



BISHOP MACKENZIE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL
POLICY HANDBOOK

BMIS educates and inspires students to value integrity, cultural diversity, and the pursuit of well-being and excellence. Our school fosters an environment which empowers students to become creative, confident lifelong learners ready to take action in the local and global communities.

PREAMBLE

The BMIS Policy Manual and Procedures Handbook are designed to work hand-in-glove.

The Policy Manual describes the Board set policies, which in turn guides the operations within the school as described in the Procedures Handbook.

This Policy Manual in turn is used by the school's administration and leadership teams to determine the school procedures, described in the Procedures Handbook.

POLICY MANUAL

1.00 THE SCHOOL AND ITS GOALS

Policy Statement

Bishop Mackenzie International School (BMIS) was founded in 1944, initially as part of the Designated Schools Board and later established as a trust in 1998. New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) accredited the school in 2002 and the Council of International Schools (CIS) in 2004.

BMIS is a not-for-profit, secular school for pupils in Reception to Year 13 following an internationally recognized curriculum governed by parents and supported principally by fees.

BMIS aspires to the highest standards of international education and is committed to sound pedagogical practice, effective school leadership and prudent governance.

BMIS is committed to the development of responsible, confident, compassionate and independent citizens of society.

BMIS has as its mission to educate and inspire students to value integrity, cultural diversity, and the pursuit of well-being and excellence, while fostering an environment which empowers students to become creative, confident lifelong learners ready to take action in the local and global communities.

BMIS teachers, students and parents will work together to ensure that all students:

- receive equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum, regardless of race, religion, ability or gender;
- have the opportunity to reach their full potential intellectually, emotionally, socially, morally and physically;
- develop skills for independent, creative and critical thought;
- develop a positive attitude, based on understanding and knowledge;
- develop an awareness and tolerance of different cultures, beliefs and lifestyles;
- are encouraged to act in a courteous and responsible manner towards all members of the community and the School;
- become concerned for the quality and care of the local and global environment;
- are offered education in an international context which ensures transferability and continuity with educational institutions around the world

Reviewed May 2018

2.00 SCHOOL BOARD OPERATIONS

Policy Statement

Bishop Mackenzie International School is governed by a Board of Trustees, registered as an Association according to the Laws of Malawi, who are elected by the BMIS Parents Association from amongst its members. The Board represents the best interests of the institution in its actions, deliberations and decisions. In discharging its duties, it relates to parents as a representative body, which owes to them its judgment rather than its obedience.

The objects of the Board are:

- to prepare students to become responsible, self-reliant, contributing and productive citizens of the ever-changing world;
- to provide education of an accredited international standard to all communities, rigorously taught through a broad curriculum, to realise the full potential of every student from Reception to the end of secondary level;
- to foster a fundamental awareness of, and respect for, the rights and freedoms of every individual in the Schools' community and the wider world;
- to achieve success for the Schools based on a partnership between the students, management, staff and the Board of Trustees.

The Board aims to keep in touch with the wishes and feelings of its electorate, which reflects a very diverse range of cultural and national expectations. The Board has the responsibility to consult widely, so as to avoid giving greater consideration to the opinions of one section of our community over another.

The Board is responsible for making policy and providing the overall strategic direction of the school, while the BMIS Director implements policy. Thus, the Director is responsible for the daily operation of the school whereas the Board steers the strategic course of the school.

The BMIS Parent Teacher Association (PTA) as well as the Teacher's Association Committee (TAC) and Staff Association shall have non-voting responsibilities on the Board and act primarily as observers.

Reviewed May 2018

3.00 FISCAL MANAGEMENT

Policy Statement

Bishop Mackenzie International School shall maintain guidelines for the systems and procedures for proper financial management of the school. These guidelines will be documented in the Procedures Handbook and shall ensure transparent management of the school's finances and resources.

The school operates as a Trust and the school's management is accountable to the Board for the management of all finance within the school. The Board is accountable to the Parents' Association and it is the Board which has the overall responsibility for fiduciary stewardship of the school.

The school will adopt an annual budget which will be adequate to cover the anticipated annual operational costs as well as contingency funds for the predicted needs of the school. In preparing the annual budget, the Board will consider the present and projected needs of the academic programmes, development plans, anticipated student numbers and staffing requirements.

The budget shall be considered as a controlled spending plan for the financial year and within the approved budget the Director shall be authorized to make expenditure and commitments in accordance with the BMIS policy and procedures of the school.

Reviewed May 2018

4.00 BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Policy Statement

Bishop Mackenzie International School is recognized as a Trust under Malawi Law. The school will adhere to guidelines and procedures which will be clearly documented in the Procedures Handbook, to ensure that the legal requirements of the Trust status are adhered to and at the same time, the members of the Parents' Association are assured of appropriate management of finances and resources.

The Director is responsible for ensuring regular, detailed financial reports of the school budget from the school's accounting system are distributed to the Finance Committee. The Board, via the Finance Committee, shall retain oversight of the school's budget and disbursement of funds according to the agreed budget.

BMIS shall strive to provide cost-effective services, prudent spending and controlled systems to ensure the school's finances and resources are managed transparently and according to the aims of the school.

Reviewed May 2018

5.00 PERSONNEL

Policy Statement

BMIS will employ appropriately qualified and experienced personnel, without bias or prejudice, and will ensure sufficient staffing in order to realise the educational policies and priorities within the school. The school will encourage continuity of staffing and will promote and support professional growth in areas where the needs of the institution and those of the employee coincide, within the constraints of the budget and smooth running of the school.

BMIS offers salary and benefits packages within its means, which compare favourably with those offered by other similar international schools in the region, appropriate to the position of the employee. The school intends that its salary and benefits levels should constitute an incentive to work at BMIS but also that its staff share a sense of community where contributing to the school and activities is more than a financial incentive.

All employees shall be subject to background and police checks to ensure that all adults working in the school have been appropriately screened, and have a positive attitude towards child protection.

Reviewed May 2018

6.00 NEGOTIATIONS AND DIALOGUE

Policy Statement

Bishop Mackenzie International School shall strive to maintain harmonious working relationships with its employees. In order to communicate effectively with its staff and different constituents of the employees, associations have been formed to act in the interests of its members. These recognized staff associations may enter negotiations and dialogue with the school through the Director and these associations are invited to Board meetings.

Reviewed May 2018

7.00 INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMME

Policy Statement

The school offers an English medium, co-educational, non-sectarian, internationally minded education. The International Baccalaureate Organisation's Primary Years Programme, Middle Years Programme, and Diploma Programme will be the backbone of its educational provision.

Instruction is differentiated and assessed in a wide variety of ways to encourage all students to achieve their full potential and achieve optimal standards of attainment in relation to age and ability. Students will be encouraged to develop critical and independent thinking, enabling them to acquire positive attitudes towards learning and education. They will be guided to understand the benefits of maintaining physical, mental and emotional well-being and the importance of self-worth. They will be helped to develop an awareness and understanding of cultural diversity, enabling them to become responsible individuals and members of society. Their education should enable them to undergo transitions, with confidence, in a rapidly changing world.

Reviewed May 2018

8.00 STUDENTS

Policy Statement

Admissions

An 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 assessment procedure is in place, to ensure that all students seeking admission can be educated, whenever possible, in an age appropriate year group and if necessary, receive adequate support from our Educational Support /EAL staff.

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 which should be supported by all members of the school community.

Reviewed May 2018

9.00 SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Policy Statement

The school strives to build and maintain strong community relations, will be guided by the International Baccalaureate Organisation's principles of honesty, transparency, efficiency, tolerance and respect.

BMIS is an open institution and parents are welcome to visit the school according to published procedures. The school will maintain regular and effective communication with parents/guardians regarding the general life of the school, its programmes, and its events. The school will promote the Parent Teacher Association as a vehicle for parental involvement in the school.

The school intends that students should identify with, and have a sense of belonging in the school, appropriate to their age. Relations between the school and its students will be based on mutual respect. The school promotes effective relations with the student body through the daily interactions with all staff and through the Student Council.

The school intends that relations with employees should be based on respect, trust and openness. The Director shall ensure that an effective dialogue between the school and its employees is maintained, through the Teacher's Association Committee and Staff Association. The Board shall promote employee participation in governance through non-voting attendance at Board meetings.

The school depends for its revenue on the local community. BMIS will ensure regular information about the school is given to the parents and to the contributing business community. The Director shall ensure that the programmes of the school offer appropriate opportunities for students and staff to learn about and interact with the host community.

Reviewed May 2018

10.0 INTER-ORGANIZATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Policy Statement

Bishop Mackenzie International School shall maintain and develop harmonious relationships with various organisations necessary to conduct its business as a world-class educational provider in Malawi. The school will seek to efficiently provide such data and information as is required by these organisations and to appropriately react to information received from them. BMIS shall conduct its business in a professional and efficient manner as befits an IB World School.

Reviewed May 2018

ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

BMIS aims to comply with copyright law, in accordance with the existing and future laws of Malawi, and the Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works, to which Malawi is a signatory nation (12th October 1991). Staff and students will limit reproduction and communication of copyright materials in accordance with generally accepted principles of fair use.

BMIS recognizes that students should strive to be principled by understanding and complying with accepted principles of academic honesty, and that instruction in academic honesty is a fundamental part of each student's education.

These principles are:

1. That authors and creators possess a moral and legal right to their own work;
2. That these rights must be acknowledged by following accepted procedures for citation and attribution;
3. That work must be authentically produced through students' own efforts;
4. That plagiarism, collusion and cheating of all kinds are unacceptable.

All students will be taught to act in a responsible, ethical and principled manner towards intellectual property and authentic authorship. Instruction will be age appropriate and reflect the regulations and expectations of the

educational programmes offered in the school, and the agencies that govern them (for example: International Baccalaureate Organization).

Academic malpractice will be treated as a serious breach of discipline and will be dealt with through the Academic Honesty Code of Conduct.

Guidance for the avoidance of plagiarism and how to cite the intellectual property of others is provided in the Student Planner. The standard system for referencing at BMIS is the MLA system.

Guidance for the implementation of this policy is provided below.

Academic Honesty Responsibilities and Expectations

Responsibilities

1. The Head Teacher and leadership team of each section of the school is responsible for creating academic honesty procedures and practices, which will provide more detailed guidance to teachers, parents and students.
2. The Programme/Pastoral Coordinators, library, in conjunction with other teachers and departments, where appropriate, will teach students how they can use information from various sources and put it in their own words.

Whole school

Expectations of students:

1. To be principled and tell the truth.
2. To value their own work and the work of others.
3. Not to copy, take or borrow answers or the work of others.
4. To do their own work, including homework and not ask their parents or tutor to do it for them.
5. To recognize the difference between legitimate collaboration and individual work and to play a full role in collaborative work.
6. To record the type of sources they used when creating their own work.
7. To be responsible for their own actions.
8. To show respect for intellectual property rights and acknowledge these where necessary.
9. Students are not expected to know and create everything themselves. They should always try to do their work on their own, but if any help is given it should be acknowledged in writing in the final work.

Secondary School

In addition, Secondary School students will be encouraged to act as follows:

1. To familiarize themselves fully with the Academic Honesty Code of Conduct, key definitions, clarifications, advice, and examples located in their Student Planner.
2. To act ethically with information and cite references for any work taken from another source.
3. To follow examination board rules for mock examinations, public examinations and coursework.
4. Students should not give their work to another student for any reason even if they are friends.
5. Students should not wait until the last minute to work on an assignment.
6. Students should ensure that they know how to cite (reference) sources and how to create a works cited list/bibliography.
7. When in doubt about any aspect of academic honesty, students should ask their teacher, librarian, Programme/Pastoral Coordinator.

Expectations of teachers

1. Academic honesty is an important part of teaching and learning. Teachers in particular are able to detect plagiarism and cheating in various ways:
 - a. Teachers know their student's writing styles and language ability. They can easily recognize if a text was really written by someone else.
 - b. The school subscribes to Turnitin, a sophisticated online platform that automatically checks for plagiarism and scores submitted documents.
 - c. If a student is caught being dishonest, teachers of the student will be informed of this and they will pay special attention to that student's work in future.

2. Teachers will model good practice. All articles or quotes from newspapers, journals, books and websites should be referenced before being presented to students or put on display.
3. Teachers in both the Primary and Secondary schools will educate students about the importance of academic honesty. Teachers will take into account that students are still learning to understand what academic honesty means.
4. Teachers will educate students about the right way to use someone else's ideas. Secondary School students should be taught to use the MLA system for referencing and citations.
5. If a teacher recognizes cheating or plagiarism, or even suspects such a case, he/she will take immediate steps to deal with it, according to school policy using the Academic Honesty Code of Conduct.

Expectations of Parents

1. Parents should encourage their children to try to do their homework on their own and write in their own words.
2. Any help given by parents should be clearly stated in writing on the work itself.
3. If a parent knows or suspects that their child has been academically dishonest, he/she should inform the school.

Consequences of Academic Dishonesty for Students at BMIS

All students are expected to follow both the letter and the spirit of this policy. The level of proof required for the school to take action on the grounds of academic honesty is reasonable suspicion and it is the responsibility of the student to demonstrate that they have not acted dishonestly.

The consequences for any student found attempting plagiarism, collusion, misconduct, duplication and/or communication of examination content, might range from a simple verbal warning to having an examination certificate taken away and losing a place at university. This will depend on:

- Student profile eg. age, Educational Support (Language/Learning) etc.
- The seriousness of the offence
- Whether the occurrence was accidental, the result of carelessness or a deliberate action.
- Whether the occurrence contravenes the rules of an examination board.

For details of the consequences and sanctions that will be applied in cases of academic dishonesty, please refer to the Academic Honesty Code of Conduct Definitions of academic conduct and its different categories

Terminology	IB Definition	Clarification
Academic Misconduct	<p>“Academic misconduct is a behaviour that results in, or may result in, the student or any other student gaining an unfair advantage (or a behaviour that disadvantages other students) in on or more assessment components. Unfortunately in every Diploma Programme examination session there are students who are investigated for alleged “academic misconduct”.</p>	<p>At BMIS we understand that academic misconduct can both intentional and unintentional. All forms of academic misconduct are treated seriously and in accordance with the BMIS Academic Code of Conduct</p>

<p>Academic honesty</p>	<p>“Making knowledge, understanding and thinking transparent...an understanding of the technical aspects of academic honesty, of citing and referencing...As stated in the IB learner profile, all members of the IB community strive to be “principled”, acting with “integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness, justice and respect for the dignity of the individual, groups and communities.”</p>	<p>Actively making sure the work you are presenting as your own is yours and it has not been copied or paraphrased, without references/citations, from the source(s).</p>
<p>Plagiarism</p>	<p>Plagiarism is defined as the representation, intentionally or unwittingly, of the ideas, words or work of another person without proper, clear and explicit acknowledgment. The use of translated materials, unless indicated and acknowledged, is also considered plagiarism</p>	<p>Presenting someone else’s ideas without citing/referencing, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Copying or paraphrasing material/ideas and presenting it as your own work without citing the source(s). · Translating a text or an idea and then presenting it as yours without citing the source(s).
<p>Collusion</p>	<p>Collusion is defined as supporting academic misconduct by another student, for example allowing one’s work to be copied or submitted for assessment by another.</p>	<p>Collusion includes sharing (intentional or unintentional) a hard or soft copy of your own work to another student, which is then presented as their own.</p>
<p>Legitimate collaboration</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Examples of legitimate collaboration are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Permitted or actively encouraged to produce work with other students. · Provide help and advice to another student, not including writing the work for them or providing a copy of your own work.

<p>Misconduct</p>	<p>Misconduct during an IB examination includes taking unauthorized material into an examination room, disruptive behaviour and communicating with others during the examination.</p>	<p>Misconduct includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Imitating someone else signature. · Using hidden notes on paper, electronic devices or written on yourself during a test or examination. · Asking for or looking up answers during a test or examination. · Making up or altering scientific or other research data. · If you work in a team, letting others do the work and then adding your name as if you had done an equal part of the work. · Pretending to be someone else in an examination
<p>Duplication</p>	<p>Duplication of work is defined as the presentation of the same work for different assessment components and/or Diploma Programme requirements.</p>	<p>Presenting the same work for marking more than once, which can include:</p> <p>‘Recycling’ an old assignment by presenting it as new original work without acknowledging that this has been done.</p> <p>Handing in the same text or research material for two different subject assignments without acknowledging that this has been done.</p> <p>The presentation of the same work for different assessment components and/or diploma requirements (for example if the same material from an internal assessment has been used in an extended essay) in contravention of examination board rules.</p>
<p>Communication about content of an examination</p>	<p>Communication about the content of an examination 24 hours before or after the examination with others outside their school community is also considered a breach to IB regulations.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Intellectual property</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Creations of the mind: inventions, literary and artistic works, symbols, names, images & pictures, and designs</p>

Revised May 2018

ADMISSIONS POLICY

Preamble

The school’s Admissions policy and procedures are designed to support the Mission Statement and objectives of the Trust.

Mission is “BMIS educates and inspires students to value integrity, cultural diversity, and the pursuit of well-being and excellence. Our school fosters an environment which empowers students to become creative, confident lifelong learners ready to take action in the local and global communities.”

The stated objectives of the Trust shall be:

- to prepare the students of the School to become responsible, self reliant, contributing and productive citizens of the ever-changing world.
- to provide education of an accredited international standard to all communities which is rigorously taught through a broad curriculum realise the full potential of every student from pre-school to the end of secondary level;
- to foster a fundamental awareness of, and respect for, the rights and freedoms of every individual in the School’s community and the wider world;
- to achieve success for the School based on a partnership between the students, management and staff and the Board of Trustees.

Further, in trying to identify what the school understands by “internationalism” the following statements apply:

- Developing citizens of the world in relation to culture, language and learning to live together
- Building and reinforcing students’ sense of identity and cultural awareness
- Fostering students’ recognition and development of universal human values
- Stimulating curiosity and inquiry in order to foster a spirit of discovery and enjoyment of learning
- Equipping students with the skills to learn and acquire knowledge, individually or collaboratively, and to apply these skills and knowledge accordingly across a broad range of areas
- Providing international content while responding to local requirements and interests
- Encouraging diversity and flexibility in teaching methods
- Providing appropriate forms of assessment and international benchmarking

With these three key “drivers” above, the school aims to apply principles of equality of educational opportunity, so every student, regardless of religion, ethnic or national origin or gender, be given maximum opportunity for educational development. The school strives to provide an environment in which the students can enjoy success through stimulating and varied educational practices and where the medium of instruction is English. The backbone of the curriculum is that of an enquiry-based learning approach and students will be expected to become increasingly self-reliant, developing study skills and collaborative approaches to the learning opportunities as appropriate.

Policy

Applications for admission are accepted throughout the year.

Admission to the school is non-selective with the exception of the IB Diploma Programme and individual IB Certificate courses. Students are eligible for admission if it is believed by the school administration that the school can meet their particular needs and if there are places available.

Admittance of students who are physically, mentally or emotionally challenged will only be accepted at the discretion of the relevant Head Teacher under guidance from the Educational Support staff and/or Counsellor, 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 classes.

Students whose native language is not English must take an oral and/or written assessment to determine whether they can be admitted. Limited assistance in English as an Additional Language 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 learning.

The school administration reserves the right not to admit a child if an appropriate programme or educational support is not available for the child at the time of application.

Placement of all students will be made on the basis of an initial assessment, which may be oral and/or through written tests as appropriate to their age, and the child’s previous school records, which may include a confidential reference from the child’s previous school.

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.

As a guideline, the optimum number of students for all classes from Y1 to Y6 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 up to 26 students. Reception classes have an optimum number of 20 students.

IB Diploma Programme

Students wishing to enrol in the IB Diploma programme are reminded that the grades achieved in their previous school year are taken very seriously when their applications are being considered. External students applying for the IBDP may be transferring from another MYP school or from a different curriculum background. The Secondary Head Teacher will assess the child's prior achievements to ensure the appropriateness of the IBDP. Typically, students should have a minimum of 11 BMIS High School Diploma credits from MYP subjects in Year 10 and 11, including Mathematics and English in order to be considered for entry into the Diploma Programme. (Further guidance is provided in the BMIS High School Diploma regulations.) Students arriving without MYP experience will be considered for the IB Diploma Programme on the basis of their previous school reports, a confidential Head Teacher report and an entry assessment. Students will be expected to maintain high academic standards throughout the two-year IB Diploma Programme and promotion to Year 13 will be dependent on acceptable performance in Year 12 (e.g. passing end of year exams, successful participation in the CAS programme and producing relevant coursework on time.)

Preferential Admission

In circumstances where class sizes are at or over the optimum numbers stated above, preferential admission may 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.

Age of Admission and Age Limits for Classes

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.

Comparison with other countries UK ZAM USA/RSA ZIM

The Head Teacher may, at his/her discretion, allow flexibility of up to one year on the age of admissions where appropriate. For example a child of Year 9 age could be placed in Year 8 or 10 depending on the results of the placement process. No other variance is accepted.

Entry in Y11 or Y13

Please note that students are not normally admitted directly into Year 11 or Year 13. Exceptions to this policy would only be made if the applicant's previous programme very closely matches that at BMIS and no alternative solutions are available elsewhere. High School credits already awarded to the student would be transferred to a BMIS High School Diploma on a Pro Rata basis if there was close compatibility between the two programmes. Again the school administration reserves the right not to admit students if there is no appropriate programme.

Reviewed May 2018

Revised May 2017

ASSESSMENT POLICY

Common Beliefs

Assessment practices at Bishop Mackenzie International School are based on the following beliefs about learning that reflect school values and IB philosophy.

Assessment is Learner Centred

- Assessment is a reflection of the holistic learning environment that is inquiry based, connected across the curriculum and grounded in real life experiences.
- Assessment is developmentally appropriate.
- Assessment is used to help ascertain what learners know, understand and can do.
- Assessment practices recognize that learning is a lifelong process.
- By recognizing each person's unique potential, assessment practices are designed to promote individual excellence.

Assessment Involves the Whole Community

- Assessment enables on-going collaborative reflection between the students, teachers and parents, enabling each to become a partner in the learning process.
- Assessment practices encourage emotional, creative and intellectual risk-taking.
- Assessment practices cater for and respect cultural, linguistic and intellectual diversity of the school community.

Assessment is Coherent within the Host Country

- Where meaningful, our assessment practices use our host country as a platform for learning to develop authentic and relevant contexts for assessment.
- Where meaningful, assessment practices use a global context to develop authentic and relevant tasks that deepen intercultural understanding and respect, and the individual students' sense of identity.
- Assessment practices take into account the diverse language and cultural backgrounds of all learners to enable them to communicate their understanding effectively.

Common Assessment Practices

Bishop Mackenzie International School's assessment policy is available to all sections of the school community and informs all assessment practices.

Planning for assessment

- Assessment is integral to planning, teaching and learning across all sections.
- Learning expectations and assessment strategies are made clear to students and parents.
- Teachers plan assessment tasks collaboratively with Learning Support and EAL departments.
- Assessment values the learning process, as well as the products students create.
- The school uses a balanced range of strategies and tools for formative and summative assessment, which are reviewed regularly.

Analysis of assessment

- Data about student learning is analysed to provide information about the individual needs of students and to help differentiate the curriculum programmes.
- Assessment information is analysed collaboratively across the separate school sections (Primary and Secondary) to evaluate the curricula programmes.
- Assessment practices are regularly reviewed in light of the IB standards and practices and the requirements of Cambridge International Examinations.

Assessment strategies

- Learning involves students in both peer- and self-assessment.
- Where appropriate, teachers involve students in the design of assessment tasks and rubrics.
- Pre-assessment is used at the start of units of work to determine what students know, understand and can do.

Feedback and reporting on assessment

- Students are provided with regular and prompt feedback to inform and improve their learning.
- Assessment at the school provides students with regular opportunities for reflection on their own learning.
- Each school section (Primary and Secondary) has developed effective systems for recording information about student learning.
- The assessment process allows for meaningful reporting to parents about students' progress.
- Data, including evidence of development in terms of the learner profile, is reported to participants in the learning process: students, parents, teachers and school leaders, and other schools at the time of transfer.

- Student portfolios and student led conferences are used to actively engage students in the learning process.
- Teachers provide regular and timely feedback to parents on student learning outside of the reporting and parent-teacher conference cycles.
- Assessment tasks provide opportunities for students to reflect on their time management skills and develop learning goals for the future.
- The reporting cycle includes written reports and conferences. Conferences can take the form of parent-teacher conferences, three-way conferences and student-led conferences.

Programme Specific Procedures

Bishop Mackenzie International School's assessment procedures are developed according to the requirements of each of the programmes operated in the school, and are organised along the following continuum:

Primary School

- IB Primary Years Programme (4 to 11 years old)

Secondary School

- IB Middle Years Programme (11 to 16 years old)
- IB Diploma Programme (16 to 18 years old)

Procedures for the implementation of this policy are developed within each section of the school, and are reviewed and refined on a regular basis (at least annually). The procedure manuals for each programme are issued to all teachers and are available for inspection by parents and students. Some details of the assessment procedures are included in student-parent handbooks and other school publications.

Reviewed May 2018

Revised May 2016

LANGUAGE POLICY

Our language policy exists to help our students to develop the attributes of communication as described in the IB Learner Profile [1]:

- We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways.
- We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.

Our School

Students at Bishop Mackenzie International School (BMIS) are drawn from the international expatriate and the local Malawian community living in Lilongwe, Malawi, and learn using English as the language of instruction and communication. We are open to children of all nationalities and a wide range of abilities. However, competence in English must be developed by all students in order to achieve certain academic standards within the school.

We also provide students with the opportunity to develop competence in at least one other language. We will ensure that all students undergo an in-depth English language programme through the curriculum and throughout their time in the School – this may involve English Language Learner (ELL) courses, in the PYP; English Language Acquisition in the MYP; and English B in the DP. We also provide additional small group English language support, if necessary.

The majority of our students speak English as their main language, spoken both at school and at home, but equally most of our students are also exposed to another language at home on a regular basis. Chichewa and Memon are the next most common home languages and in total, 60 languages have been identified as being spoken by our students at BMIS[2].

Philosophy

BMIS provides an English medium education programme using the pedagogy and philosophy of the International Baccalaureate Organization that is encapsulated in the three academic programmes: Primary Years Programme (PYP), Middle Years Programme (MYP) and Diploma Programme (DP).

The acquisition of language is a dynamic, lifelong process that permeates all learning. Through meaningful interaction, it enables us to communicate with and understand other people and to understand how the world works. Additional languages enrich our intellectual and social growth.

BMIS beliefs and values regarding language:

- Language is a key factor in the development of international understanding
- Language is central to the curriculum and to the medium of inquiry
- Diversity in the levels of language and literacy development is recognized and respected
- Literature is an integral part of the curriculum
- All teachers have a responsibility to address the language needs of their students in the language of instruction.

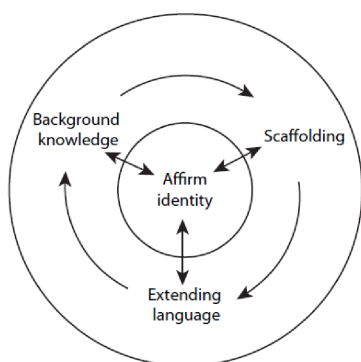
Pedagogy for Language and Learning [3]

Our school wishes to promote a pedagogy that reflects the values, beliefs and understandings of language and learning in the IB programmes. It is our belief that this is essential for all multilingual IB students, including those learning in a language other than their mother tongue, to be able to have access to the curriculum.

Our focus will be on aspects that relate specifically to developing a threshold level of cognitive academic language proficiency (or CALP), which is essential for the participation and engagement that is necessary for subsequent success in learning and knowledge construction.

We believe that there are four dimensions of teaching that are particularly important in ensuring learner participation, promoting engagement and successfully constructing understandings:

- activating prior understanding and building background knowledge
- scaffolding learning
- extending language
- affirming identity



The language and learning cycle of good practice (based on the work of Jim Cummins, 2007)

Language is involved in all learning that happens in our classrooms and it is an essential vehicle for inquiry and the construction of meaning. It empowers the learner and provides an intellectual framework to support conceptual development and critical thinking. Students' needs are best served when they have opportunities to engage in learning within meaningful contexts, rather than being presented with the learning of language as an incremental series of skills to be acquired. In an inquiry-based classroom, teachers and students enjoy using language,

appreciating its functionality and aesthetics. Wherever possible, language should be taught through the relevant, authentic context of the units of inquiry. Regardless of whether language is being taught within or outside the programme of inquiry, it is believed that purposeful inquiry is the way in which students learn best.

Primary Years Programme

The need to communicate is instinctive. The development of language is fundamental to that need to communicate; it supports and enhances our thinking and understanding. Language permeates the world in which we live; it is socially constructed and dependent on the number and nature of our social interactions and relationships. [4]

In the PYP, teaching & learning of language revolve around the planning, which in turn is based on the Language scope & sequence. The Language of instruction is a part of the transdisciplinary programme of inquiry because we believe that students learn language, learn through language and learn about language.

Middle Years Programme

An IB education creates teaching and learning communities and opportunities that help students increase their understanding of language and culture, and become more globally engaged.[5]

MYP students are encouraged to consider issues from multiple perspectives so as to learn about their own and others' social, national and ethnic cultures and to develop international-mindedness. In all MYP subject groups, communication is both an objective and an assessment criterion.

Diploma Programme

In the Diploma Programme, language courses are offered in two of the subject groups:

- Group 1 - studies in language and/or literature
- Group 2 - language acquisition

The range of courses has been designed to address and acknowledge the complexity and range of language profiles that students may bring to the DP. Our school aims to provide school-supported self-taught literature programmes and tutor-based or online language-acquisition courses, as and when appropriate, and when resources allow, where taught programmes may not be viable.

Our school will provide subject and class teachers with suitable professional development to support language learning.

Whole Language Outcomes

At our school, the teaching of language must address the strands of listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing, and presenting.

Listening: Students learn to listen attentively and demonstrate consideration for the speaker. They learn to understand and evaluate what they hear, to think about both literal and inferred meanings, and to respond appropriately. They learn to listen for specific information, considering the context, the speaker and the audience.

Speaking: Students use oral language to ask and answer questions; collect information, relate and retell; persuade; talk about needs, feelings, ideas, and opinions; and to contribute to discussions in a range of formal and informal situations. Students learn to respond confidently, appropriately and relevantly considering the context, the speaker and the audience. They develop their pronunciation, intonation and fluency. They expand their vocabulary and start using more complex grammatical sentences.

Reading: Students read to gain meaning from text, and for enjoyment. The students learn to use a variety of strategies to gain meaning, including their understanding of phonics, the use of context clues, and visual prompts. The process of reading is interactive and involves the reader's purpose for reading, the reader's prior knowledge and experience, and the purpose and the structure of the text itself. Students need to learn how to understand, interpret and respond to the ideas, attitudes and feelings expressed in various texts; to think critically about what they read; and to be able to make predictions and inferences based on information that is both explicit and implicit in a text.

Writing: Students write as a means to remember, develop, organise, gain self-knowledge and communicate ideas, feelings and information. Purpose and audience contribute to the form and substance of writing as well as to its style and tone. Students learn to write through a developmental process. They need to focus first on meaning rather than accuracy. Grammar, spelling, handwriting, punctuation and paragraphing should be taught gradually through writing practice. The writing process involves creating an environment where students can acquire the skills to achieve written products for a variety of purposes.

The written product can be formal, informal, personal or reflective.

Viewing and Presenting: Students learn to present and interpret visuals, broadening the ways in which they can understand and communicate their learning. Acquiring skills related to advanced technology and media gives students the opportunity to communicate, respond and comprehend thoughts, ideas, and feelings. A variety of formats including visual, (e.g., photographs, graphs, cartoons), dramatic (e.g., tableaux, improvisations, live theatre), and multimedia (e.g., videos, television, computer) engages viewers allowing them instant access to data. Learning to understand and use different media expands the sources of information and expressive abilities of students.

English as Language of Instruction

Language instruction involves the belief that planning, teaching, assessing and reflecting are interconnected processes. Language support occurs throughout the school. Year group teachers (Primary) and class teachers (Secondary) are responsible for the direct instruction and assessment of student language acquisition and for identifying each student's individual needs. Language support is organized in and out of the classroom through whole group, small group, and individualized instruction. Additional support is also provided by the English Language Support teachers in case of limited English proficiency and by the Educational Support team to scaffold students' language acquisition and skills.

Strategies to collect evidence for student assessment may include writing samples, classroom rubrics, checklists, self and peer assessments, conferencing and benchmark assessments, observations, and running records. This data is used to guide instruction, monitor progress, foster student achievement, and offer differentiated language learning strategies. These strategies form an essential part of the school's assessment and reporting policies.

Teachers use a variety of methodologies to create better language understanding.

Literacy instruction in the PYP is integrated as much as possible into the units of inquiry and is supported by a variety of resources including: leveled readers, big books, guided reading books, interactive whiteboard resources, Razkids, technology and apps, as well as library resources. Our substantial collection of fiction and non-fiction readers is available to differentiate instruction in language development. We also provide Language Support for English Language Learners (ELL), which can be timetabled against French where appropriate.

In the MYP, BMIS offers English Language Acquisition as an option. Students are further supported by English Language Support (timetabled against Design), and Additional English Language Support (timetabled against Language Acquisition French/Spanish) if necessary (refer to the 'Secondary Language Pathways').

In the DP BMIS offers English Language A and B. When students study English B, their Language A is studied as a self-taught course. Currently the School provides students with the opportunity to study Literature or Language and Literature at both SL and HL. The focus of both courses is trying to deviate from the traditional path of literary study; new text-types (graphic novels, blogs, film etc.) are being explored and developed. The Language and Literature course studies language in cultural context and language and mass communication. The texts are chosen from a prescribed list of authors identified by the IB, in combination with free choice.

French or Spanish as Additional Language

The IB acknowledges that learning additional languages greatly contributes to the holistic development of students. Proficiency in a second language gives students access to a broader range of input, experiences and perspectives. The study of another language aims to encourage in the student a respect for and understanding of other languages and cultures.

The exploration of ideas in another language can enrich intercultural competence as well as the understanding of the concepts of structures in our student's English and home languages. The promotion of international-mindedness in our school is enhanced by our commitment to additional language learning.

At BMIS the modern language courses use a balance between approaches to learning that are teacher-centered and those that are learner-centered. The courses develop students' linguistic abilities through the development of receptive, productive and interactive skills. Specific strategies, including the Constructivist Approach and the Communicative Approach are used.

In the PYP, French is taught as an additional language from Years 2 to 6. The approach to language teaching is that it connects with the units of inquiry. A variety of resources are used, including audio-visuals and integrated technology. Students acquire language through a focus on meaning rather than grammar. French books and materials are available in the library and reinforce practice of our additional language at home.

The principal aim of Language B at secondary level is to encourage students to gain competence in a modern language other than their mother tongue. In the MYP French, Spanish and English are offered. Within the framework of a communicative approach, students learn the structure of the language in order to be able to express themselves in a range of situations.

Language Acquisition in the MYP

Y6-7 transition - student placement

All students transitioning from BMIS PYP to MYP will be given the option to study French/Spanish/English (where appropriate) as a second language.

Student placement when arriving to BMIS

The admissions form will detail the following and will be forwarded to the Languages HOD

1. The language/s the student has previously studied as an additional language
2. Which curriculum the student was following (MYP, IGCSE, International school, private or public schools, ...)
3. How many years the student learned the language
4. If possible, results and grades from the previous school in the language
5. Mother tongue and additional language/s spoken at home (spoken/written/read)

Issue a **30 minute placement test** based on criteria B, C and D and a **10 minute verbal interview** to be scheduled by the Languages HOD.

Phase movement

The MYP Language Acquisition Guide suggests that, 'in most cases, students exiting from phase 4 will have had the equivalent of at least four years of additional language learning' (21). It is typical that learning development in Phase 2 is over two years.

The department will review the students' phases **mid-year** (December) and at **the end of the academic year** (June). The decision for student phase progression will be informed by the following:

- Consolidation of skills and results (minimum 1 year)
- Results: Criteria A and B (minimum 5 each)
- Results: Criteria C (minimum 5) and D (minimum 6) for both spoken and written tasks
- Consultation with the descriptors in MYP Language Acquisition global proficiency table found on p.25 of the MYP Language Acquisition subject guide.

The students' success in mastering the skills in the continuum can be found on pp. 12-14 of the MYP Language Acquisition subject guide.

The final decision will be taken in consultation with the subject teacher, HOD, and MYP Coordinator.

Language B in the Diploma Programme

In the DP BMIS offers Language B English, French, Spanish and Ab Initio Spanish as part of group 2 of the IB Diploma. These language acquisition courses are designed to provide students with the necessary skills and intercultural understanding to enable them to communicate successfully in an environment where the language studied is spoken. The student is encouraged to go beyond the classroom, expanding an awareness of the world and fostering respect for cultural diversity.

In accordance with IB philosophy, we expect sustained language learning across the MYP and DP, unless satisfactory proficiency is achieved in MYP Phase 4 to transfer to another language. Only in consultation with the programme coordinators will a student be able to change their language option. Further to this:

- Students who have studied French will be placed in DP French B. Students who have studied Spanish will be placed in DP Spanish B.
- Spanish "ab initio" is for students new to BMIS who have not studied French or Spanish. In addition, BMIS students who have achieved French B Phase 4 may choose to study "ab initio" in Spanish in order to widen their strong language skills.
- Students with a strong mother-tongue background may choose to study a Literature A course in that language with an external private tutor. BMIS will support the tutor and the student. Students who achieve success in both English A and another Language A will be in a position to qualify for the award of a Bilingual Diploma from the IB.
- Students whose proficiency in English is insufficient for English A will be placed in English B. Full IB Diploma students will be required to follow a Language A in their mother-tongue
- There are other Language courses provided on-line by Pamoja (licensed by the IBO).

Language Support (English)

Language Support is offered to our English Language Learners (ELL). Students in both Primary and Secondary sections of the School from all linguistic backgrounds, who are identified as being unable to communicate fluently or learn effectively in English, are helped to achieve their potential in educational, social and cultural contexts at school. Language Support helps students to achieve accurate and confident use of English across the curriculum developing communicative skills, including the language of critical thinking and problem solving, and the use of creative language for self-expression.

New students to the school who are identified as needing Language Support are assessed on entry to the School through tests as well as through an interview with the Language Support teacher and/or IB Coordinator and/or the relevant Head Teacher (see Admissions Policy and Procedure). Based on admissions assessments, students may then be identified as requiring Language Support within the school. Existing students may be identified as requiring further Language Support based on observations from classroom teachers. The relevant Learning Support teacher will make a judgment on the level of support based on assessments and discussions with class teachers. The results of tests are made known to all subject teachers so that they are aware of any difficulties the student may encounter within their classroom.

Language Support is available for students through a combination of in-class and out-of-class support. ELL students also receive subject support for which subject teachers collaborate with the Language Support teacher/s to identify content skills needed for subject learning. Whenever possible, first language materials such as translation devices are used to help students access the curriculum. Progress is monitored both informally and formally by the Language Support teacher and class/subject teachers.

Students are carefully monitored by the Language Support teacher in collaboration with the class/subject teachers. The successful exit from Language Support involves discussions about the individual student's progress with the teachers (Primary) and teacher of English Language and subject teachers (Secondary) and may involve an age appropriate Exit Test (Primary/Secondary).

Mother-Tongue Support

As IB educators, it is our belief that mother tongue language is crucial for maintaining age appropriate cognitive development, cultural identity and emotional stability. It is our responsibility to recognize and support each and every aspect of language development and provide opportunities for individual students, parents and families to share their heritage with us.

Parents are encouraged to promote language learning at home, to read stories to their children, and to engage with them in their mother tongue. To this end, resources are available in the library to support other languages being spoken at home and their culture. Parents are provided with contact details for mother tongue language support and learning groups in Lilongwe, where these exist. Parents and community members are also welcomed to use the school facility for activities and clubs that support mother tongue development, as per use of school grounds and facility policy.

Due to the wide diversity of our home languages, we are not able to offer direct mother tongue support for languages not taught at the school. When possible, our practice is to pair up students with buddies and/or place them with year group teachers who speak that language. We also continue to reach out to the local and global community to help source tutors who can provide mother tongue support.

Host-Country Language

The official languages of the host country are Chichewa and English. BMIS encourages Chichewa speaking staff to speak their language to the students, to reinforce instructions and routines. We recognize our host-country language through bilingual signage around the school to guide our visitors. The library has, and continues to add to, resources in Chichewa.

As we value the culture of our host country, our students have opportunities to appreciate Malawian culture, literature, and performance. Service also plays an important role in appreciation of host-country language and culture.

Procedure Development

Procedures for the implementation of this policy should be developed by the Primary Head Teacher and the Secondary Head Teacher, together with the three IB programme coordinators, Educational Support Coordinator(s) and teachers and heads of languages in Secondary. Vertical alignment of the policy across the three IB programmes should be monitored through the regular refinement of these procedures following regular collaboration between all of the above stakeholders.

Policy Review

This policy, and associated procedures, must be reviewed on a regular basis. Factors to consider when reflecting on the periodicity of the policy review, should include the periodicity of the review and renewal of IBO curriculum guides, any significant changes in the school student population, and changes to legal requirements for language provision in the host country.

A survey of languages in the school community should be conducted at least every four years.

[1] IB Learner Profile (© IBO 2013)

[2] BMIS community language survey (December 2017)

[3] Based on extracts from *Language and learning in IB programmes* (© IBO 2011)

[4] Making the PYP happen (© IBO 2009)

[5] MYP: From principles into practice (© IBO 2017)

Reviewed May 2018

Revised May 2018

EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT POLICY

Introduction

Bishop Mackenzie International School (BMIS) believes that all students are entitled to a broad and balanced curriculum, which is differentiated to meet individual needs and which enables them to reach their full potential.

Students may need educational support if:

- They have a greater difficulty in learning than the majority of students of the same age, or
- They have a disability that prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for students of the same age.

All teachers are considered to be teachers of children with special educational needs and the teaching of these students is a whole school responsibility requiring a whole school response.

Educational support can be defined as any educational provision additional to, or otherwise different from, that generally available to other students of the same age at this school. Support is offered to students whose needs and requirements fall within the following broad areas:

- English as an Additional Language (EAL)
- Cognitive and learning, specific learning difficulty
- Behavioural, emotional and social development
- Mild speech and language difficulties
- Mild sensory and/or physical, hearing or visual impairment
- Response to gaps in learning as a result of school transfers

Inclusion

BMIS promotes an inclusive approach to education based on a philosophy which views diversity of strength, ability and need as natural and desirable. The programmes of the IB are designed to be inclusive programmes, and as such, are ideally suited to provide differentiated learning opportunities for BMIS students. However, there are physical limitations to the resources and facilities available at the school which will impact on this diversity (see Admissions Policy).

The Educational Support and English as an Additional Language staff will support the inclusion of all students admitted to BMIS with specific educational needs.

Objectives

BMIS Educational Support Policy begins with leadership from the Board of Governors, the Director, Heads of Primary and Secondary Schools, who actively support Educational Support and English as an Additional Language staff in achieving the following objectives:

- To enable all students to access a broad, balanced, stimulating, challenging and differentiated curriculum, focusing on the needs, strengths, abilities, talents and individual learning styles of all students.
- To ensure early identification, assessment and provision for any student who may have special educational needs, English as an additional language or who is in need of any kind of learning support.
- To encourage and support students to participate in all decision-making processes, target-setting and review of their individual educational plans (IEP) where appropriate.
- To view parents as partners, and involving them fully in supporting their child's education, developing and implementing a joint learning approach at home and at school.
- To ensure that parents, students and teachers have a common understanding of the student's educational targets.
- To monitor, evaluate and record students' progress at regular intervals, discussing results with the student, their parents and their teachers.
- To provide training, advice, appropriate strategies and information to staff on how we, as a school, may meet the needs of students with learning difficulties or English as an additional language.
- To engage teachers in sharing best teaching practices for differentiation.

Identification Procedures

The process of identification of ES and EAL students includes the following:

- Information from previous schools and parents.
- Screening/assessment on referral from parents, teachers, or self-referral.
- English Language Proficiency Tests.
- Evidence from teacher observation.
- Speech and Language Therapist, Educational Psychologist's Reports, Diagnostic Assessments and Medical Assessments. (The cost of any external assessment will be paid by the parents).
- ISA and other externally validated assessment results.

Provision and Arrangements

Provision and arrangements for EAL students and students with special educational needs is a matter for the school as a whole. An Individual Education Plan (IEP) is created for individual students by the EAL teacher(s), the ES teacher(s) or the Counsellor (as appropriate). IEPs are created and reviewed in collaboration with the student, the parent, class teacher or form teacher and subject specialist teachers. Reviews of IEPs will take place at regular intervals as agreed on the previous IEP.

IEPs are confidential documents that are designed solely to support the individual learning needs of a student. Access to an IEP is restricted to BMIS educational and administrative personnel in their support of the needs of the student, and to the student and the parents.

Procedures have been adopted (as outlined below) to provide appropriate support in different sections of the school.

IB Primary Years Programme

In the PYP, the classroom teacher and specialist teachers, in close collaboration with parents and the Educational Support Department identify and understand the needs of individual students within their class, creating a learning environment that enables each individual student to learn and progress to his or her full potential academically, emotionally and socially. (Refer to *Primary Educational Support Services Procedures*).

At the end of PYP, clear recommendations will be given as to the type and nature of support that each individual student will require in the MYP. Collaboratively an appropriate IEP will be set up to continue effective support at the start of the new academic year in the MYP.

IB Middle Years Programme

The central role of the Areas of Interaction in the MYP, particularly Approaches to Learning (ATL), helps teachers and students respond in a flexible way to varied learning needs and skills, including EAL students and students with special educational needs and learning difficulties. The MYP curriculum can be used as it is written, without any alteration or modification.

EAL and EAP (English for Academic Purposes) programmes are delivered in the context of MYP Units in an effort to reinforce skills required in the MYP mainstream classes and enrich academic vocabulary. (Read further *English as an Additional Language Secondary Handbook*)

Specific arrangements that may be put in place to support EAL students and students with learning difficulties are guided by the support policies and recommendations of the IB.

IB Diploma Programme

The DP has well established support system outlined in the publication “Candidates with Special Assessment Needs” (IBO © 2011). The identification of any student with a learning issue must be completed prior to starting the programme. A medical or psychological evaluation must not be more than two years old. Evaluations are required as evidence to support an application for special arrangements for the external examinations administered by the IBO. (These arrangements may also be used for internal assessments or examinations.)

Counselling

While addressing the academic, social and emotional needs of students, the Secondary School Counsellor will also act as a bridge between teachers and parents, working to create an environment where every student will have the tools they need to be successful, working with students on a range of issues, including leadership habits; stress management; anxiety reduction; transitions; self-esteem; and management of peer pressure.

Similar age-appropriate counselling may be provided in the Primary School as well as mechanisms of peer mediation which form an integral part of the Education Support and EAL provision.

The Secondary School Counsellor meets with MYP and Diploma students regularly to coach them on issues regarding academic, personal, social and emotional issues and support them in their future career. College counselling is a key function of this role for older students.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be continually monitored and reviewed in line with BMIS Board policy review requirements, and as and when IB policies and practices are modified.

Reviewed May 2018

Revised May 2015

CHILD PROTECTION

Consistent with the policies pertaining to the school and its goals, specifically to ensure students *have the opportunity to reach their full potential intellectually, emotionally, socially, morally and physically*; and also the Objectives of the Trust to *foster a fundamental awareness of, and respect for, the rights and freedoms of every individual in the School's community and the wider world*, BMIS shall strive to provide a safe haven for students with established procedures for ensuring the on-going protection and rights of children.

Child abuse may manifest in different ways, which may include but are not restricted to physical, emotional and sexual abuse and/or neglect. Child abuse and neglect detrimentally affect the child's physical and mental health and as a result typically impair learning. BMIS seeks to provide a positive stance of child protection, with a supportive framework to help identify and address child abuse or neglect, using a range of strategies that may be available through the school's provision or using external agencies. BMIS shall provide a safe and secure learning environment, which supports the educational, social, emotional and physical growth of the children.

In promoting positive attitudes towards child protection, the school shall take active measures with sufficiently rigorous monitoring procedures to ensure that all adults coming into contact with children, including teachers, support staff, and visitors, have been appropriately vetted to safeguard the children in our school.. Recruitment procedures shall require background checks on staff, including police clearance and medical certificates, and specific attention to child protection strategies shall be raised with all personnel during interviews.

Child Protection Acronyms

CPA Child Protection Advocate CPT Child Protection Team

Child Abuse: Reporting by Staff

Any member of staff who suspects a child may be suffering from abuse must report the grounds for suspicion to the designated Child Protection Advocate (CPA) or Counsellor in the event the CPA is absent. The CPA informs the

Director and/or Head of Primary/Secondary, depending on section of school affected, as soon as possible but not exceeding 24 hours for immediate response. Should both the CPA and Counsellor be absent, then the relevant Head of Primary or Secondary should be informed.

If, in the considered opinion of the CPA or Counsellor the report is of a serious nature, then a Child Protection Team (CPT) meeting will be called at the earliest possible time. The CPT includes the CPA, Director, respective Head of Primary or Secondary and Counsellor. The CPT shall evaluate the grounds for suspicion and further action to be taken.

Also see Referral Flow Chart at end of section.

General Guidance

Child abuse is a complex issue, requiring an approach by the school that holds the protection of children as paramount while respecting the rights of individuals accused of abuse. The school will follow Malawian law in issues related to child abuse. The following sections are general guidance and principles to be followed in all cases of suspected child abuse.

Guiding Principles

The Board of Trustees has as one of its stated objects "to foster a fundamental awareness of, and respect for, the rights and freedoms of every individual in the School's community." and endorses the School aim that all students should "have the opportunity to reach their full potential intellectually, emotionally, socially, morally and physically." It is therefore the belief of the Board that every student has the right to live in a safe and secure environment.

The School's curriculum, and in particular the Personal Social Physical Education (PSPE) programmes, will instruct the students in this area as is developmentally appropriate and in addition encourage them to seek help when they feel their safety and security is threatened by any form of abuse.

Yearly training of teachers by the CPA will cover issues including; confidentiality, how to recognise signs of possible abuse, and how to respond to students who want to talk about abuse. The Board acknowledges the value of such training, of staff awareness in how to recognise signs of possible abuse, and how to respond to students who want to talk about abuse. While not intending to monitor the conditions under which students live, the Board does expect school personnel to be vigilant towards signs of possible abuse taking place outside the school's jurisdiction and when abuse is suspected to report it.

School's Response

Whenever there is a suspicion of child abuse, the School's response will always be directed towards investigating the allegations, causing any identified abuse to cease, and restoring a safe and secure learning environment. In the event of an investigation of a staff member or student, both the accuser and accused may have restricted access to campus during the length of the investigation.

Definitions

While remaining sensitive to different cultures, the Board sets out below some definitions of abusive behaviour. The definitions are not necessarily exhaustive.

The Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act (CANRA) is a California law requiring certain people to report known or suspected child abuse or neglect, and this reference provides useful definitions used herein.

Also used for guiding the Child Protection documentation is online training provided through the Chadwick Center, 2015. 'Mandated Reporter Training School Personnel Training Module' [online]. Available from: <http://educators.mandatedreporter.ca.com/default.htm> [Accessed 1 November 2016]

Emotional Abuse

Although emotional abuse is not as clearly defined in the law as other forms of maltreatment, it is generally recognized as a pattern of behavior by a caretaker that impairs a child's emotional and/or psychological development. This may include constant criticism, threats, rejection, intimidation, humiliation, acts intended to produce fear or guilt, withholding of love and support, and isolation. Emotional abuse may also be through various forms of cyber-bullying. Witnessing of domestic violence also falls within the scope of emotional abuse. In some situations, such as habitual scapegoating, belittling, or using cruel words, it may be difficult to determine what constitutes emotional abuse.

Emotional abuse is the most difficult form of child maltreatment to identify. First, the effects of emotional maltreatment, such as delays in physical development, learning problems, and speech disorders, are often evident in children who have not experienced emotional maltreatment. Second, the effects of emotional maltreatment may only

become evident in later developmental stages of the child's life. Third, the behaviors of emotionally abused and emotionally disturbed children are often similar.

There are some guidelines that can help distinguish between emotional disturbance and emotional abuse. The parents of an emotionally disturbed child generally recognize the existence of a problem, whereas the parents of an emotionally abused child often blame the child for the problems or ignore the existence of a problem. The parents of an emotionally disturbed child show concern about the child's welfare and actively seek help, whereas the parents of an emotionally abused child often refuse offers of help and appear punitive and unconcerned about the child's welfare.

Reasonable suspicion of emotional abuse that must be reported often results from verbal disclosures or direct observation and involves any person willfully causing or permitting any child to suffer unjustifiable physical pain or mental suffering, or endangering the child's person or health. In the absence of a verbal disclosure or direct observation, suspicions of abuse may be reported when behavioral indicators alert the professional to suspect emotional abuse.

Emotional abuse is often difficult to prove; cumulative documentation by a child protection agency may be necessary for effective intervention. Finally, emotional abuse is most often seen in combination with other forms of abuse; any child who is being physically abused, sexually abused, or neglected is also being emotionally abused.

Physical Abuse

CANRA defines physical abuse as a physical injury inflicted by other than accidental means on a child, or intentionally injuring a child.

Physical abuse is characterized by physical injury (for example, bruises, burns or broken bones) resulting from hitting, beating, kicking, biting, burning, or otherwise harming a child. Although the injury is not an accident, the parent or caretaker may not have intended to hurt the child. The injury may have resulted from over-discipline or inappropriate physical punishment.

The injury may be the result of a single episode or of repeated episodes and can range in severity from minor bruising to death. Any injury resulting from physical punishment that requires medical treatment is considered outside the realm of normal disciplinary measures.

Additionally, abusive bruises and burns may be patterned or have a distinct outline, while accidental bruises typically do not leave a clear pattern or outline. However, abusive injuries are not always patterned and may look very similar to accidental bruises.

Broken bones, lacerations, burns (cigarette, scalding water, iron) are also injuries that may be concerning for possible physical abuse.

Neglect

Neglect refers to the negligent treatment or the maltreatment of a child by his/her caregiver that results in harm or could be harmful. The term includes both acts (e.g., locking a toddler in a hot car) and omissions (e.g., not providing food) on the part of the responsible person.

General neglect means the failure of a caregiver of a child to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, medical care, or supervision, where no physical injury to the child has occurred.

Severe neglect means the intentional failure of a caregiver to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, or medical care. "Severe neglect" also means those situations of neglect where any person having the care or custody of a child willfully causes or permits the person or health of the child to be placed in a situation such that his or her person or health is endangered.

Other forms of neglect include

- Medical neglect, such as not providing appropriate medical care or dental care
- Emotional neglect, such as not interacting with an infant or child
- Educational neglect, such as not enrolling a child in school or providing proper home-schooling

Sexual Abuse

According to the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) a child is sexually abused when they are persuaded or forced to participate in sexual activities. The child may or may not realize the situation is abusive in nature and may not understand the nature of the abuse. In addition the NSPCC includes the following in their explanation of sexual abuse:

Contact abuse involves touching activities where an abuser makes physical contact with a child, including penetration. It includes:

- sexual touching of any part of the body whether the child's wearing clothes or not
- rape or penetration by putting an object or body part inside a child's mouth, vagina or anus
- forcing or encouraging a child to take part in sexual activity
- making a child take their clothes off, touch someone else's genitals or masturbate.

Non-contact abuse involves non-touching activities, such as grooming, exploitation, persuading children to perform sexual acts over the internet and flashing. It includes:

- encouraging a child to watch or hear sexual acts
- not taking proper measures to prevent a child being exposed to sexual activities by others
- meeting a child following sexual grooming with the intent of abusing them
- online abuse including making, viewing or distributing child abuse images]
- allowing someone else to make, view or distribute child abuse images
- showing pornography to a child
- sexually exploiting a child for money, power or status (child exploitation).

Sexual touching between children can also be sexual abuse when there is a significant age difference (often defined as 3 or more years) between the children or if the children are very different developmentally or size-wise."

National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, 2016. "Sexual Abuse: What is sexual abuse" [online]. London, National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. Available from <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/child-sexual-abuse/>

[Accessed 3 October 2016].

Identifying Child Abuse

Members of the school staff are well placed to observe and report outward signs of abuse. Care must be taken in interpreting these signs as such signs can only be a cause for suspicion, and are not in themselves, proof that abuse has occurred. Unexplained changes of behaviour or school performance may indicate abuse. Inadequate clothing, poor growth or apparent deficient nutrition may indicate physical neglect, while attention-seeking or excessive dependence may point to emotional neglect.

When attempting to identify child abuse, the School will take particular care to collect evidence in accordance with Malawian law and to observe strict confidentiality.

Confidentiality

All investigations of abuse will be held in the strictest confidence. Only those persons required by this policy and those persons with a "need to know" will be advised of a suspected case. "Need to know" implies the divulging of confidential information only to a certain degree when the information is required to perform one's official duties or to protect the safety or rights of an individual. Those with a "need to know" may include, but are not limited to, child protective services, medical professionals including counsellors, criminal investigators, the alleged perpetrator's employer, the parent's employing organization(s), the parent's/victim's diplomatic representatives, and the Board of Trustees.

A breach of confidentiality by a school employee or representative is a serious offence and will be investigated by the Director.

Informing Parents/Guardians

If the parent/guardian of an allegedly abused child were not themselves the origin of the suspicion, a decision must be taken as to whether and when to inform them.

Parents/guardians should be notified in nearly all cases unless the school determines that the allegations are frivolous or baseless, the result of malicious behaviour or rumours, do not constitute an act of abuse or parental notification could endanger the child.

If an investigation into alleged sexual abuse involves questioning the child, the parents/guardians must be informed of the suspicion and at least one parent/guardian should be present when the child is questioned. In the case of parents/guardians being the accused, the counsellor or designated child advocate can be the second adult in the room for the purpose of confidentiality, child safety and taking notes. Whenever parents/guardians are informed of suspected abuse, it must be made clear to the parents/guardians what steps have already been taken, and what further steps will be taken to resolve the issue. The family may be offered whatever help and support the School has available, and urged at the same time not to take independent action until the school's investigation is concluded.

School's Response to Abuse by Persons Outside the School's Employment or Jurisdiction

The general guidance for abuse involving persons outside the School's employment or jurisdiction are outlined in the sections below.

Internal Referral

The member of staff identifying signs of suspected child abuse, or being told by a child of abuse, must immediately report the observations to the appropriate CPA/Counsellor and to nobody else. The CPA/Counsellor must immediately call the CPT together.

At least two of the members of the CPT must agree, on the evidence presented, that there is cause for concern. One member of the CPT will be designated to write a brief and as far as possible factual description of the case. This document is, at this stage, for the sole use of the CPT.

The CPT must then decide whether or not, at this stage, to involve the form tutor (secondary) or class teacher (primary.) The CPT will agree on what further action needs to be taken and the role of each member of the CPT.

Action

The CPT will decide on the most appropriate course of action. Discretion will always be exercised.

This list is not intended to be exhaustive, nor to indicate an order of procedure, but rather to indicate the range of responsive actions that might be appropriate.

1. Disregard the allegations as unfounded after initial investigation. It may be obvious the allegations are false, but a record will be kept for future reference.
2. Draw parents'/guardians' attention to the evidence, without accusation or comment.
3. Inform parents'/guardians of the suspicion and offer to refer to outside counselling.
4. Refer the suspicion to, with or without informing parents'/guardians, out of concern and safety for the child, and request assistance from one or more of the following:
 - a. child protective services
 - b. an outside professional (for example the family's doctor or some other doctor)
 - c. an appropriate community leader
 - d. an appropriate member of the Board of Trustees ie. the parents' employing organisation(s)
 - e. the parents'/guardians' Embassy, High Commission or Consulate.
4. Involve the Malawi criminal justice system.
5. Involve the Child Welfare Department

School's Response to Abuse by Persons in the School's Employment

Guiding Principles

The general guidance for abuse involving persons in the School's employment is outlined in the relevant sections below. While the primary duty of the School is to protect and support the child, the Board also acknowledges that a secondary duty is to protect and support its employees and abide by the employment laws of Malawi.

Internal Referral

Any member of staff who is made aware of a suspicion of abuse relating to another member of staff, or is told by the child or the child's parents, or a third party, must report to the Director *and to nobody else*. If the Director is the suspected person, the report must be made to one of the Head teachers *and to nobody else*, after which, that Head teacher will act as though s/he were the Director for the purpose of this policy alone.

The Director, in consultation with the CPT (assuming that the accused is not a member of the CPT), must decide whether or not there is a cause for concern. The Director will write a brief and as far as possible factual description of the case. This document is, at this stage, for the sole use of the Director and the CPT.

As the allegations are against an employee and have possible repercussions for the school, the Director will bring the CPT back together to inform the team of the action/s to be taken. If the Director informs a member/s of the board of the allegation and the action to be taken, it is on a strictly need to know basis which implies the divulging of confidential information only to a certain degree when the information is required to perform one's official duties or to protect the safety or rights of an individual. (Refer to 5.2.10.3 School's Response, Refer to 17.2.1.5 Confidentiality).

Suspension

The Director must decide whether the circumstances warrant the suspension of the member of staff under suspicion. The decision to suspend must be taken quickly, preceding an investigation, and based on the possibility that abuse may have occurred, and the possibility of a repetition or continuation.

It is not a confirmation of any accusation, nor is it a judgment on the facts of the case.

Suspension will be on full pay and without prejudice to the outcome of subsequent enquiries. In the event of an investigation of a staff member or student, both the accuser and accused may have restricted access to campus during the length of the investigation.

Supporting the Staff Member

An allegation of child abuse, especially sexual abuse and however far-fetched, has a devastating effect on the accused staff member. The Director has a duty of care to the staff member, and will attempt to ensure that at least one colleague, acceptable to the staff member, undertakes the role of mentor for the duration of the investigation. Such colleague must not be a participant in the investigation.

Investigation

The Director will personally oversee an investigation into alleged abuse by a member of staff. S/he may call on the advice and assistance of any appropriate professional person outside the School, but is not obliged to do so. In any case, the ultimate decision regarding the alleged abuse is the Director's alone. The CPT will be informed of the outcome of the investigation. If the investigation cannot be concluded within 10 working days of the Director first being informed, the Director will inform the CPT and seek their advice.

Possible outcomes of investigation

- a. The allegations were unfounded, no abuse of any description having occurred. Any rumours or false information that has been shared will be addressed and stated that this is not true, or dealt with in an appropriate manner.
- b. There is evidence of abuse, but not by the member of staff suspected.
- c. There has been inappropriate behaviour by the member of staff suspected, a breach of professional guidelines but falling short of abuse as defined in the introductory guidelines.
- d. There has been an instance of child abuse amounting at least to serious professional misconduct and at worst a breach of the laws of Malawi.

Action Following Investigation

- a. All parties who have been made aware of the allegations will be informed of the outcome. The matter will be regarded as closed. (At this stage, staff have recourse to the grievance procedure and parents to the complaints procedure.)
- b. In the case that there were rumours or false information shared, the CPT in support of the falsely accused, will address the situation in an appropriate manner.
- c. The suspected abuse will now be treated as being by a person outside the School's employment, and investigated accordingly.
- d. A written reprimand will be administered by the Director, together with guidance and warnings regarding future conduct.
- e. The member of staff concerned will be dismissed for professional misconduct, in accordance with the contract. The matter should be referred to the Malawi authorities and/or the employee's diplomatic representatives.
- f. In all cases where reasonable grounds exist for the allegations, or where disciplinary action is taken against a member of staff resulting from the investigations, the Board Chair will be advised of the situation.

School's Response to Sexual Abuse of BMIS Students by Other BMIS Students

Guiding Principles

The general guidance for abuse by BMIS students are outlined in sections below.

Definition of Sexual Abuse

The definition of sexual abuse at the top of this section of procedures is not entirely appropriate in cases of child on child abuse. The following passage serves to clarify what is intended:

'Children and young people have always been curious about the opposite sex and/or experimented sexually. However, where a child is in a position of power over another child, and abuses that trust through some sexual activity, then this is abuse. Where one child forces himself/herself on another child of a similar age, this is also abusive. Such situations should be taken as seriously as if an adult were involved and would be investigated in the same way by the child protection agencies. This is important, as the effect on the child victim may be as great, and the perpetrator could also be a victim. Since abuse is addictive, it is important to establish the chain and to take action. You cannot assume that the young person will grow out of it.' (David Pearson 'Child Abuse – Guidance for Teachers' Family Reading Centre, UK, 1996)

If there is genuine mutual agreement or consent regarding the conduct in question, it cannot be classed as abuse, although the behaviours may be a cause for concern in other ways.

Internal Referral

Any member of staff who is made aware of a suspicion of abuse or identifying signs of suspected abuse, or is told by the child or the child's parents/guardians or a third party must immediately report the information to the CPA, or in the cases of unavailability the counsellor. The CPA must immediately inform the CPT *and nobody else*.

At least two members of the CPT must agree, based on the evidence presented, that there is cause for concern. One CPT member will write a brief and as far as possible factual description of the case. This document is, at this stage, for the sole use of the CPT.

The CPT members must then decide whether or not, at this stage, to involve the form tutor (secondary) or class teacher (primary.) The CPT will agree on what further action needs to be taken and the role of each member of the CPT.

Action

The CPT will decide on the most appropriate action. Discretion will always be exercised.

This list is not intended to be exhaustive, nor to indicate an order of procedure, but rather to indicate the range of responsive actions that might be appropriate.

1. Disregard the allegations as unfounded after initial investigation, but record the incident for future reference.
2. Draw both sets of parents' attention to the evidence, without accusation or comment.
3. Inform both sets of parents of the suspicion and offer to refer to outside counselling.
4. Refer the suspicion, with or without informing parents, to one or more of the following:
 - a. child protective services
 - b. an outside professional (for example the family's doctor or some other doctor)
 - c. an appropriate community leader
 - d. an appropriate member of the Board of Trustees i.e. the parents' employing organisation(s)
 - e. the parents' Embassy, High Commission or Consulate
5. Involve the Malawi criminal justice system
6. Involve the Child Welfare Department

