

since 1980



St. Nicholas

Access and Inclusion Policy

St. Nicholas School

Revised and approved: June 2024

Next revision: 2026

www.stnicholas.com.br

1.Introduction

St. Nicholas School is committed to fostering an inclusive and diverse learning environment that reflects the values and principles of the International Baccalaureate (IB) programmes - the Primary Years Programme (PYP), Middle Years Programme (MYP), and Diploma Programme (DP). We believe that every individual within our community contributes to the richness of our educational experience. It is our role to provide equitable opportunities to ensure access to learning and successful school life for all learners, taking into consideration special educational needs, language, wellness, economic status, gender identity, ethnicity and other needs.

2.International Baccalaureate Diversity, Equity and Inclusion statement

“At the IB we want to understand and celebrate differences within our community while recognizing and valuing the things we have in common. As we all strive to achieve our mission of creating a better world through education, we cannot underestimate the importance of diversity, equity and inclusion.” (International Baccalaureate, 2023, para.1)

3.St. Nicholas Diversity, Equity and Inclusion statement

At St. Nicholas School, we acknowledge the diverse range of abilities, strengths, and needs among our students. Our commitment is to remove barriers to learning, ensuring that every child has access to the resources and support they need to thrive. Inclusion is an ongoing effort, where we continuously work to create an environment that accommodates and embraces the full range of individual differences.

Following the IB mission statement, St. Nicholas commits to be a safe community for all its members regardless of appearance, ethnicity, social class, regional or national origin, ancestry, religion, disabilities, gender, identity and family structure. It is our duty as educators in an International school, to offer an inclusive and equitable environment that provides a respectful and integrous space for every member of our community, free from discrimination, whilst upholding human rights and advocating for a culture of inclusion. Our goal is to create a community of learners of all ages who feel comfortable to be themselves, where differences are acknowledged, valued and respected, and personal development can contribute to a more inclusive society.

4.Aims of the policy

- To define inclusive practices and the language of inclusion
- To foster student agency
- To support learning in all areas and ensure students reach their full potential
- To provide a range of assessment opportunities
- To remove learning barriers and cater for individual needs
- To support the wider safeguarding framework and play a key role in child protection
- To ensure access to learning for all learners, providing a safe learning environment

5. Principles of Inclusion

The pursuit of inclusive education lies at the heart of fostering a learning environment where every student can thrive. As stated in the “Learning diversity and inclusion in IB programmes” (2016), inclusion is an ongoing journey focused on enhancing access and engagement in learning for all learners. Central to this pursuit is the identification and dismantling of barriers that hinder the holistic participation of students. This process emphasises equitable educational opportunities encompassing various facets of school life, from learning and teaching to evaluation and assessment. Access arrangements serve as vital tools within this framework, offering tailored modifications that do not compromise learning expectations but rather empower students to navigate barriers effectively. By championing fairness, equal access, and the integrity of assessments, these arrangements pave the way for a truly inclusive educational experience.

Our commitment to inclusivity is guided by the following principles:

- **Meaningful connections:** Inclusive practices thrive on the authentic relationships forged between students and teachers.
- **Student-centered Approach:** Teachers possess a deep understanding of their students, embracing their unique talents, interests, and needs. This personalized approach ensures every student feels seen and valued.
- **Safe Learning Environments:** Our classrooms are sanctuaries where students are encouraged to explore, innovate, and learn through both success and failure. Mistakes are celebrated as opportunities for growth.
- **A Culture of Belonging:** True inclusivity fosters a profound sense of belonging for every individual. Students find their place within our school community, supported by teachers who serve as mentors and allies.
- **Equity in Action:** Equity is not just a concept; it's a commitment to fairness and justice in all aspects of education.
- **Social Hub for Learning:** Our school isn't just a place of academic instruction; it's a vital social hub where relationships form the foundation of support.
- **Inclusion for All:** Inclusion is not selective; it encompasses every individual within our community. When we embrace inclusive practices, we embrace every child, honoring their uniqueness and celebrating their contributions.
- **Tailored Support:** The success of our inclusive model is measured by our ability to adapt to the diverse needs of our learners. Each student is provided with a space to express themselves authentically, discover their strengths, and receive personalized support on their journey of growth and self-discovery.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

The successful development and learning of students hinge on collaboration among parents/guardians, teachers, and students.

Parents and guardians:

- Understand that all learners will be supported to meet their potential.
- Won't seek to make comparisons between students and won't talk about other children.
- Will respect all families.
- Will support the school in its decisions and actions, tailored to meet the unique needs of each learner.
- Serve as primary advocates, providing essential support and insights into their child's unique learning journey.

- Advocate for appropriate resources and foster a conducive learning environment at home.
- Act as partners in the educational process, offering invaluable insights and unwavering encouragement.
- Embrace the responsibility of fostering and modelling an inclusive environment.
- Actively contribute to the cultivation of a just and equitable society.

Teachers:

- Create and tailor instructional strategies for diverse learning styles and needs.
- Implement innovative and effective teaching methods, differentiation, personalised instruction, and inclusive practices.
- Conduct consistent assessments to shape academic advancement and emotional stability.
- Foster an environment where students feel safe, supported, and empowered.
- Provide opportunities for learners to share experiences and perspectives.
- Keep learner profiles at the forefront of teaching.
- Offer a variety of perspectives in teaching.
- Know learners holistically and build on this understanding.
- Actively explore and challenge personal biases.
- Refer students to the PL and wellness support departments when needed.
- Implement accommodations and modifications outlined in the IEPs (Individualised Education Plan)
- Facilitate collaboration among staff members within a multidisciplinary team, fostering partnerships with both the Wellness Support Department and the Personalised Learning Department.

The Personalised Learning Team:

- Cultivate a school-wide culture that embraces inclusion and a comprehensive understanding of special needs.
- Collaborate and strategize learning support initiatives with classroom/subject teachers regularly.
- Design tailored lessons for pull-out support sessions, and assign supplementary homework when necessary.
- Offer in-class support to students receiving learning support, aiding in classroom teacher planning and guidance.
- Provide continuous guidance and professional development to staff to enhance their ability to meet students' additional support needs.
- Coordinate the development of Individualised Educational Plans (IEP) with classroom/subject teachers, coordinators, and segment heads.
- Engage in ongoing professional development activities, maintaining a personal portfolio relevant to learning support.
- Propose effective resources and strategies for supporting children, both in class and at home.
- Maintain meticulous records of Individual Educational Plans (IEP) and relevant meetings, ensuring they are consistently updated.
- Coordinate with external specialists when necessary, facilitating assessments and diagnoses for students with special needs.
- Maintain an updated directory of external specialists involved with students.
- Safeguard confidentiality by maintaining the privacy of personal files and records of students in the Personalized Learning Programme, ensuring access is limited to appropriate authorities.
- Engage with parents/guardians of children with special educational needs, providing updates on their progress and collaborating on future strategies.
- Organise periodic review meetings involving leadership, teachers, and parents to assess progress and plan further actions.

Learners:

- Play a pivotal role in their learning journey, shaping it with resilience, determination, and unique perspectives.
- Are empowered to actively engage, become autonomous and self-advocates.
- Are motivated and have a strong sense of belonging, their voices, interests and aspirations are encouraged.
- Engage in goal-setting, self-assessment, and reflection on academic, social, and emotional growth, while seeking support as needed.
- Uphold respect for themselves and others.
- Actively promote diversity and equity within the school environment.

School leaders and Board:

- Ensure all team members are treated equitably, feel a sense of belonging, and have the resources to reach their potential and support all learners.
- Visibly and authentically commit to diversity.
- Challenge and hold others accountable, prioritizing diversity and inclusion.
- Acknowledge personal blind spots and flaws in the system, actively challenging biases and promoting inclusion.
- Provide space for dialogue on professional challenges and inclusive practices.
- Support diversity, equity, and inclusion professional development and training, including policy implementation.
- Respect and adapt to diverse cultures and beliefs.
- Value diverse thinking and prioritize psychological safety, staff well-being, and team cohesion.
- Ensure the school has policies and procedures that are consistent with the school mission and Brazilian law.

Programme Coordinators are responsible for:

- Providing support with subject choice in order to allow students to play to their strengths and individual learning profile.
- Submitting applications for inclusive access arrangements on behalf of the student. While a teacher may complete the application, the ultimate responsibility lies with the coordinator to ensure the completed form is submitted to the IB.
- Ensuring the school provides the resources and manpower necessary to support inclusive learning arrangements, including for external assessment
- Verifying all requests for inclusive access arrangements, are endorsed by the head of school. Typically, correspondence from the IB regarding students with access requirements will be directed to the coordinator.
- Ensuring all requests for access arrangements for IB assessments adhere to the following criteria:
 - They align with the typical methods of learning and teaching in the classroom.
 - They meet the eligibility criteria outlined in this policy.
 - They are accompanied by supporting documents serving as evidence.
 - They are submitted within the deadline specified in the Assessment procedures for the relevant programme(s).

The Wider community:

All staff, including catering, cleaning, security, facilities maintenance, information and communication technology, office administration, and healthcare professionals, are valued members of our community.

- Report to a pedagogical leader if they notice a learner who appears to need support.
- Report to their designated leader if they feel any adult is not being respected.

The collaborative efforts of parents or guardians, educators, and students create a holistic and supportive framework essential for the development and success of students with special learning needs. Inclusion thrives when the whole school community shares a culture of partnership, collaboration, mutual respect, support, and problem-solving.

7. Systems and Structures

At St. Nicholas, we prioritize access and inclusion for all learners by recognizing and respecting their strengths and identities. While our tailored learning approach mitigates many barriers, additional support may be needed for individual challenges. Our systems and structures include:

- Collaborative Meetings: Teams reflect on practices, incorporate learner interests, and address challenges collaboratively.
- Diverse Assessments: We use various methods to evaluate learners, ensuring inclusivity.
- Personal Projects and ECA Clubs: Learners engage in activities reflecting their interests, fostering belonging and relationships.
- Vertical Learning Opportunities: Learners interact across year groups, sharing perspectives authentically.
- Language Acquisition Support: Individual and small-group support in English and/or Portuguese is provided across sections.
- Personalized Learning (PL) Specialist Support: Staff seeks guidance to brainstorm personalized strategies and arrange additional support if needed.
- Individual Educational Plan (IEP): Tailored plans leverage strengths to address specific learner needs.

The build environment fosters inclusive learning spaces designed around cognitive principles and pedagogical aims, promoting relationship-building among learners. Additionally, teachers carefully observe and document learner interactions to ensure individual needs are met and progress is monitored effectively.

8. Links, Cycle of Review, Bibliography

The policy undergoes a regular review every two years, aligned with the school's policy review cycle. The next review is scheduled for March 2025 and will involve relevant stakeholders, including the senior leadership team, program coordinators, lead learners/teachers, personalized learning specialists, a student representative, and a parent representative. The bibliography includes various resources on inclusive education, the Brazilian Law on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities, and International Baccalaureate (IB) resources on Individual Educational Plans (IEPs), accommodation, modification, and differentiation strategies.

In alignment with the International Baccalaureate (IB) publication of standards and practices, as an accredited IB World Schools, we wholeheartedly welcome students with diverse abilities, needs, and

backgrounds. Our educational approach integrates their learning with real-world experiences, ensuring expanded opportunities for their holistic growth and development. By embracing the principles of inclusivity, we demonstrate our commitment to supporting learning diversity among students, fostering an environment where every individual is valued and empowered to thrive.

Culture 2.1: The school implements and reviews an inclusion policy that meets IB guidelines. (0301-02-0100)

Culture 2.2: The school identifies in its inclusion policy all its legal requirements and outlines the school's IB structures and processes for compliance. (0301-02-0200)

Culture 2.3: The school describes in its inclusion policy the rights and responsibilities of all members of the school community and clearly states the school's vision for implementing inclusive programmes. (0301-02- 0300)

Culture 6: The school implements, communicates, and regularly reviews its IB-mandated policies to ensure they are cohesive and reflect IB philosophy. (0301-06)

Culture 6.1: The school implements processes with consideration of the relationship between its IB mandated policies. (0301-06-0100)

Culture 6.2: The school documents its IB-mandated policies and communicates them to the school community. (0301-06-0200)

Culture 6.3: The school considers physical and virtual spaces in all its IB-mandated policies. (0301-06-0300)

Culture 6.4: The school articulates a planned integration of human, natural, built, or virtual resources in all its IB-mandated policies. (0301-06-0400)

Culture 6.5: The school considers the learner profile in all of its IB-mandated policies. (0301-06-0500)

Culture 6.6: The school considers international-mindedness in all of its IB-mandated policies. (0301-06- 0600)

Culture 6.7: The pedagogical leadership team uses the school's IB-mandated policies in decision-making and curriculum development. (0301-06-0700)

Student support 2: The school identifies and provides appropriate learning support. (0202-02)

Student support 2.1: The school implements and reviews systems and processes to identify the needs of students. (0202-02-0100)

Student support 2.2: The school supports the identified needs of students, and evidences this support through planning, policy, and practice. (0202-02-0200)

Student support 2.3: The school provides staff, facilities and resources as outlined in their inclusion policy. (0202-02-0300)

Student support 2.4: The school demonstrates a commitment to make the most effective use of learning spaces and learning environments in ways that meet the needs of all students. (0202-02-0400)

Student support 3: The school fosters the social, emotional, and physical well-being of its students and teachers. (0202-03)

Student support 3.1: The school identifies and allocates spaces and resources to support the social, emotional, and physical well-being of its students and teachers. (0202-03-0100)

Student support 3.2: The school demonstrates in its systems, processes and policies attention to the social, emotional, and physical well-being of its students and teachers. (0202-03-0200)

Student support 3.3: The pedagogical leadership team and teachers support students' social, emotional and physical well-being. (0202-03-0300)

Student support 3.4: The school promotes open communication based on understanding and respect. (0202-03-0400)

Approaches to teaching 5: Teachers remove barriers to learning to enable every student to develop, pursue and achieve challenging personal learning goals. (0403-05)

Approaches to teaching 5.1: Teachers consider learner variability when planning students' personal learning goals. (0403-05-0100)

Approaches to teaching 5.3: Teachers use IB-mandated policies to support students. (0403-05- 0300)

Approaches to teaching 5.4: Teachers support language development with consideration for the language profiles of students. (0403-05-0400)

Bibliography

International Baccalaureate Organization. (2009). Making the PYP happen: A curriculum framework for international primary education (November 2009).

International Baccalaureate Organization. (2013). Approaches to teaching and learning in the Diploma Programme.

International Baccalaureate Organization. (2014). Fostering interdisciplinary teaching and learning in the middle school.

International Baccalaureate Organization. (2014). Middle school: From Principles into Practice (updated September 2014).

International Baccalaureate Organization. (2015). Diploma Programme: From principles into practice. For use from August 2015.

International Baccalaureate Organization. (2018). Learning and teaching.

International Baccalaureate Organization. (2018). Programme standards and practices.

International Baccalaureate Organization. (2019). Primary Years Programme Learning and teaching.

International Baccalaureate Organization. (2019). The IB guide to inclusive education: a resource for whole school development.

International Baccalaureate Organization. (2022). Access and Inclusion Policy.

International Baccalaureate Organization. (2022). Approaches to learning and approaches to teaching in the Middle Years Programme.

International Baccalaureate Organization. (2022). MYP: From principles into practice 2014 (Updated August 2022).

International Baccalaureate Organization. (2013). Meeting student learning diversity in the classroom.

International Baccalaureate Organization. (2015). Candidates with assessment requirements.

International Baccalaureate Organization. (2021). Adverse circumstances policy (Effective from November 2022 examination session).

International Baccalaureate Organization. (2023). Developing and aligning a school inclusion policy with the Programme standards and practices.

International Baccalaureate Organization. (2023). Access and inclusion policy.

Lei Brasileira de Inclusão da Pessoa com Deficiência (2015) Estatuto da Pessoa com Deficiência.

KUPFER M. C. M., PATTO M. H. S., VOLTOLINI R. (orgs.), Práticas Inclusivas em Escolas Transformadoras - acolhendo o aluno-sujeito, Editora Escuta, São Paulo, 2017.

International Baccalaureate Organization. (2020). Learning Diversity and Inclusion in IB Programmes: Removing Barriers to Learning (November 2020).

International Baccalaureate Organization. (2023). Building practices for inclusivity within the IB community:
<https://www.ibo.org/news/news-about-the-ib/building-practices-for-inclusivity-within-the-ib-community/>

Voltolini, Rinaldo. Psicanálise na Educação Inclusiva (accessed in March, 2023):
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SC2dd_DWzNo

Blackwelder, Aaron (2028). Accommodation, Modification and Differentiation: Understanding Terms (accessed in September 2024):
<https://www.spectrumlife.org/blog/accommodation-modification-and-differentiation-understanding-terms-191>