

# **GULLIVER PREPARATORY SCHOOL**

## **INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE DIPLOMA PROGRAMME**

### **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS/INCLUSIVE EDUCATION POLICY**

#### **Philosophy**

The mission of Gulliver Preparatory School is to provide a superior, personalized college preparatory education that fosters well-rounded, successful, lifelong learners. Gulliver is committed to developing the unique gifts and talents of each student in a nurturing environment that promotes academic excellence, innovation, global understanding and character.

Gulliver Preparatory School fully supports the International Baccalaureate Organization philosophy that “all candidates should be allowed to demonstrate their ability under assessment conditions that are as fair as possible.” The founder of Gulliver Preparatory School, Marian C. Krutulis, made the following her mission: *“To create an academic community devoted to educational excellence with a personal touch which fulfills each student’s potential.”*

#### **Introduction**

With more than 50 countries represented, Gulliver’s student population reflects the multiethnic character of the South Florida community. We serve students via a range of programs designed to meet individual needs. Gulliver Preparatory offers an array of accommodations for students found eligible to receive services. These individual needs may include, but are not limited to, specific learning disabilities; communication and speech difficulties; social, emotional and behavioral difficulties; physical challenges; medical challenges; or multiple disabilities. Any faculty member can identify a student for evaluation and assessment. Teachers, guidance counselors, the IB Coordinator and parents are part of the team that evaluates students in need of services.

#### **IB Learner Profile**

The aim of all IB Programmes is to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world.

IB learners strive to be:

**Inquirers** They develop their natural curiosity. They acquire the skills necessary to conduct inquiry and research, and demonstrate independence in learning. They actively enjoy learning, and this love of learning will be sustained throughout their lives.

- Knowledgeable** They explore concepts, ideas and issues that have local and global significance. In so doing, they acquire in-depth knowledge and develop understanding across a broad and balanced range of disciplines.
- Thinkers** They exercise initiative in applying thinking skills critically and creatively to recognize and approach complex problems and to make reasoned, ethical decisions.
- Communicators** They understand and express ideas and information confidently and creatively in more than one language and in a variety of modes of communication. They work effectively and willingly in collaboration with others.
- Principled** They act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness, justice and respect for the dignity of the individual, groups and communities. They take responsibility for their own actions and the consequences that accompany them.
- Open-minded** They understand and appreciate their own cultures and personal histories, and are open to the perspectives, values and traditions of other individuals and communities. They are accustomed to seeking and evaluating a range of points of view and are willing to grow from the experience.
- Caring** They show empathy, compassion and respect towards the needs and feelings of others. They have a personal commitment to service and act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in relation to the environment.
- Risk-takers** They approach unfamiliar situations and uncertainty with courage and forethought, and have the independence of spirit to explore new roles, ideas and strategies. They are brave and articulate in defending their beliefs.
- Balanced** They understand the importance of intellectual, physical and emotional balance in achieving personal well-being for themselves and for others.
- Reflective** They give thoughtful consideration to their own learning and experience. They are able to assess and to understand their strengths and limitations in order to enhance their educational and personal development.

## **Disabilities and Accommodations Policy**

- Gulliver Preparatory School is committed to complying with applicable laws governing the rights of students with disabilities.
- Gulliver Preparatory School will attempt to provide reasonable accommodations to qualified students with mental or physical disabilities, to the extent that such request does not cause a fundamental alteration of the school's programs or an undue hardship on the school.
- Parents whose child may need some type of accommodation must provide a written note, specifying the condition and requested accommodation(s) along with appropriate medical

documentation (in accordance with Gulliver Preparatory School' guidelines) that support the need for the accommodation.

- After receiving such information, Gulliver Preparatory School will consider the request.
- Accommodation requests will not be processed between December 1 and the return from Winter Recess, or after May 1 for the current academic year.
- Parents may contact Gulliver Preparatory School' Testing and Accommodations Coordinator for consultation regarding Gulliver's Accommodation Policy and its implementation, or consult the GP Student and Parent Handbook.
- Essential Functions
  - The following are basic skills and abilities a student must be able to perform, with or without reasonable, in order to attend Gulliver Preparatory School. Gulliver's Accommodation Committee, as part of the admissions process, may use this list:
    - Ability to meet admissions criteria
    - Ability to maintain academic qualifications
    - Ability to meet acceptable attendance and punctuality criteria
    - Ability to function in a classroom setting without affecting the safety, security, and education of other students
    - Ability to move from class to class safely in specified time
    - Ability to respond to emergency evacuations and drills
    - Ability to feed oneself
    - Ability to sit during class
    - Ability to take notes
    - Ability to meet Gulliver behavior standards
    - Ability to take tests
    - Ability to receive visual communication
    - Ability to communicate effectively
    - Ability to safely participate in classroom activities (science labs, art projects) as applicable
    - Ability to understand and abide by the rules, policies, and expectations as outlined in the Gulliver Family-Student Handbook

## Identification

All students experiencing academic and/or behavior 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. At Gulliver Preparatory, there is an informal collaborative process that is designed to help promote a student's success in the regular education classroom with the collaboration of the IB Coordinator, learning specialist, IB faculty member, guidance counselor (if necessary) and individual faculty members. Intervention strategies, such as alternative or modified learning instruction and/or behavior management techniques, may be developed to:

- Improve the student's academic performance,

- Improve the student's behavior, or
- Improve and refine teaching skills so that the classroom teacher is able to teach students with diverse educational needs.

## Identification of Special Needs

We believe that difference and diversity strengthen any class. Teachers work diligently to remove barriers that would inhibit increased self-esteem, more positive student relationships and improved academic and social skills. Teachers use varied methods of instruction and formative and summative assessments to accommodate instruction. IB Diploma Programme teachers must keep in close contact with the Coordinator as well as with parents. Before entering the Diploma Programme, students and their parents are advised of the rigorous requirements to ensure proper placement and academic success. Students must have successfully completed certain pre-requisite classes, have an appropriate GPA and have appropriate teacher recommendations.

Once a student is accepted into the Programme and the course of studies has commenced, faculty members should refer to the Coordinator a student who is:

- Experiencing academic and/or behavioral problems,
- At risk of not being promoted,
- At risk of being referred for academic and/or attendance probation,
- Frequently absent,
- Planning to drop out of the IB Programme,
- Demonstrating negative social behavior, or
- Demonstrating stress by behavior after illness or accident.

## Special Arrangements

### Language Development Support

In order to support curriculum instruction for English language learning students, as well as to further develop reading and writing skills for those students already proficient in English, Gulliver Preparatory School designed the course Inquiry and Critical Writing 1 and 2, which pairs by semester with Theory of Knowledge. This course is currently taught by an instructor who is certified by the State of Florida in Reading and ESE (Exceptional Student Education), and who is endorsed for ELL (English language learner) instruction. Staff are encouraged to work directly with this instructor as students are assessed upon entry to the IB Diploma Programme as to their individual language development, including both strengths and weaknesses. After being assessed, our “in house” IB policy may include the following terms that are distributed to all staff:

*The following is a list of those students who qualify to take QUIZZES, TESTS and EXAMS on an extended-time basis. Students on this list can be given up to 50% additional time to complete their work.  
\*\*A translating dictionary (the dictionary must not contain notes of any kind) may be used.*

## **Academic Resource Program**

In support of Gulliver's commitment to help each student realize his or her full potential, individual instruction in the Academic Resource Program may be arranged at a convenient time during the school day. Skilled Academic Resource Program teachers work closely with classroom teachers to create an integrated, individualized program. The goal is to facilitate learning by expanding the understanding of individual learning strengths and needs and to aid students in developing strategies that can assist them in becoming more effective and successful in the classroom. This service is available to all Gulliver students on both the Marian C. Krutulis PK-8 and Upper School campuses for an additional fee.

## **Accommodations Committee**

Once a student has been identified as eligible to pursue psycho-educational testing by his/her guidance counselor, the report is sent to the Testing and Accommodations Coordinator. A meeting is called to assemble the Accommodations Committee, which is comprised of the Testing and Accommodations Coordinator, Academic Resource Program chairperson, student's guidance counselor, and parent and student. At this time, a diagnostic discussion ensues and the committee identifies school accommodations that the student will be granted to meet his or her special needs. If there are behavioral issues involved (basically issues not involving "extended time" and "testing environment"), the psycho-educational testing report will be reviewed by our in-house psychologist/college and guidance counseling staff member, who will recommend all findings to the Accommodations Committee.

## **Student Monitoring**

Once the written intervention plan developed for the student has been decided, it will be implemented by the classroom teacher, the parent in collaboration with the teacher and the classroom teacher in collaboration and consultation with persons with a particular expertise. The student's progress will be closely monitored through communication by the teacher as well as through a review of grade reports at quarterly interim time, quarter, semester and end of year. The IB Coordinator and the student's guidance counselor will:

- Review problem areas,
- Document difficulties,
- Utilize informal methods of documentation,
- Recommend specific in-school accommodations (differentiation),
- Recommend school-based resources (i.e. counseling, reading specialist, etc.),
- Monitor a student's progress and the effectiveness of interventions,
- Develop a monitoring system,
- Involve parents as participants,
- Provide parents with clear information and feedback,
- Provide feedback to administrators regarding school resource needs, and
- Develop intervention plans.

## **IBO Special Arrangements**

Any student who has either a psycho-educational report resulting in special arrangements or a doctor's medical diagnosis of issues requiring special arrangements is automatically eligible to apply for special arrangements with the IBO to assist the candidate during his or her preparation of work for assessment and in completing the written examinations. In November of each year, after the IB exam registration period has ended, the IB Coordinator requests a list of all special needs from the Testing and Accommodations Coordinator. The IB Coordinator automatically files a D1 form with the IBO for any student with special needs who is enrolled in an IB course. Once the IB Coordinator learns of the decision of the IBO, the student, parents and teachers involved will be informed. Special arrangements may include:

- Additional time,
- Rest periods,
- Use of a word processor,
- Assistance from a scribe,
- Readers,
- Communicators,
- Prompters,
- Modifications to examination papers or assignments,
- Transcriptions,
- Extensions to deadlines,
- Assistance with practical work,
- Exemption from one or more assessment components, or
- Other arrangements as recommended by the committee and approved by the IBO.

*Gulliver Preparatory encourages all students to come forward if they experience any adverse circumstances. The IB Coordinator will file a D2 form with the IBO as necessary.*

## **Professional Development for Instructional Staff**

Gulliver Preparatory is committed to inspiring and informing teachers of ways to improve student learning and achievement. We are committed to financially supporting ongoing professional development for all instructional staff. Teachers are encouraged to attend a wide range of workshops, including ESE, the Learner Profile, Special Needs and Developing Strategies that Promote and Support Diverse Learners in the Diploma Programme.

## **Resource for Parents, Students and Instructional Staff**

Gulliver Preparatory has four full-time academic resource specialists who can provide technical assistance to staff and parents. Additionally, there is an IB faculty member who is certified by the State of Florida in Reading and ESE (Exceptional Student Education), and endorsed for ELL instruction.

Gulliver Preparatory School also has a satellite campus, Miller Drive, whose academic program is based on The Academic Achievement Program (AAP). The Miller Drive Campus accepts students with average to superior intellectual abilities. Students must meet specific testing levels. The AAP is appropriate for students who are on grade level or above grade level but not achieving at their potential. Small class sizes, direct instruction in learning strategies and organizational skills and many other support systems provide an environment in which students can become successful with Gulliver's college preparatory curriculum. Students take their academic core subjects in the morning at the Miller Drive Campus and attend the Preparatory School in the afternoon for lunch, electives and extracurricular activities.

Due to the comprehensive nature of the academic program, students must possess a level of competence in communication and social skills, as well as show evidence that emotional or behavioral issues are not a concern. The IB Programme is open to students from the Miller Drive Campus as long as prerequisite courses have been taken. The IB Coordinator works closely with this campus's administrators, counselors and teachers when their students apply to the Programme and then follows through with monitoring when they are accepted into the Programme.

The counseling department at Gulliver Preparatory has 8 counselors with a reasonable caseload, 3 of whom are fluent in Spanish. In addition, the Assistant Principal is fluent in Spanish, the dean of students is fluent in Spanish, and the IB Coordinator is fluent in French and Spanish. An abundance of support personnel are available to help students with special needs.

## **Special Needs Policy Review**

It is the responsibility of the IB Diploma Programme Coordinator to ensure the success of the Special Needs Policy review. This is a working document and will be examined annually through collaborative discussions and meetings that will be held and will include those faculty members, specialists, counselors and administrators who are involved in the procedures.

## **Acknowledgements**

*The IBO Handbook of Procedures for the Diploma Program (2012)*

*Programme Standards and Practices (2005)*

*Candidates with Special Assessment Needs (2009)*

*The Diploma Programme: A Basis for Practice (2009)*

*The Diploma Programme: From Principles to Practice (2009)* and the IB Online Curriculum Centre online publications and resources

*The Gulliver Family-Student Handbook*

*The Gulliver Faculty Handbook*

<http://www.garnerib.net/home/special-education-policy>

<http://apsva.us/cms/lib2/VA01000586/Centricity/Domain/2179/Special%20Education%20Needs%20Policy.pdf> (*Special Needs Policy, International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme, Washington-Lee High School*)

<http://www.gulliverschools.org>

This document was created in collaboration with the IB Diploma Coordinator, teachers, staff specialists and administrators.