

*since 1980*



***St. Nicholas***

# Inclusion

Policy and Procedures  
@Pinheiros

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[www.stnicholas.com.br](http://www.stnicholas.com.br)



Dear community members,

Our school policies draw from our mission and beliefs outlined in the Principles of Learning. We aim to model the IB learner profile and mission. Our policies have been developed through discussions with the community. This Inclusion Policy meets the legal requirements that guarantee Inclusion for all children.<sup>1</sup>

St Nicholas is a diverse community. We embrace different identities, neuro diversities and language backgrounds. Our Inclusion Policy requires that we are the best school for the learner and that we can cater for each applicant's needs. By enrolling your child(ren) at St Nicholas, you agree to embrace and promote the diversity of our community.

We refer to our educators as "lead learners" because, in alignment with our Principles of Learning, we recognize that everyone, regardless of their role, is on a continuous journey of growth and discovery—a core aspect of our mission to foster lifelong learners within our community.

In each of our policy documents, you will find the philosophy driving the policy and the community's rights and responsibilities. In the appendices are the procedures and processes associated with each policy. This policy has been written by the Inclusion Policy Review Group, a diverse team of leaders and lead learners.

We look forward to you enjoying a unique learning journey. Thank you, in advance, for reading this policy.

*St. Nicholas Leadership Team*

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<sup>1</sup> [www.planalto.gov.br](http://www.planalto.gov.br)

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# Our Guiding Principles

## St. Nicholas' mission

In a caring, innovative and inspirational environment, we nurture our learners with values, skills and knowledge, enabling each of them to succeed and transform the world.

**St Nicholas. Preparing Each child for their own success.**



## Our values

Respect, Commitment, Integrity, Belonging International Mindedness

## Principles of Learning most relevant to Inclusion



## 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.*

## International Mindedness<sup>2</sup>

Cultural diversity is integral to St Nicholas and IB. We are shaped by local and global culture. All members of the community are responsible for understanding, valuing and respecting different perspectives, therefore fostering international-mindedness in our learning spaces and promoting inclusion, tolerance and respect.

## IB Learner Profile

Diversity, Inclusion and Equity are embedded with the IB Learner Profile attributes and international mindedness. Every member of the community is committed to embodying these attributes on a daily basis.

*Inquirers, Knowledgeable, Thinkers, Communicators, Principled, Open-minded, Caring, Risk-takers, Balanced and Reflective*

## IB Diversity Equity and Inclusion Philosophy Statement <sup>3</sup>

*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 (DEI).*

## Diversity, Equity and Inclusion @Pinheiros

We bring our authentic whole on a journey for all. Embracing ethnicity, physical and neurodiversity, gender and gender identity, age and socio-economic condition.

We are aware of how we see, listen and speak. We acknowledge our shared history, understand our present and advocate for a just future.

We are safe and free to explore. Diversity broadens perspectives, generates ideas and ignites innovation. It is the right way to be.

Agency and personalisation of learning are the rights of all our learners.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.whitbyschool.org/passionforlearning/cultural-diversity-international-mindedness-integral-in-ib-schools>

<sup>3</sup> Diversity, equity and inclusion statement - International Baccalaureate®

## Aims of the Inclusion Policy

*"Inclusion is an ongoing process that aims to increase access and engagement in learning for all learners by identifying and removing barriers." (Learning Diversity and Inclusion in IB programmes, 2016).*

This Inclusion Policy covers the diversity of all the St Nicholas' community. We recognise everyone's strengths, first and foremost. We believe everyone has the right to learn.

It is our role to provide equitable opportunities to ensure access to learning and school life for all learners. Access arrangements (changes or alterations) may be necessary concerning the learning and teaching, and assessment to remove or reduce barriers to provide the optimal support that each learner deserves. Barriers and challenges may be related (but not restricted) to special educational needs, language learning, emotional and mental wellness, economic situation, gender and sexual identity, ethnicity, medical issues, impairments and/or other long-term challenges.

At St Nicholas School Pinheiros, we are working towards a philosophy and practice where personalisation starts with the learner in the centre, from their strengths to their needs, and not the curriculum.

## Aims of the Inclusion Policy:

1. To redefine **inclusive practices and the language of inclusion**
2. To establish **agency** as the way learners flourish in their unique adventure
3. To align learning with the **principles of learning**
4. To support the holistic development of all learners in **all areas** of their learning
5. To support adventurous grouping of learners as diverse as possible
6. To support assessing learners on their unique journey, identifying their individual growth **as opposed to age**
7. To support the community **any time a member** needs support
8. To support the **wider safeguarding framework** and play a key role in child protection
9. To fulfil our responsibility as a school and society to ensure access to learning for all learners, including all children, providing a healthy learning environment where they can develop and be supported while respected in their abilities and needs and integrated into the school community.

# Principles of Inclusion

***“Inclusion is not made by decree, but through the bond, in the relationship.”***

*“Inclusion transforms the school and makes it a place where all children can live.”<sup>4</sup>*

Inclusion happens in all daily interactions and is embedded as a value in our culture. When we talk about inclusion, we don't focus only on academic skills or the child's challenges but on their strengths and profile.

The following principles of inclusion guide our inclusive practices:

1. Inclusive practices happen when there is a connection. Learning is social, and connecting is the first step to ensuring inclusive practices will take place.
2. The lead learner knows the learner, and this knowledge is built through connection.
3. The learning environment is a safe one wherein there is freedom to learn through trial-and-error: the security to try, make mistakes, and feel empowered to try again.
4. The learner belongs to the school. A lead learner can be a reference for a child, but collaborative work with other adults opens a space for inclusive practices to happen.
5. Equality is the right to be unique. Each learner is treated as unique at their own pace, and differences are valued.
6. The school is an important social place for the learner, and relationships are important for each learner's development and to help overcome challenges.
7. Inclusion is for everyone and each one. When the school has inclusive practices, it includes all children and each child.
8. The success of inclusion is how far the school adjusts to the learners' needs. A learner meets a space to be themselves and find strengths. In this process, the school changes and adapts to the learner.

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<sup>4</sup> Princípios orientadores de práticas inclusivas" - Kupfer, Pesaro, Bernardino, Merletti and Voltolini - Livro: Práticas inclusivas em escolas transformadoras.

# Equity rights, roles and responsibilities

Inclusion happens when the whole school community shares a culture of partnership, collaboration, mutual respect, support and problem-solving.

## The School Leadership

*“School Principals play a critical role in setting the priorities for learning in the school. Through values, commitment, knowledge and skill, the principal makes a difference. Effective leadership by the principal is especially important if schools are to be truly inclusive and meet the educational needs of an increasingly diverse student population.” (Inclusive Education Canada)<sup>5</sup>*

School Leaders (Head of School, Head of Section, Programme Coordinators and Pedagogical Leaders) have the responsibility to ensure all team members are treated equitably, feel a sense of belonging and value, and have the resources and support they need to achieve their full potential and to support all learners.

Leaders are:

- visually and authentically committed to diversity. Leaders challenge and hold others accountable, making diversity and inclusion a priority
- aware of personal blind spots and flaws in the system, explore and challenge unconscious biases in the community and work hard to ensure inclusion
- committed to providing space for dialogue about professional challenges about inclusion and inclusive practices
- committed to supporting Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) professional development and training, including policy implementation
- curious about others, open-minded, non-judgemental when listening, and seek empathy and compassion to understand those around them
- attentive to others’ cultures and beliefs and adaptable as required
- attentive to the diversity of thinking and psychological safety, and focus
- on staff wellbeing and team cohesion.

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<sup>5</sup><https://inclusionbc.org/our-resources/inclusive-education-handbook-chapter-3/#:~:text=School%20boards%20should%20ensure%20that,are%20consistent%20with%20ministry%20policy.>



## Lead Learners

In a diverse learning space, the key is identifying agency and passions along with social, emotional, behavioural, physical, and academic strengths. Lead Learners play an important role in setting the tone for inclusion. To make access and inclusion successful, we create a space where everyone belongs and adapt the learning and teaching strategies and assessments to support all learners individually. We work collaboratively with others to facilitate inclusion. We also ask for appropriate support when we need it.

Lead learners:

- are curious
- provide opportunities for learners to share their own experiences and perspectives and make a positive impact on learning
- keep the learner profile at the forefront
- provide a variety of perspectives
- know their learners holistically and build on this
- actively explore and challenge personal biases
- refer learners to the PL and Wellness Support departments when they feel there is an unmet need
- implement the accommodations and modifications set out in the IEPs (Individualized Education Plan) by the PL Department
- collaborate with the Wellness Support Department regarding student mental wellness and health

## Learners

Learners are caring members of the community who develop their communication and social skills in a healthy learning environment. They learn to take care of themselves and others.

Learners:

- set learning goals (according to their stage of development) and engage and drive learning engagements by sharing their interests and perspectives with others

- self-assess, reflect on academic, social and emotional growth, and have the opportunity to seek support
- respect themselves and other learners
- promote diversity and equity in the school environment

## Families

Families share with us their child's likes and dislikes, strengths and needs, and hopes for the child's future. All families will respect diversity in the community and be supportive of all members of the community and the inclusive use of the school's Principles of Learning to help build a just and equitable society.

Families:

- understand that all learners will be supported to meet the values of the school
- won't seek to make comparisons between learners and won't talk about other children
- respect all families
- support the school in its decisions and actions, tailored to meet the unique needs of each learner.

## School Board

The school board ensures that the school is inclusive for all, that inclusive programs are delivered as required, and that arrangements for staff and human and physical resources are in place.

The board:

- ensures the school has policies and procedures that are consistent with the school mission and Brazilian Law
- ensures we assess and plan for learners with diverse and additional support needs
- leads by example and embodies the Learner Profile

## The Wider Community

All staff, including catering, cleaning, security, facilities maintenance, information and communication technology (ICT), office administration, and healthcare professionals, are part of our learning community. They contribute to supporting access and inclusion by fulfilling their designated roles and respecting others, while also being respected by everyone.

The Wider Community:

- report to a pedagogical leader if they see a learner who seems to need support
- report to their designated leader if they feel any adult is not being respected

## Systems and Structures to ensure access and inclusion

At St Nicholas, there are systems and structures to ensure learners feel part of the community, having their strengths and identities recognized and respected. Making learning unique to everyone already removes many possible barriers to learning but, at times, additional support is required to tackle individual challenges. The extra support may be related specifically to the learner's learning disability, language acquisition (English and/or Portuguese); literacy skills; maths/numeracy skills; other areas of the curriculum; social and emotional well-being, and others.

Our main systems and structures include

- **Collaborative meetings:** Team reflections on current practices, discussions of how to incorporate learners' passions, interests, and specific challenges so that together they find ways to remove possible barriers to learning
- **Diverse assessments:** Multiple ways of assessing learners as well as considering different ways of assessing the learners
- **Personal projects and ECA clubs:** Learners share interests and passions that facilitate belonging and play a key role in building relationships and the learning process

- **Vertical learning opportunities:** Learners learn and interact with other year groups, sharing perspectives and finding further opportunities to connect with others in authentic ways
- **Language Acquisition Support (EAL - English as an Additional Language, and PAL - Portuguese as an Additional Language):** Additional support of English and/or Portuguese is provided individually and in small groups by EY and Primary year group teams and in Secondary by language teachers who provide intensive programmes where necessary (kindly refer to our [Language Policy](#) for more information).
- **Wellness Support and School Psychologists:** In line with St Nicholas' commitment to the holistic growth of learners, the Wellness Support Department and the Wellbeing Center in Secondary School foster mental wellness in our school community. Recognizing the intricate relationship between learner wellness and meaningful learning, the department serves as a cornerstone for valuable learning experiences, and in turn, these experiences reinforce the overall welfare of our learners.
- **Personalised Learning (PL) Department support:** Lead learners can ask for guidance and support from the Personalised Learning specialists to brainstorm personalised strategies through accommodations, like extra time, using speech-to-text, visual aids, or testing in a separate location, or providing the child with extra support through program modification, such as simplifying the curriculum content to match the learner's pace.
- **Individual Educational Plan (IEP)\*:** A specific plan, created based on the findings of professionals in the field of psychology, neurology, and learning needs, that helps lead learners to support the individual in their learning journey. Reviewed annually with input from the family, teachers, and learner, the IEP is a dynamic document aimed at helping us better understand the child's strengths and areas of development through strategies that are chosen for their unique profile.

### **PL Specialists and School Psychologists**

While personalised support for learning, socio-emotional, mental health and child protection is primarily the responsibility of all lead learners, lead learners can ask for guidance and support from the Personalised Learning and the School Psychologists who can, depending on the case, recommend further personalised strategies to provide the child with extra support.

### **Personalised Learning Specialists (PL):**

- build connections with learners in order to know who they are as individuals and what they need to flourish
- meet with parents and outside specialists
- interpret reports of outside professionals
- write and regularly review students' IEPs and share those with lead learners
- support the learning and teaching mainly indirectly (in the learner's learning spaces of reference) and directly (in a withdrawn environment) in some specific cases
- apply or help colleagues to personalise learning to meet learners' needs
- act as consultants for lead learners, the leadership team, and parents
- raise awareness in the community by promoting both inclusion itself and the procedures and strategies used that foster inclusion
- provide professional development by sharing tools or organizing collaborative meetings to support lead learners and tutors
- support stakeholder reflection on their practices and interactions with the learners
- co-ordinate the recognition, assessment and support of each learner who experiences primary barriers to their learning together with the team of lead learners and school psychologists
- collaborate closely with the Wellness department, contributing to the development of emotional or mental wellness/health plans, when appropriate
- support program coordinators in preparing and collecting documentation needed for the application process of Access Accommodations for formal examinations (ex. DP exams or MYP on-screen exams)

### **Wellness Support Specialists (School Psychologists)**

- are deeply committed to professional ethics and confidentiality
- cultivate a positive environment and healthy relationships, promoting overall happiness and life satisfaction among learners and the school community
- actively listen to and embrace individual learners' difficulties and struggles, fostering a compassionate and supportive environment
- prioritize learner welfare, ensuring their social and emotional development alongside academic growth
- collaborate with and provide support to educators and leadership, recognizing the crucial role they play in the overall development of learners
- collaborate closely with the Personalized Learning (PL) department, contributing to the development of IEPs, when appropriate
- offer advice and guidance to families, establishing partnerships with them to create a supportive network for the learners' wellbeing
- collaborate with outside specialists, such as psychologists and psychiatrists, to ensure a comprehensive and specialized approach when needed
- recognize the interconnected dimensions of mental wellness - mental, emotional, social, and psychological - and strive to address each of these elements through strategic initiatives

## Individual Educational Plan (IEP)

Personalised support is built around an IEP, which is a specific program or strategy of learning that takes into consideration the learner's strengths and challenges<sup>6</sup>, focusing on important skills for the particular learner's development. The IEP focuses on individual realistic adjustments involving accommodations, differentiation and/or modifications to the learning and teaching that are required to achieve expected learning outcomes.

The IEP is designed by the PL specialist support team based on documentation/information provided by the outside specialists, with input from families, the learner, and lead learners.

### Main aspects of IEPs

- Is holistic.
- Provides Lead Learners with practical strategies that they can implement in the classroom to support the learner with regards to Content, Process, Product, and Environment
- The learner is actively involved in creating their IEP, specifically in setting learning goals.
- Will contain important skills to be developed and specific goals to be achieved.
- Is specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timely.
- Defines roles and responsibilities in removing barriers to learning to enable the learner to develop, pursue and achieve challenging personal goals.
- Is created with parents and includes their concerns. Parents receive a copy after the initial creation and after each yearly review.
- Shared with outside professionals where appropriate.
- reviewed annually.
- IEPs contain confidential information and are kept safe.

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.understood.org/en/articles/understanding-individualized-education-programs>

# Human, physical and virtual resources

## Human resources

All lead learners are fully committed to ensuring that learning is accessible and inclusive for everyone. Through regular collaborative meetings, they engage in discussions to identify and devise innovative strategies to overcome any barriers to learning a learner might face. Whenever additional support is necessary, lead learners have the backing of Personalised Learning Specialists and School Psychologists to provide further guidance.

## The built environment

The design of our learning spaces is rooted in cognitive principles and pedagogical aims, moving away from the traditional setup of individual classrooms. Instead, learners share open spaces that are conducive to forming connections with a diverse group of peers. This approach facilitates a variety of learning experiences, fostering a community that celebrates diversity and encourages inclusive learning opportunities.

## Virtual resources

Lead learners strategically use virtual resources to make learning personal and inclusive. They include adaptive platforms for personalized content, tools for diverse needs to ensure all can access materials, and online spaces for collaboration. Digital assessments offer instant feedback, supporting varied learning styles. Additionally, lead learners access training on inclusive education and digital tools, ensuring learning meets each learner's unique needs.

# Links to other policies

[Admissions Policy](#)

[Assessment Policy](#)

[Language Policy](#)

[Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy](#)

[Online Safety and Safeguarding Policy](#)



# Cycle of review

This policy will be subjected to a regular and official review which will take place every two years, as per the school's policy review cycle. The next scheduled review will take place in March 2026, and will include all relevant stakeholders including:

- Senior leadership team, including all programme coordinators
- Lead learners
- Personalised Learning specialists
- Student representative
- Parent representative

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