



BRITISH INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL  
OF BOSTON

A NORD ANGLIA EDUCATION SCHOOL

Photo of children

Welcome to  
Lower School

Parent  
Handbook  
2023-2024







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# Welcome from the Head of School

Welcome to the new academic year 2023-2024 at BISB!

We have an exciting year ahead of us and I am very happy to welcome everyone back to school and to introduce our new Principal, Mr Paul Keach and many new teaching staff to you over these coming months. We are entering the school year with lots of positives from last year to build upon, and new initiatives to enhance the BISB experience for students and families.

Lower School students will enjoy more opportunities to engage with each other in learning, Enrichment, House Games, Student Council, performances and sports this year and we will also be continuing with all the successful activities from last year. We will be inviting parents and families into school to share and celebrate the children's learning through IPC projects and curriculum topics throughout each term. As a community of students, parents, teachers and leadership we will continue to collaborate, achieve more together as a team and share with the children their successes and support them in any way they require, both academically and personally.

I am looking forward to sharing this journey with you all and I know that we will have a fantastic year in Lower School at BISB in 2023-2024.

Esther Hunter

Head of Lower School

# ACADEMIC CALENDAR 2023-2024

Fall Term 2023	
Staff Induction Week	Monday, August 21 <sup>st</sup>
Start of Fall Term	Monday, August 28 <sup>th</sup>
Labor Day – No School	Monday, September 4 <sup>th</sup>
Back to School Information Evening	Thursday, September 12 <sup>th</sup>
Mid-Term Break and Columbus Day	Monday, October 9 <sup>th</sup> – Friday October 13 <sup>th</sup>
Veterans Day – No School	Friday, November 10 <sup>th</sup>
Settling in Report	Friday, November 3 <sup>rd</sup>
Parent Teacher Conferences – School Closed	Tuesday, November 14 <sup>th</sup>
Parent Teacher Conferences - Evening	Thursday, November 16 <sup>th</sup>
Thanksgiving Holiday	Wednesday, November 22 <sup>nd</sup> – Friday, November 24 <sup>th</sup>
End of Fall Term	Friday, December 15 <sup>th</sup>

Winter Term 2024	
Start of Winter Term	Wednesday, January 3 <sup>rd</sup>
Lower School Information Evening 2024-25	Wednesday, January 10 <sup>th</sup>
Martin Luther King Jr. Day – No School	Monday, January 15 <sup>th</sup>
Mid-Term Break and Presidents' Day	Friday, February 16 <sup>th</sup> – Monday, February 19 <sup>th</sup>
Target Setting Report	Friday, March 8 <sup>th</sup>
Parent Teacher Conferences – School Closed	Tuesday, March 12 <sup>th</sup>
Parent Teacher Conferences - Evening	Thursday, March 14 <sup>th</sup>
End of Winter Term	Friday, March 18 <sup>th</sup>

Spring Term 2024	
Start of Spring Term	Monday, April 1 <sup>st</sup>
Patriots' Day – No School	Monday, April 15 <sup>th</sup>
Mid-Term Break and Memorial Day	Monday, May 27 <sup>th</sup> – Friday, May 31 <sup>st</sup>
Reception, Year 2 & Year 6 Transition	Thursday, June 6 <sup>th</sup>
Juneteenth – No School	Wednesday, June 19 <sup>th</sup>
End of Year Reports	Friday, June 21 <sup>st</sup>
End of Spring Term	Friday, June 30 <sup>th</sup>

# SCHOOL HOURS

The school day is from 8:20 am – 3:30pm.

Students can be dropped off into the Lower School playground from 8:00am where they will be greeted by the teachers and Senior Leadership Team. All students are expected to be in school at 8:20 am and ready to learn. The bell will ring in the playground at 8.20am and children in Year 1 to Year 4 will line up and go into their classrooms. Children in Year 5 and Year 6 will go to the Gymnasium on arrival where they will be supervised until 8.20am and then they will line up and go to class.

It is essential that students arrive at their classrooms on time for the beginning of the school day so that they can be properly registered and begin the day with their classmates and teachers. Any students arriving after 8:20am should be taken directly to the Main Office. They will then be escorted to their classrooms.

After School clubs will be available to children in Lower School and above and will take place after school each day from 3:30 until 4:30. Sign-ups for these will be sent out via the Main Office and parents will be able to sign up for clubs using School Buddy.

Aftercare is also available for all students and runs from 3:30 until 6pm. Children in Year 1 and Year 2 will be in Aftercare in the Nursery classroom and Years 3 through 6 will be in the School Library. You can sign your child up to Aftercare for any days you need, and this is also through School Buddy.

Children in Lower School can ride the bus to and from school. We have 4 different bus routes available. Our bus provider is Local Motion, which is clearly marked on both sides of the buses. Please note that you must sign up for the morning and afternoon routes separately in School Buddy.

If there are any changes to your child's afternoon bus schedule, it is essential that you request a schedule change in Schools Buddy or contact the main office by phone or email, [main.office@bisboston.org](mailto:main.office@bisboston.org), by 1pm to inform them of these changes and to ensure the bus system runs smoothly.

- The Wellesley/Needham Bus Serving Milton, Needham, Wellesley.
- The Newton/Waltham Bus: Serving Waltham, Newton, Chestnut Hill, Brookline.
- The Brookline/Cambridge Bus: Brookline (Brookline Village & Washington Square), Brighton and Cambridge.
- The Boston Bus: Jamaica Plain, Boston (Back Bay & Beacon Hill)





## ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE PROCEDURES

It is essential that our students are always supervised, for their own security and safety. Therefore, we request that students wait until 8am before entering the campus, when teachers are on duty. Children should arrive by 8:20am at the latest and will line up to go into their classrooms with the teachers at the sound of the bell.

It is important to collect your child punctually. If, for any reason, you have been delayed, please telephone the school so that we are aware. Please also notify your class teacher or the front desk, if any other adult will be collecting your child. For security reasons, children will only be released to an authorized adult.

## DROP OFF AND PICK UP POINTS

### **Drop-off and Pickup points for Lower School:**

Lower School parents can park in the lower parking. Once you enter the campus, follow signs for 'BISB drop off'. You will be able to bypass the drop off line in front of the main building and park in the lower parking lot on the right hand side. Once parked, you will be able to walk your child to the school gate, where they will be greeted by Lower School teachers and the Senior Leadership Team.

At pick up time, if children in Lower School have siblings in Nursery, Reception, Year 1 or Year 2, they will go downstairs to the lower playground where you can pick them up with their siblings. If children have siblings in Toddlers, Middle or High School they will go upstairs to meet you in either the car line or Front Desk area. Children who are being picked up in the car line will go upstairs and line up outside the main school building. If children are being picked up in the car line, please keep the line moving and collect your child from outside the main school building.

Children in Aftercare will go to the respective location with supervision and children in clubs will go to the club teacher's classroom or location. After Lower School clubs, children are collected from the teacher in the lower playground at 4.30pm. If you are late for any reason, please let the front desk know. Children who are collected late from clubs will be taken to Aftercare and there may be a charge for this.

If, for any reason, you have been delayed, please telephone the school so that we are aware and can inform your child to avoid any unnecessary anxiety. If you are unable to collect your child, please inform the school at your earliest convenience as to who will be collecting your child. For security reasons, teachers will not release a child to an unauthorized person.

For families who will be walking to school there is a designated pathway from Pond Street which extends to our school building.

Please familiarize yourself with the traffic and parking scheme in the areas around school. Our aim is to provide a safe vehicular traffic system for you and your children.

## SCHOOL BUDDY

BISB use a system called School Buddy for all payments for field trips, after school clubs, early and after care and school lunch. The Main office staff will have sent out an email with your account at the beginning of the school year. Please reach out to the Main Office if you have any issues with using School Buddy for sign ups and payment.

## EARLY CARE AND AFTER CARE

### **Early Care:**

Early care for students in Toddlers to Year 6 will be available in the library from 7:30AM to 8:00AM. If you would like your child to attend Early Care, you will need to sign them up via Schools Buddy. Please contact the Main Office if you have any difficulty with logging into Schools Buddy. The daily fee for early care is \$10.

At 8:00AM students will be taken to their respective classrooms/play areas.

### **After Care:**

Aftercare takes place from 3:30PM to 6:00PM. Children in Year 1 and Year 2 will be in the Nursery classroom and children can be collected from the Nursery classroom door, on the playground, anytime between 3:30 and 6. Children in Year 3 through Year 6 will be in the main school library and can be picked up from the main entrance.

Please sign up for Aftercare on Schools Buddy. Please contact the Main Office for up-to-date pricing for Aftercare.

## SCHOOL UNIFORM

Wearing our school uniform is compulsory for all students attending BISB. We believe that wearing the uniform in a proud and smart manner promotes positive self-esteem. Therefore, it is an integral part of our school



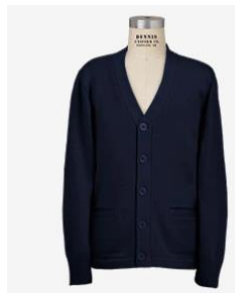
culture. Please ensure your child arrives at school looking smart and ready for the day ahead. Shirts should be tucked in, and uniform is correct for the age group.

All students are expected to wear our Physical Education (PE) uniform on PE days. You will be informed about these days at the beginning of the academic year.

Visit the Dennis Uniform site to purchase your child's uniform directly. Please contact the Main Office if you have any questions.

Both indoor and outdoor shoes are required throughout the year and should be suitable for the weather conditions. Children can wear fully black sneakers, or black shoes should be worn. All footwear must be fully enclosed. Sandals and other open-toed shoes should not be worn.

We believe that children benefit a great deal from playing outside and enjoying fresh air, even in winter. It is therefore extremely important that your child has clothes that are suitable for the prevailing weather conditions. Coats, snow pants, hats and gloves are all encouraged during cold and rainy days, while hats are recommended for bright days.



## WHAT TO BRING TO SCHOOL

### Water bottles:

Each student will be asked to bring their own reusable water bottle to school, clearly labelled with their name on it. The bottle will be returned home daily to be washed. Only water should be contained in the bottles – no

juice, tea, carbonated or flavored drinks. Water dispensers will be available at school for refills, whenever required.

#### Weather appropriate clothing

We encourage our students to play outside in all weather conditions, therefore it is vital children have weather appropriate clothing in school. We would never encourage children to play outside in extreme, dangerous weather conditions, but we do utilize raining or snowy days to enhance their learning of the natural world.

#### Masks

Masks are optional within school unless a child is returning from a bout of COVID. In this instance they should wear a mask for 5 days after returning to school.

## SCHOOL LUNCH

Families have the option of either providing their child with a packed lunch from home or signing up for School lunch. Families who wish to pack their child a home lunch are encouraged to send food that their child enjoys and is a healthy option. We are unable to heat any food in school, so we recommend using thermos flasks for foods that children would prefer to eat warm.

Parents can sign their child up for school lunch via School Buddy. Our school lunches are provided by the company Lunchbox for Years 1 and 2, and SHOWA canteen for children in Years 3 – 6. At the start of each month BISB will send out a menu, so parents can decide if they wish to sign their child up to receive school lunch. Payment can be made online for SHOWA lunch and the link will be sent by the school office.

## SNACKS

Children in Lower School bring in a snack for the morning. This should consist of fresh fruit or a wholesome, nutritious snack. BISB discourages sugar-laden foods for health reasons and because they can have a negative effect on concentration and learning. Under no circumstances should snacks be shared amongst students. Occasionally, families send in a small individual cupcake for each child to celebrate a birthday. Please avoid sending in one large cake.

Please note that, due to the potential for serious allergic reactions, nuts are strictly not allowed on Campus. BISB is a nut-free zone.

## BEHAVIOR

At BISB, we have very high expectations of behavior and always encourage children in Lower School, even from a very young age to make positive choices, start and end every day with kindness and to always try their best. However, we do understand that, from time to time, children sometimes find this challenging. This will always be dealt with in a sensitive way and the child will be reminded of acceptable behavior and how to make good choices. With the Lower School children we facilitate a restorative approach to conflict resolution, reflecting on actions and their impact on others. If a problem persists, you will be notified, and an appointment

will be made for teachers and parents to discuss any issues or concerns and to support the child in making better choices.

In all Lower School classes, we follow a positive approach to behavior management. We consistently praise the children for their good behavior to reinforce their motivation to make good choices, which leads to improved learning outcomes. We reward the children for their positive behavior and attitude to learning in a variety of ways, including House Points, Star of the Week Awards and Miss Hunter's Star Stickers. Children love receiving positive reinforcement from their teacher and Head of School, and we celebrate these achievements in a weekly, values-based assembly. All Lower School classrooms also celebrate a Star of the Week which is linked to the Personal Goals from the IPC (International Primary Curriculum).

Once your child has been accepted to BISB, they will be allocated a 'House'. Each House has a color associated with it and your child will be able to purchase a gym shirt in this color. We award children with House Points for academic or personal achievements. Each week the House with the most House Points wins the House Trophy. Throughout the year we have a variety of house events, including Sports Day, in which your child will participate and they will be given lots of opportunities to earn House Points and House Point Awards. For these events your child should come to school in their house color t-shirt. You will be notified of your child's house color once your child enters the school. Siblings will be assigned to the same house.

## HEALTH AND ABSENCES

### HEALTH AND SAFETY

Regular daily attendance is expected though sometimes absence is unavoidable. Please telephone the Main Office in the morning if your child is not able to attend.

If your child has had vomiting or diarrhea, please keep them at home for 24 hours. If they have a contagious illness such as flu or chicken pox, please keep them home until a doctor certifies that they are no longer contagious.

Please advise us of any medical problems your child may have, particularly when there is a contagious condition or an allergy to materials or food. Serious food, drug or insect allergies requiring Epi-Pens must be accompanied by a Food Allergy Action Plan (or any other allergy) completed and signed by the doctor and the parents. This form is in the Health Forms Packet on the BISB website under Parent Essentials

A health questionnaire must be completed and returned to admissions prior to entry. Medicines will only be given in special circumstances and then the medicine must be clearly labelled with your child's name and dosage. If you would like us to administer medicine to your child at school, you will be required to sign a 'medicine approval form' obtainable from the school administration staff. Prescription medications will be given only with a written Doctor's Order and written Parental Consent. These forms are in the Health Forms Packet. Any prescription medication must be in the original pharmacy packaging with the original pharmacy label attached

During certain times of the year there are often ticks around the school grounds. The school grounds are treated however, some ticks inevitably remain. In the warmer months, we recommend applying insect and tick repellent to your child each morning.



We always have a qualified nurse on the school premises in case of accidents or illness. In addition to this, all staff receive formal first aid training from qualified medical staff every two years. Most minor accidents and illnesses are dealt with at school by the school nurse and if necessary, these accidents/ illnesses will be communicated to you via email or the Seesaw App. In cases of serious accidents or illnesses parents will be contacted immediately and your child will be taken to a hospital/ doctor of your choice.

Throughout the year we will also be practicing fire and active intruder drills. During our fire drills we will show the children where the assembly point is. During our active intruder drills we will practice with the children what we should do in the event of an active shooter in school. We follow the ALICE protocols. We will talk to the children, in child friendly language, what we need to do to keep ourselves safe. We do not believe sheltering in place is always the safest thing to do. Instead, we will work with the children to practice evacuations, as well as sheltering in place.

## COVID POLICY

As the CDC relax COVID protocols, we are all looking forward to providing our students with in-person experiences that will offer rich learning opportunities, robust extra-curricular activities, and an educational environment for positive social interactions among students and between students and staff.

With COVID-19 vaccines now readily available, treatments accessible to those at higher risk for severe disease, and widespread availability of self-tests, we will be aligning our policies with the most recent CDC guidance:

- Children and staff who test positive must isolate for 5 days. If they are asymptomatic or symptoms are resolving and they have been fever free, without the use of fever-reducing medicine for 24 hours, they may return to school after Day 5 and should wear a mask through Day 10. Upon request, prior to the start of the school day, asynchronous work will be provided for students during their isolation period.
- Symptomatic individuals can remain in school if they have mild symptoms, are tested immediately onsite, and that test is negative. Masking would be required until symptoms are fully resolved. For symptomatic individuals, DPH recommends a second test within 48 hours if the initial test is negative.

### Masking:

Masking at BISB will continue to be optional on campus and on the bus, however, there will be some exceptions as outlined below:

- As stated above, a positive individual will be required to wear a mask from day 6 through day 10, when back at school. If an individual has mild symptoms and has tested negative, masking would be required until symptoms are resolved.

As mask-wearing will now be a family choice, students and staff will be respected and supported to wear masks, if this practice is in support of their comfort and feelings of safety.

We will continue to monitor the positivity rates throughout the year, and will adapt our policies, if necessary.

# THE UK NATIONAL CURRICULUM

In Lower School our taught content is based on the UK National Curriculum. The curriculum provides pupils with an introduction to the essential knowledge they need to be educated citizens. It introduces pupils to the best that has been thought and said and helps engender an appreciation of human creativity and achievement. All children in Lower School study core subjects of English (including Spelling and Grammar), Mathematics and Science. In addition to this the children study Computing, Design Technology, Art, Personal Social and Health Education in their homerooms with their class teacher. Specialist lessons are detailed below. Children in Year 1 and 2 also have a daily Phonics lesson to develop the Literacy skills of reading and writing.

Children are assessed against age-related National Curriculum levels are reported as 'working towards', 'working at expected' or 'working at even greater depth' of year group expected outcomes. As each child is unique, we teach the National Curriculum through a personalized learning model which reflects the individual learner.

## THE INTERNATIONAL PRIMARY CURRICULUM

The International Primary Curriculum (IPC) develops children aged 5-11 into informed, globally competent, and future-ready learners. Influenced by progressive pedagogy, metacognition and primary education best practice, the IPC can be tailored to fit the children's needs while developing their knowledge, skills and understanding. Through thematic units teachers can create fun and engaging learning opportunities that enable learners to make connections between subjects and the world around them.

The IPC is taught in thematic units or topics and contains content relating to the world around us, diversity and equality, intercultural competence and international mindedness alongside humanities and creativity. Within the IPC, learning is developed in three forms: knowledge, skills and understanding. Each unit of work has a clear set of learning goals with particular emphasis on developing students' skills. Assessment for Learning plays a crucial role in supporting and challenging students. The teachers identify students' strengths and areas for development, as well as the opportunity for children to be part of the assessment process with self-reflection time built into the timetable.

Our Personal Goals also stem from the IPC Curriculum and are embedded into the ethos of Lower School through assemblies, weekly focus goals and celebrating individuals who have demonstrated each character attribute. The Personal Goals are statements for the children to focus on learning dispositions: I am Adaptable, I am a Communicator, I am a Collaborator, I am Empathetic, I am Ethical, I am Resilient, I am Respectful, I am a Thinker.

## SPECIALIST LESSONS

Children in Lower School all have weekly specialist lessons to enhance their educational journey. Each week the children have Physical Education, Music, Dance and Languages with a member of our specialist teaching team.

## ENRICHMENT

Each week the children in Years 3 – 6 will have an Enrichment lesson which will develop important personal skills such as leadership, debating, community and developing new interests and skills. We will incorporate Houses and School Council into the Enrichment periods each week and also give children the opportunity to

choose a new skill to learn. The goal of Enrichment is for children to flourish outside of the academic subjects we teach and to explore different interests and activities. We also incorporate the Nord Anglia 'Global Campus' platform into Enrichment time and explore age-appropriate materials which encourage and enable the children to collaborate with Nord Anglia students across the world.

## HOMework

Children in Years 1 and 2 will bring home a reading book each week and learning linked to Phonics where appropriate. In Years 3 – 6 children are expected to complete a weekly homework packet which includes spelling practice, an English or IPC activity and a Maths challenge. Homework is sent home on Friday and is due back in class the following Wednesday.

## ROLE OF THE PARENT

At BISB, we acknowledge the importance of involving our parents in their child's education and we encourage the support of parents throughout the school. The Parent Association is a fantastic way to get involved in school life. More details of how to join the Parent Association will be distributed once the school year begins.

Each class will have a class communication rep. These class representatives are often involved in supporting a school trip or other school or social events. If you are interested in becoming a class rep, then please feel free to contact your child's class teacher.

In addition to your role within school, we also encourage your support with your child's learning at home. The enjoyment and knowledge that young children get from books is invaluable at this age and we encourage parents to read with their child as often as possible at home.

Each week your child's class will send out a newsletter discussing upcoming dates and learning that will be taking place the following week. The school will also send out a weekly newsletter, so you can have a wider view of what is happening throughout BISB.

## IN SUMMARY

We hope that this handbook provides an informative introduction to the school. Should you need any further guidance, please feel free to contact the appropriate member of the school for further advice. We look forward to working with you and supporting your children's learning this academic year and beyond.



# Contact us

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