitment so that all our students are able to acquire an IB education with dignity, consistency and a love of learning.

At the heart of the work of every successful teacher is a continuous cycle of planning, teaching and assessing which takes account of the wide range of abilities, aptitudes and interests of children.

Admission, Identification, Assessment and Student Support

Admission

- Documentation from previous school
- Recommendation from previous classroom teacher
- Information from and collaboration with parents
- Review of educational records

Identification

All stakeholders at AAGE recognize that all students:

- Are unique and capable individuals
- Have different educational and behavioral needs and aspirations
- Require different strategies for learning
- Acquire, assimilate and communicate information at different rates
- Need a range of different teaching approaches and experiences

AAGE routinely:

- Communicates student progress with parents per our current school policies
- Monitors student growth through formal reporting two times per year and verbal parent conferences, in addition to regular and ongoing contact with parents, as an individual student's needs may dictate
- Provides formal and informal assessments in the shape of formative and summative assessments, standardized assessments, observations, notes and anecdotal evidence
- Identifies underachieving learners within the classroom via observation of behavior in the school environment and monitoring of academic progress

Further development of specific identification processes has been underway as AAGE is working to create and implement a Response-to-Intervention (RTI) model approach. RTI is a system that helps to identify students' learning and behavioural challenges early, in order to allow educators to intervene where necessary with specialized instruction to help support academic achievement. As this approach continues to develop, it will guide our teachers and staff in a more strategic process for identifying students with outstanding needs, and for attempting a variety of interventions in order to best support their learning and development. This has been, and continues to be, an area of focus for the school, as we advocate for the resources to be able to finalize and implement an RTI programme.

Assessment

If a student is identified as:

- gifted or talented
- not making satisfactory progress
- and/or is exhibiting behaviors that may indicate academic or social/emotional difficulties

Teachers will then raise their concerns with their respective coordinator or the school counsellor either immediately, or in weekly team meetings at the PYP level and weekly Student of Concern (SOC) meetings at the MYP level. Stakeholders will utilize ongoing collaborations to gather information about student concerns that have been raised.

After the initial concerns have been raised further assessment of needs will take place. This may include:

- Liaison with parents and relevant stakeholders
- Review of previous educational history
- In class observations of behavior
- Further referral to the school counsellor
- Monitoring and recording of behavior
- In house screening, classroom reports, and assessments, where appropriate
- Trial of strategies and interventions

AAGE currently uses NWEA's Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) as a form of ongoing assessment. Data collected throughout this process is used to drive instruction based on student needs, but also used to thoughtfully identify areas of skill deficits for individual students. In the case of a student being assessed for special educational needs, the team will refer to this subject-specific data to determine if this data supports trends and observations across settings.

Collaboration with Local Municipality with Respect to Educational Planning, Referral & Assessment

- Within the Aarhus Kommune lies an organization called Pædagogisk Psykologisk Rådgivning og Specialpædagogik, or PPR for short. PPR has the responsibility of collaborating with the school to review student cases when more support is needed by a family or for pedagogical personnel in the school setting. If an AAGE student is identified through the process above as having outstanding needs, their individual case can be taken to PPR for a Special Center Meeting, which is an internal meeting of school stakeholders and our PPR psychologist to review the case and problem solve potential strategies, interventions, and next steps. The individual student case can also be taken to a more

comprehensive Network Meeting. At this Network Meeting, teachers and school staff will have the opportunity to express ongoing concerns and share relevant information, data, and attempted strategies. PPR will be responsible for providing the school with further guidance including possible strategies and interventions. PPR will also collaborate with the school to hold meetings with parents and monitor cases where students are in need of ongoing support.

PPR has the right and responsibility to determine if an individual student or a specific case warrants recommendation or referral for educational or psychological testing. Although the school can make recommendations, PPR alone can determine these referrals for assessment.

- In Denmark, parents also have the right to access PPR services through the 'Åben Rådgivning' process if they have concerns about their child's academic development or overall well-being. School staff can provide guidance for parents in this process. For services requiring in-school support, AAGE will complete the formal referral procedures in conjunction with parents.
- Parents are also welcome and encouraged to pursue assessment and advisement in their own countries or privately in Denmark and to share any relevant documents and information with the appropriate school staff.

Support

Where a need for additional support is identified throughout this process, the curriculum coordinator and/or special education teacher, in consultation with the school counsellor will call a meeting to review the student profile. An Action Plan/Handleplan will be created for each student admitted with identified learning needs. The Action Plan will address the student's learning goals, support/intervention, implementation, responsible parties and time frame for evaluation and review. In some instances, parents may be asked to commit to providing extra support for their child, which may include financial contributions to teaching support or provision of specific resources.

The support/intervention may include:

- Use of differentiation to meet student needs in their classrooms
- Provision of training and staff development to implement intervention and support student needs successfully
- Implementation of appropriate interventions
- Withdrawal from particular subjects to work with specialist teachers e.g.: not taking language acquisition and having extra math/language lessons

in the MYP.

- Classroom and educational accommodations for children with a diagnosis
- Additional support offered at home
- Professional support from a specialist outside the school
- Short-term counselling, if required
- Additional teaching support, possibly at the cost of the parent.

The goal of all implemented supports will be to continue the provision of inclusive practices, which allows all students the ability to access AAGE's IB curriculum within the regular education setting.

Additional Considerations

AAGE continues to advocate for the appointment of a Special Educational Needs (SEN) coordinator/teacher to strengthen our general abilities to support students with Special Educational Needs and to strengthen our overall inclusive approach. Counselling services are undertaken by a part-time school counsellor whose services are utilized on an as-needed basis. All psychological assessment and support will be driven by referral from PPR, as detailed above, or will be outsourced to private practitioners.

This policy will be reviewed annually in August and will be revised according to the latest guidance from the IB and developing circumstances within the school.

References

AAGE Admissions Policy, Aarhus Academy for Global Education, 2015

AAGE Assessment Policy, Aarhus Academy for Global Education, 2015

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