



An **Inclusive**  
**Learning**  
**Community**

**Inspiring**

**International Mindedness**  
**Personal Excellence**  
**Creative Thinking**



# Nanjing International School

## Parent Handbook

### 2016-2017

[www.nischina.org](http://www.nischina.org)



NEA  
SAC New England Association of  
Schools and Colleges (NEASC)



NCCT  
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CANADIAN TEACHERS



IB CONTINUUM  
CONTINUUM DE L'IB  
CONTINUUM DEL IB

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**Welcome to Nanjing International School.** The purpose of this handbook is to communicate basic information to parents about core beliefs and procedures that help to make this school an exciting, safe, and inclusive learning community. We are accredited by the Council of International Schools (CIS), New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), the National Centre for Curriculum and Textbook development, China Ministry of Education (NCCT). We are authorised to offer the International Baccalaureate (IB).

The contents of this handbook will not provide detailed rules and regulations - in fact, we are pleased to be a school that does not require lists of do's and don'ts. What we do encourage is conversation, and lots of it. Should you wish for more detail on any of the contents of this handbook, or any other matter relating to your children and NIS, please do not hesitate in contacting us. Key contact details are listed at the end of this document.

## **School Overview**

NIS is a wholly non-profit school and has a student body of approximately 660 students from 43 different nationalities, and over 100 teaching staff from more than 15 countries. Our language of instruction and communication is English, with translation provided, where possible, for language groups who comprise 30% of our student body. Korean is currently the only language at this threshold.

All three International Baccalaureate programmes are offered: The Primary Years Programme (Pre-Kindergarten - Grade 5), Middle Years Programme (Grades 6 - 10), and the Diploma Programme (Grades 11 - 12). For details on curriculum, please refer to our website: [www.nischina.org](http://www.nischina.org) and click on Academic". Parents can access unit planners on Atlas at: <http://nanjing-school-public.rubiconatlas.org/Atlas/Public/View/Default> Please ask your child's homeroom/advisory teacher for the password.

As an inclusive school we accept students with a broad range of learning needs if we are in a position to support their learning. To assist, we have four full-time specialist support teachers as well as a school focus on differentiated instruction.

**ID Cards**: All members of the NIS community must have an ID card that is visible while on campus. This ID card is required when entering the campus.

**Nut-free Campus**: NIS is becoming a nut-free campus as of August 2016. Watch for details by email and in the weekly bulletin.

**Helmets**: Helmets are required for all motorised bikes (electric and gas) as well as all three-wheeled and open bubble cars and tuk-tuks. Helmets are strongly recommended for pedal bikes.

**Insurance:** All students enrolled at NIS should be covered by current and comprehensive medical insurance. In the event of accident or injury while the student is on or off campus, it is the parent's responsibility to cover any and all medical expenses resulting from the accident, either with the family insurance coverage or family payment, in accordance with regulations and insurance policies. All school trips are supervised by staff members and/or responsible adults who will exercise all reasonable care. The parent agrees that they will not hold NIS, its representatives, administration or its Board of Trustees liable for any accident.

### **Attendance**

The NIS school year has 185 academic days. The total number of student absences is recorded and stated on the student report. There is no distinction made for the type of absence, as the focus is to simply state how many days of learning have been missed, without making any judgement on their validity. Should a student miss more than 30 days of schooling, a review will be held to determine whether the student would benefit from repeating that academic year. No rebate is given in school fees for student absence. ***If your child will be absent from school due to sickness, please contact our nurse at: 8589 9111 ext 3030 or by email at [nurse@nanjing-school.com](mailto:nurse@nanjing-school.com).*** If your child will be absent for any other reason, please email your child's homeroom/advisory teacher, the relevant section head, *and* the nurse.

Students need to manage their sport and cultural commitments to ensure balance. Students may therefore have up to 12 days off campus for co-curricular activities, and are required to complete an Out of Lesson Form (OLF) form to notify teachers of absence. Students can track their absences on Veracross.

**Digital Images:** Photos of students may appear in school publications, newspaper and other promotional material, brochures, and on the website, and the school's authorised social media. Students might also be used as subjects for articles, and asked to write articles. On occasion, NIS conducts photographic and video shoots for the purposes of promotion of the school. These images are used for this purpose only and, as such, we aim to protect the rights of our students and the rights of the school as an organisation by ensuring that this material is never published out of context or to promote services, products or concepts of other organisations or companies unrelated to our core mission. Your child's participation confers on you no rights of usage, ownership or copyright. NIS reserves the right to make use of suitable images and is under no obligation to publish or use all or indeed any of the selected images.

## **School Organisation**

NIS is led by the School Director, assisted in the Senior Leadership Team by the Deputy Director - Learning, and the Deputy Director - Operations & Finance. The daily academic and pastoral programme is overseen by the Senior Education Team: the Deputy Director - Learning, the Head of Upper School (Grades 10-12), the Head of Middle School (Grades 6-9), and the Head of Primary (PreK to Grade 5).

## **School Board**

The NIS Board is comprised of seven voting members plus one non-voting staff member and the Director. The Board is responsible for the Mission and Strategy, has financial oversight, and hires, supports, and evaluates the Director.

## **Strategy**

We've zeroed in on two big, audacious goals.

—> **Bursting the Bubble**

—> **Student Voice and Choice**

We have eight chunky strategy projects to take us there. We have a talented, creative Strategy Team working together with our teachers, students, and parents driving the process forward. For more information, see the hard copy *The Little Book of Nanjing International School* 2016 Edition, or search this title in iBooks.

## **Communication**

### **Face to Face Communication**

We welcome the opportunity to meet with parents. There are many scheduled opportunities to meet with teachers on a range of topics, and these can all be found on the calendar, including conferences, coffee mornings, and sessions regarding special events such as Discover China Week (our Fall off-campus week without walls). Other opportunities focus on understanding the IB programmes, on our partnership with external organisations that help us provide services for learning needs, or on addressing topical learning and development needs.

If you would like to speak with a teacher about your child's progress, please contact the relevant teacher directly. For other questions, a detailed list of contact persons is provided at the end of this booklet. Should you not know to whom you want to direct a particular question, please contact the relevant Section Head who will direct your query appropriately.

### **Weekly Bulletin**

NIS publishes a weekly Bulletin. This will be emailed to you each Friday. The Bulletin can also be accessed on our website at: <http://www.nischina.org/> and click on 'News.

## **Veracross: Parent and Student Portals**

Your parent portal on Veracross will connect you to all of your child's teachers, and we expect you to use this to stay in touch. Face-to-face meetings remain our preferred option. Your Veracross parent portal will give you access to many facets of your child's life at NIS:

- School calendar
- Your child's calendar, indicating his or her upcoming sporting or cultural events
- Your child's timetable (8-Day rotation)
- Your child's upcoming assignments (in MYP & DP: due dates, task descriptions, supporting material);
- Sign-up opportunities for After School Activities and Three-Way Conferences;
- Your child's reports for the current academic year. You need to download these to your own computer; NIS does not provide printed reports;
- Contact details for NIS community members.

In order for Veracross to be used effectively, personal information must be accurate and up to date. This is particularly important for medical alerts, phone numbers, addresses, and passport details. Accuracy is essential to ensure timely contact with you, and to ensure correct information when organising hotel accommodation for any off-campus trip.

## **E-mail**

Your child's teachers may e-mail you for a variety of reasons, ranging from requesting a meeting to informing you about current progress, from keeping you up to date about upcoming events to making special announcements.

## **Written Communication**

On occasion, NIS may send communication via your youngest child in an envelope. This normally includes important messages from the Director, the Board, or Standardised Testing results. This is accompanied by an e-mail asking you to check for the correspondence with your child.

**Note:** *We understand that this variety of communication can be overwhelming. We are evaluating our communications systems, and welcome your feedback.*

## **Homework as Out of Class Learning**

A balanced lifestyle that reflects rigorous learning through our classes and opportunities that incorporate physical activity, creativity, personal "passions", family time, and sufficient time for sleep is important at NIS. If students are feeling overwhelmed by the amount of homework, or if students or parents have any question about an assignment, please make an appointment to see the relevant teachers. Our Homework as Out of Class Learning document is available at <http://nanjing-school-public.rubiconatlas.org/Atlas/References/View>

## School Rules

We try very hard to encourage a community approach to those rules that are in place to benefit our students while at NIS. Rather than create a list of 'Don'ts', we emphasise:

***Respect for Others, Respect for Yourself, Respect for Property***

We understand that this approach results in certain ambiguities. Should there be a need, therefore, please engage in conversation to clarify any questions you may have.

A few areas that do not fall into the guidelines above are:

- **Hats** are not permitted inside buildings,
- **Chewing gum** is not permitted on campus,
- **Video gaming** and video streaming are not permitted in the café or cafeteria; only age appropriate games are permitted in the activities room, beside the Theatre.
- **Centre Café:** Students in Grades 10-12 are permitted in the Centre Café during breaks and after school; younger students must be directly supervised by a parent. Students in Grades 4-9 who participate in NIS sports practices starting at 4:20pm may wait in the *cafeteria* from 3:15 – 4:15. All other students must be directly supervised by parents.

## Anti-Bullying

We are committed to ensuring that NIS offers a safe, inviting campus to all community members. Bullying, at any age level, has no place in our community. The distinctions between play, accidents, and bullying, are always reviewed before decisions are made. Our Policy on bullying can be found on Atlas under Resources at <http://nanjing-school-public.rubiconatlas.org/Atlas/References/View>

## Dress Code

Our dress code tends towards the conservative, recognising that we have diverse cultures on our premises. Therefore, our code states that:

- No underwear showing
- No midriff tops
- No basketball vests
- No T-shirts with graphics that could offend
- No short shorts (must cover full buttocks)

Teachers are encouraged to engage students in conversations as to why clothing might be inappropriate, and are also empowered to take action in these situations. This could result in students being asked to change their clothing.

For PE classes, students are expected to wear their house shirt, provided by the school, shorts or track pants, and running shoes.

## Parents on Campus

We are very proud of our community feel at NIS which extends to parents. The Centre building is designed purposefully to encourage one of our foundational goals at NIS - to be a bridge to China. We encourage parents to feel welcome to use The Cafe and the Centre Gym. All other school social spaces are designed specifically for student use as we expand learning beyond the classroom.

## School Schedule and Calendar

Students attend school for 185 days in an academic year. The school year is divided into 2 semesters. A brief progress report is provided mid-way through Semester 1, and Student-Led Conferences and Invitational Three-Way Conferences take place mid-way through Semester 2. Comprehensive semester reports are provided at the end of Semester One (January) and Semester 2 (June). It is not possible under any circumstance to provide reports ahead of the scheduled dates.

We have an 8-day rotation which ensures that there is less impact on days such as Friday, which often see a large number of students involved in off-campus activities.

In PreK, the school day runs from 8:00am to 1:00pm each day, including lunch time. Please note that children **must** be 3 years old and out of nappies before being enrolled.

In K1 through to Grade 12, the school day runs from 8:00am to 3:00pm, except for Tuesday when school finishes 2:30pm to allow staff to participate in professional development.

School closes at 11:00am on the last day before Winter Break (December) and Summer Break (June).

## Reports

### Quarter 1 Reports

These reports provide parents with indicators about their child's progress based on skills areas. These are represented by: R (Rarely), S (Sometimes), M (Meeting) and E (Exceeding). Meeting means that a student is performing at the level expected of a student during that reporting period in that grade level. Please note that an E is only awarded to those **few** students who are exceeding grade level expectations.

### Semester Reports

In PYP semester reports include full comments and the same progress indicators as the Quarter 1 reports. In Grades 6-10, grades are based on subject criteria which are transposed to a 1-7 grade. Students in Grades 11-12 earn an overall 1-7 grade. These reports are accompanied by subject area comments.

## **Conferences**

During the second week of school, Parent Led Conferences will take place in order for homeroom/advisory teachers to get to know your child better. Full day Three-Way Conferences are held after Quarter 1 reports and after Semester 1 reports. Parents sign up through Veracross. An additional half day of Invitational Three-Way conferences takes place in April for students who may be in need of additional support through to the end of the school year. Parents are encouraged to arrange for additional meetings at any time to discuss concerns and strategies to support their child.

## **Awards**

Students are recognised for participation in sport and cultural activities throughout the year at school assemblies, which are held on alternate Fridays for Primary and MYP/DP. The PYP assemblies also awards Learner of the Week certificates at each assembly. Parents are encouraged to attend these assemblies and there is designated seating.

Major academic awards are presented at the end of each semester to students who achieve within certain academic achievement:

Academic Roll: 50 points (Grades 6-10) / 36 points (Grades 11-12)

Principal's Roll: 55 points (Grades 6-10) / 39 points (Grades 11-12)

Director's Roll: Students placed on the Principal's Roll for two consecutive semesters. The points totals are the total IB scores students achieve across their subjects in a semester.

The scores are modified for ELL students.

Full details on Semester 1 and Semester 2 awards details can be accessed on Atlas under Resources at <http://nanjing-school-public.rubiconatlas.org/Atlas/References/View>

## **Graduation**

Students are awarded a NIS High School Diploma if they achieve a minimum of 24 credits across Grades 9-12. One credit is granted for a grade of 3 or higher. Students enrolling at NIS after Grade 9 use previous report grades to determine eligible credits.

All Grade 12 students participate in the IB Diploma courses. Students who successfully complete the requirements will be awarded the IB Diploma after examinations in May. For further information on DP requirements, visit: <http://www.nanjing-school.com/curriculum/diploma-programme/>

## **English Language Support and Learning Support**

NIS is committed to supporting all students in their learning, and accepting of the fact that students learn at different rates, have their own academic strengths, and learning needs. Teachers differentiate learning to address for these needs.

## **English Language Support**

The model used by NIS focuses on having English Language Learners (ELL) students integrated with fluent English speakers as much as possible. In the MYP/DP English is offered at a range of levels to ensure access to learning for all students. Students in English B Phases 3 or 4 have additional classes to assist them in language, homework, planning and organisation. Students in Grade 10 English B Phase 4 must achieve a final grade of 5 or above in order to be admitted into the Diploma Programme.

The NIS Language Philosophy can be accessed on Atlas under Resources at <http://nanjing-school-public.rubiconatlas.org/Atlas/References/View>

## **Learning Support**

Students who require additional modifications to their academic programmes receive assistance from one of our four Learning Support Teachers who provide guidance and strategies, pull-out, and/or in-class support. Under certain circumstances, parents with students who have significant learning needs may be required to pay for a Learning Assistant who will serve in a 1:1 capacity with their child. The full Learning Support Handbook can be accessed on Atlas under Resources at <http://nanjing-school-public.rubiconatlas.org/Atlas/References/View>

Two Guidance Counselors support student learning and well-being. Our Grade 9-12 counselor is also dedicated to post high-school career guidance and university/college education placement.

## **Standardised Testing**

NIS participates in standardised testing in order to benchmark performance against national and international standards. We are currently transitioning from the International Schools Assessment (ISA) to Measures of Academic Progress (MAP). These assessments do not require any special preparation by students, are not used for promotion purposes, and are not taken into account in our NIS academic reports. Rather, the reports identify strengths and weaknesses that provide valuable information to further our commitment to differentiated learning. Individual student reports are provided to parents when made available.

## **Library**

Our Library is a centre for learning. We have a full-time librarian. Students are encouraged to visit the library to sign out books for leisure reading and for research. We also have a number of on-line databases that students can access for research purposes. In PYP classes visit the library regularly. The library is not a place for gaming; playing of video games may take place in the Activity room beside the Theatre.

## **1:1 Technology**

NIS is committed to providing the best possible learning experience to all of our students. One aspect of this is our investment in technology support, teacher training, and software provision. All students in Grades 5-12 are required to purchase a Macbook, and in the PYP, students in Grades 1-4 are required to purchase an iPad. Specifications that support learning are provided by NIS. The school offers on-campus purchase through a third party, or you may opt to purchase your device elsewhere. Macbook lifespan is calculated at three years, and iPad lifespan is expected to be five years. Devices that exceed this will possibly not be able to take advantage of software updates, and will need to be upgraded.

Technology is integrated into the curriculum, and the opportunities to responsibly connect, create, and share for anywhere/anytime learning are becoming more apparent as digital opportunities expand. Students at NIS are guided on appropriate and safe use of technology, both through Life 101 (Grades 6-12) and through class teachers in the PYP. Students are asked to respect this: Technology, at NIS, is for learning. The use of the wifi on school premises is monitored for patterns of usage, which indicates which programmes are running on computers logged on to the network. Should students be found using computers in a manner which is not fit for academic purpose, their computers will be locked down for three weeks. This means they will lose Administrator privileges and only have access to school materials. Their academic involvement through the laptop will not be affected. All students, on enrollment at NIS, sign an Acceptable User Policy.

## **Student Council**

There is a PYP Student Council and an MYP/DP Student Council. Student Council is made up of interested students who have been chosen by their peers, and is overseen by teachers. Elections for president and vice-president (MYP/DP) are held in June for the following year, and all other posts and grade level representatives are elected in August.

## **Houses: Taiping (green), WuTaiShan (red), XuanWu (blue)**

Students and staff are members of one of the three houses. Friendly competitions are held throughout the year such as cultural events and sporting events. The house that gains the most points at the end of the year is awarded the house shield. This is a big deal at the end of the year and the students love it!

## **Community & Service (C&S) Creativity, Action, Service (CAS)**

Students in Grades 6-10 must complete Community & Service requirements. This is followed up and reported on by Advisory teachers. Students are responsible for maintaining records as evidence of their C&S activities. In Grades 11-12, students must meet the requirements for CAS. Each student has a CAS advisor.

## **Activities**

NIS offers over 180 school activities for students over the course of 3 ten-week cycles. Sign-up for Activities is done through Veracross, directly by students in the MYP/DP, or by parents of students in the PYP. The number of activities students can sign up for are:

Grades 1-2: 1 activity

Grades 3-5: 2 activities

Grades 6-12: 3 activities

In some cases, there are costs for externally run activities borne by parents.

## **Parent Teacher Association (PTA)**

At NIS we are privileged to have an active PTA that works to welcome new families, to organise social events for students, to support sporting events, to enhance the overall experience at NIS. If you are interested in becoming involved in the PTA, please contact the PTA president. Contact information can be found at the end of this booklet.

## **Charities and Service**

At NIS, we have committed to formally supporting a number of charities: Pfrang, Hopeful Hearts, and Butterfly Hospice in China, as well as Ray of Light in Cambodia. In order to provide continuous and sustainable support, and to limit overburdening our community with additional requests for fund-raising, additional charities are not normally considered.

## Student and Parent Access to School Campus

At NIS safe and appropriate use of campus facilities is of utmost importance.

“Supervised” means that students have a responsible adult with them.

“Scheduled” means that the activity has been formally organised or approved by NIS.

<b>School access by students:</b>	
Monday through Friday	7:30am-6:00pm (exception: morning swim squad) Access to classrooms from 7:45
Saturday: supervised activities	7:45am-4:00pm
Sunday: supervised activities	Scheduled and supervised activities only

<b>Specific Areas of the School</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>When</b>
Centre Cafe	Parents, G10-12 only, parent-supervised children	morning break, lunch, after school
Cafeteria - main floor	G1-5	lunch break
	G5-12	after school until 4:15pm
Cafeteria - main & 2nd floors	G6-12	lunch and break (G5 as of Sem 2)
Green Gym	PYP	2nd half of lunch
	G6-12	1st half of lunch
Blue Gym	Supervised ASAs only	lunches and after school
Both Gyms	Scheduled & supervised use only	after 6:00 pm and weekends
Design Centre	Supervised student use only	Monday-Sunday
Pitch & Field	Supervised student use only	after 6:00 pm and weekends

## Links to other useful documents

NIS publishes documents that clarify certain philosophies and practices at NIS. Most of these documents can be found in the Resources section of Atlas at:

<http://nanjing-school-public.rubiconatlas.org/Atlas/Public/View/Default>

The login password can be provided by your child's homeroom/advisory teacher.

- **Academic Honesty**

Teaching students to attribute the sources of information they use in their research and writings is an important step in developing academic integrity, as well as creating a sense of rightful ownership of material produced by personal effort.

- **Assessment Philosophy**

Assessment at NIS is on-going, varied, and supports student learning.

- **Awards**

Students receive a wide range of sporting and cultural awards throughout the school year in assemblies. At the end of Semester 1, there is an award ceremony where students in MYP and DP are recognised for academic achievement, and at the end of Semester 2 we hold an end of year awards ceremony to recognise students for a range of academic and non-academic achievements.

- **Curriculum**

Parents can access both unit planners and Scope and Sequence documents on Atlas. Use the Browse button and then filter for a certain grade and subject area.

- **Exams**

Exams for students in Grades 6 - 11 take place twice a year.

- **Grade Level Overviews (MYP) / Grade Level Timelines (PYP)**

These documents provide an overview of student learning according to grade level. They can be accessed on the NIS website, under Curriculum. Choose the relevant programme (PYP or MYP) and scroll to the bottom. The pdf links are on the right side.

- **Homework as Out of Class Learning Practices**

Our current Homework as Out of Class Learning document is currently under review. The updated version will be available this by October 2014.

- **Language Philosophy**

NIS is an English medium school that both supports English language learners and endeavours to support home languages.

- **Learning Support Services - Handbook**

NIS is an inclusive learning community. This handbook outlines our approach to inclusivity and the types of support available.

## Contact Information

<b>Position</b>	<b>Name</b>
Director	Arden Tyoschin
Deputy Director - Operations & Finance	Arek Owczarek
Head of Primary	Marina Gijzen
Head of Middle School (Grades 6-9)	Kasson Bratton
Head of Upper School (Grades 10-12)	Juan Saavedra
Member of SET	Ruth Clarke
Strategy Team	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning Strategist - PYP</li> <li>• Learning Strategist - PYP</li> <li>• Learning Strategist - MYP/DP</li> <li>• Learning Strategist - MYP/DP</li> <li>• Projects Manager</li> <li>• Activities Strategist</li> <li>• Inclusion Advocate</li> </ul>	Kath Adams Tom Johnson Katie Ham Luiz Mello Jo Andrew Danny Clarke Sarah Thawley
Admissions Director	Sue Northcott
Athletics Director	Danny Clarke
Director of Technology	Joe Barder
School Counselor (9-12)	Gretchen Galaty
School Counselor (K-8)	Kris Bezzerides
Learning Support	Bob Buhler
Learning Support	Rick Fischl
Learning Support	Betina Mello
Learning Support	Sarah Thawley
Activities, Community & Service Coordinator	Robin Hutchison
Personal Project Coordinator	Minza Snyder
Community Activities Officer	Sandra Fuchs
Korean Admissions Officer	Grace Kim
Korean Admissions Officer	Ahna Lee
PTA President	(To Be Confirmed)

## **Acronyms at NIS:**

ACAMIS	Association of China and Mongolia International Schools
ACT	American College Test
ASA	After School Activity
ATL	Approaches to Learning
CAC	Community Activities Coordinator
CAS	Creativity, Action, Service
C&S	Community & Service
CISSA	China International Schools' Sporting Association
DP	Diploma Programme
ECSS	English for Cognitive and Social Success
ELL	English Language Learner
FCD	Freedom from Chemical Dependency – Prevention Works
HL & SL	High Level & Standard Level (in the DP)
IB	International Baccalaureate
ISTA	International Schools Theatre Association
INSET	In-service Educational Training
ISA	International Schools Assessment
IT	Information Technology
LSS	Learning Support Services
MAP	Measures of Academic Progress
MUN	Model United Nations
MYP	Middle Years Programme
NIS	Nanjing International School
OLF	Out of Lesson Form
PAC	Performing Arts Centre
PD	Professional Development
POI	Programme of Inquiry
PPP	Personal Process Project (Grade 10)
PSB	Public Security Bureau
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
PYP	Primary Years Programme
RAMS	Risk Assessment and Management System
SAT	Scholastic Assessment Test
SCISAC	Southern China International Schools Athletic Conference
SET	Senior Education Team (Deputy Director - Learning and Section Heads)
SISAC	Shanghai International Schools Athletic Conference
SLT	Senior Leadership Team (Director, Deputy Directors: Learning & Operations/Finance)
TSA	Think Speak Act
UOI	Unit of Inquiry

Language A: first language

Language B: additional language