

**Shogaku Gakuen**  
**Okinawa Shogaku Senior High School**  
**Special Needs Policy**  
**June 15, 2020**

Okisho's main goal for the IB DP is for it to be a program of inclusion. By its very nature, the IB DP, within the context of the Japanese educational system, is an exceptional program. We will do everything in our power to meet the needs of any student who shows the ability and desire to become an IB DP candidate.

IB DP Special Needs Policy

Okisho has a history of admitting students with special needs, both physical and emotional. While recognizing that challenges of the IB DP, we are committed to minimizing the barriers to student participation. All of our teachers are dedicated to meet the needs of any student by using a variety of teaching and learning strategies. We are particularly concerned with meeting the needs of students with bi-racial and multilingual backgrounds, as more so than in other areas of Japan, Okinawa's situation leads to a unique blend of cultures and languages, and as a result, students.

Okinawa Shogaku uses an integrated approach to meet the needs of our students. The fundamental counseling "unit" for approaching the needs of our students consists of the home room teacher, student, and the student's guardian(s). As necessary, consultation with our school's full time professional counselor is available. Additionally, students always have access to an additional professional counselor who is available for private counseling, who, if the student wishes, will maintain strict confidentiality with the student in accordance with Japanese counseling laws. With this layered approach, we seek to create an atmosphere of support and positive reinforcement to allow each and every student maximize their performance and enjoy their school life in the least restrictive way possible.

**Individual Education Plan:**

The most important component of a special needs student's education will be to recognize what their needs are and create a personalized plan to provide the least restrictive environment that we can. At the least, this requires dedicated and consistent communication and feedback with the student, their guardians, the teachers, and the school staff and shareholders. Each Individual Education Plan (IEP) will be kept on file and reviewed regularly to assess its efficacy.

While we strive to ensure every student is participating in the classroom, we understand that at certain times, students will perform best when in an individual atmosphere. In this case, we will make certain that the student is allowed to learn in an atmosphere that makes them most comfortable. We will fully support a student's needs, and are fully capable of providing student's with individual lessons and private study spaces whenever the student feels necessary.

**Differentiated Instruction:**

We strive to maintain the same experience for each and every student in the classroom. But we recognize that some students will require differentiation of resources both inside and outside the classroom. To the best of our ability, we will try not to withdraw students from the classroom. Yet we also realize there are situations where a student could benefit more from a separate plan of

study. In such cases, we will ensure all parties understand the rationale and include such plans in the IEP.

We make a strong effort to ensure our students are understanding the material as it is being taught to them. As such, our teachers will provide constant formative assessment to shape not only the students' learning, but also to guide the teacher's lessons. However, there are times when individual students struggle with new material. Because of the importance of building new material on previously learned material, when, based on the student's monthly grade report, the student appears to have difficulty grasping the content, the home room teacher, the student, and the student's guardian(s) will meet to decide an appropriate course of action. The purpose of any remedial activities decided upon will be to bring the student up to an acceptable level of understanding so that they can continue their studies with the least amount of stress.

### **Students whose first language is not Japanese:**

One of the most exciting components of the IB DP program is the inclusion of English as the language of instruction. Historically, Okisho has accepted many students whose first language is not Japanese. Our experience has shown that these students are more than capable of succeeding in a Japanese classroom when given proper Japanese language support. Non-native Japanese speakers will take Japanese language classes through Kumon, a Japanese educational system, which is administered on campus with classes taught by a licensed Okisho teacher. Motivated students with no prior Japanese ability can pass the highest level in under a year, at which point they move to the normal Japanese classroom. Students with some level of Japanese ability will be able to fully integrate into the Japanese classroom even sooner.

### **Assessments:**

Okisho will ensure that students requiring special needs for assessment be allowed to participate in the assessment in such a way that they can show their true level of ability. Any student with special assessment needs will consult with the IB DP Coordinator, and the coordinator will liaison with the IB using the D1 form.

**The fundamental philosophy of Shogaku Gakuen Education Foundation is one of inclusion. In simple terms: if a student has the ability to achieve success in our curriculum, we will do whatever is in our power to accommodate them in the least restrictive manner here at Okisho.**