# Inclusion Policy

All IB 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*.” (IB mission statement)

## Introduction and purpose

In Vardafjell Upper Secondary School we believe that each student belongs to the classroom community and needs to feel cared for, trusted, understood, valued and safe. We believe that all students should have the opportunity to feel successful. Hence an Inclusion policy that is in use is an essential part of our responsibility as an IB world school. To take care of all our students, we want to specifically mention that also students with high learning potential will need inclusive education in school for teaching to be fully inclusive.

This policy should be read in conjunction with *Access and inclusion policy* (2023),

*Learning diversity and inclusion in IB programmes: Removing barriers to learning* (2020), *The IB guide to inclusive education: a resource for whole school development* (2019) and *Diploma Programme Assessment procedures 2025 section C6 Inclusive access* (2024).

The purpose of this document is to

1. Communicate to all stakeholders in our IB community – administrators, teachers, students, and parents/legal guardians – the programmatic expectations for creating and maintaining an inclusive educational environment for all learners as required by the IBO.
2. Provide clear guidelines to all stakeholders by defining appropriate vision, goals, and practice in the context of the IB Diploma Programme at Vardafjell Upper Secondary School.
3. Establish clear responsibilities of all stakeholders.
4. Outline the various accommodations and support opportunities that are available to students and teachers both in class and linked to the final assessments, oral and written.

All students are highly valued at Vardafjell Upper Secondary School regardless of their talents, abilities and needs. We believe that educational inclusion is about equal opportunities for all learners, whatever their age, ethnicity, impairment, attainment and background. The main focus of our school, for both the IB Diploma Programme and the national curriculum, is that all students should be guided as needed to help them reach their full potential in any subject they choose to study. All students experiencing academic and/or behaviour difficulties may not have a disability or require special education to meet their individual educational needs. In many cases, modifications to the regular education program will address a student's particular needs without resorting to evaluations or special education services.

Inclusion is an ongoing process that aims to increase access and engagement in learning for all students by identifying and removing barriers. It’s about responding positively to each individual’s unique needs instead of marginalizing students because of their differences. At Vardafjell Upper Secondary School, we recommend inclusion approaches that practice differentiation through identifying a student’s learning style, scaffolding their learning, and differentiating the approaches and tasks in order to develop the student’s true potential and achieve agreed goals with the most effective strategies. In addition to help from specialists, we believe collaborative planning by all teachers who are part of a student’s education anywhere along the learning process is the best way to support students with learning challenges.

Vardafjell Upper Secondary School supports the policy of the IBO regarding students with learning support requirements and assessment access requirements: *“The IB believes that all candidates must be allowed to take their examinations under conditions that are as fair as possible. Where standard examination conditions and assessment procedures would put candidates at a disadvantage and prevent them from being able to demonstrate their skills and knowledge adequately, reasonable forms of access arrangements may be authorized”* (Diploma Programme Assessment procedures 2025 section C6.1 Inclusive access, 2024).

Candidates eligible for inclusive assessment arrangements are those with individual needs such as:

* learning disabilities
* specific learning difficulties
* communication and speech difficulties
* autism spectrum disorders
* social, emotional and behaviour challenges
* physical and sensory challenges
* long-term medical and/or mental health challenges (with onset or occurrence more than three months before the intended examination session)
* additional language learning.

However, access arrangements are not restricted to students with identified challenges. They should be provided to any student who requires support, and where the need can be justified based on the eligibility criteria articulated in the [*Access and inclusion policy*](https://resources.ibo.org/permalink/11162-53587?lang=en) (2023).

Access arrangements are changes or alterations introduced to learning, teaching and assessment to remove or reduce barriers. They do not change what the student is expected to learn and do not lower expectations but instead provide the optimal support to address a range of barriers and enable the student to work around them. At a fundamental level, they address fairness and equal access to learning and teaching, and in addition, ensure validity and meaningfulness of assessment. (Access and inclusion policy, 2023)

## Stakeholders

Vardafjell Upper Secondary School is a state-run, publicly funded school. The inclusion policy will therefore apply to: regional education office (Rogaland Municipality County, RFK), Head of School, school leadership team, school IB coordinator, school counsellors, personal tutors, teachers, students, parents/guardians and non-teaching staff in contact with students.

## School Philosophy and Inclusive Education

The school’s philosophy on inclusive education is aligned with the school’s mission statement:
*“At Vardafjell Upper Secondary School we prepare our students for the challenges of the future in a safe and active school environment. With a broad offer of study options with international focus we are opening the doors to the world outside”.*

We regard inclusive education as a continuing process which involves:

* Increasing educational opportunities and achievements for all learners, irrespective of their needs, circumstances and disabilities
* Taking positive steps to overcome discrimination and barriers to learning
* Ensuring that the needs of individual learners are effectively met

We strive to:

* Meet the diverse educational needs of all students, from students with learning disabilities to students with high learning potential
* Define the roles and shared responsibility of each stakeholder
* Define the structures and systems needed to support all students
* Monitor our practices and adjust for success
* Manage our resources effectively and efficiently
* Seek out and provide professional development opportunities targeted at meeting the educational needs in the IBDP classroom

**Inclusive Education Goals:**

The goals of the Inclusion Policy are to:

* Adhere to national, state, and local laws regarding the special needs of students
* Ensure that the special needs of our IB students are identified early, assessed, and provided for
* Assist IB students in accessing all elements of the IB curriculum
* Ensure that the IBDP program at Vardafjell Upper Secondary School will adhere to the rules and guidelines for inclusive assessment arrangements as set forth by the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO)
* Ensure that the IBDP program at Vardafjell Upper Secondary School will provide guidance to students with inclusion needs to help them make informed decisions concerning participation in the IB Diploma Program
* Ensure that the IB coordinator immediately sends a “Request for inclusive assessment arrangement” form to the IBO through IBIS for any student with special needs that is enrolled in an IB course. Once the IB coordinator learns of the decision of the IBO, the student, parents/guardians, personal tutors and teachers involved will be informed

Special arrangements may include:

* + Additional time – 10%, 25% or 50%
	+ Rest breaks
	+ Deferral
	+ Word processor
	+ Scribe
	+ Readers
	+ Communicators
	+ Prompters
	+ Modifications to examination papers or assignments
	+ Speech recognition software
	+ Transcriptions
	+ Extensions to deadlines
	+ Assistance with practical work
	+ Vision aids and devices
	+ Hearing aids and devices (without Bluetooth)
	+ Specialized testing environment
	+ Specific seating location
	+ Interpreter for hearing impaired

The IBDP coordinator will apply for inclusive assessment arrangements for the students according to the IBO guidelines.

* Other arrangement as recommend by subject teachers/IBDP coordinator and approved by the IB
* Internal deadline extensions

Adverse or unforeseen circumstances *do not* fall under the tenets of this inclusion policy. An IB student who experiences adverse circumstances must contact the IBDP coordinator immediately to seek information regarding his or her specific situation. (For more information see School Assessment Policy, section on *Assessment deadlines*.)

We continually work on the buildings and surroundings to avoid physical obstacles (for example regarding wheelchair users, noise cancelling due to hearing impairment, etc).

## School organization and Inclusive Education

At Vardafjell Upper Secondary School all staff members have a responsibility to meet all national legal obligations on inclusive education as described in national documents on education (see links listed below) .

Education act: <https://lovdata.no/dokument/NL/lov/2023-06-09-30/KAPITTEL_1-1#KAPITTEL_1-1>

* Section 1-3 The objectives of education and training
* Chapter 11 Adapted education and individual adaptation

Framework for education (Rogaland Municipality County, 2024)

<https://www.rogfk.no/vare-tjenester/skole-og-utdanning/opplaring-i-skole/>

* Individual tailored training

Core curriculum - values and principles for primary and secondary education <https://www.udir.no/lk20/overordnet-del/?lang=eng>

* Section 3.1 An inclusive learning environment

The Educational and psychological counselling service (PPT): Education act, Chapter 11, section 11-13.

Pupils’ school environment: Education act, Chapter 12

<https://lovdata.no/dokument/NL/lov/2023-06-09-30/KAPITTEL_4-3#KAPITTEL_4-3>

As a state-run school Vardafjell Upper Secondary School is also obliged, as a legal requirement, by local and national school authorities to establish a student counselling service for students in need of learning support. The school has a student careers counsellor as well as a social counsellor (both with approx. 50% of their entire post devoted to counselling) who deal with all students within the school. The counsellors are required to give guidance according to national standards and practices. The counsellors liaise with a network of institutions connected to the school with regards to giving guidance and support to both students, teachers and parents/guardians. The student’s personal tutor has a special responsibility to keep close contact with the student to make sure all staff members in school are doing all they can to help each individual student reach his/her full potential in all IBDP subjects studied.

## EST-meetings and Inclusive Education

The social counsellor, the career counsellor, the Head of School and members of the school leadership team meet every fortnight in the Student Success Team (EST-meetings, Norwegian: Elev suksess team). The school’s employee responsible for students with reading-and-writing-challenges meets occasionally. The school’s representatives from two of the external agencies (OT and PPT; see below) participate approximately once a month, throughout the year. The EST-meetings discuss general issues and improvements, and in some cases identified students, but then only with the involved persons. All written information is stored according to guidance from the county.

External agencies are for example:

* Health service – national, regional, local institutions, council school nurse
* Educational Psychological Service (Norwegian: PPT – pedagogisk-psykologisk tjeneste)
* Education Out of School (Norwegian: OT – oppfølgingstjenesten)
* Psychiatric service for children and young people (Norwegian: BUP - Barne- og ungdomspsykiatrisk poliklinikk)
* Special Education Section
* Social Care Services (Norwegian: NAV)
* Child Protection Services (Norwegian: Bufetat)

## Council school nurse and Inclusive Education

The council school nurse has office hours in school four days a week and offers students support and guidance. The school may only discuss named students with the council school nurse if the student has given an informed consent. If contact between school educational staff/leadership team and the school nurse is needed to provide the best care for the student, an informed consent form is signed by the student (*Samtykkeerklæring i forbindelse med samarbeid mellom skolen og helsesykepleier/school-school nurse consent form*). In agreement with the student, the council school nurse may also be included in the EST meetings.

## Personal tutors and Inclusive Education

A personal tutor is responsible for following up 15-25 students on a daily basis. The school uses a digitally based system to monitor the students’ grades and absenteeism. Visma InSchoolis used to monitor student grades in all subjects and for student absenteeism registration. A high percentage of absenteeism or low grades will always be investigated and indicate a need for action. The personal tutors are continuously in touch with parents/guardians (via emails, telephone calls etc) to keep them informed (for students over 18 only if they have signed a consent form). Parents/guardians of students under 18 may at any time contact the school and ask for a meeting to discuss actions needed in order to facilitate.

At least once a year, parents/guardians together with students under 18 are invited to conferences where inclusive needs may be a relevant issue on the agenda. Furthermore, parents/guardians are informed about the Inclusion policy at the beginning of each academic year in August at parent/school meetings. For the school to inform parents/guardians for students over 18, each student is asked to sign a consent form. Only if the student chooses to do this may the school continue to inform the parents/guardians for students over the age of 18.

When a potential learning challenge is identified by a member of staff, the responsible personal tutor, the IBDP coordinator and the school social counsellor are informed, and an action plan is initiated. Minor inclusion arrangements will be decided upon in collaboration between the IBDP coordinator, the school social counsellor, the personal tutor and/or subject teachers. Any inclusion needed linked to assessments must be done only after discussing the matter with the IBDP coordinator who may/may not need to contact IBO for approvement (see School assessment policy).

It is a parent’s responsibility to be forthcoming concerning a student’s assessment access needs and/or learning support needs, and to be cooperative concerning professional documentation. This also includes parents of students with high learning potential.

## School inclusive education and professional development

All members of the teaching staff are teachers of inclusive education and must ensure that learning tasks are well matched to the individual ability and preferred learning styles of each student. Such differentiation is fundamental to allow all students access to the curriculum and a national directive as stated in the national education act.

* School social counsellor attends national as well as regional and local conferences/workshops on inclusive education regularly.
* Leadership team and teaching staff participate in national, regional and in-house workshops related to inclusive education regularly.
* The school has trained staff members in the programmes Logos and Dysmate for specific testing/screening of reading and writing challenges (e.g. dyslexia).
* The school provides extra tuition. For the national curriculum subject-specific workshops and intensive courses are arranged on a regular basis for all students; students with multinational background and who have lived in Norway for a very short period may for example have extra teaching lessons in Norwegian and may sit for an alternative examination in Norwegian. Students may also apply for additional time when performing tests and examinations. For IBDP students tutor lessons are organized by subject teachers when required and according to the individual student’s needs and wishes.
* Budgetary implications: Funding/resources are given to schools through national and regional education offices; the school has its own school budget based on this state funding.

## Meeting the inclusive education needs of students

**1: Meeting needs within the classroom**

All teaching should aim to include IB’s principles of teaching for learning diversity: affirming identity and building self-esteem, valuing prior knowledge, scaffolding and extended learning. This promotes equal access to the curriculum for all learners. Extended learning includes Approaches to teaching and learning, teaching to variability, creating optimal learning environments, assessment, collaboration and use of technologies. (*Learning diversity and inclusion in the IB programmes, 2020*).

If something additional is needed, the school social counsellor and/or the personal tutor meets with the student (and parents), to discuss necessary facilitations. The subject teachers will be informed and will work with the student (and parents/guardians) concerning how the student’s needs will be met in their individual classrooms. Individual decisions will be made on the best routes of communication for monitoring the student’s progress. Teachers will inform the personal tutor, and the personal tutor will then inform the IBDP coordinator if problems or concerns arise.

**2. Meeting needs with IBDP assessments**

It is the IBDP Coordinator’s responsibility to send the “Request for inclusive assessment arrangements” application to the IBO with all needed documents translated into English. All the inclusive assessment arrangements must be tried during the school year before applying. Once the IBO informs about the parameters regarding the special consideration decision, the IBDP Coordinator shares that information with the personal tutor, the student, parents/guardians and subject teachers involved. During the May IBDP Exams, the IBDP Coordinator makes all necessary arrangements for said accommodations in compliance with the IBO’s recommendations for special consideration. A copy of all related documents will be available in the exam venue for inspection at all times. The IBDP coordinator makes sure that the examiner is not informed about a candidate’s personal circumstances, disability, medical condition or learning support need of any kind.

## Stakeholder responsibilities

 **Summary of responsibilities of the IBDP coordinator**

* The IBDP coordinator will apply to the IBO for students’ accommodations in assessment type and circumstances using the “Request for inclusive assessment arrangements”.
* The IBDP coordinator will work collaboratively with the IB staff to support students with inclusion needs.
* The IBDP coordinator will provide examination accommodations as needed and approved by the IB.
* The IBDP coordinator will maintain discretion and confidence in providing inclusion services.

**Responsibilities of the IBDP teachers**

* IBDP teachers will comply with all federal and local laws regarding inclusion needs.
* IBDP teachers will identify struggling learners and refer said learners to the social counsellor, personal tutor and/or the IBDP coordinator. This also includes students with high learning potential.
* IBDP teachers will access and become familiar with any plans agreed upon by the EST.
* IBDP teachers will provide the appropriate accommodations and differentiated instruction as agreed upon.
* IBDP teachers will maintain accurate records of students’ progress.
* IBDP teachers will maintain discretion and confidentiality in providing inclusion services.

**Responsibilities of IBDP Parents/Guardians**

* Parents/Guardians will communicate to the school all information and documentation regarding their child’s inclusion needs.
* Parents/Guardians will communicate to the school regarding any changes in their child’s inclusion needs.
* Parents/Guardians will make a request for needed services from the school and/or the IB Program in a proactive manner.
* Parents/Guardians will provide documentation for IBO inclusive assessment arrangement requests

**Responsibilities of IBDP Students**

* Students will be proactive in asking for assistance from the personal tutor, school social counsellor, IBDP coordinator and other staff members.
* Students will be proactive in requesting inclusive assessment arrangements.

Mangler ikke responsibilities of personal tutor?

## Resources available (er dette avsnittet nødvendig? Er ikke alt nevnt tidligere?)

* Expertise the school has access to: social counsellor, careers counsellor, external support services (list of main collaborating agencies above), county school nurse, county school advisors, various national health related interest organizations
* Guidance on student’s choice of subjects: school careers counsellor has office hours providing guidance every school day. In addition, the counsellor has information meetings in classes several times a year on choice guidance. The counsellor is available during parent/guardian meetings twice a year. During the admission process to the IB Diploma programme all qualified applicants have at least one conference on individual basis with the careers counsellor; at times the IBDP coordinator as well as parents/guardians are invited to the conference (see school’s admission policy).
* Staff experts/consultants who work with students and/or guide teachers to work with students with learning support needs: social counsellor, careers counsellor, class teachers, school leadership team, head of school
* Resources allocated to maximize inclusion: appointing social counsellor, careers counsellor, personal tutors (two for each class), school leadership team members with special responsibilities for the different classes, head of school, subject teachers as well as county school advisors and external agencies
* Responsible for finding, allocating and deploying resources: in collaboration the following - social counsellor, careers counsellor, school leadership team, head of school, RFK (County School Authorities)
* Staff/stakeholders with specific responsibilities to maximize inclusive outcomes: national as well as regional education authorities, head of school
* The school is physically accessible with a lift between floors as well as wheel- chair ramps. There are also disabled parking spaces and an accessible toilet available in school.

**Communication plan linked to School Inclusive Education - er dette avsnittet nødvendig?**

* Responsible for notifying parents/guardians, students, personal tutor and teachers of testing results and/or inclusive arrangements: in collaboration the following - social counsellor, careers counsellor, school leadership team, head of school, IBDP coordinator and personal tutors
* arousing awareness in school community through school website, school learning platform (*itslearning*), at parent-teacher meetings, direct contact with parents/guardians - social counsellor, head of school, school leadership team, careers counsellor and IBDP coordinator
* Ongoing communication with parents of students under 18 in need of inclusion will be done via telephone, email, EST-meetings, parent-teacher-student conferences and/or social counsellor-student-parent meetings. Expertise from external agencies may be included when needed if the student has signed the relevant consent forms
* Inclusive Education Policy and practices are communicated to all staff at meetings, via school leadership team, as well as via the school’s learning platform and school web site where information is continually updated
* Inclusive Education information linked to individual students is communicated and coordinated during transition stages: from lower secondary school to year 1, from year 1 to year 2, from year 2 to year 3 every August of academic year in teacher class meeting with personal tutor, all subject teachers, school social counsellor and IBDP coordinator and other members of the school leadership team if needed. All information transfer is done with a high focus on maintaining discretion and confidentiality.
* Information linked to students with inclusive needs is communicated and coordinated during all three years at Vardafjell upper secondary school in EST meetings and teacher-class meetings incl. the personal tutor, all subject teachers, at times also school social counsellor and any member of the school leadership team with responsibility for the student
* School social counsellor liases with a network of institutions connected to the school with regards to giving guidance and support to students with special education needs through the EST meetings. The school head, the school leadership team, the IBDP coordinator as well as teaching staff collaborate with the social counsellor on a regular basis.

**Confidentiality of student information linked to inclusive education**

Communication of school policies and procedures regarding confidential information is done according to national and county directives and standards (data protection and privacy legislation) and also the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

* Confidential information is held in office archive system *Elements* and managed by the head of school; some confidential information is held in a secure storage in the office of the IB coordinator and the social counsellor’s office
* Access to student files is limited to – head of school, school leadership team and both school counsellors

Revised December 2024, by Gro Torill S. Nypan, IBDP Coordinator.

Earlier versions:

* Vardafjell’s Inclusive Education Policy from 2014.
* Revised November 2019 by: Ragnhild Aspen Alvsaker, Head of School and Hanne C. Gilje Birkeland IBDP Coordinator.

This document is available for the whole school community on both the school’s learning platform (Teams) and the school’s website.