



**DR. PILLAI GLOBAL ACADEMY**  
*local actions...global options*

SEN POLICY

2014

(Revised November 2014)



### **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."

### **Our School Mission**

We are committed to provide a holistic education based on new-generation academics that create not just powerful global career options for our students, but which empowers them to become key contributors to the community and the environment in which they live. We strive to achieve nation building through character building and we do so through an approach of mentoring

## IB Learner Profile<sup>1</sup>

**INQUIRERS:** We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.

**KNOWLEDGEABLE:** We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.

**THINKERS:** We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyse and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.

**COMMUNICATORS:** We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.

**PRINCIPLED:** We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.

**OPEN-MINDEDNESS:** We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.

**CARING:** We show empathy, compassion and respect. We have a commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.

**RISK-TAKERS:** We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.

**BALANCED:** We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives—intellectual, physical, and emotional—to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.

**REFLECTIVE:** We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.

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<sup>1</sup> International Baccalaureate Organisation IB Learner Profile

## School Philosophy

“Education is not a quest but a journey”: Dr. K.M.V. Pillai. This journey of life encompassing the entire world has its base in our educational institution, ‘Dr. Pillai Global Academy’.

The two different poles, even though contrary not only intersect the knowledge & skills but also overlap different ways of thinking. Globalization leaves its footprints in every arena/area of the student development. Teaching & Learning are now equipped with new techniques involving interacting learning environment. These skills involve multicultural influences, inclusive societal structures & a pattern of interdependency.

A student in this new world must grapple with 2 core facts of life. One is where he encounters immense competition and the other where he accesses infinite opportunities. He must be equipped well to deal with the competition efficiently. The IB Learner Profile supports the students in developing the skills required for competing and enables to develop the attributes that further aid in his holistic development. This Learner Profile permeates into the whole school life, including the formal, acknowledged curriculum, as well as the informal, holistic curriculum. Thus, every member of the school community is geared towards being internationally minded and reflecting the attributes of the Learner Profile.

Dr. Pillai Global Academy employs a unique approach to address this need, by making a paradigm shift from the textbook to the real world & labs. While skills & facts are important; the reasoning behind the facts makes for a subject of analysis. Thus, the ‘how’ & the ‘why’ gather much weight than the ‘what’. Dr. Pillai Global Academy focuses on developing the right attitude to face the challenges, learning & applying contemporary knowledge & cultivating a spirit of enterprise. As stated in the mission, Dr. Pillai Global Academy believes in an education that concentrates on a holistic development. An education that helps students imbibe, not only diversified knowledge, but also teaches them how to harness this knowledge towards building a new world.

The school fosters critical thinking while at the same time emphasizing creativity. A positive environment is developed to complement the students’ positive attitude. Right values & morals are instilled amongst the student at the same time as self-confidence & self-esteem. To this end the school strongly believes in going beyond academic development by conducting numerous extra and cocurricular activities as well as field trips. The Philosophy is made operational through the implementation of different curricula & boards as they help in developing & cultivating the skills necessary for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## **SEN POLICY**

In keeping with its philosophy and mission, DPGA strives to make its students in the DP programme active and lifelong participants in their learning. It encourages students to learn from multiple perspectives, through collaborative teaching approaches, aware that such an approach can lead to positive outcomes such as improved academic and social skills, increased self-esteem, and more positive relationships with others. Teachers at DPGA are sensitive towards the shift in focus in addressing students with special educational needs which is now the responsibility of all teachers who form part of the student's education.

### **At the Beginning**

The identification of students with a learning issue takes place before the start of the programme. The Parent-Candidate-Coordinator (PCC) interaction at the time of admission is a good starting point where discreet questioning and scrutiny of previous assessment documents might indicate a special educational need. Documents to support the claim need to be not more than two years old.

Further investigation and tests might reveal the extent of the need. All reports and observations are placed before the admissions committee that consists of the Head of the School, Director, Associate Director & IB Coordinator, The Counsellor and Medical Officer. A thorough assessment is made by the committee keeping in mind the following and a decision is arrived at.

- The local legal requirements of teachers in meeting the needs of students.
- The extent of the special educational need of the candidate and whether DPGA has the expertise to handle such a case.
- The expertise required.
- The expertise we have.
- Provisions to be made for SEN, and whether we are in a position to provide them given the present scenario.

### **The Role of the Programme Coordinator**

- Must be well acquainted with the SEN of the student.
- Have all necessary up to date documentation to establish the claim and be the authorised signatory for all documents when applying to the IB for special arrangements. Maintain subsequent documentation of SEN students.
- Should aid the student in careful selection of subjects with the help of subject teachers.
- Be well versed with the principles, requirements and procedures laid down by IB for SEN students in the Diploma programme.
- Approach IB with all necessary documentation well in time, for the special arrangements to be in place, particularly where assessment is concerned.

### **The Role of the Teacher**

Teachers at DPGA have replaced the conventional role of the teacher with that of a mentor, one who has continuous engagement with a student's academic and personal growth and who works at an individual level to develop the student from all angles: personal, psychological, emotional, mental, physical, aesthetic and spiritual. As a mentor the teacher must perform as a role model, working with empathy and vision to create citizens of the future. Individual differences are viewed not as problems to be fixed, but as opportunities for enriched learning.

All teachers along with the auxiliary staff in the IB Diploma programme are responsible to effectively address the needs of students with SEN; hence they need to know at the very outset:

- The factors that affect student learning and how best to address them.
- How to differentiate and align teaching approaches to student needs.
- How to use technology to its fullest advantage in removing barriers to learning.
- The background details of past experiences of the student & family environment.

## **Teaching Strategies for Effective SEN**

Teachers will:

- Create an affirming environment that builds confidence and self-esteem and where the student feels safe.
- Enlist the cooperation of parents as partners to support students in meeting the challenges and optimizing learning experiences in the DP.
- Put into practice the best and most appropriate IB teaching-learning approach based on the four principles of good practice:
  1. Affirming identity & building self-confidence;
  2. Valuing prior knowledge;
  3. Scaffolding;
  4. Extending learning.
- Collaborative planning to support learning in areas where progress is far from satisfactory.

### **For Gifted students with exceptional ability, teachers will:**

- Ensure further learning in areas in which the student shows exceptional ability.
- Challenge students to go deeper from the perspective of critical analysis, understanding and evaluation of content rather than providing them with more content.
- Create opportunities for students with exceptional ability to undertake studies at a higher level.
- Allow students to undertake studies in different and additional areas of interest.

## **Assessment**

It is important that in the area of assessment the grade awarded to a student in any subject, reflects the student's level of achievement. DPGA is in total sync with the IB practice of awarding the same standard of assessment to all students irrespective of whether they have special needs or not.

While applying for special arrangements, it must be kept in mind that the student in question does not have an advantage in respect of any assessment component.

It would be the responsibility of the IB Coordinator and the Head of the School to ensure that the principles defined by IB are adhered to, the procedures, and requirements are meticulously applied in the assessment of candidates with special educational needs.

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