



# Zhuhai International School Teaching & Learning Policy

Period of Review: Bi-annually  
Reviewed by: Senior Leadership Team  
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## I. OVERVIEW

*This policy document was written through the collaborative efforts of the Senior Management Team, IB coordinators and teachers and administrators. In writing this policy, the team referred largely to the Core Standards of the CIS Membership Report and the IBO document, Programme Standards and Practices.*

### **Who we are**

Zhuhai International School (ZIS) educates students aged 3-18 from around the world. Founded in 2007, it has maintained a family-oriented atmosphere. While a sizeable portion of our students have spent much of their childhood in the country, they hold passports from other nations. Students enter ZIS with a range of needs, cultural backgrounds, family dynamics and perspectives.

The ZIS Child Protection Policy outlines the necessary components of the environment needed for students to live out the school's mission statement:

*At ZIS we strive to develop dynamic and principled global citizens who have the skills and attitudes to enable them to become compassionate, life-long learners who will contribute positively to the future of our world.*

## II. POLICY AIMS

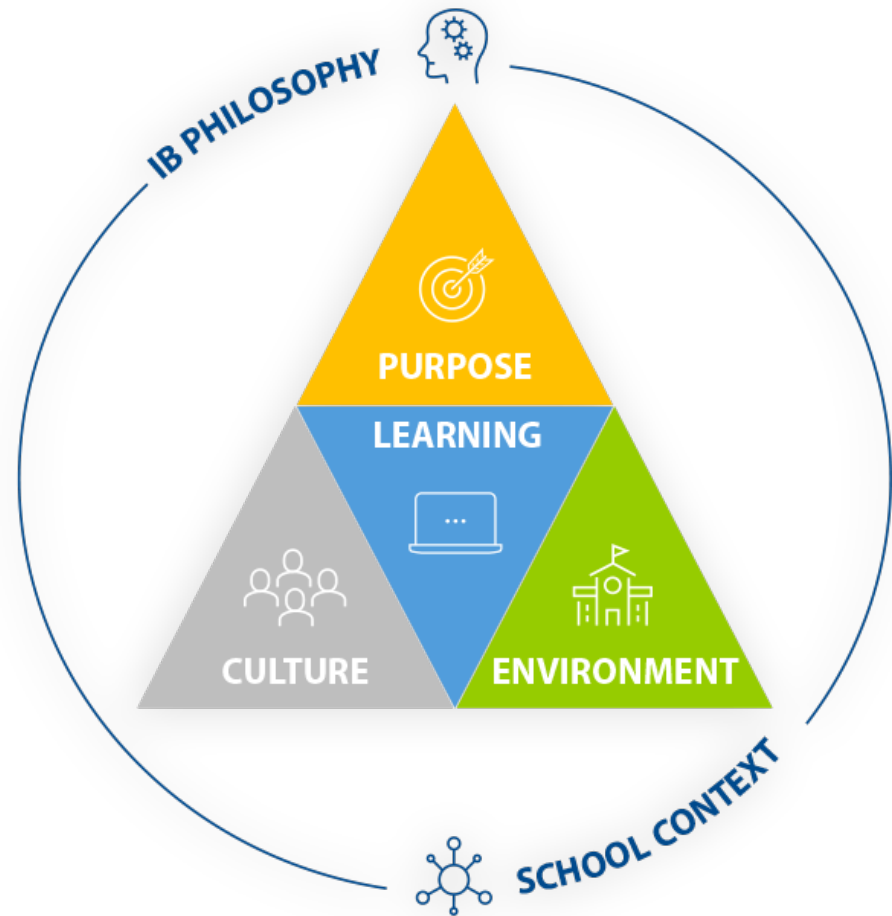
- Outline our teaching and learning aims and ensure they reflect our mission statement
- Provide links to our guiding documents
- Outline the roles and responsibilities with regards to supporting and implementing the main elements outlined in this policy and in the IBO Standards and Practices.
- Outline our inclusion policy
- Reference other policy documents connected to curriculum

- Outline the policy review process

### III. TEACHING & LEARNING AIMS

As an IB World school, we adhere closely to the guidance outlined in the IBO Programme Standards and Practices, 2018. The diagram on the right (IBO) depicting the PSP, shows how learning is at the heart of everything we do and is influenced by our unique context, the IB philosophy as well as the purpose, environment and culture present in our school. “The PSP are organized into four elements: purpose, environment, culture and learning. The four categories fit into a framework, which places learning at the centre and is encircled by IB philosophy and the school’s unique context.” The standards that fall under each of these 4 elements are outlined in the table on the following page.

As our school mission is so closely linked to the IBO mission, we are able to ensure that, by adhering to the standards and practices outlined in the PSP, that we are answering both to our mission and the IBO mission in practice.



Purpose	Environment	Culture	Learning
<p><b>Purpose:</b> Schools implement IB programmes to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. (0101)</p>	<p><b>Leadership and governance:</b> The leadership and governance of IB World Schools create and sustain high-quality learning environments. (0201)</p> <p><b>Student support:</b> Learning environments in IB World Schools support student success. (0202)</p> <p><b>Teacher support:</b> Learning environments in IB World Schools support and empower teachers. (0203)</p>	<p><b>Culture through policy implementation:</b> Schools develop, implement, communicate and review effective policies that help to create a school culture in which IB philosophy can thrive. (0301)</p>	<p><b>Designing a coherent curriculum:</b> Learning in IB World Schools is based on a coherent curriculum. (0401)</p> <p><b>Students as lifelong learners:</b> Learning in IB schools aims to develop students ready for further education and life beyond the classroom. (0402)</p> <p><b>Approaches to teaching:</b> IB programmes encourage approaches to teaching that create learning experiences that are shown to be meaningful to the school community. (0403)</p> <p><b>Approaches to assessment:</b> Learning, teaching and assessment effectively inform and influence one another. (0404)</p>

These Standards listed in the table inspire our 12-point definition of **Excellence in Teaching and Learning:**

- Promotes education through the interplay between inquiry, action, and reflection
- Builds a community of learners equipped to engage with complex challenges
- Explores aspects of culture in respectful and responsive ways
- Develops agency through student voice and choice
- Empowers learners for global engagement and to take principled action
- Activates creative and critical thinking
- Inspires and equips students for lifelong learning
- Encompasses a breadth and depth of disciplinary knowledge and understanding
- Expands on conceptual understandings allowing for integration and transfer of learning
- Pursues connections across ideas, disciplines, people, and perspectives
- Relates assessment, student development, and personalized learning
- Models open-mindedness and intellectual risk-taking

***Teaching and Learning at ZIS is based on Constructivism:***

Excellence in teaching and learning arises from an understanding of education that celebrates the many ways people work together to construct meaning and make sense of the world. By taking a constructivist approach, the interplay between asking (inquiry), doing (action) and thinking (reflection), leads towards open classrooms where different views and perspectives are valued. Such an approach empowers young people for a lifetime of learning, both independently and in collaboration with others. It prepares a community of learners to engage with complex global challenges through a dynamic educational experience framed by inquiry, action and reflection.

***Teaching and Learning at ZIS is Concept-Driven:***

A concept-driven curriculum encourages idea-centered teaching and learning. Curriculum prescribes key concepts (overarching) and related concepts (subject-specific) to better ensure a common basis of conceptual understanding is developed that will provide students with a sound foundation for future learning.

***Teaching and Learning at ZIS is Contextual:***

Students learn best when their learning experiences have context and are connected to their lives and to the world that they have experienced. When learning becomes meaningful and relevant, students are more likely to internalize their understanding and promotes engagement. Contextual learning helps teachers and students answer the important question “Why are we learning this?”

***Teaching and Learning at ZIS fosters Approaches to Learning Skills:***

Academic success is grounded in a dual focus that engages students with significant content and the skills that extend across the curriculum that help them “learn how to learn”. Student engagement and depth of understanding are based on both content and process, knowledge and skills. Through the promotion of self-regulated learning, students are equipped to reflect purposefully on their learning, preparing them for further study and responsible participation in their local and global communities.



In pursuit of this excellence, ZIS teachers:

- hold and develop extensive professional knowledge
- implement a variety of teaching strategies to the unique needs of their students
- employ assessment as a learning tool
- model international mindedness and intercultural competency
- invest in building safe, respectful, and engaging learning environments
- collaborate with colleagues to advance programming
- partner with parents and promote community involvement
- exemplify professional standards of teaching and models the attributes of the learner profile
- approach teaching as lifelong learners

## IV. OUR GUIDING DOCUMENTS

The documents outlined below provide the outside guidance, research and integrity of recognized educational programs to ensure that teaching and learning practices at ZIS are carefully developed, considered and reviewed and are linked to an internationally-minded, well-developed and recognized curriculum.

ZIS is an IB school. As a result, we rely heavily on IBO guides to ensure that our teaching and learning practices meet the standards set in place to allow us to remain a fully accredited IB World School for the PYP, MYP and DP.

The text written in blue specifically references teaching and learning.

<p><b>IBO Standards and Practices</b> <i>(updated March 2019)</i></p>	<p>This document outlines “the foundational set of principles for schools and the IB to ensure quality and fidelity in the implementation of the programmes. [...] The programme standards and practices provide a set of criteria that can be used to evaluate the success of IB World.” (1)</p> <p>“The <b>standards</b> are general principles that lie at the heart of being an IB World School, while <b>practices</b> are further definitions of the standards that include references to implementation. <b>Requirements</b> are more specific and refined measures of implementation, and include programme-specific elements known as <b>specifications</b>. The standards and practices, requirements and programme specifications are necessary for the successful implementation of the relevant IB programme.” (1)</p> <p>“Learning in the IB community celebrates the many ways people work together to construct meaning and make sense of the world. Through the interplay of asking, doing and thinking, this constructivist approach leads towards open, democratic classrooms. IB students and teachers are lifelong learners, independently and in collaboration with others. Learning communities in IB World Schools engage in cycles of inquiry, action</p>
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	<p>and reflection that lead to deeper understanding and a lifetime of learning. Learning is the central tenet, as well as the outcome, of developing purpose, culture, and environment in IB schools. “</p>
<p><b>What is an IB Education</b> (updated May 2017)</p>	<p>This document outlines the 4 main areas that are at the core of the IB philosophy, with Approaches to Teaching and Learning being the fourth, making this document crucial.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International mindedness</li> <li>• The Learner Profile</li> <li>• The broad, balanced, conceptual and connected nature of this curricular framework</li> <li>• Approaches to Teaching and Learning</li> </ul> <p>In all IB programmes, <b>teaching</b> is based on 6 approaches: (6)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Based on inquiry</li> <li>• Focused on conceptual understanding</li> <li>• Developed in local and global contexts</li> <li>• Focused on effective teamwork and collaboration</li> <li>• Designed to remove barriers to learning</li> <li>• Informed by assessment</li> </ul> <p>Complementing these approaches is the belief that, “learning how to learn is fundamental to a student’s education” (7). The IB identifies 5 categories “of interrelated skills aim to empower IB students of all ages to become self-regulated learners who know how to ask good questions, set effective goals, pursue their aspirations and have the determination to achieve them. These skills also help to support students’ sense of agency, encouraging them to see their learning as an active and dynamic process.” They are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• thinking skills</li> <li>• research skills</li> <li>• communication skills,</li> <li>• social skills</li> <li>• self-management skills (7)</li> </ul>

<p><b>PYP Learning and Teaching</b> (updated February 2019)</p>	<p>“Through acknowledging and aiming to foster the diverse capacities—physical, social, intellectual, aesthetic, cultural—of students, IB World Schools implementing the Primary Years Programme (PYP) ensure that learning is engaging, relevant, challenging and significant.” (1)</p> <p>This document aims to support educators on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a theoretical level: reflecting on the transdisciplinary nature of the PYP and reviewing its transformative nature</li> <li>• an operational level: demonstrating “how the PYP framework and key elements of the PYP are designed to promote and strengthen transdisciplinary learning and teaching.”</li> <li>• a practical level: it offering reflective questions for IB World Schools to push beyond traditional subject-based teaching to innovative concept-based and transdisciplinary approaches that bring relevance, authenticity and connection to student learning.” (1)</li> </ul> <p>It is expected that all PYP teachers and administrators have access to and use this guide.</p>
<p><b>MYP: From Principles into Practice</b> (updated September 2014)</p>	<p>A Guide for all MYP teachers and school administrators in schools that offer the MYP. “The principles and practices detailed in this guide apply to all teachers in all IB World Schools offering the MYP. All staff involved in the programme should have access to, and be familiar with, this guide.” (1)</p> <p>Sections that pertain most closely to teaching and learning are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaching and learning in context (p 17)</li> <li>• Approaches to learning (ATL) (p20)</li> <li>• Approaches to teaching (p 72-77) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Inquiry-based curriculum (p 72)</li> <li>○ Creating learning environments (p 74)</li> <li>○ Teaching and academic honesty (p 76)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Action: Teaching and learning through inquiry (p 66)</li> </ul>
<p><b>DP: From Principles into Practice</b> (updated September 2014)</p>	<p>A Guide for all DP teachers and school administrators in schools that offer the DP. “The principles and practices detailed in this guide apply to all teachers in all IB World Schools offering the DP. All staff involved in the programme should have access to, and be familiar with, this guide.” (1)</p> <p>The section Teaching and Learning outlines how to ensure that the nature of the programme is maintained in the delivery of the curriculum. (pages 64-77)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approaches to teaching and learning</li> <li>• Inquiry-based learning</li> <li>• Conceptual understanding</li> <li>• Teaching and learning in context</li> </ul>

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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Teaching focused on effective teamwork and collaboration</li><li>• Differentiated learning</li></ul> |
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## V. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

In order to that teaching and learning at ZIS fulfills the aims, it is important that all stakeholders understand their role and the roles of those collaborating with them and supporting them.

### SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM (SLT)

The Senior Leadership Team is comprised of the 2 Division Heads, the Chinese Principal, and the Head of School. They are charged with ensuring that the teaching and learning policy is implemented.

SLT will ensure that:

- ZIS follows the IB framework when setting teaching and learning priorities and targets
- The structure of the school day and timetable allows for the teaching and learning aims to be met
- Curriculum Coordinators are supported through time and resources to allow for the collaboration, coordination, mentoring and guidance needed to meet these aims
- Teachers and Coordinators receive the proper training as outlined by the IBO
- Proper provision is made for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with special educational needs (SEN)
- The school ensures time and resources are set aside for external assessments like MAP Growth, MYP eAssessment and DP external exams to help inform teaching and learning.
- It participates actively in decision-making about the nature and realization of teaching and learning practices
- The school environment supports the teaching and learning outlined in the aims of this document and by the IBO
- The governing body of the school is aware of the needs of teachers, coordinators and students to realize our inquiry-based, internationally-minded, student-centred approach.

## CURRICULUM COORDINATORS

Each IB programme is overseen by a Curriculum Coordinator. These Coordinators (PYP, MYP and DP) have received training as outlined by the IBO.

Curriculum Coordinators will ensure that:

- They support the collaborative planning needed to implement the teaching and learning aims
- They remain up to date on changes made by the IBO to their respective programmes
- They implement programme changes as they occur
- They support teacher PD in order to ensure that the training requirements are met
- Teachers receive the support they need to meet the teaching and learning objectives outlined in the PSP and in each of the programme guides
- External requirements (such as eAssessment and DP exams) are planned for and executed correctly
- Their teams adequately prepare for and manage the authorization visits
- They organize and manage the 5 year plans that result from authorization visits
- They act as leaders in inquiry-based, internationally-minded, conceptually based, student-centred learning
- Proper provision is in place for pupils with different abilities and needs, as required by the school and individual programme needs (ie. IEPs are sent to IB for support during MYP eAssessment or DP external exams)

## TEACHERS

Teachers have direct contact with students. It is the teachers that have the most direct impact on the teaching and learning happening in and outside of the classrooms.

Teachers will ensure that they:

- Collaborate with their colleagues to ensure that they model the importance of collaboration, “to create and promote a positive learning community.” (PSP 0403-04) and to “ensure a holistic and coherent learning experience.”
- Collaborate with their students to ensure that learning is truly student-centred and to promote student agency
- Read the guiding documents written to outline and support the implementation of the teaching and learning aims outlined in their respective programme and/or discipline
- Participate in the whole-school Curriculum Review Cycle to ensure that the written curriculum allows for and reflects the teaching and learning aims
- Maintain the documentation required to articulate and document the teaching and learning happening throughout units of study
- Create assessments that measure learning in a variety of ways in order to collect data that can then inform teaching and learning
- Reference and use data collected from the various assessments (summative, formative, internal, external) in order to inform teaching and learning in the classroom
- Provide proper provision for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with special educational needs (SEN)

## VI. INCLUSION

ZIS is an inclusive school. Through our IB Curricular Framework and our Learning Services Department, we are able to meet the needs of students with a variety of strengths and needs.

Teachers, administrators and coordinators will work together to provide a learning journey that is suitable for:

- More able pupils
- Pupils with low prior attainment
- Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Pupils with SEN
- Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL)

Teachers will use differentiation and universal design to meet the various needs of students in their classroom. Through our 3-Tiers support system and collaboration from Learning Services, students with more specific needs will be supported as they access the curriculum in place.

Further information can be found in our SEN policy.

## VII. LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES

The following policies outline and clarify how different elements of our curriculum are implemented and supported.

<b>Academic Honesty Policy</b>	Reviewed annually, this policy defines academic honesty, it's importance and how to support our student development in it.
<b>Assessment Policy</b>	Reviewed annually, this policy outlines the aims, objectives and practices of assessment and how it drives teaching and learning.
<b>Curriculum Policy</b>	Reviewed annually, this policy outlines how the school implements the curricular framework of the IBO and implements the standards outlined in the Common Core.
<b>SEN Policy</b>	Reviewed annually, this policy outlines support given to our exceptional students. Through the Learning Services Department, students receive Individual Education Plans (in collaboration with teachers informed by formal, external testing), EAL support, Special Educational Needs support and Social/Emotional Support.

## VIII. POLICY REVIEW

This policy document will be reviewed bi-annually to ensure that it is both current and relevant to the changing needs and dynamics of the school. After each review, the policy document will be shared with our school community on the school website.

## IX. GLOSSARY OF TERMS

<b>Differentiation</b>	Adjusting the content, process, product or environment during learning to meet the individual needs of the student
<b>Early Years</b>	Nursery and Reception. Students can be enrolled in Nursery at the age of 3. Students typically progress from Reception to Year 1 at the age of 4 or 5 years.
<b>Exceptionality</b>	A learning difference (whether physical, behavioural, intellectual, communication or multiple) that changes what a child needs in order to be successful in a regular school setting
<b>Inclusion</b>	Ensuring the classroom is a place in which all students can access learning, regardless of their individual needs
<b>Individual Education Plan (IEP)</b>	Describes the student's learning difficulties, how the student learns, how the student best demonstrates that learning and what teachers and service providers will do to help the student learn more effectively; the plan is reviewed regularly by all involved parties; a legally necessary document in some countries and cities
<b>SEN Teachers</b>	Comprised of specialists in their field, the SEN teachers help students in their learning journey; they also provide staff with the tools needed to assist their students. This team works specifically with those students who require extra support with academics or social/emotional well-being.
<b>Primary School</b>	Follows the PYP (Primary Years Programme). Students enter in Year 1 and finish in Year 6. Students are typically 10-11 years old upon their completion of Year 6.
<b>Secondary School</b>	Made up of 2 separate programmes: MYP (Middle Years Programme) Year 7-11 DP (Diploma Programme) Year 12-13
<b>Senior Leadership Team (SLT)</b>	Made up of the Head of School, Chinese Principal, Head of Primary, Head of Secondary, this team meets weekly to make decisions that impact well-being, teaching and learning and policy matters.
<b>Special Educational Needs (SEN)</b>	Learning difficulties or differences that make it harder for children to learn. Children with SEN are likely to need extra or different support from that given to other children in their age group.



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