

Special Needs Policy

The IB Diploma Programme at St Olav videregående skole

Academic Needs

St. Olav vgs has a dedicated IB counsellor to offer career advice as well as assistance with university applications, and all such related matters. Appointments are made as necessary. In addition, the counsellor is a member of the IB Advisory group together with the IBDP Coordinator and CAS Coordinator and attends all Pedagogical Forum meetings plus general IB student meetings with the IB Coordinator to issue information and elicit response/information on student needs.

Any student with diagnosed special requirements is approved – upon receipt of formal documentation – for special circumstances for tests etc. in terms of conditions (e.g. separate room, reader, scribe) and duration of test. Should there be any indication of condition requiring extra help, the student will be referred to in-house testing. The school will provide access to the Lingdys programme as well as audio books.

Physical Needs

Currently, the majority of IB classes other than Science labs are held in the ground floor classrooms or the basement. All floors are accessible by different stairwells and by elevator. The Local Education Authority (LEA) undertook a renovation project of part of the school since the last IB review. This brought us in line with access requirements for those with physical limitations/challenges. The project also increased the number of classrooms and added 2 smaller study/tutorial rooms for IB students.

Psychological Needs

St. Olav vgs has a dedicated full time counsellor concerned with students' social, emotional, psychological welfare in accordance with Norwegian regulations. Additionally, a school nurse is on the premises two days each week to meet solely with students on a drop-in basis. Students may, however, request an appointment at any time. In addition, the local health centre is close by and the school has close contact with the personnel there so students can drop in without prior appointment anytime there is a need.

In accordance with Norwegian regulations, students who are diagnosed with or express a need for psychological counselling are referred to the local authority service and assigned a counsellor/psychologist.

Upon starting the IB Programme at St. Olav vgs, students are placed in tutor groups of around 10 – 15 students with a Personal Tutor who is also their teacher in at least one IB subject. These groups meet every month during the school day for a dedicated hour-long session to discuss issues of concern. The personal tutor also arranges an in-depth opening interview with each student in her/his charge to discuss all pertinent issues: academic, social, emotional, psychological and physical. This is followed up with a meeting towards the end of each semester. Personal tutors also meet with students to discuss and advise on CAS programmes.

In addition, Personal Tutors meet once a semester with the CAS Coordinator to give an overview of student progress, also with students' CAS programmes. At this time, any problems or issues are discussed and progress is checked. Meetings are held every semester to record grades, behaviour and any areas of concern. The Personal Tutor will then raise these issues with the relevant student(s) and as necessary contact parents, CAS Coordinator, IBDP Coordinator. Any areas of concerns are then documented in line with Norwegian government regulations.

Should a student be identified with special needs, a suitable learning plan will be discussed and put in place in cooperation with the student and any outside personnel who may be involved. In addition, a meeting will be held with the personal tutor, counsellor and IBDP to track the student's welfare and make adjustments as necessary. The student will be involved in discussions at each step of the process.

Personal tutors who observe students with special needs inform the student of their rights within the IB Diploma Programme with regard to the help available on/with final written exams. We encourage close cooperation between student, school and home.