

Berlin Cosmopolitan School

Learning Diversity / Special Educational Needs Policy

BCS Vision:

"Nurturing lifelong learners for a more respectful, enlightened and compassionate world."

BCS Mission:

"The BCS mission is to foster international-minded, academically successful, and balanced lifelong learners. We achieve this through inquiry-based learning, innovative teaching, and community involvement; inspiring positive change in our diverse and dynamic world."

Overview:

We acknowledge that the students at the Berlin Cosmopolitan School have a range of learning styles and learning needs. Some of our students however, require more specialised teaching and learning due to a range of recognised difficulties or particular strengths. This incorporates a range of intellectual and physical disabilities such as hearing and vision impairment, special learning challenges, speech, language and communication needs, behavioural issues and students identified as gifted and talented or exceptionally able. We create inclusive learning environments in which students can develop their intellectual and academic potential. The differentiated curriculum caters for a wide range of learning styles, readiness and ability levels within mainstream classes. Our diverse curriculum maximises engagement through multiple entry points for learning, and we also ensure our students have access to specialised learning and support which increases learning opportunities for all students.

BCS works in collaboration with a range of professional support services which the school accesses for diagnostic and professional advice. These include Speech, Behaviour, Psychology, Disability Support, Hearing and Vision. This involves a referral, observation and conclusion about how best to support the students and is managed by the Head of School. This process is in close collaboration with Support services, teachers and families.

Identification:

Where a pupil is not making progress as expected in class, or if a child is identified as having special learning needs upon admission, the class teacher will refer them to the learning support staff and the applicable referral guidelines will

be followed. All BCS referral procedures (either for Special Educational Needs SEN, English Language Development ELD or German Language Development GLD) uses a collaborative approach involving all teachers. Careful Screening and a range of assessments in an educational context will take place to establish the extent of the learner's difficulties, the extent to which they disadvantage the learner and to advise how the learners' special needs might be met. This is discussed together with all relevant teachers, the student and the parents / guardians and together, an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) is written. IEP's are revisited and reviewed regularly.

Inclusion:

Wherever possible we encourage students with special learning needs to join in the classroom activities. At BCS we include students during classroom activities through differentiation. We differentiate through;

- Differentiation of the curriculum
- Parallel teaching
- ILS teaching
- Specialised teaching; English Language Development (ELD), German Language Development (GLD) and / or Special Educational Needs (SEN) teachers.

Differentiation of the curriculum:

Differentiation is a targeted process that involves forward collaborative planning and reflecting to incorporate different learning needs and styles, as well as teaching and learning that differentiates instruction. It involves assessment strategies that are fair and flexible, provide an appropriate level of challenge and engage students in learning in meaningful ways.

Parallel teaching:

Class teachers are scheduled for 4 hours per week to support their parallel grade class. Specifically, to help support certain students to access the curriculum.

ILS teaching (Individual Learning Support):

Afternoon Educators are scheduled for 1 – 3 hours per week to support certain students within a classroom setting.

Specialised teaching:

Specialised teachers such as ELD, GLD and SEN teachers will support certain students depending on the student's established needs. Specialised support will take place within the classroom setting wherever possible. When student needs cannot be met in an inclusive setting, class teachers will specially plan for small

group pull out groups or 1:1 groups with the relevant teacher (either the parallel class teacher, afternoon educator, ELD teacher, GLD teacher or SEN teacher). Some children benefit from extra classes in ELD and GLD for Literacy support. (See language policy).