



FELIX-KLEIN-GYMNASIUM

Felix-Klein-Gymnasium

International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme

Access and Inclusion Policy

1. Inclusion in Lower Saxony

Article 24 ("Education") of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities guarantees people with disabilities non-discriminatory access to the education system. In Lower Saxony, the basis for the introduction of inclusive schooling is anchored in the Lower Saxony School Act (§ 4 Niedersächsisches Schulgesetz, NSchG). The goal of individual support for all students is also laid down in NSchG and implemented in the decrees and directives for all types of schools in the primary and lower secondary education levels (§ 54 NSchG). Every school in Lower Saxony is an inclusive school. In this sense, inclusion is the responsibility of all teachers and all types of schools.

Learning groups in schools are typically composed heterogeneously. This heterogeneity is understood and accepted as the basis for school work. School-induced learning processes are designed to meet the needs of the heterogeneous student body. This is done through individual-oriented planning.

The NSchG formulates the goal of individual support for each student. "Individual support" is not to be understood as an additive, but as an integral part of every lesson planning and design.

Thus, there is no distinction made between students with and without support needs. Rather, every student has learning and developmental potentials. To fully develop these, pedagogical support is needed. In this regard, every student has a pedagogical support need. Special educational support needs represent a specific manifestation of the pedagogical support needs among others. A pedagogical support need can also be determined, for example, when a student exhibits special talents. Lower Saxony thus follows an expanded concept of inclusion: it is the mandate of inclusive schools to meet the individual pedagogical needs of all students.

The Rules and Regulations for inclusivity at schools in Lower Saxony are determined in the publication Rahmenkonzept Inklusive Schule (https://www.mk.niedersachsen.de/startseite/schule/inklusive_schule/rahmenkonzept_inklusive_schule/)

2. Access and Inclusion at FKG

FKG welcomes students of all abilities and strives to support every child and young adult. It is our aim to create a school community in which every student can contribute to the best of their potential. No student may suffer disadvantages because of a physical or mental challenge. This is the fundamental belief of our school.

This Access and Inclusion Policy aims to establish standards and best practices in access and inclusion during learning and teaching, as well as for all assessments so that all students can fully participate in their (IB) education.

Access arrangements are made in line with the student's individual challenges, which can have diverse specifications:

Physical challenges

- FKG is one of the few schools in Göttingen that offer special facilities for students using wheel chairs (elevator and barrier-free entrances and halls).

- Students with challenges such as language or hearing impairments (primary barriers, cf. below) will be granted support that allows them to participate in all classes with their peers, e.g. arrangements like microphones to be used by teachers or class mates or additional written explanations during oral exams.

Mental health challenges

- Mental health challenges (eating or stress disorders, autism spectrum disorders, anxiety, ADHD) can be temporary or prevail throughout a student's school career.
- Based on medical information, measures will be taken to allow for the student to be an integral part of the community and have school days that offer the required space or additional support.

Learning disabilities and learning difficulties

- The needs arising from learning disabilities or difficulties like dyslexia, dyscalculia, and dysgraphia are met by the respective measures specified by the education authorities. Special writing and Maths support classes are offered at FKG.
- If students with learning disabilities are not able to obtain a school certificate (Middle Years Certificate, IB Diploma, German Abitur) they can still attend classes without a final graduation. In this case, the main objective for them is to share surroundings and experiences with their peers and to learn as much as they can for their future lives.

All students with individual challenges can be granted support by a personal assistant who accompanies them throughout the school day. These assistants are trained professionals and their employment will depend on medical information.

Individual special regulations regarding assessment and final assessment can be authorized by the Lower Saxony education authorities (Regionales Landesamt für Schule und Bildung Braunschweig) for students with all educational needs.

The school counselling team at FKG offers support sessions for all students, especially for those with individual challenges. The team are trained to identify these challenges and give appropriate guidance. To ensure the best possible support for every student, FKG relies on cooperation with the legal guardians regarding medical documentation and their child's individual situation.

For further support in the counselling of students, the development of an individual learning and support plan, and request of official decisions on inclusive access arrangements, the staff at Regional Office for Counselling and Support / Inclusive Schools (Regionales Beratungs- und Unterstützungszentrum Inklusive Schule, RZI) are available for school visits and best-practice examples.

3. Individualized Educational Plans (IEPs)

IEPs are formulated for students identified for special educational assistance, with identification possible at any stage of a student's academic journey. Classroom observation is pivotal in detecting individual needs, triggering a multi-step process involving observation, communication with school staff (teachers, counsellors) and parents, potential psychological-educational testing, and the eventual development of an IEP. This tailored plan documents an individual student's learning goals, strengths, challenges, interests, and approaches to support. The IEP fosters a shared understanding of a student's learning profile and serves as a reference for teachers, parents, and involved parties. The Plan is reviewed yearly or more often, and all records are treated with confidentiality.

To allow for a smooth transitioning between schools, documents are transferred from one school to another to ensure continuity. New students with existing IEPs are integrated according to the recommendations, with potential further development based on classroom observations.

4. Access and Inclusion in the IB DP at FKG

This Policy is in line with the IB publication Access and Inclusion Policy (<https://www.ibo.org/globalassets/new-structure/programmes/dp/pdfs/access-and-inclusion-policy-en.pdf>) and is updated every year to align with the newest Diploma Programme Assessment Procedures (2024: https://resources.ibo.org/dp/works/dp_11162-426343?)

At the heart of its educational philosophy, the International Baccalaureate (IB) promotes a comprehensive and inclusive approach to learning, aimed at eliminating or minimizing barriers to ensure the full engagement and development of each student throughout their IB learning journey. The IB defines "barriers" as any obstacles that may hinder or impede a student from actively participating or effectively engaging in their learning, teaching, and assessment experiences. In the context of IB assessments, it is crucial that every student receives the opportunity to demonstrate their abilities under assessment conditions that are as equitable as possible (cf. FKG Assessment Policy).

Provisions are made to accommodate students with diverse learning needs, ensuring equal opportunities for success through modifications made to the realms of learning, instruction, and assessment with the intent of eliminating or reducing barriers to learning (IB, 2022). These provisions are known as "access arrangements".

5. Barriers to Learning

To establish an all-inclusive and comprehensive learning environment that fosters student growth, it is imperative to eliminate or minimize barriers. Primary barriers that can impact a student's learning are:

- hearing impairment
- visual impairment
- intellectual exceptionalities
- medical issues
- movement and coordination
- additional language (first or best language is not the language of instruction)
- cultural variations
- social-emotional issues
- mental health issues

Issues with

- numeracy
- reading
- processing
- speech and language
- writing

can also be considered primary barriers.

Secondary barriers can emerge from these primary barriers.

Effective planning of access arrangements for a student demands a comprehensive consideration of both the primary and associated secondary barriers.

6. Access Arrangements

Access arrangements as modifications made for a student to the realms of learning, instruction, and assessment, are intended to eliminate or reduce barriers to learning.

Any arrangements must be applied into learning and teaching to align with justifiable arrangements in the assessment context.

The IB recognizes a range of inclusive access arrangements:

- Flexibility in duration/additional time: candidates may be granted extra time for written exams and specific activities connected to internal assessment, aligned with their assessed needs. The

duration of additional time corresponds to the level of access requirement.

- Flexibility in presentation of material and resources/reception of content: Adjustments may be made to exam papers to accommodate candidates with visual impairments or specific learning challenges.
- Flexibility in response: candidates with writing or reading challenges may be allowed access to use the following: word processor, scribe, speech recognition software, graphic organizer, four-function calculator, text to speech, transcriptions, talking calculator, and audio recording of responses.
- Use of human assistance: care assistant, practical assistant, spelling assistant, prompter, communicator (to clarify instructions or directions), designated person for colour naming, designated person for reading aloud or oral language modifications, sign language interpreter, reader, script reader (for lip reading), scribe (see above).
- Flexibility in equipment, setting or location: separate room for tests and IB examinations, specific seating location, alternative venue (away from school) for IB examinations, noise-cancelling headphones, adapted desk or seat, medical aids and equipment, group setting.

It is appropriate for some of these access arrangements to be used in the context of teaching and learning (formative assessment) and for some to be used in the context of final IB exams and assessments (summative assessment), depending on the student's individual situation and requirements.

7. Eligible candidates

In accordance with the guidelines outlined in the newest Diploma Programme Assessment Procedures, students meeting the criteria below are qualified for access arrangements:

- Learning disabilities
- Specific learning difficulties
- Communication and speech challenges
- Autism spectrum disorders
- Social, emotional, and behavioral challenges
- Physical and sensory challenges
- Medical and mental health difficulties, including temporary medical conditions (with onset or occurrence up to three months before the IB examinations)
- Additional language learning (first language is not the language of instruction; not applicable to Group 1 and 2).

8. Application Process

- The IB DP Coordinator is responsible for applying for inclusive access arrangements that need authorization from the IB on behalf of the student through the IB online platform. They might require the support of a subject teacher for insights into the student's particular needs.
- It is the responsibility of the student or their parents to provide any medical, psycho-educational or psychological documentation to support a request for access arrangements.
- It is the responsibility of the school to provide any educational evidence to support the request.
- In order to ensure sufficient time for processing, all applications for inclusive access arrangements should be submitted at least six months ahead of the scheduled examination session.
- For anticipated and retake candidates, any approvals granted for inclusive access arrangements extend to all upcoming IB assessment sessions.

9. Access Arrangements exempt from IB authorization

The following arrangements can be organized by the school without prior request for IB authorization, including final examinations:

- Rest breaks
- Hearing aids and devices
- Vision aids and devices
- Memory devices, organizers, written list of instructions and other visual aids
- Sign language interpreter
- Care assistant
- Practical assistant
- Prompter
- Communicator
- Designated person for color naming
- Separate room (within the school) for class tests and IB examinations
- Specific seating location
- Special lighting
- Noise-canceling headphones
- Adapted desk or seat
- Medical aids and equipment

Communication and Review of the Policy

In order for all students at and applicants to FKG, this policy will be communicated openly during the admissions process and in counselling situations. It is a shared responsibility for all IB DP teachers to communicate their input regarding access and inclusion in the IB DP at FKG. It will be revisited annually.

Last updated: March 2024

By: Silke Neumann, Dr. Daniel Vollmar, Dr. Katharina Brundiek

Next review: March 2025