



Admissions Policy



BMIS ADMISSIONS POLICY AND GUIDELINES

Our Mission Statement

We are a diverse and welcoming community in a joyful learning environment that promotes well-being, sustainability, and inclusivity and celebrates growth as success.

Admissions Policy

- The admissions procedure is in place throughout the school which requires information about family, previous educational experiences, and basic medical information.
- Prospective students will be assessed individually, with standardized assessment material, appropriate to their chronological age.
- The size of the school and class size limits are approved by the board of trustees.
- In alignment with the school's mission of inclusiveness, the school does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, religion, political or other opinion, in its admission practices.
- The school admits, according to available resources, students whose learning needs can be effectively supported by current resources of the school.
- BMIS is aligned with the recommendations of the International Task Force on Child Protection.

Rights and Responsibilities

Students have the right to be treated with respect, courtesy, and consideration by all members of the school community. The Learner Profile, attitudes and attributes, outlined by the IBO should be a guide for all students.

Honesty, mutual respect, and respect of other people's cultures and beliefs, are attitudes that should be supported by all members of the school community.

The school is committed to safe-guarding well-being, and aligns itself to the CIS Code of Ethics, and the values inherent in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990).

Procedures of Admissions

Entrance Assessment

The Entrance assessment is overseen and administered by the school. Assessment results are one of several criteria that impact the decision on whether or not to admit an applicant. Where the entrance assessment must be taken outside Lilongwe, this must take place under the secure supervision of the student's current school, with the cooperation of the principal of that school, independently of the family concerned. This should be at the family's expense. Applicants may only be informed of successful or unsuccessful completion of entrance examinations: no discussion of

the performance of an applicant is permitted.

Evaluation Criteria

With due attention to maintaining a balanced linguistic and cultural diversity in each year group, the relevant principal selects those applicants who most fully meet the following circumstantial and performance criteria:

- The family's level of identification with the mission of BMIS, and the inclination to make a positive contribution to the school
- The family's potential to benefit from the IB style of education that BMIS offers
- Place availability within the student numbers and class size policy
- English proficiency as per entrance assessment results
- Potential to contribute to and benefit from the English medium
- Mathematical proficiency as per assessment results
- Proven special talent, gift or ability
- Sibling already enrolled in the school.

Wait Listing

The principal shall place applicants on a waiting list in two categories:

- Applicants meeting admissions criteria, for whom no place is currently available. Such applicants will be offered a place according to the criteria outlined above.
- Applicants failing to show evidence of readiness through admissions assessments.

Evaluation of Application

The relevant principal, in discussion with all appropriate members of the admissions team and interviews with the family, will determine whether applicants shall demonstrate the potential to contribute to the English medium, both benefiting and deriving benefit from the cultural diversity of the school.

Interview

The applicant's family must attend an admissions interview with the relevant principal. The purpose of this interview is to establish the family's identification with the school's mission and philosophy, its potential to benefit from the BMIS IB programmes, and their inclination to make a positive and supportive contribution to the school.

Primary Admissions Procedures

Placement

Placement of all students will be made on the basis of their previous records and the initial assessment of the school. Initial class placement is tentative and the school

may advise a change of class after the student's abilities have been thoroughly assessed. As a guideline, the optimum number of students for all classes is 24 except for kindergarten where there the optimum number is 20.

Preferential Admission

In circumstances where class sizes are at or over the optimum numbers stated above, preferential admission will be given to students whose parents find themselves in Lilongwe by virtue of their employment. Such cases include but are not limited to, diplomats posted to Malawi, expatriates recruited to Malawi as TEP holders (including teachers at BMIS), and Malawians relocated by employers to Lilongwe from other parts of Malawi. Families of the US mission will have preferential admission.

Families of the US mission are required to complete the school's mission process and will have preferential admission and entry will be in accordance with the admission criteria.

Age of admission

The age of admission for year groups in the school is based on the child's age on the 31st of August in the academic year of admission.

Pre-Kindergarten – 4 years

Kindergarten – 5 years

Grade 1 – 6 years

Grade 2 – 7 years

Grade 3 – 8 years

Grade 4 – 9 years

Grade 5 -10 years

Application Process

After an initial inquiry, parents of prospective students are sent or given an application form and a list of required documentation. All school reports, confidential teacher reports and other documentation must be received prior to scheduling an appointment, except in rare circumstances. An appointment will be made for the student to undergo an assessment, initially with a member of the educational support department. When the completed application form and all the required documents are received and a place can be offered, a confirmation letter will be sent or given to the parents. Following the admissions assessment, it may take approximately three days to complete enrollment procedures and make final preparations for the student.

Applications made after June 30th will be processed when the school returns in August.

Secondary Admissions Procedures

Application Forms

Inquiries and applications for admission are welcome at any time of the year. Applications made after June 30th will be processed when the school returns in August.

Starter packs of information, which also include an application form, confidential reference form, and recommendations form, are available from the secondary school office or can be downloaded from the school website.

Admission and Testing

Prospective students are eligible for admission if it is believed by the principal that the school can meet their particular needs and if there are places available.

Admission to the secondary section is non-selective, with the exception of entry into the BMIS high school diploma programme in Grades 10, 11, and 12.

Admission to the last year of the IB Middle Years Programme (Grade 10) and the last year of the IB Diploma programme (Grade 12) must also allow prospective students to complete the IBO requirements for these programmes if external certification is required. (Parents must contact the principal before submitting an application for entry to Grade 10 or Grade 12).

- All prospective students are required to undertake BMIS entry assessments in the core areas of English and mathematics. (These assessments can be sent electronically to the prospective student's current school before arrival in Lilongwe. Ask for details at the time of application.)
- Other subject-specific tests may be required for entrance into the IB Diploma programme in Grades 11 & 12. (These additional tests are only available on-site at BMIS after arrival in Lilongwe.)
- Students with identified language or learning support needs will be required to undergo further assessment to evaluate the extent that which BMIS may be able to support them. (These additional tests are only available on-site at BMIS after arrival in Lilongwe.)
- The results of BMIS admission tests, previous school reports, a confidential report from the previous school, and other relevant documents (e.g. learning support reports, etc.), and discussions with the prospective student and parents all contribute to the admission decision and class placement.
- The school, through the principal and director, reserves the right not to admit a child.

Age of Admission

The age of admission for year groups in the school is to be based on the child's age on the 31st of August of the current school year.

Grade 6 - 11 years
Grade 7 - 12 years
Grade 8 - 13 years
Grade 9 - 14 years
Grade 10 - 15 years

At the discretion of the principal, flexibility of up to one year may be allowed when appropriate. (For example, a child of Grade 8 age could be placed in Grade 7 or 9 depending on the results of the placement process. No other variance is accepted).

Admission and Placement

- Admittance of students who are physically, mentally, or emotionally challenged will only be accepted at the discretion of the secondary principal under guidance from the counselor and learning support coordinator, who will conduct any tests necessary to establish the needs of an individual child. Should admittance be granted, the situation will be subject to an annual review. Students with slight to moderate learning difficulties may be admitted if it is believed that their needs can be dealt with by the school's educational support programme and the students can be placed in the regular classroom for most, if not all, of their subjects.
- Students whose native language is not English must take an oral and/or written assessment to determine whether they can be admitted. Limited assistance to English Language Learners (ELL) is available for students with slight to moderate English language needs provided the students can be placed in the mainstream classroom for the majority of their other subjects.
- Initial class placement is tentative and the school may advise a change of class after the child's aptitudes and abilities have been thoroughly assessed more closely by subject teachers.
- As a guideline, the optimum number of students for all classes is 22. The maximum number of students in a class is 24. However, in exceptional circumstances, the board of trustees may allow class sizes of 26 students.

Preferential Admission

In circumstances where class sizes are at or over the optimum numbers stated above, preferential admission will be given to students whose parents find themselves in Lilongwe by virtue of their employment. Such cases include but are not limited to, diplomats posted to Malawi, expatriates recruited to Malawi as TEP holders (including teachers at BMIS) and Malawians relocated by employers to Lilongwe from other parts of Malawi. All applications remain subject to the educational criteria stated above.

Families of the US mission are required to complete the mission process and will have preferential admission and entry will be in accordance to the admission criteria.

Please note: Students who have left the BMIS for an extended period of time must go through the same admissions process as new students including any financial conditions. There is no guarantee of a place once students have left the school.

Review

The school will, in the process of the review of the admissions policy and procedures, ensure alignment with the school's guiding statements. As part of this review the outcome of admissions will be used to ensure alignment with the school's mission.