



BRITISH  
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL  
OF HOUSTON  
A NORD ANGLIA EDUCATION SCHOOL

# PARENT HANDBOOK

## 2023-2024

1st September 2023



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# Parent Quick Guide



**BRITISH INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF HOUSTON**  
A NORD ANGLIA EDUCATION SCHOOL

## Parent's Quick Guide

How do I find?	Resource with the answers:	Link and Login Instructions:	QR Code for Mobile Devices	Contact for additional help:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grade Reports</li> <li>Report Guides</li> <li>School Calendar</li> <li>Student Timetable</li> <li>Boma ID Number</li> </ul>	iSAMS Parent Portal	<a href="https://parents-bho-isams.nordanglia.com/api/homepage/">https://parents-bho-isams.nordanglia.com/api/homepage/</a>  Initial login credentials are mailed to parents by the Registrar. Once established, parents login with their email address and their own password.		Dr. Gary Eaton Registrar <a href="mailto:gary.eaton@houston.nae.school">gary.eaton@houston.nae.school</a>
	iSAMS iParent App (for mobile devices)	Download to mobile phone from the App Store or Android App Store.  The school code is "BISH"; then login with the email address and password from your iSAMS Parent Portal account established above.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>After-School Activity Registration</li> <li>BISH Kids Registration</li> <li>Bus Registration</li> <li>Music Lessons</li> <li>Summer Camps</li> <li>Athletics</li> <li>PTSC</li> <li>Appointments</li> <li>Order a replacement lanyard and ID</li> </ul>	SchoolsBuddy	<a href="https://bishouston.schoolsbuddy.net/#">https://bishouston.schoolsbuddy.net/#</a>  1. On the login screen, click on the purple "iSAMS" button 2. Then click on "iSAMS (Parents)" 3. Enter your login credentials from the Parent Portal (email address and password)		Louise Skerry After-School Activities <a href="mailto:louise.skerry@houston.nae.school">louise.skerry@houston.nae.school</a>
School Directory	"Our Team" section of BIS Houston website	<a href="https://www.nordangliaeducation.com/our-schools/houston/british-international/our-team">https://www.nordangliaeducation.com/our-schools/houston/british-international/our-team</a>  Open access		<a href="mailto:info@houston.nae.school">info@houston.nae.school</a>
Curriculum Information	Atlas Rubicon	<a href="https://bish-public.rubiconatlas.org/Atlas/Authentication/View/PublicLogin">https://bish-public.rubiconatlas.org/Atlas/Authentication/View/PublicLogin</a>  The password is "academics"		Appropriate classroom teacher or Head of Year
	SeeSaw	Primary and EY teachers may post assignments and student work through SeeSaw. The teacher will provide a QR code to parents.		
	ShowMyHomework	Secondary students may use this platform for some homework. The Form Tutor or Head of Year will provide login details.		
Academic Calendar, School Forms and Guides, Supply Lists	Parent Essentials section of BIS Houston website	<a href="https://www.nordangliaeducation.com/our-schools/houston/british-international/parent-essentials/calendar-school-forms-and-guides">https://www.nordangliaeducation.com/our-schools/houston/british-international/parent-essentials/calendar-school-forms-and-guides</a>  Open access		Dr. Gary Eaton Registrar <a href="mailto:gary.eaton@houston.nae.school">gary.eaton@houston.nae.school</a>
Absences: To report a student's absence from school	Email <a href="mailto:info@houston.nae.school">info@houston.nae.school</a> and copy the class teacher / form tutor <u>or</u> telephone (713) 290 9025  Please indicate your child's name, year group, and reason for the absence. The Welfare Office will follow up on student illnesses.			



How do I find?	Resource with the answers:	Link and Login Instructions:	QR Code for Mobile Devices	Contact for additional help:
School Lunch Menus	Nutrislice online menus for BIS Houston	<a href="https://britishhouston.flikisdining.com/menus-eula">https://britishhouston.flikisdining.com/menus-eula</a>  Open access		Sergio Diaz Executive Chef <a href="mailto:sergio.diaz@compass-usa.com">sergio.diaz@compass-usa.com</a>
My Family's Contact Information / Updated Emergency Contacts	iSAMS Parent Portal	<a href="https://parents-bho-isams.nordanglia.com/api/communication/contacts/">https://parents-bho-isams.nordanglia.com/api/communication/contacts/</a>  It is vital to keep your family's local telephone, email and home address details current on the Parent Portal. This allows representatives of the school to communicate regularly—and to reach you reliably if there were ever an urgent need. You may make changes yourself on the portal under "Communications" > "Contacts", or email the changes to the Registrar.		Dr. Gary Eaton Registrar <a href="mailto:gary.eaton@houston.nae.school">gary.eaton@houston.nae.school</a>
School Lunch Accounts	MyPaymentsPlus	<a href="https://www.mypaymentsplus.com/welcome">https://www.mypaymentsplus.com/welcome</a>  1. Click on the "Register Now" button 2. Select State: "Texas (TX)" 3. Select School District: "British International School of Houston" 4. Enter your personal details and create a password 5. Add your student by using the BOMA ID Badge Number provided by Admissions (also available on the Parent Portal under "School Information" > "Documents and Files")		Sergio Diaz Executive Chef <a href="mailto:sergio.diaz@compass-usa.com">sergio.diaz@compass-usa.com</a>  Or <b>(877) 237 0946</b> <a href="mailto:Support@mypaymentsplus.com">Support@mypaymentsplus.com</a>
Dress Code Guidelines and Uniform Shopping Guide	Parent Essentials section of BIS Houston website	<a href="https://www.nordangliaeducation.com/our-schools/houston/british-international/parent-essentials/dress-code-guidelines">https://www.nordangliaeducation.com/our-schools/houston/british-international/parent-essentials/dress-code-guidelines</a>  Open access—scroll down to find the desired PDF guide		Jane Chastant Director of Admissions and Marketing <a href="mailto:jane.chastant@houston.nae.school">jane.chastant@houston.nae.school</a>
School Therapist	"Our Team" section of the website	<a href="https://www.nordangliaeducation.com/bis-houston/academic-excellence/student-support-services">https://www.nordangliaeducation.com/bis-houston/academic-excellence/student-support-services</a>  Open access		Samantha Schlanger School Therapist <a href="mailto:samantha.schlanger@houston.nae.school">samantha.schlanger@houston.nae.school</a>
Welfare Office	The Welfare Office at BIS Houston is located near the Administrative Offices and Reception. It is staffed by two UK-qualified school nurses	<a href="mailto:welfare@houston.nae.school">welfare@houston.nae.school</a>		Neezie Munro School Nurse <a href="mailto:denise.munro@houston.nae.school">denise.munro@houston.nae.school</a>  Deb Henderson School Nurse <a href="mailto:deborah.henderson@houston.nae.school">deborah.henderson@houston.nae.school</a>
Athletics	Athletics Website	<a href="https://www.bishathletics.com/landing/index">https://www.bishathletics.com/landing/index</a>		Sara Lopez Athletic Director <a href="mailto:sara.lopez@houston.nae.school">sara.lopez@houston.nae.school</a>

\*revised 1 August 2023

# Attendance and Absences

**Overview:** We are keen to support all of our families so that students have the best possible experience at school and reach their full potential. Excellent attendance is strongly correlated with success in school and with high academic outcomes. When parents, students, and school staff share the expectation of excellent regular attendance in school, academic outcomes are enhanced. Of course, students should not attend school if they are unwell. Parents are asked to notify the school before 8.25 am if a student will be absent for any reason:

## Reporting Absences or Lateness

**Option 1: Email [info@houston.nae.school](mailto:info@houston.nae.school) and copy the class teacher or form tutor (preferred)**

Please email [info@houston.nae.school](mailto:info@houston.nae.school) and copy your child's class teacher or form tutor, clearly indicating your child's name, year group and reason for absence. Please let us know if your child rides the bus or has a CCA scheduled for that day.

**Option 2: Telephone 713-290-9025**

Call the main school number and press 1 for the option to report an absence. Leave a message, clearly indicating your child's name, year group and reason for absence. Please let us know if your child rides the bus or has a CCA scheduled for that day.

Our registration period closes at 8.30 am. At this time emergency registers are printed and our system generates a list of 'unexplained absences'. Our administrative team will contact parents of students with an unexplained absence by text and email.

## Informing our Welfare Team of Illness

**If your child is unwell, do not bring them into school.** Return to school is permitted following a 24-hour period in which the child has been symptom free without the use of medication. For example, no fever for 24 hours without the use of a fever reducing medication such as Tylenol.

**If your child is displaying one or more COVID-19 symptoms**, please follow the guidance in the COVID section of this handbook.

## Appointments During the School Day

Whenever possible, we encourage families to make routine appointments, including medical or dental appointments, outside of school hours. If school hours cannot be avoided, parents must notify the school at least 24 hours in advance. Please email notification to [info@houston.nae.school](mailto:info@houston.nae.school) and copy your child's teacher or form tutor. This will allow Security, your child's teacher, and Reception to coordinate pick up of your child. When arriving to collect your child, Security will direct you where to park and where to enter the building in order to sign your child out at the Reception desk.

## Absence and Athletics

Student athletes participating in competitive athletics (Middle and High School) must be in school by their designated lunch time (12.55 pm) in order to participate in after-school practices or games. Saturday games require attendance on the preceding Friday. In rare cases and after review of the specific circumstances, permission to participate may be granted to students not in attendance by the Principal, Athletic Director or Head of Secondary. Please contact the Athletic Director to discuss any specific circumstances.

## Extended Absence During Term Time

Taking vacation in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking children away in school time. We do appreciate that visa visits are occasionally required during the term and that some absences are unavoidable. All applications for term time absences should be made in advance to the Head of School.

For Early Years and Primary School students please email [gemma.averette@houston.nae.school](mailto:gemma.averette@houston.nae.school) and for Secondary students please email [helen.morgan@houston.nae.school](mailto:helen.morgan@houston.nae.school).

### **Persistent Absenteeism**

Students become 'persistent absentees' when they miss 15% or more schooling across the school year for any reason. Absence at this level will have a significant impact on the student's progress and ability to access the curriculum. The school will support regular attendance at the following levels:

*Attendance drops below 90%:* the class teacher or form tutor will contact parents and discuss reasons for the drop in attendance and support where necessary.

*Attendance at 85%:* Head of Year will join the class teacher or form tutor in working with parents to assess reasons for low attendance, support where necessary and agree to steps to increase attendance.

*Attendance lower than 80%:* The Head of School will lead an intervention, working with parents, teachers and any other agencies involved to ensure a pathway to greater school attendance.

## **Accidents and Medical Issues (on site)**

An investigation will be undertaken by the Facilities Manager, who is responsible for Health and Safety. In order to mitigate the impact of any accident, and to meet Texas licensing requirements, all staff has first aid training every two years. The Welfare staff are the first points of contact in the case of an accident requiring medical attention. There are also first aid boxes clearly identified around the campus.

### **Illness or Injury at School**

Minor bumps/scrapes: All staff are able to administer basic first aid in the instance of a minor scrape, cut or bump. This is recorded using the school's electronic information system and does not require parent notification.

#### More serious injuries:

In the event of a more serious injury, students will be escorted directly to the Welfare Office, or if necessary our UK-qualified nurses may go directly to the injured party. Once the injury has been assessed, parents will be notified as soon as Welfare is free to telephone. If the injury or illness is assessed to be very serious, the school will contact emergency services directly and then inform the parents. If a child needs to go to hospital, one of our UK-qualified nurses will escort the child in the ambulance and stay until a parent arrives.

### **Illnesses**

Children with a temperature of 100.4 degrees or above will be required to be picked up from school, as per Texas state requirements. A child should not return to school until fever and symptom free, without the use of fever-reducing medication, for a period of 24 hours. If the child has experienced an unexplained rash, suspected conjunctivitis, skin infections or strep throat, parents will be contacted and will be expected to take the child home.

### **Infectious Conditions**

Children with an infectious condition must be kept at home. Please notify the Welfare Office immediately. The child may return to school with a doctor's note indicating that the condition is no longer infectious.

### **Medication at School**

Medication for students with specific medical needs may be administered by the nurses if the parent completes a Medication Authorisation form and returns it and the medication to the Welfare Office. Any medication provided to the school must be in its original packaging with a clear expiration date and the student's name clearly indicated. The medication is stored in a locked cabinet and is monitored by the Welfare Officers.



### If parents need to appoint another person to collect their child

Parents must inform the class teacher or form tutor via email if their child is to be collected by somebody other than themselves. For your child's protection, we require that the person collecting the student provide appropriate identification.

## After School Activities

The British International School of Houston offers a wide range of optional opportunities for student participation from Early Years through to IB. The development of young people takes place both inside and outside the classroom and a rich selection of after school activities extends your child's learning experience each term. We believe that a school's role is to nurture confident, knowledgeable, independent young people who understand that their actions can make a difference to their school, as well as the local and global communities. In addition to outstanding academic outcomes based on our gold standard curricula, we provide opportunities for all our students to enrich their lives and the lives of others.

**Activities:** After school activities are offered to our community by a range of external vendors at an additional cost. There are also school-sponsored opportunities for students in competitive athletics (middle and high school only), mother tongue languages, specific performing arts opportunities, etc.

**Times:** Monday-Friday, 3:35-4:30pm (this may vary by activity)

### **Points of Contact:**

After-school Activity Coordinator, Louise Skerry, [cca@houston.nae.school](mailto:cca@houston.nae.school)

Athletics: Athletic Director, Sara Lopez, [sara.lopez@houston.nae.school](mailto:sara.lopez@houston.nae.school)

### **Process to Register for After-School Activities on SchoolsBuddy:**

The [SchoolsBuddy website](#) or the SchoolsBuddy mobile app will allow parents to register and pay for a variety of activities using their iSAMS parent portal login credentials:

- After-school activities
- Instrumental lessons
- BISH Kids
- Athletics
- PTSCs (Parent-Teacher Conferences)
- School Trips
- School Buses
- Summer Camps

To login to SchoolsBuddy you must first have an active iSAMS Parent Portal login. (For help with your Parent Portal account, contact the Registrar, Dr. Gary Eaton at [gary.eaton@houston.nae.school](mailto:gary.eaton@houston.nae.school)) Once you are able to login to the Parent Portal, you will access SchoolsBuddy by following these steps:

1. Click on this link: [SchoolsBuddy Link](#)
2. Click on the purple iSAMS button on the login page
3. Click on the iSAMS (Parents) button
4. Enter your Parent Portal iSAMS email address and password

2023 - 2024 Block Dates for Primary and Secondary CCAs			
Block 1	28 August 2023	8 December 2023	14 weeks
Block 2	8 January 2024	22 March 2024	10 weeks
Block 3	8 April 2024	7 June 2024	9 weeks

\*Selections for activities are completed in blocks. Registration and payment for an activity must be made prior to participation. For families joining the school in the middle of a block, students may participate in activities based on space available and if it is feasible to join mid-block.



2023 - 2024 Dates for Instrumental Lessons			
Block 1	28 August 2023	1 December 2023	13 weeks
Block 1 Make Up Lessons	4 December 2023	8 December 2023	
Block 2	8 January 2024	15 March 2024	9 weeks
Block 2 Make Up Lessons	18 March 2024	22 March 2024	
Block 3	8 April 2024	31 May 2024	8 weeks
Block 3 Make Up Lessons	3 June 2024	7 June 2024	

#### Changes to Activities:

Changes may be made prior to the shared cut-off date only. Only under extenuating circumstances may an activity be changed and payment will not be refunded.

#### Absences from After School Activities:

If your child will not attend his or her after-school activity, please notify us by emailing [cca@houston.nae.school](mailto:cca@houston.nae.school).

#### Pick Up Procedures from After-School Activities:

- Primary students must be picked up promptly at 4:30 in person in the BOMA.
- Secondary students may make their way to the car park and be picked up on the Secondary route.

## Agora

The Agora is a modern learning and research space for our students and teachers. Greek for 'Gathering Place', the Agora can be used as a traditional library, an electronic library, for students to work quietly and collaboratively, or for small group presentations. Many classes will have timetabled lessons in the Agora.

## Assemblies

Assemblies are an excellent way to celebrate students' achievements, share information and develop our school spirit. Each assembly links to a school value, a core behaviour or our leader and learner profiles.

Assemblies take place for Primary and Secondary School and on some occasions parents are invited to attend. An invitation will be sent by your child's class teacher, form tutor or head of year.

## Assessment Procedures

At BIS Houston, we use a combination of diagnostic, formative and summative assessments. This allows us to accurately measure progress over a period of time and more importantly, allows the learners to understand both the learning process and their own progress.

Click [here](#) for more information on assessment .

# Athletics

## Athletics

Our Middle School teams (Y7-Y9) compete in the Greater Houston Athletic Conference (GHAC) and our High School teams (Y10-Y13) compete in the Texas Association of Private and Parochial Schools (TAPPS) District 4A. In addition to our competitive athletics program, we also offer recreational sports and training through our Enrichment and after school activities.

AT A GLANCE - ATHLETIC DATES			
	FALL - 23	WINTER 23-24	SPRING 24
<b>1ST DAY OF PRACTICE</b>			
UPPER SCHOOL	JULY 31	OCTOBER 16	JANUARY 15
MIDDLE SCHOOL	AUGUST 21	OCTOBER 16	FEBRUARY 19
<b>TAPPS TRANSFER DATES</b>			
UPPER SCHOOL (YEARS 10-12)	SEPTEMBER 5	OCTOBER 31	JANUARY 23
UPPER SCHOOL (YEAR 13)	SEPTEMBER 5	-	-

## Middle School (MS) – GHAC (Greater Houston Athletic Conference)

Fall Sports Season	Winter Sports Season	Spring Sports Season
MS Boys' Cross Country	MS Boys' Soccer	MS Boys' Tennis
MS Girls' Cross Country	MS Girls' Soccer	MS Girls' Tennis
MS Boys' Soccer	MS Boys' Swimming	MS Boys' Golf
MS Girls' Volleyball	MS Girls' Swimming	MS Girls' Golf
Esports (Co-Ed Y9 only)	MS Boys' Basketball	MS Boys' Track & Field
	MS Girls' Basketball	MS Girls' Track & Field

## High School (HS) – TAPPS (Texas Association of Private & Parochial Schools)

Fall Sports Season	Winter Sports Season	Spring Sports Season
HS Girls' Volleyball	HS Boys' Soccer	HS Boys' Tennis
HS Boys' Volleyball	HS Girls' Soccer	HS Girls' Tennis
HS Girls' Cross Country	HS Boys' Basketball	HS Boys' Track & Field
HS Boys' Cross Country	HS Girls' Basketball	HS Girls' Track & Field
Esports	HS Boys' Swimming	HS Boys' Volleyball
	HS Girls' Swimming	HS Golf (Co-Ed)
		Esports (Co-Ed)

## High School Athletics (Year 10 - Year 13)

**Junior Varsity Programs** are designed to developmentally prepare student-athletes for Varsity competition. The amount of playing time will always be determined by the coach and is not guaranteed. Close communication between the Varsity head coach, the Junior Varsity head coach and student-athletes is important and expected. Coaches will be using similar principles and strategies, so the transition from Junior Varsity to Varsity will be seamless.

**Varsity Program** - Competition at the Varsity level is the culmination of each sports' program. We strive to compete at the highest level in each Varsity sport, while upholding our ideals of sportsmanship, respect, commitment and integrity. At the Varsity level, coaches are not expected to give playing time to all student-athletes. Varsity teams are a competitive experience in which achievement and outcome are priority.

### Middle School Athletics (Year 7 - Year 9)

**The Year 7 Program** is designed to introduce the concept of a competitive team environment. Sport-specific skill development will be the main focus of instruction at this level. Encouraging students to have fun and enjoy physical activity, while improving health and wellness, is crucial to their overall development. Coaches will be encouraged to promote playing time for each student-athlete in every contest.

**The Year 8 Program** is designed to continue to develop and enhance sport-specific skills enabling student-athletes to compete at a more competitive level. Coaches at this level will build on the fundamentals introduced in Year 7 and begin teaching more advanced skills and techniques. While BIS Houston does not guarantee equal playing time, everyone will have an opportunity to compete at some point during the season.

The goal of the **Year 9 Program** is to prepare student-athletes for the transition to High School athletics where they will be competing on Junior Varsity or Varsity Teams. Team practices will emphasise skill development, individual improvement, self-confidence and teamwork. While BIS Houston does not guarantee equal playing time, everyone should have an opportunity to compete at some point during the season.

### Athletic Attendance

Students involved in extra-curricular activities must be in attendance at school to participate in their extra-curricular activities after school.

### Early Dismissals/Absences

It is the student-athlete's responsibility to inform his/her classroom teachers of all known absences and/or early dismissals due to athletic events. Student-athletes are responsible for submitting assignments and completing tests for classes missed and pre-arranging with their teachers to make up work missed.

## Badges / Lanyards

ID badges are an important component of safety and security. They must be visible at all times.

**Visitors:** Only visitors with appointments will be allowed on campus and are checked at the Security booth upon arrival. Visitors must be accompanied at all times and will be checked out upon departure.

To minimise risk, anyone without a valid ID will not be allowed on campus.

## BISH Kids (Before and After School Care)

BISH Kids is structured provision for students who arrive early or stay longer after school. **BISH Kids has limited spaces and you must enrol your child in BISH Kids in order for them to participate.** Our policy states that outside of the timetabled learning hours, Primary aged students must be supervised at all times.

### Availability of BISH Kids:

AM: 6.45am-8am

PM: 3:30pm-6pm

For more information about BISH Kids or for enrolment details please contact: Donna Burt, [donna.burt@houston.nae.school](mailto:donna.burt@houston.nae.school).

School finishes at 3.30pm. All students who take part in our after-school programs are registered and supervised until 4.30pm. If a student is not taking part in an after-school activity at 3.30pm and remains on site, the following options are available:

- A parent may supervise their child in the Agora (if open) or the Boma (if open) to share a book or snack. The Agora is open until 4:45pm
- Students can be enrolled in BISH Kids, our after-school care programme. Students may be registered for this in Schools Buddy.

Children of Primary age cannot be left unsupervised in the Agora, Boma or any other shared space in the school. This includes Primary children waiting for siblings who are in after school activities.

# Billing

## General Billing Information

All financial matters must be coordinated through the Finance Office

### Contacts:

Jose Gonzalez, Interim Director of Finance, [jose.gonzalez@nordanglia.com](mailto:jose.gonzalez@nordanglia.com)

Matt Booth, Finance Director as of 1st October 2023, [matt.booth@houston.nae.school](mailto:matt.booth@houston.nae.school)

Deanna Thompson, Finance Officer, [deanna.thompson@houston.nae.school](mailto:deanna.thompson@houston.nae.school).

### **The following are guidelines for all financial matters:**

After School Activities: CCA lessons will be registered and paid in advance through SchoolsBuddy. Parents should contact the CCA Coordinator, Louise Skerry, [cca@houston.nae.school](mailto:cca@houston.nae.school), for further information.

Application: The Application Fee is required for each application. It is not refundable and not transferable to another academic year nor to a different student.

Enrolment Deposit: The Enrolment Deposit is paid when the School Agreement is signed. The Deposit is non-refundable and is credited toward the first tuition payment.

New Student Fee: The New Student Fee is a one-time charge per student and is payable at the time of joining our school. It is non-refundable.

Tuition: Tuition is billed in increments of 1-Payment (one annual fee), 2-Payment (half yearly fees+2% financing fees), or 10-Payment (monthly fees + 5% financing fees) in accordance with the payment option elected on the School Agreement. Generally, for reenrolling students, 1-Payment is due in June, 2-Payment is due in June and November, 10-Payment is due each month from June-March. If parents do not receive an invoice, please contact the Finance Office to request a copy.

Exam Fees: Additional exam fees are payable prior to the exams, e.g. Exam Remarks, Mother Tongue Language assessment, and Music. All MAP and CAT testing is included in tuition.

Parents of students taking external, final GCSE and IB examinations should note that the cost of the initial examinations is included in tuition fees. Additional costs may be incurred for courier costs of certificates to families outside of the Houston area and for any re-marks.

Entrance Exam Fees: If possible, we accommodate entrance exams for other schools. There is a \$50 fee per exam session. One exam session can last up to 3 hours in which students can sit multiple exams. If parents wish for multiple exams to be spread across more than one exam session, please note there is a \$50 charge per exam session. The school provides an exam space and an invigilator/supervisor. If taking an entrance exam to transfer to another Nord Anglia school, there is no fee for the exam.

Transportation: Transportation is billed per term or yearly. If parents do not receive an invoice, please contact the Finance Office to obtain a copy.

Learning Support: Learning Support fees are payable in advance and must be approved by the SEN Coordinator. Fees will vary based upon the amount of support provided.

Trips: Residential Trips are paid in advance of the trip and must be turned in to the trip organiser along with the permission slip. The Finance Office will provide a receipt as requested.



BISH Kids: Parents should contact the BISH Kids Coordinator for information and register through SchoolsBuddy for before and after school care. Billing typically occurs on a termly basis.

Music Lessons: Music lessons will be paid in advance through SchoolsBuddy. Parents should contact the Leader for Learning for Music and Performance for further details.

Notary: Notary is available for school-related documents only.

Late Fees: A 3% late fee will apply on all past due invoices.

NSF Checks: A \$50.00 fee will be charged.

Any money owing to the school must be paid on time. Please note that any outstanding invoices are subject to late fees if they are not settled within 30 days of the date shown on the invoice. Unless an extension has been agreed upon with the school, a charge of 3% of the invoice amount is added per month.

### **Information Requests for New Applicants:**

Parents are asked to inform the Admissions Team as soon as they begin planning other schooling options for their children.

All requests for academic records, including transcripts, school reports, academic references and letters of recommendation from teachers are coordinated by the Registrar, Dr. Gary Eaton, [gary.eaton@houston.nae.school](mailto:gary.eaton@houston.nae.school). In order to be considered official, these materials must be sent directly to the requesting schools.

## **BOMA (Cafeteria)**

The BOMA is our cafeteria and meeting place. It is operated by Flik Dining, part of the Compass Group.

Our fresh and healthy food menus, approved by nutritionists, are created and served by FLIK Dining. Flik takes a careful approach to healthy eating with the majority of their ingredients sourced locally. The food is prepared and cooked on-site daily.

### Options to Purchase Food in the BOMA

- Meal plans and a la carte lunches can be purchased through [MyPaymentsPlus](#) and will be linked to the student's lanyard ID card. The initial account will be established on the MyPaymentsPlus website using the student's 14 digit BOMA student number. The Admissions Officer will provide all new students with this BOMA number, and it can also be found in the documents section of the Parent Portal for each student.
- A la carte items may be purchased in the BOMA or in the Coffee Shop.
- Parents and students may access menus and other information on [www.britishhouston.flikisdining.com](http://www.britishhouston.flikisdining.com).

Students may also choose to bring their own lunches and our Academy students may choose to eat in the Academy Centre, where there is also a mini kitchen.

### **The Coffee Shop**

The Coffee Shop will serve a variety of drinks, nutritious foods and snacks for students and parents. Its hours of operation are 8am-9:30am and after school until 4:30pm daily. Only Secondary students and parents may make purchases in the Café.

### **Parents:**

Parents are welcome to use the on-site Coffee Shop until 9:30am daily and after school from 3pm-4:30pm. Parents must not be in the Coffee Shop area at other times as students need this space.

### **Students:**

Academy students are welcome to use the Coffee Shop throughout the day when they are not in scheduled learning sessions.

In the interest of safety, please refrain from carrying hot beverages around the campus and please remember that food and drink is not permitted in our theatre.

**Please may we remind you that we are a nut free campus.  
Please note that outside delivery services are not permitted.**

## Bulldog

The Bulldog is the School's mascot and there is a great amount of pride in being a bulldog. EY and Primary students are awarded a Bulldog to take home and return to the School for showing characteristics of the leader/learner profile.

## Buses

The British International School of Houston offers premium school bus service for our students through AAmbassador Transportation.

The luxury bus features include:

- WiFi service
- Air conditioning
- 3-point safety belts

Contact: [bus@houston.nae.school](mailto:bus@houston.nae.school)

For more information or if you wish to enrol for the school bus service, please review the bus policy found on [Parent Essentials](#) and email [bus@houston.nae.school](mailto:bus@houston.nae.school) for an enrolment form. Enrolment is for the whole school year, but may be paid by term. Withdrawal during the school year requires a completed withdrawal form submitted with one full term's notice.

Please note that all routes, stops and times are subject to change based on participation. The current costs per year for each of the routes offered are as follows:

Cost per student	Per Term	Per Year
All current routes full time	\$1,045	\$3,135
All routes mornings only	\$570	\$1,710
All routes afternoons only	\$570	\$1,710

For bus related emergencies please contact Ambassador Dispatch at (1-800) 895-4667, ext. 2. The school bus service is provided by AAmbassador Transportation.

AAmbassador Transportation  
11435 Brittmoore Park Dr.  
Houston, TX 77041

Students using school buses are required to adhere to the code of conduct. If you are aware of any incidents on a school bus, please inform our Travel Coordinator immediately. If parents change their child's mode of transport, they MUST inform the Class/Form Teacher AND the Travel Coordinator.

School staff may not allow children to change bus or modes of transport without Parental Consent.

For more details, see the [Transportation Policy](#).

# Background Checks

Nord Anglia Education considers the safety of its students of paramount importance and we make a commitment to protecting the children with whom we work. All members of our community who work or volunteer on site must undergo a complete background check.

## Calendars

Our academic school year has three terms and can be found on [Parent Essentials](#) on the BIS Houston website. Year group specific calendars are also available and given to families at the start of the school year. For all our up-to-date events please use our iSAMS Parent Calendar. Please log onto our iSAMS Parent app by clicking on the link [here](#).

## Campus Closure

### CAMPUS CLOSURE GUIDANCE

The safety and wellbeing of all of our school community is our highest priority, this will always be at the core of any decision made.

If the school is to be closed for any reason, announcements will be made via email and the Emergency notification on the School App. All details for Campus Closure are in the Parent Handbook. The following serves as a simple guide in the case of an emergency. Please remember to ensure you keep your contact details up to date [here](#).



School communicates the risk of closure to families when information is available.



If school communicates the need to close the campus, no access to the site is permitted.



If there is whole school closure, depending on the situation, the School may provide virtual learning. The School will need to assess a whole school closure according to each situation, including availability of internet, electricity, amount of preparation the community may need to take to prepare for inclement weather, etc. Please refer to our parent handbook for further details.



Ongoing communication will be posted to families to clarify the duration of closures and return to school details.



School closure announcements are made via email and the Emergency Notification on the School App.

## If the school is to be closed for any reason, announcements will be made via email and via the Emergency notification on the School App.

All email contact details are taken from iSAMS; it is the responsibility of all members of our community to ensure that their contact details are current and correct. Changes to your address, email address, or phone number may be made through the Parent Portal or by emailing [info@houston.nae.school](mailto:info@houston.nae.school).

The School's duties and obligations specified in the enrolment contract shall be suspended immediately and without notice during all periods that the School is fully or partially closed because of force majeure events, including but not limited to, any fire, weather conditions, war, governmental action, acts of terrorism, epidemic, pandemic, or any other event beyond the School's reasonable control (a "Force Majeure Event"). If a Force Majeure Event occurs, the School's duties and obligations provided herein will be postponed until such time as the School, in its sole discretion, may safely fully or partially reopen.

In the event that the School cannot fully or partially reopen due to a Force Majeure Event, the School is under no obligation to refund any portion of the fees paid. Unless otherwise indicated by the School, during any Force Majeure Event, I/We acknowledge that I/We are solely responsible for the safety and well-being of the Student.

Where on-campus education is not possible as a result of the Force Majeure Event for a period of more than 7 days (the "FM Period"), the mitigation steps to be taken by the School may include the provision of virtual schooling, as determined in the School's discretion, and to be deployed in accordance with the School's virtual school experience policy as may be in effect from time to time.

It is acknowledged and agreed that the provision of such virtual schooling by the School shall be the agreed replacement for on-campus learning during the FM Period.

# Communication

The British International School of Houston is committed to ensuring that our parents are involved in the life of the school and are kept fully informed of events in school. We strive to create many opportunities for our parents to give feedback on various aspects of school life. The following are some of the ways in which the school currently communicates:

- Newsletters and Social Media
- Whole School Newsletter with BIS Houston Bulletin
- Head of School updates
- Head of Year updates
- Class Teachers will communicate with parents regarding class specific items and discussions specific to individual children.

All communication is sent electronically. Our Newsletter provides general information about school events, celebrates student successes and achievements, gives reminders, and highlights important dates. We communicate constantly via Facebook, Twitter and Instagram and encourage all members of our community to follow us on our social media platforms.

BIS Houston has a school communications app with details to download [here](#). Staff email addresses can be found on the app.

## Email

Email is the preferred method of communication as teachers' timetables vary and teachers are not available by phone. If you wish to send a message to a member of staff by email, the School's communications app contains staff email contact details. If the staff member is not available through the app, school email addresses are composed of the first name followed by surname followed by the school address in the following format: [john.smith@houston.nae.school](mailto:john.smith@houston.nae.school). Staff will acknowledge receipt of emails within 24 hours, Monday to Friday during term time. Parents may use email to arrange appointments, to communicate with members of staff or to share information with them.



You can also email [info@houston.nae.school](mailto:info@houston.nae.school) in order to reach a teacher and the message will be forwarded to the teacher from the front desk.

### Emergency SMS/Text Service

This is a telephone notification system that will send an SMS message/text to your home telephone number and/or mobile phone from school. This system is used to keep parents informed of any emergencies or school closures.

### Letters Home

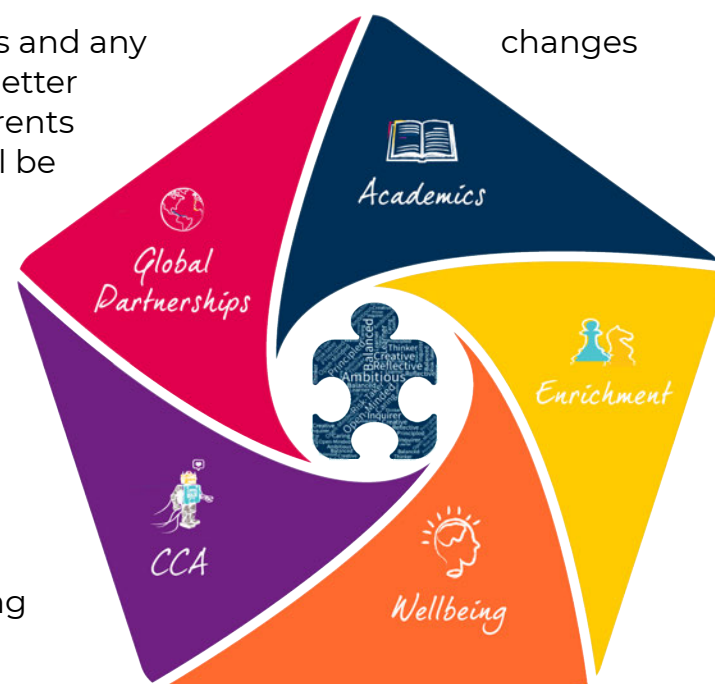
The school keeps parents informed of forthcoming curriculum topics and any affecting learning for large numbers of students through a detailed letter outlining the learning to take place. If the school needs to inform parents about a particular event, such as a class trip or sports day, a letter will be sent home with each child and/or notification will be sent by email.

### Online Access through iSAMS

The iSAMS parent portal allows parents to:

- Check the attendance of the student.
- View the students' timetables, subjects and teachers.
- Access School Calendar.
- Access School Reports.

On joining the school, each family will be issued a document detailing the registration process for setting up an account.



### Emergency SMS/Text Service

This is a telephone notification system that will send an SMS message/text to your home telephone number and/or mobile phone from school. This system is used to keep parents informed of any emergencies or school closures.

# Community Conduct and Discipline Code

Our BISH Houston community is committed to providing the very best and most positive learning experience and home/school relationship possible. We place a premium on student achievement, responsibility, and accountability, with faculty, staff, and parent guidance and support. We recognise that the establishment and

Key Timings of the School Day for Primary:	Key Timings of the School Day for Secondary:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students can arrive on site from 8am.</li> <li>• Registration Time: 8.25am-8:30am</li> <li>• Learning Session: 8:30-8:50</li> <li>• Learning Session 1A: 8:50am-9:45am</li> <li>• Break: 9:45am-10:10am</li> <li>• Learning Session 1B: 10:10am-11:05am</li> <li>• Learning Session 2A: 11:05-12:00pm</li> <li>• Primary Lunch: 12:00-12:55pm</li> <li>• Learning Session 2B: 12:55pm-1:40pm</li> <li>• Learning Session 3A: 1.40pm-2:35pm</li> <li>• Learning Session 3B: 2:35pm-3:30pm</li> <li>• End of School Day: 3:30pm</li> <li>• After School Activities: 3:30pm-4:30pm</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students can arrive on site from 8am.</li> <li>• Form Time: 8.25am-8:50am</li> <li>• Learning Session 1A: 8:50am-9:45am</li> <li>• Learning Session 1B: 9:45am-10:40am</li> <li>• Break: 10:40am-11:05am</li> <li>• Learning Session 2A: 11:05-12:00pm</li> <li>• Learning Session 2B: 12:00-12:55pm</li> <li>• Secondary Lunch: 12:55pm-1:40pm</li> <li>• Learning Session 3A: 1.40pm-2:35pm</li> <li>• Learning Session 3B: 2:35pm-3:30pm</li> <li>• End of School Day: 3:30pm</li> <li>• After School Activities: 3:30pm-4:30pm</li> </ul>

maintenance of a positive and purposeful learning environment and educational atmosphere are achieved only through the cooperative and mutually supportive efforts of students, parents, faculty, staff, and administrators, alike. We expect all members of our school community to understand and embrace the importance of equality and diversity and stand against discrimination in any form.

Maintaining a safe, secure, orderly, and purposeful environment is among our highest priorities at our school. Consequently, the Community Conduct and Discipline Code is established in this handbook to clearly communicate the expectations of the school for behaviour within our school.

### **Campus Etiquette**

We prohibit drugs, smoking and vaping on our campus. Any violators will be dealt with appropriately. Please do not bring any of the above items to campus.

No animals are allowed on campus at BIS Houston with the exception of service dogs.

All community members are requested to support and uphold our school values of Respect, Unity and Pride at all times.

## **Curriculum**

Parents will be sent the child's Academic Curriculum Overview via [Rubicon Atlas](#) and the password is "academics". Rubicon Atlas will enable parents to access the child's units of learning and see how each unit will be assessed.

## **Daily Schedule**

# Digital Citizen Agreement



## Respect Yourself

I will show respect for myself through my actions. I will select online names that are appropriate. I will consider the information and images I post online. I will not post personal information about my life, experiences, experimentation, or relationships. I will not be obscene.

## Protect Yourself

I will ensure that the information I post online will not put me at risk. I will not publish my personal details, contact details or a schedule of my activities. I will report any attacks or inappropriate behaviour directed at me. I will protect passwords, accounts, and resources.

## Respect Others

I will show respect to others in the community of BISH and not disturb their learning via technology. I will not use electronic mediums to flame, bully or harass other people. I will show respect for other people in my choice of websites/apps. I will not visit sites that are degrading, pornographic, racist, or inappropriate. I will not abuse my rights of access and I will not enter other people's private spaces or areas. I understand that my screen/audio when using technology may be seen/heard by staff, students, other members of the community and visitors.

## Protect Others

I will protect others by reporting abuse, not forwarding inappropriate materials or communications and not visiting sites that are degrading, pornographic, racist, or inappropriate.

## Respect Intellectual Property

I will request permission to use resources and suitably cite any and all use of websites, books, media, etc. I will use and abide by the fair use rules. I will not abuse the privilege of using the school network for personal use.

All students must sign a [Computer Permission Form](#) and adhere to the guidelines set forth.

# Enrichment Programme

Enrichment is a mandatory part of our learning programme and is scheduled during the regular school day.

It is designed to give our students access to different opportunities that broaden their experience. The programme is based around the Creativity, Activity and Service elements of the IB Diploma programme and is designed to develop the Leader Learner Profile attributes. In addition to building a school transcript that demonstrates the breadth of learning it gives students the chance to try different activities, and as they move into High School take additional qualifications or externally assessed courses and activities. It is designed to enable students to discover new passions as well as build upon existing ones.

To pass the Enrichment element of the Learning Programme students must develop a portfolio which illustrates the students learning across all the elements of the programme and shows their growth in the Leader Learner Profile Attributes. In addition to each of these elements being represented in the student's portfolio they must all complete at least one Mi Learning project (passion project) per year in Primary and Middle School.

Primary enrichment is an opportunity for children to engage in experiences beyond the academic curriculum. They will engage in projects related to service, creativity and technology and have the opportunity to pursue their own lines of inquiry. A middle school student experiences a range of enrichment activities each week. A high school student will choose an option for the school year. We encourage students to discuss their programme with their parents. However, the choices are made in school by the students with the support of their form tutor or class teacher. The teacher supports, guides and monitors the students' choices to ensure that they are creating a portfolio that fulfils the requirements of the programme and enriches the students' learning.

## Facilities Usage

### Swimming Pool:

No one may enter the pool without a swim instructor/lifeguard. Outdoor shoes are not allowed on the pool deck. Clean indoor sneakers or flip flops are allowed. It is expected that all students participate in aquatics from Early Years through Year 11.

Times for swim team training and adult swim times will be sent out separately.

### Gymnasiums (Gold and Silver Gyms):

All students must wear clean indoor non-marking sports sneakers. No outdoor shoes are allowed in gyms. Matting is provided for spectators to use to walk to bleachers.

No food, drink, or water is allowed in the gymnasiums.

### Neighbourhoods and Learning Environments

A Neighbourhood is the term given to each section of the school. Primary year groups are in a neighbourhood and Secondary neighbourhoods are designated by subjects. Students have designated neighbourhoods they may have access to depending on their timetables and teacher supervision.

### Outside Track and Fields:

Cleats / Studs / Spikes are NOT worn inside the building.

All outdoor shoes must be put on outside and taken off before entering the building. All shoes cleaned outside with brushes, bring own plastic bag for items or ask PE staff.

### Fitness Room:

- Any student using the fitness room must be trained in the safe and proper use all equipment by a trained PE Teacher.
- Students Under 12 will be allowed to use the cardio equipment, ONLY with trained PE teacher. Students Under 16 must always have a trained PE teacher present.
- Students 16 and over must sign-in with a PE Teacher and workout in pairs. Only water is allowed in this area.



# Firearms and Weapons

The School is committed to providing a safe and secure learning and working environment. All School employees, students, parents, and visitors are prohibited from possessing or carrying firearms, explosives, or weapons anywhere on the School's property or premises, including stored in private motor vehicles, regardless of whether or not the employee, student, parent, or visitor possesses a federal or state license to possess or carry the firearm or weapon. The only exemption to this is a Security guard hired by the School with a license to carry.

The School's property or premises includes all buildings owned or leased by the School, and all surrounding areas such as sidewalks, walkways, driveways, and parking lots under the School's ownership or control.

Any employee, parent, visitor or student violating this Policy shall be subject to disciplinary policies and procedures up to and including termination of employment or expulsion from the School.

## Genius Bar

The Genius Bar is staffed by IT and is located opposite the Spirit Store. The Genius Bar is open from 8.30am-3.30pm.

## Global Campus

The Global Campus is an important integral element to learning at the school, it is an online virtual platform for all Nord Anglia Education students around the world. It contains a number of different areas including News and Activities, Events and Competitions as well as areas specially designed for different ages.

Students have opportunities throughout the year to engage with Global Campus.

## Health and Safety

**Emergency Procedures:** By the term "Emergency Procedures" the school means all situations that might arise that would endanger the health, safety and well-being of all students, staff and visitors to the school. This includes, and is not limited to: fire drills, school evacuations, severe weather and lockdown/hold & secure situations. Regular training drills for all staff and students are provided throughout the year. If you find yourself on campus during an emergency procedure or drill please follow instructions given to you by our members of staff.

**First Aid:** All of our staff are first aid trained. In addition, we have two UK qualified nurses on campus based in our Welfare Clinic found in the central administration area at the front of the school.

**Heat Index Guidelines:** Houston summers are extremely hot. To ensure we keep our students safe in the heat, the Welfare Officers track the Heat Index throughout the day during the summer months. All students are required to be kept inside if the index reaches 100. All Primary students must have a hat and a water bottle before being allowed outside.

## Home Learning

### Home Learning in Secondary

#### What it is and why do we have it?

As students enter our Secondary School, home learning will become more prevalent as we continue to prepare them for success. The key challenge is ensuring that our students are supported as they become effective, independent learners that have the skills and strategies to be successful when they are in our Secondary School and beyond. To ensure home learning is utilised fully to support the learning in school, we insist that it falls with one of the three categories below.

Review – By providing our students with tasks that focus on reviewing what has already been learned, they will have the opportunity to explore, practise and consolidate new knowledge to ensure that it is more likely to be retained.

Preparation for new learning – The key focus for some home learning tasks will be to prepare the students for new learning at school. This may be achieved by employing a range of strategies from ‘thinking’ tasks, ‘knowledge harvests’ / pre-assessment tasks to instructional activities that students will complete prior to lessons, to allow for a greater time to be spent on learning in school.

Developing students as independent learners – As students’ progress through our school they are being prepared to take responsibility for their own learning so that they have the tools to be successful both with us and beyond. Home learning activities, like independent projects and research tasks, enable our students to develop the organisational and management skills that they need to be effective independent learners. All independent projects and research tasks will be planned, broken into manageable sections for students and support will be in place for the students in both resources and expertise.

Home learning is most effective when the emphasis is on the quality of the learning and not the amount of time doing home learning. If you feel that your child is spending excessive amounts of time on home learning, encourage them to stop and discuss this with the relevant subject teacher.

Click here for help and support articles for parents logging in to show my homework to access their child’s homework: [https://help.showmyhomework.co.uk/ArticleDetail/Parents/The\\_basics/Logging-in-as-a-parent](https://help.showmyhomework.co.uk/ArticleDetail/Parents/The_basics/Logging-in-as-a-parent)

## House System

All students and staff are members of one of the schools Houses: Fire, Earth, Water, Air. Each House is led by elected house captains from primary and secondary and facilitated by a house leader.

### House Points

Students gain house points by being recognised by a member of staff for demonstrating one of the Learner and Leader Profile elements. Staff allocate the points on iSAMs by selecting the student and the element of the profile they have demonstrated. Teachers can obtain the totals from iSAMs and celebrate the results with their form groups and classes. Students are awarded single house points only.

House Points are a part of helping our students learn to contribute to something bigger than themselves.

### House Events

Various events occur throughout the year. There will be a whole school house event each term where students compete to earn points for their house rather than individually. There will also be regular individual house competitions representing different areas of the curriculum through-out the year. Multiple points can be awarded by staff judges once agreed with the house leaders.

### House Cup

The house cup is awarded at the end of the year to the house with the most House points collected throughout the year (individual and team). Termly events such as sports day will be awarded a termly house event cup. House cups will be displayed in the PE corridor in a trophy cabinet with the winning house colour ribbons.

## iPad/Laptop Policy

The School issues iPads for students in Years 1-9. Year 1-6 students are to leave their iPads in one of the available charging stations at the school daily, so will not be provided with an individual Apple-branded charger/charging cable.

As part of Year 6 transition, Year 6 students are permitted to take their school iPads home for school work. Chargers will not be given to students in Year 6, however, the neighbourhood has charging stations that the children can use. It is not compulsory to take the school iPad home.

Except during the summer break, Year 7-9 students are permitted to take their iPads home for schoolwork and will be provided with an appropriate Apple-branded charger and charging cable. Students must ensure their iPads are 100% charged daily for the next day's coursework. The charger and charging cable is to be returned at end of the term, and/or if the student leaves the school.

If an issued iPad or loaned iPad is lost, stolen or broken, the family will be held responsible for the cost in damages.

Students in Years 10-13 follow a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) model and will need to bring a laptop to school. The chosen device does not have to be an Apple product but it should have a keyboard as this is more suitable for completing extended pieces of writing at the high school level.

## Learner and Leader Profile

Our students created the Learner and Leader Profile. It is at the heart of our school and is the foundation of our House Point and rewards system. The Learner and Leader Profile elements are at the core of our learning programme. These are key attributes that we endeavour to develop in all our students both inside and outside the classroom. They also make up the themes for our school assemblies.

The Learner Profile Attributes are as follows:

### Inquirer

We nurture curiosity at every opportunity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and collaboratively. We learn with enthusiasm and share that enthusiasm with others. We sustain our love of learning throughout life.

### Balanced

We understand the importance and necessity of balancing many different aspects of our lives, mentally, physically and emotionally. We embrace our independence with other people and the world and seek to enrich ourselves through our differences.

### Caring

We show empathy, compassion and respect to others. We understand our role in building community and act to make a positive impact, locally and globally.

### Risk-taker

We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination. We work independently, and collaboratively, to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient even in the face of challenge and change.

### Principled

We act with honesty and integrity at all times. We have a strong sense of fairness and justice and we respect the dignity of other individuals, groups and communities. We embrace the 3 core values of our school, Respect, Unity, Pride.

### Open Minded

We are outgoing and ready to try new experiences. We embrace the traditions, cultural heritages and perspectives of others. We are good listeners and are always ready to learn from other opinions and ideas to enhance our understanding.

### Learner

We believe we can learn anything. We understand that learning is best when it is personalised to each individual, and that we are responsible for our own learning. Sometimes we learn individually and sometimes collaboratively, but we are always open to learning new things.

### Thinker

We think critically, deeply and creatively to analyse and approach problems at all levels, even the most complex. We look to solve important and real-life issues, always in an ethical manner.

### Communicator

We express ourselves confidently and creatively in a variety of media. We use our knowledge and experience firstly to understand, and then to be understood. We actively listen to the perspective of others, seeking to work together effectively and collaboratively.

### Reflective

We recognise that feedback and reflection are critical elements in our learning. We are able to assess and understand our strengths and limitations in order to support our own development.

### Ambitious

We believe there is no limit to what we can learn or achieve, academically, socially and emotionally. We believe that creativity and challenge help us to get better and we go out of our comfort zones to try new things. We stretch ourselves further and are relentlessly optimistic in everything we do.

### Creative

We appreciate the diversity and aesthetic beauty in the world. We value the process of developing new ideas to bring in to existence thoughts and products through imagination, inspiration and innovation to further enhance our learning.

## **Learning Conferences**

### **(Parent Teacher Student Conferences | PTSC)**

Learning Conferences are an integral part of our communication with parents. Although we encourage an ongoing dialogue about student's learning; there are specific times of the year where learning conferences are calendared to provide an opportunity for parents, teachers and students to sit together virtually or in person to review, celebrate and discuss a student's learning and next steps. Our Learning Conferences are primarily student led. This is an important opportunity for your child to explain their learning to you with the assistance of a teacher. There will also be an opportunity for parents to ask questions and discuss more details with your class / form teacher. PTSCs are in the iSAMs calendar and an email notification will be sent when parents may register for their child's PTSC.

## **Learning Support / Student Services**

The Student Support Services Department at the British International School of Houston encompasses: Learning Support (services for students with Special Education Needs), EAL (services for students for whom English is an additional language), School Therapist (social and emotional support) and Highly Able (services for students with exceptional abilities beyond their age expectations). For more information, contact the Head of Student Support Services.

## **Lockers and Valuables**

Students are encouraged not to bring valuable items (other than those they need for their learning), or large amounts of cash onto the school site, and are responsible for those valuables they choose to bring to school. It is suggested that all parents check that their own household insurance policy (contents) covers all items of personal property whilst at school.

### **Lockers**

Students have access to their lockers before school, at break and lunch time and therefore should only carry their required equipment, iPad and books to each individual learning session.

- Students in Early Years - Year 1 have a "Cubby Hole" in their neighbourhood.
- All students from Year 2 - Year 13 will have their own locker.

Students in Year 6 and above are responsible for providing a lock if they wish to use one for their assigned locker. If they do choose to use a lock, we would recommend they use a coded lock and give their tutor or class teacher the code in case they forget it.

### **Valuables**

If students choose to bring valuable items into school, they do so at their own risk. However, there are areas in the school where personal items can be stored. Students should lock any valuables into their locker before all dance, P.E or swim lessons as well as any activity that might damage or require them to leave valuables such as athletics practices, performing arts rehearsals, or any other in school or after school activity.



# Lost Property

## Please label your child's belongings.

If you have lost any items, please note we have several pick up points around the school:

- Reception: jumpers, sweaters, fleeces, clothing, hats
- PE Hallway: PE kits and sports items
- BOMA: lunch boxes, water bottles, food containers

Before the end of each term, all unclaimed property is displayed at the front for pick up. If not picked up by the end of the term, items are donated to charity.

## Medical Records, Including Immunisation

### Immunisations

According to Texas State requirements, all children attending child-care facilities and schools must be vaccinated against Hepatitis A & B and Pneumococcal disease for the first time. Children who attend any regulated child day-care and school are already required to be immunised against Measles, Mumps, Tetanus, Polio, Rubella, Rubeola, and other communicable childhood diseases. The Texas minimum required immunisations can be found here [http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/immunize/Schedule/schedule\\_child.shtm](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/immunize/Schedule/schedule_child.shtm) All immunisation documentation is kept in the Welfare Office.

## Mobile Phones/ Smart Watches

Students are permitted to bring their mobile phones to school, but the mobile phone must be kept in their backpack or locker and not taken out during the school day unless a teacher wishes for them to use their phone to support learning.

If students need to contact home during the school day, they must coordinate with their teacher.

If a student's mobile phone is visible while at school, the student will be asked to put it away. At break and lunch times we ask students to socialise with their friends and not bring cell phones into the BOMA, the Agora or our outside areas. Phones may be confiscated by teachers if they impede learning time. In case of emergency, please contact the school directly and we will assist you.

All technological devices, including Smart Watches, are intended to be used for learning only while at school. If a Smart Watch is inhibiting a student's learning, the student will be asked to remove the watch.



## Nord Anglia Education

Nord Anglia Education (NAE) is the parent company of BIS Houston. Nord Anglia has over 70 premium private schools globally and provides access to collaborations with The Juilliard School, MIT and UNICEF. Nord Anglia also provides access to Global Campus. Staff benefit from NAE trainings and development, and access to work around the world at NAE schools. Families benefit from the ability to access NAE schools around the world. During the transfer process, the Admissions departments work to transfer any documents between schools, and families are given priority spots in NAE schools. Of course, students must meet the admissions requirements of NAE schools even when transferring.

# Parents and BIS Houston

## Parents on Campus:

Parents are welcome to use the on-site Coffee Shop until 9:30am daily and after school from 3pm-4:30pm. We ask that parents leave the campus at 9:30am and may return at the earliest for pick up at 3pm. When parents are on campus, they are asked not to enter learning spaces as this can be a distraction to lessons.

After school, parents are welcome on the school campus until 4:45pm, at which point Security starts to secure the campus. BIS Houston students may use the playgrounds until 4:45pm but **MUST BE ACCOMPANIED** by a parent or guardian. Families will be asked to leave the campus by 4:45pm unless they are on campus for a specific evening event.

## Parent Volunteers

In addition to involvement in parent organisations and events, parents are also welcome to volunteer directly in classrooms, the Agora, on duties and with exam supervision. If you wish to volunteer, please contact the relevant Head of School or parent representative.

All parents volunteering must go through a background check and must wear a school ID badge whilst in the building. They must also agree to and sign the 'Volunteers Agreement', which is available from the Head of Human Resources.

## Personal Information Collection

All personal data collected from students and/or their parents/guardians in connection with their education at The British International School of Houston will be handled by our staff, kept confidential and used by Nord Anglia Education Limited and/or our affiliates ("we" or "us") for lawful and relevant purposes. Please read our [updated Privacy Policy](#) for full details.

## Parking/Car Park (including Drop off and Pick Up)

### School Zone

Our school is in a designated active School Zone on Westgreen Boulevard. There is a speed limit reduction to 25mph between 7.45am-8.30am and 3.15-4.00pm. The use of mobile phones in this zone is also illegal. Please respect the speed and regulations for the safety of our children.

Once entering the car park, cell phone use in the car park is prohibited and the car park speed limit is 10 mph.

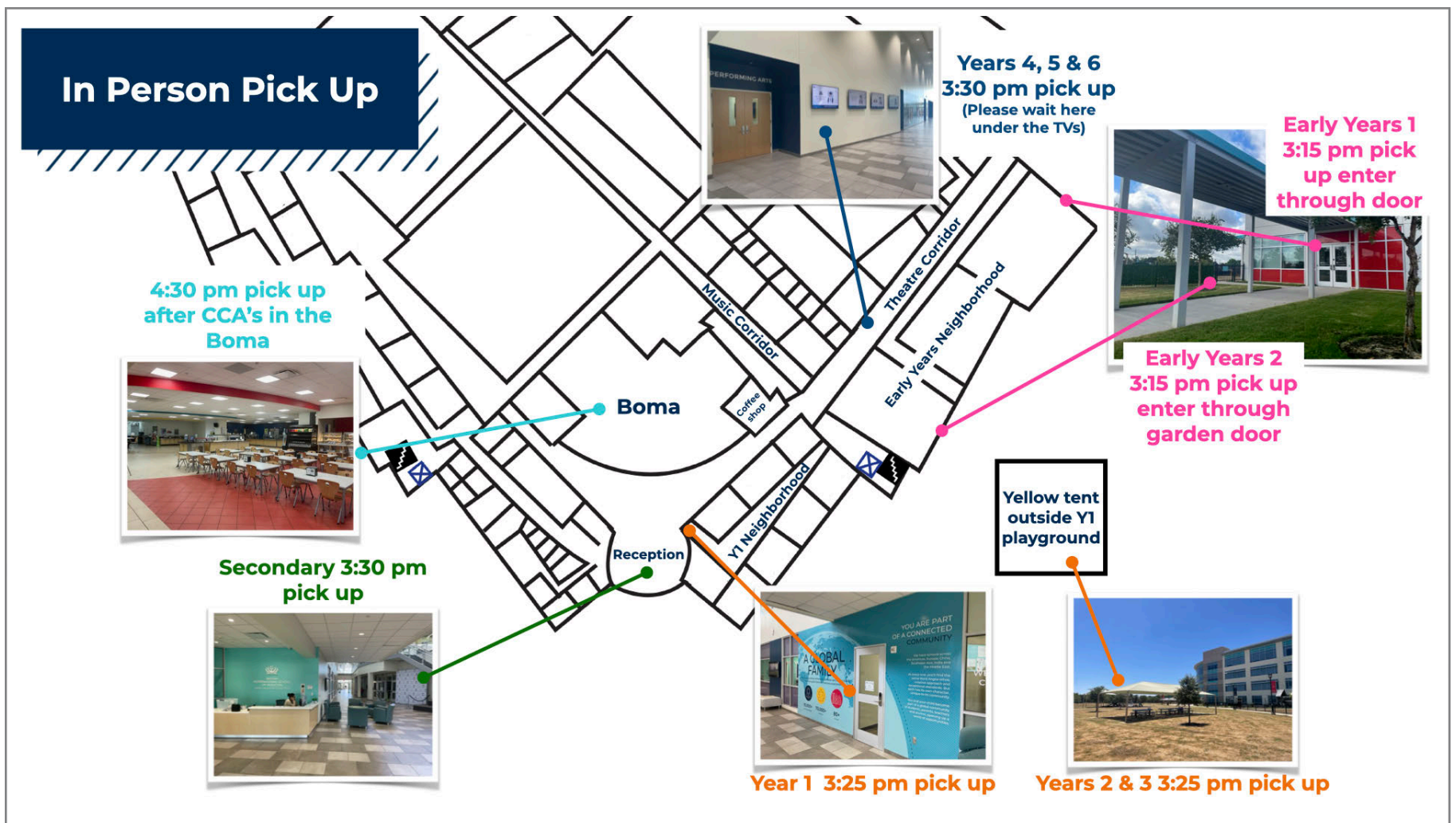
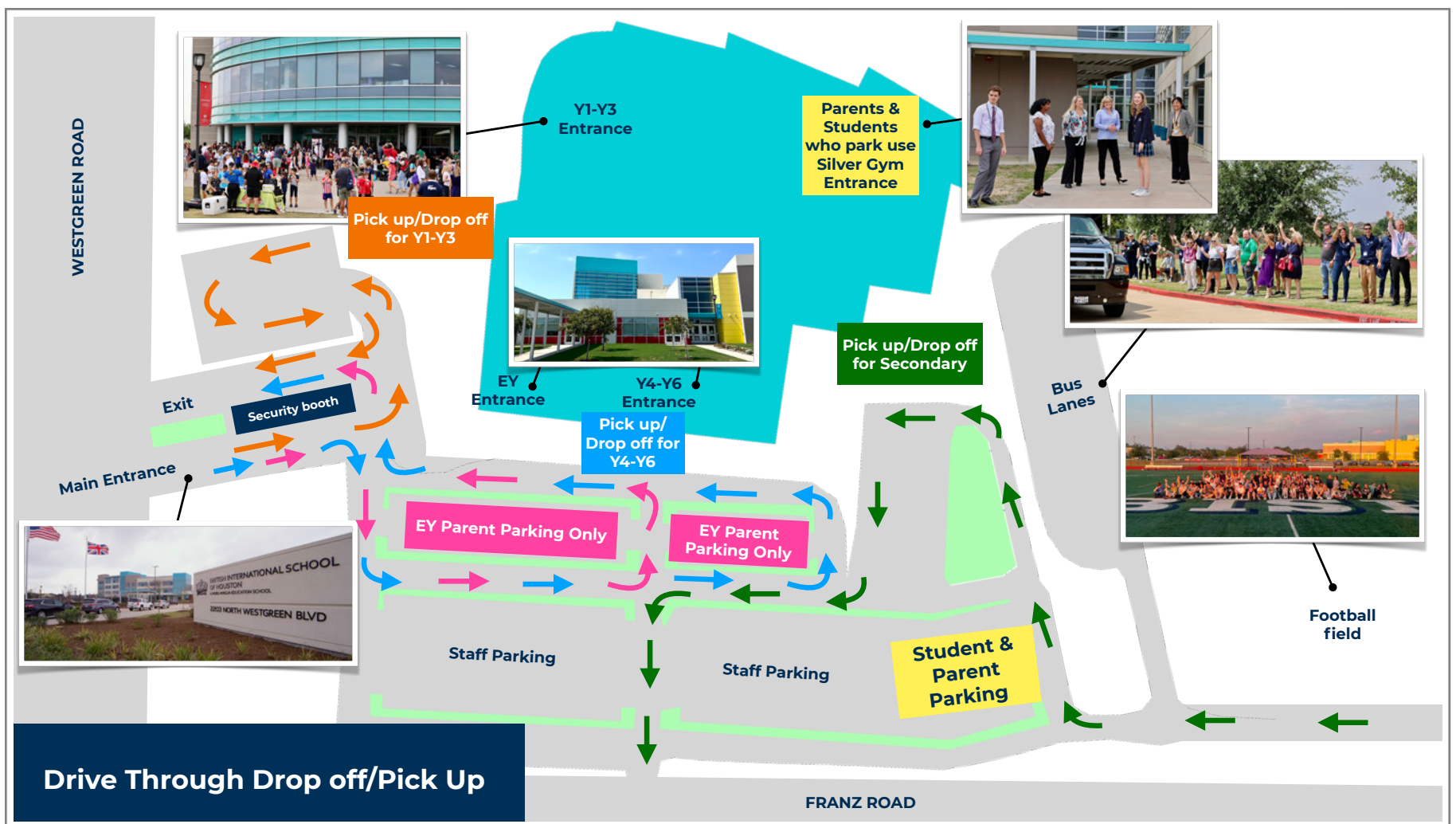
### Campus Car Park Flow

Please follow the guidelines and view the car park map for drop off/pick up procedures.

### Morning Drop off Procedures (see map below)

There are 2 options for dropping off your child in the morning:

- **Option 1** - Drive Through Drop Off: Remain in your car and enter the school through the main entrance (Primary) or through the back gate (Secondary) on Franz. If you have children in both Primary and Secondary school, feel free to use either entrance. Follow the designated route and please have your children remain in your vehicle until a member of staff motions them to exit.
- **Option 2** - In Person Drop Off:
  - Early Years: If you have a child in Early Years, please park in the designated area and walk your child into the school.
  - Year 1 - Year 13: Park in the car park in the designated Parent Parking area and walk with your child (only in the designated crosswalks) to drop them off. Please enter through the Silver Gym entrance.



**Afternoon Pick Up Procedures (see maps above)**

- **End of Day Pick Up**
  - **Option 1 end of day-** Drive Through Pick Up: Remain in your car and use the appropriate route. If you have children on multiple routes, please use the route of your youngest child. Your oldest child should join their younger sibling on his/her route.
  - **Option 2 - In Person Pick Up**



- Early Years at 3:15-3:30: If you have a child in Early Years, please park in the designated area and pick up your child in the EY neighborhood.
  - Year 1 at 3:25 Please collect your child in the Year 1 neighborhood.
  - Year 2 & Year 3 at 3:25: Please collect your child in the designated tent area (outside the Year 1 playground).
  - Years 4 - 6 at 3:30: Please pick up your child at the Theatre/Early Years corridor. Please wait at the doors (next to the coffee shop window) until dismissal begins. The teachers will assist in dismissing your child to you.
  - Secondary students at 3:30: Please meet in the Reception area.
- **4:30 pick up**
    - **Option 1 at 4:30** - Drive Through Pick Up (Secondary students only): Please enter through the back gate on Franz and wait for your child on the Secondary route.
    - **Option 2 at 4:30** - In-Person Pick Up (Primary only): The after-school activity vendors will bring your child to the BOMA. Please meet your child in the BOMA.

Students who are consistently not collected on time will be prevented from enrolling in after-school activities.

### Parking

All cars must reverse into parking spaces. This is for the safety of our community.

## Private Drivers

Any private driver must be authorised by a child's parent to pick up the child. Parents must sign a release and the driver's license of the driver must be scanned at the school in order for a driver to be able to pick up a child at BIS Houston.

Private Drivers will be authorised to enter the school campus providing all of the above have been satisfied. Drivers with approved Visitor or School Lanyard may collect assigned primary students from the BOMA or Reception.

## Permission to Leave Site

During the school's operational hours we are responsible for the safety and learning of the students, and we must know where they are at all times.

Students are only allowed to leave the campus when signed out by their parents for specific reasons, such as medical appointments.

All students must be signed out and in at school reception.

Please follow Attendance and Absence Procedures.

## Parent Concerns

We have an open-door policy and encourage all parents to contact us with any concerns they may have as early as possible so we can best understand and support your family.

Please follow the chain of command to resolve your concerns so we can be sure each step has appropriately addressed the issue.

Contact the form tutor or subject teachers concerned, preferably by email.



The teacher will respond either by email or by telephone and may request to arrange a meeting.



If the issue is not resolved or you do not hear back within 24 hours (please note: this is only Monday 8am until Friday 4pm during term time), then you should contact the next level above the teacher. If a subject teacher, then contact the Head of Subject. If a form tutor, then contact the Head of Year.



If this issue involves one of the above members of staff or cannot be resolved at this level, contact their Senior Leader. Then, and only then, should you contact the appropriate Senior Leader, i.e. Assistant / Deputy Head / Head of School. If your concern is still not resolved, then you can contact the Principal. If your concern is of a more serious nature, then you should contact a senior member of staff either by email or call to arrange an appointment for you to meet in person to discuss your concern.

## Reports

As part of our communication with parents you will receive several progress reports throughout the year. If you have any questions regarding a report or are concerned about your child's progress please contact the teacher directly.

There are slightly different reporting times for different phases of the school. A reporting calendar is published each year. Please see the Head of School for the latest reporting calendar.

## Photos on Campus

We may place a student's photo, video footage, name or school work in our or our affiliates' website, social media, marketing materials, corporate communications (including annual reports) or publications. If you do not wish for us to take photos of your child, please email the Communications Manager at [admissions@houston.nae.school](mailto:admissions@houston.nae.school).

When parents are on campus and attending school functions (i.e. assemblies, exit points, etc), we ask parents to only photograph and/or film their own children. In the event other children may be in a photo with your child, we ask that these are not posted on personal or year group social media accounts without the other parents' approvals. Any photos from the School's social media pages may be shared as the School filters these for any children who are not to be photographed.

## Rewards and Sanctions

### Non-Harassment

We are fully committed to providing an educational environment free from offensive or harassing conduct. We depend on all members of our community to conduct themselves in line with our core values of Pride, Unity and Respect in order to ensure a harassment-free environment at all times.

### Behaviour for Learning

#### Rationale

We believe that positive behaviour in school is a fundamental requirement to help our students develop academically, personally, and collectively. We seek to create an inclusive, caring, and positive learning focused



environment by promoting the school's core values; Pride, Unity and Respect which are embedded through the school's Leader Learner Profile.

We strive to create an environment where students feel safe, where they feel valued and supported, and where individual differences are respected. We believe in developing positive relationships through mutual respect as well as developing opportunities for collaboration of all members of the school community. All members of the school community should take responsibility for their own actions and behaviours, they should treat others as they expect to be treated themselves, as well as feeling as though they have themselves been treated fairly.

A school ethos of modeling and promoting positive attitudes as well as offering stimulating and high-quality lessons, is at the heart of ensuring positive behaviour within the school. We believe that providing students with appropriately challenging and interesting learning experiences encourages students to fully engage with the learning process and minimise instances of behavioural concern. In addition, students should therefore realise that desirable behaviour and responsibility for one's own actions are clearly valued. We know that when students are intrinsically motivated to learn and develop, they have the greatest opportunity to holistically and academically prosper.

[See Early Years and Primary Behaviour for Learning Policy here.](#)

[See Secondary Behaviour for Learning Policy here.](#)

## Safeguarding

As a Nord Anglia Education school, our aim is to:

- Provide a world class, safe and happy environment to enable students to thrive and learn.
- Outline the systems and processes we all take to ensure that students remain safe at school.
- Raise awareness to all staff of safeguarding/child protection issues, and define their roles and responsibilities in reporting possible cases of abuse.
- Identify students who are suffering, or likely to suffer harm.
- Ensure effective communication between all staff on child protection/safeguarding issues.
- Set effective procedures for staff/volunteers or third party individuals who encounter any issues in relation to child protection/safeguarding to follow.
- Be clear with all parties, including students and their parents/carers, regarding our approach to safeguarding and child protection, through the provision of clear policies.

As such, the British International School operates under the 'Nord Anglia Education Safeguarding Policy' amended in accordance with state laws relating to child protection. The full policy can be found [here](#). In addition to this, the British International School of Houston adheres to Section 261.101 of the Texas Family Code which mandates teachers / all staff to report any safeguarding concern to either Texas CPS or law enforcement, within a 48 hour timeframe, 24 hours for concerns relating to safety. Please see the Texas DPS website for more information [www.dfps.state.tx.us](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us).

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for the British International School of Houston is Gemma Averette (Head of Primary, [gemma.averette@houston.nae.school](mailto:gemma.averette@houston.nae.school)). Ms. Averette should be contacted with regards to any questions or concerns relating to child protection and the safeguarding of students at BIS Houston.

## School Supplies

We keep lists of school supplies your child will need in [Parent Essentials under Calendar, School Forms & Guides](#). Please label your child's school supplies.

## School Trips and Student Travel

Viability of trips both local and international are assessed on a case-by-case basis.

With both residential and day trips from campus, our students all participate in a variety of opportunities to encounter learning outside the school setting. Learners will partake in various school trips to local museums,

historic sites, and other learning experiences. In the secondary school, our subject leaders plan specific lessons to engage in off-site scholarly endeavours including field trips. Additionally, there are many opportunities for overnight student travel, including but not limited to camping, Project Week, MIT trips, UN and Model UN, Juilliard visit, JASS and International Award with Outdoor Education. All trips are rigorously planned for safety, and all our staff are first aid trained. Safety is our top priority during travel.

# School Therapist

## School Therapy Informed Consent Form

The British International School of Houston is committed to providing quality education to its students. In an effort to achieve this goal, parents/guardians or school staff may refer students for counselling, or students may request counselling sessions. The focus of the program is to help students express their thoughts and feelings, better understand the world they live in, and develop strategies and coping skills. There is no cost for counselling services provided.

## Background

My name is Samantha Schlanger, and I am the School Therapist at The British International School of Houston. I have a Master's degree in Marriage and Family Therapy, and I am a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist and Licensed Professional Counsellor.

## Provisions of Services

The bulk of my referrals come from parents, teachers, and Heads of Year. For students who refer themselves without parental knowledge, my policy is to contact the parent after three sessions to let them know I am seeing their child. Students sometimes drop by one or two times to discuss a small issue that they want to process out loud, and I always encourage students to let their parents know they reached out to me so that parents are aware. I make my office a very comfortable and relaxing atmosphere where students, parents, and faculty can feel at ease. If students come to the office with a group of friends for a casual chat that does not qualify as counselling, then I may use my discretion to decide if parent contact is needed. I will always contact parents if any information is shared that they would need to know. Parents have the right to deny counselling services at any time.

Services include short-term solution-focused individual counselling, crisis intervention, group counselling, and referrals as needed. I teach students about their emotions and help them learn effective coping skills. I assist with concerns such as stress, anxiety, depression, social issues, grief, self esteem, and adjustment to life transitions.

School Therapy services are aimed at effective education and socialisation of your child within the school community. These services are not intended as a substitute for psychological counselling, diagnosis, or medication, which are not the responsibility of the school. I may not be able to guarantee regular weekly sessions with your child. I have a document with referrals for outside professionals if your child would benefit from counselling outside of school.

## Benefits/Risks

There may be both risks and benefits associated with participation in counselling. Counselling may improve your child's ability to relate with others, provide a clearer understanding of himself/herself, along with values, goals, and an ability to deal with everyday stress. Counselling may also lead to unanticipated feelings and change.

## Observation/Presentations

One of my goals is to demystify and destigmatise my role so that students feel comfortable coming to talk with me. In order to accomplish this, I maintain an active presence on campus so that students know who I am. I regularly observe classes so that I can get to know the students in each year group and see the dynamics of the classroom environment. I also conduct presentations across the year groups on a variety of subjects to enhance the emotional intelligence of our students.

## Confidentiality

In order to build trust with your child, I will keep information confidential with some possible exceptions. I may share information with the child's parents/guardians, the child's teacher, and/or administrators or school

personnel who work with the child on a need to know basis, so that we may better assist the child as a team. I am required by law to share information with parents or others in certain circumstances:

- If the child is presenting a danger to himself/herself or another person
- Evidence or disclosure of abuse or neglect
- Threats to school security
- Illegal activity

I may also disclose bullying behaviour and other information to parents and relevant staff members in an effort to provide support to both the student(s) experiencing these behaviours and the student(s) exhibiting the behaviours.

I will make your child aware of these limits of confidentiality and make an effort to inform your child before sharing information with others. If you would like me to share information with a third party, such as an outside counselor, psychiatrist, social services worker, or paediatrician, you will need to sign an additional release of information form.

### Contact

I encourage you to ask questions and receive information about methods or techniques used. You are free to seek a second opinion or end counselling at any time. I also want to reiterate that I encourage outside counselling if your child wants or needs regular weekly sessions.

To request an appointment for your child, you can email me.

Samantha Schlanger (Ms. S.), [samantha.schlanger@houston.nae.school](mailto:samantha.schlanger@houston.nae.school)

## Security

BIS Houston has Security officers and Houston Police on site during the school day. Please follow the directions of our Security Officers as their role is to keep our community safe.

All exterior doors to the school are locked.

It is of most importance that no one holds doors or props doors open. Only designated individuals may enter the school.

## Spirit Store

Friday is Spirit Day at BIS Houston when we support and celebrate our school sports teams and unite our students through our 'Bulldog Pride'. Our Spirit Store carries all Spirit wear, PE uniforms, Early Years uniforms, school hats, school supplies and more. To view everything in our Spirit Store and purchase online, [click here](#). Further details on what to wear are include in our [Dress Code Policy](#).

## Social Media Policy

We expect all members of the BIS Houston community to demonstrate our values of Pride, Unity and Respect in all aspects of their social media accounts. Online bullying is not tolerated. If there are instances of this and brought to the School's attention, the situation will be evaluated. Consequences for violating the policy will include sanctions up to and including expulsion from school.

## Staff Parking

Staff parking is allocated at the end of the parking lot. All staff must use this parking lot, including part time staff. All cars must reverse park.

# Student Drivers

Students driving their own car must reverse park in the designated Student Parking area. They also must have a parking sticker to be placed at the bottom left of their windshield. Parking stickers may be picked up at Reception.

## Suicide Prevention Policy

### Basic Guidance for Schools

The purpose of this policy is to protect the health and well-being of all students by having procedures in place to prevent, assess the risk of, intervene in, and respond to suicide. The school:

(a) recognizes that physical, behavioral, and emotional health is an integral component of a student's educational outcomes,

(b) further recognizes that suicide is a leading cause of death among young people,

(c) has an ethical responsibility to take a proactive approach in preventing deaths by suicide, and

(d) acknowledges the school's role in providing an environment which is sensitive to individual and societal factors that place youth at greater risk for suicide and one which helps to foster positive youth development.

Parents/ carers should always be made aware of the issues and encouraged to involve appropriate professionals. Where parents or carers fail to act appropriately to help safeguard their child- this may indicate that there is a growing child protection issue and school staff may need to consider alternative action.

### Scope

This policy covers actions that take place in the school, on school property, at school-sponsored functions and activities, on school buses or vehicles and at bus stops, and at school sponsored out-of-school events where school staff are present. This policy applies to the entire school community, including educators, school and district staff, students, parents/guardians, and volunteers. This policy will also cover appropriate school responses to suicidal or high risk behaviors that take place outside of the school environment.

### Staff Professional Development

All staff receive annual professional development on risk factors, warning signs, protective factors, response procedures, referrals, postvention, and resources regarding youth suicide prevention. The professional development will include additional information regarding groups of students at elevated risk for suicide, including those living with mental and/ or substance use disorders, those who engage in self-harm or have attempted suicide, LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning) students, students bereaved by suicide, and those with medical conditions or certain types of disabilities. All staff will also be provided resources for additional training if they choose.

### Risk Factors

**Risk Factors for Suicide** are characteristics or conditions that increase the chance that a person may try to take her or his life. This does not predict suicidality but can assist in identifying who may need support. Suicide risk tends to be highest when someone has several risk factors at the same time.

#### Individual factors

- depression/anxiety
- poor communication skills
- low self esteem
- poor problem solving skills
- hopelessness
- impulsivity
- drug or alcohol abuse

### Family factors

- unreasonable expectations
- abuse (physical, sexual, emotional or neglect)
- poor parental relationships and arguments
- depression, deliberate self-harm, suicide or other mental health difficulties in the family
- drug/alcohol misuse in the family
- domestic violence

### Social factors

- difficulty in making relationships/ loneliness
- persistent bullying or peer rejection
- easy availability of drugs or medications

### Triggers

- family relationship difficulties
- difficulties with peer relationships e.g. break up of relationship
- bullying behaviors
- significant trauma e.g. bereavement, abuse
- suicidal behavior in other students (contagion effect)
- self-harm or suicidal behavior portrayed or reported in the media
- difficult times of the year (e.g. anniversaries) trouble in school or with the authorities
- feeling under pressure from families, school and peers to conform/achieve
- exam pressure
- times of change (e.g. parental separation/divorce)

### Warning signs

There may be changes in the **behavior** of the young person. These changes in behavior are likely to be the signs that tell staff that a child is in distress:

- changes in eating/sleeping habits
- increased isolation from friends/family
- changes in activity and mood e.g. more aggressive than usual, lowering of academic grades
- talking about self-harming or suicide
- abusing drugs or alcohol
- becoming socially withdrawn
- expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- giving away possessions

### Protective Factors

**Protective Factors for Suicide** are characteristics or conditions that may help to decrease a person's suicide risk. While these factors do not eliminate the possibility of suicide, especially in someone with risk factors, they may help to reduce that risk. Protective factors for suicide have not been studied as thoroughly as risk factors, so less is known about them.

Protective factors for suicide include:

- Receiving effective mental health care,
- Positive connections to family, peers, community, and social institutions
- Life skills (including problem solving skills and coping skills, ability to adapt to change)
- Self-esteem and a sense of purpose or meaning in life
- Cultural, religious, or personal beliefs that discourage suicide

Note that protective factors do not entirely remove risk, especially when there is a personal or family history of depression or other mental disorders.

### Frequently Asked Questions



**Q: Will bringing up the subject of suicide with a young person increase the likelihood they will attempt suicide?**

No. All collected evidence shows that bringing up the topic is an important way to prevent suicide. Introducing the topic and showing a willingness to discuss suicide allows the other person to feel heard.

**Q: Do youth who express suicidal thoughts or behaviors ever do so just to get attention?**

Not every single youth who expresses suicidal thoughts or behaviors plans to attempt. However, it is important that these expressions are taken seriously every time they occur. Research indicates that suicide is often a process, not a random isolated occurrence. Individuals who attempt suicide usually express their intention to do so and display one or more of the common warning signs prior to the event.

**General Aspects of Prevention**

An important part of prevention of self-harm or suicide is having a supportive environment in the school setting which is focused on building self-esteem and encouraging healthy peer relationships and wellbeing.

An effective anti-bullying behavior policy and a means of identifying and supporting young people with emotional difficulties is an important aspect of this. All staff/volunteers need to recognise that suicidal ideation should be seen as a safeguarding issue. A Cause for Concern form should be filled out and submitted to the Safeguarding Officer if there are any concerns.

**Hotlines to be aware of and promote:**

National Suicide Prevention Hotline: Call 988 | Online Chat: 988lifeline.org

Houston Area Teen Line- 713-529-8336

Text HOME to 741741 for free 24/7 confidential support in the US

**Assessment and Referral Protocol**

When a student is identified by a staff person as potentially suicidal, i.e., verbalizes about suicide, presents overt risk factors, self-harms, or discloses ideation to a friend or member of staff- staff should inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead of these concerns and fill out a Cause for Concern Form. The Safeguarding Lead will guide the member of staff on next steps. The Safeguarding Lead will most likely have the staff member call the student's parents to make them aware that the student verbalized these feelings so that the parent can monitor further and get outside psychological counseling for the student.

If the situation is urgent (student expresses more clear intent), the school staff will need to reach out for support/backup from staff while continuously supervising the student to ensure the student's safety. The Designated Safeguarding Lead, School Therapist, or administrator will contact the student's parent or guardian immediately and will assist the family with an urgent referral. When appropriate, this may include calling emergency services or ensuring the student is brought to the local Emergency Department, but in most cases, will involve ensuring that the parents set up an outpatient mental health or primary care appointment and communicate the reason for referral to the healthcare provider.

- When you recognise signs of distress, record what you have observed
- Find a person whom the young person trusts who can find ways of talking with the young person about how they are feeling.
- What appears to be important for many young people is having someone to talk to, who listens properly and does not judge. This person may be a mentor, therapist, school nurse, Head of Year, coach, form tutor, teacher, or another trusted adult.
- It is important that all attempts of suicide or deliberate self-harm are taken seriously. All mention of suicidal thoughts should be noted, and the young person listened to carefully and action taken.

**Support and Safety Plan**

It is helpful to identify someone who can support the young person and know how to get in touch with them. Examples are friends, family, School Therapist, or a teacher. Knowing how to access a crisis line is also important. Creating a **"Safety Plan"** can be a useful way of recording the support people in a young person's life. This is something that anyone who has a trusted relationship with the child or young person can do. Safety plan forms can be found through the School Therapist or Safeguarding.

**Confidentiality**

Confidentiality is a key concern for young people, and they need to know that it may not be possible for staff or to offer complete confidentiality. If you consider that a young person is at serious risk of harming him/herself or others, then confidentiality cannot be maintained. It is important not to make promises of confidentiality that you cannot keep, even though the young person may put pressure on you to do so. If you have any safeguarding concerns, follow the Nord Anglia Safeguarding Policy and discuss with your Designated Safeguarding Lead.

### Support for staff

Staff may experience a range of feelings in response to self-harm or suicidal behavior in a young person (e.g. anger, sadness, shock, disbelief, guilt, helplessness, disgust or rejection). It is important that where necessary staff can access appropriate support. Staff can talk with the School Therapist or with the Head of Wellbeing. It is helpful for staff to have an opportunity to talk this through with work colleagues or senior management. You may also be able to receive up to three free counselling sessions through our Employment Assistance Program.

### In-School Suicide Attempt

In the case of an in-school suicide attempt, the health and safety of the student is paramount. In these situations:

1. First aid will be rendered until professional medical treatment and/or transportation can be received, following district emergency medical procedures.
2. School staff will supervise the student at all times to ensure their safety.
3. Staff will immediately notify the principal or school suicide prevention coordinator regarding in-school suicide attempts.
4. The school employed mental health professional or principal will contact the student's parent or guardian.
5. Staff will move all other students out of the immediate area as soon as possible.
6. If appropriate, staff will immediately request a mental health assessment for the youth.
7. The school will engage the crisis team to assess whether additional steps should be taken to ensure student safety and well-being.

### Re-entry Procedure

For students returning to school after a mental health crisis (e.g., suicide attempt or psychiatric hospitalization), appropriate members of staff will meet with the student's parent or guardian, and if appropriate, meet with the student to discuss re-entry and appropriate next steps to ensure the student's readiness for return to school.

1. A school employed mental health professional or other designee will be identified to coordinate with the student, their parent or guardian, and any outside mental health care providers.
2. The parent or guardian will provide documentation from a mental health care provider that the student has undergone examination and that they are no longer a danger to themselves or others.
3. The designated staff person will periodically check in with student to help the student readjust to the school community and address any ongoing concerns.

### Definitions

**At risk-** A student who is defined as high risk is one who has made a suicide attempt, has the intent to die by suicide, or has displayed a significant change in behavior suggesting the onset or deterioration of a mental health condition. The student may have thought about suicide including potential means of death and may have a plan.

**Crisis team-** A multidisciplinary team of administrative, mental health, safety professionals, and support staff whose primary focus is to address crisis preparedness, intervention/response, and recovery.

**Mental health** A state of mental and emotional being that can impact choices and actions that affect wellness. Mental health problems include mental and substance use disorders.

**Postvention** -A crisis intervention strategy designed to reduce the risk of suicide and suicide contagion, provide the support needed to help survivors cope with a suicide death, address the social stigma associated with suicide, and distribute factual information after the suicide death of a member of the school community.

**Risk assessment** -An evaluation of a student who may be at risk for suicide, conducted by the appropriate school staff (e.g School Therapist). This assessment is designed to elicit information regarding the student’s intent to die by suicide, previous history of suicide attempts, presence of a suicide plan and its level of lethality and availability, presence of support systems, and other relevant risk factors.

**Self-harm** Behavior that is self-directed and deliberately results in injury or the potential for injury to oneself. Can be categorized as either non-suicidal or suicidal. Although self-harm often lacks suicidal intent, youth who engage in self-harm are more likely to attempt suicide.

**Suicide-** Death caused by self-directed injurious behavior with any intent to die as a result of the behavior. Note: The coroner’s or medical examiner’s office must first confirm that the death was a suicide before any school official may state this as the cause of death.

**Suicide attempt** A self-injurious behavior for which there is evidence that the person had at least some intent to kill himself or herself. A suicide attempt may result in death, injuries, or no injuries. A mixture of ambivalent feelings such as wish to die and desire to live is a common experience with most suicide attempts. Therefore, ambivalence is not a sign of a less serious or less dangerous suicide attempt.

**Suicide contagion** The process by which suicidal behavior or a suicide influences an increase in the suicidal behaviors of others. Guilt, identification, and modeling are each thought to play a role in contagion. Although rare, suicide contagion can result in a cluster of suicides.

**Suicidal ideation** Thinking about, considering, or planning for self-injurious behavior which may result in death. A desire to be dead without a plan or intent to end one’s life is still considered suicidal ideation and should be taken seriously.

### Language Guidelines

The words you use matter. You can better reach youth, break down negative stereotypes and give teens hope by choosing words that are more relatable and promote understanding. The following are tips for talking to you and talk about suicide:

Instead of this...	Say this...	Why
Commit/committed suicide	Died by suicide/death by suicide/lost their life to suicide	“commit” implies suicide is a crime and reinforces the stigma that it’s a selfish act or choice Using neutral phrasing helps strip away the shame/blame element
Successful/unsuccessful suicide	Died by suicide/survived a suicide attempt/lived through a suicide attempt	The notion of “successful” suicide is inappropriate because it frames a tragic outcome as an achievement
Chose to kill themselves	Died as the result of self-inflicted injury	Reinforced the stigma that it is a selfish act or choice
Threatened to self-harm/commit suicide	Disclosed they were having thoughts of self-harm/suicide	Reinforces the notion that it is attention seeking or not a credible report

National Suicide Prevention Hotline: Call 988 | Online Chat- 988lifeline.org  
Houston Area Teen Line- 713-529-8336



## PLAN OF ACTION FOR URGENT SITUATIONS

**If the student is bleeding profusely or is unconscious – CALL 911 IMMEDIATELY**

**Then Immediately Contact the School Nurse, School Therapist, and Head of Safeguarding**

### School Therapist - School Nurse – Head of Safeguarding

- Conducts interview with student
- Contacts parent/guardian
- Makes referral for Same-Day Suicide Assessment
  - Crisis Response Team
  - Psychiatric Facility in the area
  - or licensed clinician per family's choice
- Contacts CPS 1-800-797-3260 if necessary
- Contacts 911 if necessary
- Stays with the student until parent/guardian/Police arrive
- Completes necessary documentation:
  - Suicide Intervention Interview/Notes
  - Acknowledgement of Referral (parent)
  - Safety Contract (student)
  - Release of Information (student & parent)
- Alerts School Administrators and other relevant staff
- Follows up with appropriate communications

If a student threatens suicide or manifests the signs of intent:

If a student reports that another student has threatened suicide or has manifested signs of intent:

### When any employee becomes aware of a suicide threat:

- Student should be under adult supervision at all times.
- Never leave student by themselves (or alone with another student) while securing assistance.
- Employee responsibility is to secure immediate assistance from designated staff (see below)
- It is not an employee's duty or role to assess the level of risk or do in-depth counselling

### Contact: School Therapist, School Nurse, and Head of Safeguarding

Referral for same-day Suicide Assessment to be made by School Therapist or Head of Safeguarding.



# Technology Platforms

Platform	Year Groups	Purpose	How to Log In
<b>iSAMS Parent Portal</b>  iSAMS may be accessed through App and the iSAMS website.	All Year Groups	iSAMS is the school management information system. In iSAMS, you can view Schools Reports, check your Child's details, view the live school calendar, access your child's timetable and much more.  You can also find your child's BOMA ID number in the iSAMS parent app.	For new families, once new student paperwork is turned in to the Registrar, you will receive your invitation to log in within 2-3 days. For existing families, your login will be the email address attached to your child's student record. To reset your password, please email the Registrar. We encourage families to use the iSAMS parent app.  Information on how to log onto our iSAMS Parent app is available <a href="#">HERE</a> .
<b>Atlas Rubicon</b>	All Year Groups	This holds curriculum information for all year groups.	You can access BIS Houston's platform <a href="#">HERE</a> and the password is <i>academics</i> .
<b>MyPaymentsPlus</b>	All Year Groups	Your child may carry a balance on their ID to make á la carte purchases in the BOMA (the School's canteen). Please note meal plans are purchased directly from the Coffee Shop in the BOMA.	You can access the mypaymentsplus site <a href="#">HERE</a> .
<b>SeeSaw</b>	Early Years, Primary	SeeSaw is a communication tool for EY and Primary families. Your child's teacher may post work, assignments or communication through SeeSaw. Your child may also post work on SeeSaw.	At the start of the school year or when your child starts school, your child's teacher will provide a QR code for you to access SeeSaw.
<b>Schools Buddy</b>	All Year Groups	Schools Buddy is the system used to register your child for buses, instrumental lessons, any after-school activity, Summer camp, Athletics, and complete PTSC bookings.	You can access the Schools Buddy site <a href="#">HERE</a> . Your login details will be the same as your iSAMS login details.
<b>ShowMyHomework</b>	Secondary	ShowMyHomework is a homework platform used in Secondary school.	Students and parents will be provided a login from their child's Form Tutor or Head of Year for access.

# Training Days

At BIS Houston, there is an emphasis on the continual professional learning of staff as this has a direct impact on the quality of learning for students. The school has several training days per year which are identified when the school calendar dates are released.

## Transferring Out

If a student in their first academic year at the school cannot return for the following academic year, a withdrawal form must be submitted before the re-enrolment deadline. For students who have been at the school for more than one year, a full term's notice of departure is required. Withdrawal Forms can be found on Parent Essentials.

Please submit completed withdrawal forms to Jane Chastant, Director of Admissions and Marketing.  
[jane.chastant@houston.nae.school](mailto:jane.chastant@houston.nae.school)

Any outstanding fees and costs must be paid before departing. As per school policy, all report cards, transcripts, external results and certificates can only be released to students and families if all school fees are up to date. Please contact the Finance Office for payment arrangement and let us know if we can be of any further assistance.

### School Reports

Your new school will request your children's school reports. These are accessible to you through your iSAMS Parent Portal Log-in. We would certainly encourage you to print all the reports before you leave BIS Houston to ensure you have them to hand.

School reports can also be provided directly to other institutions by the school Registrar.

### Teacher Evaluations

From time to time, future schools may request our staff to complete a teacher evaluation of your child's academic progress. This is often a confidential report. Please ask the future school's Registrar to email the request and any forms they wish us to use to our school at [info@houston.nae.school](mailto:info@houston.nae.school).

### Teacher Recommendation

If required by your new school, you may need a letter of recommendation. Please contact the Registrar to make this request.

### Certificate of Enrolment

The 'Certificate of Enrolment' is a stamped evidentiary document that your children attended our school. Please contact [info@houston.nae.school](mailto:info@houston.nae.school) to request this certificate.

### Transfer Certificate

If you are traveling to the Middle-East as well as some countries in South America; they will require a 'Transfer Certificate'. This document is prepared, stamped and notarised (Texas Notary) by our school. You may also be required to seek further notary from the applying country. Please contact the Registrar for additional information.

## Tutoring

We do not allow BIS Houston employees to accept pay to tutor students at the school. If your child needs additional help, please contact the teacher directly.

# Uniform

It is important that all students uphold and maintain the standards required for the school uniform. Form Tutors in Secondary and Class Teachers in Primary will check that their students are wearing the correct uniform each day.

We have a three-stage intervention approach to enforce the uniform policy:

1. Students are notified of their improper uniform.
2. Class teacher/form tutor warns student and makes contact home to inform parents.
3. Heads of Year contact Parents and student is removed from school until they are compliant with the school uniform policy.

Please refer to the full [School Uniform Guide](#)

## Virtual School Experience Policy

The School does not offer virtual learning if a student is absent due to illness.

Virtual Learning may only be offered during whole school closures.

- If there is whole school closure (e.g., weather-related closures), depending on the situation, the School may provide virtual learning. The School will need to assess a whole school closure according to each situation, including availability of internet, electricity, amount of preparation the community may need to take to prepare for inclement weather, etc.

These are the only approvals for accessing virtual learning. Any other reasons will not be approved (i.e. vacations during term time, medical appointments)

Should the School be forced to close or suspend the provision of on-campus education for any reason, including a Force Majeure Event for one week or more, the affected school will implement the Nord Anglia Virtual School Experience (VSE). Virtual Schooling shall form part of the one-off exceptional support that the school may provide to parents and students in such circumstances.

Virtual Schooling will be delivered to all our students whatever their age. We do however recognise that the age of the student, and their well-being, mean that it is essential that screen-time is balanced against offline activity. Therefore, our Virtual School Experience will:

- Be a mixture of live synchronous contact with the student's teacher(s) and asynchronous personal learning activity (independent study), undertaken online or offline, against their normal curriculum, whilst at home;
- Use designated technology platforms where student assignments can be set and submitted together with downloadable content for students and parents;
- Include provision for a student's physical, social, emotional, creative, aesthetic needs as well as academic learning (this may include activities such as musical instrument instruction and performance, undertaking science experiments, conversations in foreign languages and an engaging range of fun and artistic challenges);
- Continue to connect students (provided they previously had access) through our Global Campus, where students can collaborate and create world-class ideas. Students work remotely together, solving challenges like those set by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology or collaborating on solutions for UNICEF's Sustainable Development Goals; and
- Ensure that safeguarding and child protection are given as high a priority as they would be on campus at school.

Parents should recognise and understand that their ongoing commitment will be required to ensure that the Student remains engaged and progresses during such virtual schooling.

Education in a Nord Anglia Education school, whether actual or virtual, is a long-term process that aims to meet the needs of every student in a personalised way. Virtual Schooling shall be the agreed temporary replacement for on-campus learning during a Force Majeure Event, however, we acknowledge that it should only be provisional in nature. We commit to continuing to develop the student's education as they prepare to

reintegrate and return into physical on-campus schooling. As such, to ensure that our teachers and school leaders are able to operate the virtual School Experience at the optimum level and to maintain the highest quality of teaching when students return to school, parents must continue to pay their normal fees during the provision of the virtual school experience.

Further details about our virtual school experience are available on your school's website and also on the Nord Anglia Education website at the following link:

<https://www.nordangliaeducation.com/virtual-school-experience>

## Visitors

All visitors must report to the Guard House upon arrival, show photo ID, and sign out upon departure from the school.

- All visitors must wear an identity badge at all times. Any visitor not wearing a badge will be asked to return to the Security office to check in.
- All visitors must be escorted to their destination by a member of the school team and remain with a member of staff at all times while school is in session.
- If a member of staff has requested that a parent come into the school, the staff member will greet the parent at reception.

## Water Bottles

Students are all encouraged to carry a reusable water bottle with them at all times. At break and lunchtimes, especially in hot weather, students are required to take a water bottle outside with them to remain hydrated.

## Yearbook

Our Yearbook is a fantastic memento of our students' achievements and memories of a great year at BIS Houston. It includes class and individual photos of students, school and community events, and student activities. Yearbooks are available for purchase in the spring time and are delivered to the school at the end of the school year.