

Special Educational Needs Policy Gymnasium Bäumlhof

1. Philosophy

The Gymnasium Bäumlhof caters to the citizens of Basel, located in the North-West of Switzerland, one of the country's most culturally diverse areas. This results in our students having a very heterogenic background, socially, intellectually and culturally. In order for us to cater to the different social groups in our vicinity, our school offers many different programs to meet individual needs. Our mission is to challenge students to become responsible, knowledgeable students who take on a global perspective and treat others with care and respect.

We aim to build a school that is supportive of all students who choose to study with us, including those students who decide to take the IB Diploma Programme. In order to accomplish this, we have developed the *GBplus* system, a school model which reduces classroom teaching and increases student's individual or group learning time (= InL, see 3b.). Subjects are taught in phases of six weeks at a time and more intensively than in non-GBplus classes. At the end of each phase, students have an exam week, where their knowledge is tested. Our experience has shown that this model helps teachers better identify any behavioural or academic needs students might have. This develops the working relationship between teachers and students as they work together on improving their teaching and learning.

2. Identification

Every student in the IB DP (as in all *GBplus* classes) is assigned a "coach", who also teaches the student in at least one subject. The aims of our coaching system are

For coaches to...

- support and foster the planning of the learning process
- gain a better understanding of individual students and consequently to be in contact with parents whenever issues arise
- identify whether students are over- or underworked and to suggest measures which can improve the situation
- make students aware of any challenges that might appear should the students' behaviour and learning style be disadvantageous
- be in contact with the other subject teachers in order to gain a comprehensive picture of the students so that any feedback given incorporates multiple perspectives

For students to...

- reflect on his/her behaviour during the past 1-2 weeks and to plan the next 1-2 weeks
- manage school life and free time so that neither is neglected
- recognise the importance of asking for feedback and help from their subject teachers
- reflect on previous performance in various subjects and work towards optimizing results

For coaches and students to...

- discuss how the allotted individual learning time has been used in order to fulfil the goals set by the various teachers and to complete their assignments
- identify problems and to address them appropriately
- formulate clear and sensible guidelines together
- reflect on the time since the last meeting and plan the following weeks together

Our coaching system identifies student needs and difficulties, which can be academic or/and behavioural. We believe that coaching enables us to clearly identify each student's individual needs.

3. Access to the curriculum

The students have equitable access to the general state curriculum, the subject specific curriculum of the Gymnasium Bäumlhof and the IB curriculum via the school website. The three curricula accord in that they complement but also entail each other, similar to the workings of a Russian doll: The state curriculum is very general and forms the broad standards and contents of teaching; the subject specific school curriculum is more specific in that it focuses on competences and approaches to teaching and learning (ATL) skills. The IB curriculum is the most specific of the three in that it focuses also on very specific teaching content.

Meaningful access to the curriculum is guaranteed by IB teachers in that the curriculum requirements are discussed in class, and through the coaches, if any further questions occur outside the classroom.

For information on assessment of student's work in the IB DP see *Assessment Policy Gymnasium Bäumlhof*.

4. Supporting student needs

Throughout the past few years we have developed various possibilities besides coaching for students to either broaden their knowledge in different subjects or gain support from experienced educators.

a. Individual Learning Time (= InL)

In our GBplus system, students are required to participate in so-called InL lessons. During this time (30% of lesson time plus individual/group assignment time) a teacher of the class is present. He or she makes sure that a conducive learning atmosphere supports students whilst they work and learn individually and in groups.

In order to create a conducive learning atmosphere, the following guidelines should be adhered to:

- Students and teachers should not hold discussions which disturb the learning atmosphere of the class
- Students and teachers should not show behaviour which distracts other learners
- Students have the possibility of working together with other students and teachers

- Students have the possibility of working alone and in quiet

Students' behaviour and their progress during InL is a matter of discussion during coaching sessions (see 2.).

b. Mathematics Training

Grade 12

Grade 12 students have the possibility of taking part in a course to refresh mathematical fundamentals. A grade 12 mathematics teacher teaches this subject as an elective course.

Grade 15

A short time before final exams, students are motivated to deepen their mathematical knowledge. The "Brush Up Your Maths" elective course, which is conceived to prepare students for their final maths exam is on offer for grade 15 students.

c. Language Training

Grade 12 students who enter our high school have the possibility of taking language training in French. These are additional lessons which are taught by the subject teacher. The aim of these lessons is for students to refresh and solidify their French grammar and vocabulary skills.

We also have a similar opportunity for students who face challenges in German. In German Training (Stützkurs/Training Deutsch) students are given refresher courses and are encouraged to improve their German by experienced German language teachers. All students can participate in German Training.

For more information on language requirements and language support services at our school, see our school's *Language Policy Statement*.

d. "Nachführunterricht"

Newcomers from different countries often have deficits in French and German compared to Swiss students. In order for newcomers to become successful students at our school, additional tuition can be agreed upon when foreign students are interviewed. Both the subject and the amount of tuition are discussed. Students are instructed mostly by external tutors who remain in frequent contact with the various subject teachers.

For more information on language requirements and language support services at our school, see our school's *Language Policy Statement*.

e. Optional Courses

Students have the possibility of choosing optional courses every school year by filling out a registration form (note: courses only take place when enough students register for a given course). We also collaborate with other institutions to offer courses which do not take place at our school.

f. Talent Pool

Motivated and interested students can choose to participate in various offers available in our Talent Pool.

In the past we have offered specialised courses such as a robotics workshop, a poetry slam workshop and debating courses.

Students also have the possibility of attending lectures/workshops/camps which are organised from third parties, such as taking classes at the University of Basel to achieve ECTS credit points (Schülerstudium) or taking part in the “Biology Olympics”.

originally written in 2015 by Jonathan Lee, updated 19.3.21 by Isla Ward

Gymnasium Bäumlhof LEARNING CENTRE

Language and Mathematics Training	Guided Learning	Additional Tuition	Optional Courses	Talent Pool
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- remedial courses in French and German- German Training- Spelling Training	<p>learning to learn efficiently</p> <p>enables concentrated learning</p>	<p>Additional tuition for newcomers</p>	<p>Various options for interested and motivated students</p>	<p>Supporting giftedness in highly motivated and talented students</p>