



Inspiring

**International Mindedness
Personal Excellence
Creative Thinking**

**Nanjing International School
Parent Handbook
2020-2021**

www.nischina.org

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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. 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 625 students from 45 different nationalities, and over 100 teaching staff from more than 15 countries. Our language of instruction and communication is English. 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) and were the first school in China to be authorized as an IB Continuum School.

As an IB Continuum School, we offer three International Baccalaureate programmes: 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 and click on "Academic". Here, parents can access Grade Level Overviews and Unit planners.

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 full-time specialist support teachers, as well as a school focus on differentiated instruction, sustained by our EAL teachers, counselors.

Child Protection: All students at NIS should be treated with respect and dignity at all times. NIS endorses the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, of which the host country, China, is a signatory. As such, we have a professional and ethical obligation to identify children who are in need of help and protection and to take steps to ensure that the child and family avail themselves of the services needed to remedy any situation that constitutes child abuse or neglect. Child protection standards defined by NIS encompass all cultures and international law. When given reasonable cause to believe that these rights are violated, NIS will seek all available resources to restore those rights. Ruth Clarke is our Child Protection Officer. Our Child Protection Procedure is available on our school website.

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 and is used to sign out books in the library and to purchase food at Chartwells. Each semester, students' ID cards are charged with funds for printing purposes. In the unusual case that this is used up prior to the end of the semester, additional money will need to be added at the cashier office at parents' expense. As part of our commitment to the environment, where possible, students are encouraged to use digital versions of their work.

Health: If your child has a fever, diarrhea, or vomiting, they must stay at home until symptoms have not been present for 24 hours. If your child has lice, please inform the school nurse right away.

All students need to have up to date **vaccinations** for: Polio, DT&P, Meningitis, MMR, and Chicken Pox. The following vaccinations are recommended: Hepatitis A & B, Bacillus Calmette-Guérin (BCG), Japanese Encephalitis, Rabies, Influenza, Typhoid.

No Nuts on Campus: NIS is committed to provide a nut-free environment. This includes all items for sale through Chartwells. The full details can be found on our [school website](#). Thank you for helping us maintain a safe environment.

Helmets: Helmets are required for all motorised bikes (electric and gas). Helmets are strongly recommended for pedal bikes for all members of the school community.

Insurance: All students enrolled at NIS must 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.

Living Arrangements for Students: We insist that all NIS Students live with their parents or a named guardian. We do not accept students living alone under any circumstances. If you have questions about this please contact Mr. Kasson Bratton kassonbratton@nanjing-school.com

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 may be held regarding the student's status at NIS. 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.* 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 notify teachers of absence and keep up on missed work. Students can track their absences on Veracross.

Digital Images: Photos of students and community members involved in events on campus may appear in school publications, newspaper and other promotional material, brochures, on the school website, and the school's authorised social media accounts. Students and community members 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, community members, and 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. Participation confers no rights of usage, ownership or copyright on students or members of the community. 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 School (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, including conferences, coffee mornings, and sessions regarding special events such as **Discover China Week** (our off-campus week without walls – see *NIS calendar for dates*). 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'.

Managebac and Veracross: Parent and Student Portals

Your parent portals on Managebac and Veracross will connect you to all of your child's teachers, and we expect you to use this to stay in touch. Both can be accessed via the MyNIS feature of our website. Face-to-face meetings remain our preferred option.

Your Managebac Portal: This gives you access to learning-related information.

- Your child's calendar, indicating his or her upcoming sporting or cultural events
- Your child's timetable and teacher contact information
- Your child's assignments and units of study
- Your child's current report cards as they are issued.

Your Veracross Portal: This gives you access to scheduling and historical information.

- Parent Conferences and Activity Sign-Up
- Your child's reports from previous academic years. 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.

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:

Be Safe

Be Kind

Be Helpful

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:

- **Campus Access:** Please see the chart on Page 13 of this document.
- **Dress Code:** Please see Page 8 of this document.
- **Chewing gum** is not permitted on campus,
- **Drones** on campus may ***only*** be used under a teacher’s supervision,
- **Video gaming** and video streaming are not permitted in the café or cafeteria.

Peer-to-Peer Safeguarding

We are committed to ensuring that NIS offers a safe, inviting campus to all community members. Peer-to-peer abuse, 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 commitment to peer-to-peer safeguarding can be found on Atlas under Resources at <http://nanjing-school-public.rubiconatlas.org/Atlas/References/View>

Dress Code

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

- No underwear visible
- No midriff tops
- No basketball vests
- No clothing with graphics that could offend
- No short shorts (must cover full buttocks)
- No hats are to be worn inside of the school building

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 extend 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 students must be 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 skill 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 the PS, 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 cultural and service activities throughout the year at school assemblies, which are held on alternate Fridays for Primary and Middle/Upper School. The Primary School assemblies also awards Learner of the Week certificates at each assembly. Parents are encouraged to attend these assemblies and there is designated seating. Sports awards are presented at student-led Awards Nights four times per years.

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 awards thresholds are modified for students with non-graded courses.

Full details on Semester 1 and Semester 2 awards details can be accessed [here](#).

Graduation

Students are awarded a NIS High School Diploma if they achieve a minimum of 24 credits across Grades 9-12 and a certain number of credits per subject area. 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 eligible 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 US requirements, visit: <http://www.nanjing-school.com/curriculum/diploma-programme/>

Student Support Services

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 Middle School and Upper School 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 at the following link: <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>

Three Guidance Counselors support student learning and well-being. Our Grade 10-12 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. International Schools Assessment (ISA) is used for writing in Grades 5 – 10 and Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) are used for Maths and Reading in Grades 3-10. 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 Primary School classes visit the library regularly.

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 Primary School, 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 PS. 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 may be locked down, meaning they will lose Administrator privileges. All students, on enrollment at NIS, sign an Acceptable User Policy.

Student Council

At NIS, we have a PS and an MS/US 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 (MS/US) are held in June for the following year, and all other posts and grade level representatives are elected in August.

Houses: **Taiping**, **WuTaiShan**, **XuanWu**

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

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.

Activities

NIS offers over 180 school activities for students over the course of 4 cycles. Sign-up for Activities is done through Veracross, directly by students in the MS/US, or by parents of students in the PS. The number of activities students can sign up for are as follows:

Grades 1-2: 1 activity Grades 3-5: 2 activities Grades 6-12: 3 activities

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

At NIS, we have committed to formally supporting a number of charities: Pfrang, Hopeful Hearts, The Amy Yang Foundation, and 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

Safe use of our facilities is of the utmost importance. Please refer to the guidelines below.

“Supervised”: Students have a responsible adult from this NIS community with them.

“Scheduled” : The activity has been formally organized or approved by NIS.

Campus Access by NIS Students	
School Days	7:45am-3:15pm (<i>exception</i> : supervised and/or scheduled activities or fitness room access)
Weekends and Holidays	Scheduled and/or Supervised activities <i>only</i>

Campus Access by NIS Students	
Fitness Room Access	Grade 10-12 Students only Weekdays: 5:30am-7:45am and 3:00pm-9:30pm Saturday and Sunday: 5:30am-9:30pm
Overall Student Access	Students may only be on-campus for the regular school day, scheduled and/or supervised activities, and/or to use the fitness room (G.10-12). Students are not allowed access to campus between 10:00pm-5:00am

Specifics	Who?	When?
Centre Cafe	Parents, adult visitors, and parent-supervised children	During the Café's hours of operation.
Cafeteria	All Students	During the school day as directed and after-school until 4:15pm, only if waiting for NIS-scheduled activities*
Gyms	All Students	During class, supervised breaks, and for scheduled and supervised activities, only
Design Centres Outdoor Areas		
Fitness Room	Grade 10-12 Students	5:30am-9:30pm
E-Bikes/Powered Scooters	Grade 10-12 Students	With a helmet!

*Students in **Grades 4-9** who participate in NIS activities starting at 4:20pm may wait in the **cafeteria from 3:15pm – 4:15pm**. **All** other PK-Grade 9 students must be *directly* supervised by a parent from 3:00pm (2:30pm on Tuesdays). Grade 10-12 students may also wait in the Café.

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.

- **Approaches to Assessment**

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 MS and US 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 unit planners on Atlas. Use the Browse button and then filter for grade level.

- **Exams**

Exams for students in Grades 7 - 12 take place twice a year.

- **Grade Level Overviews (MS) / Grade Level Timelines (PS)**

These documents provide an overview of student learning according to grade level. They can be accessed on the NIS website, under Academics and the relevant school Section.

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

At NIS we encourage a **balanced lifestyle** that reflects rigorous learning through our classes and opportunities that reflect physical activity, creativity, personal passions, family time, and sufficient time for sleep. With this in mind the goal of out of class learning is that it complements classwork in a way that enables students to develop creativity and/or achieve personal excellence.

- **Language Philosophy**

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

- **Learning Support Services - Handbook**

This handbook outlines our approach to inclusivity and the types of support available.

Contact Information

Position	Name
Director	Laurie Mclellan
Deputy Director - Learning	Kasson Bratton
Deputy Director - Operations & Finance	Arek Owczarek
Head of Primary School (Grades PreK-5)	Adam Dodge
Head of Middle School (Grades 6-9)	Ruth Clarke
Head of Upper School (Grades 10-12)	Katie Ham
Deputy Head of Primary	Gareth Jacobson

Deputy Head of Primary	Bella Zhang
Child Protection Officer	Ruth Clarke
Learning Strategist	Sonya terBorg
Admissions Director	Sue Northcott
Athletics Director	Danny Clarke
Technology Director	Joe Barder
School Counselor (10-12)	Dave Lalonde
School Counselor (6-9)	Kathy Dyba
School Counselor (PreK-5)	Caleva Kelly
Learning Support	Bob Buhler
Learning Support	Rick Fischl
Learning Support	Craig Trevillyan
Activities Coordinator	Anna Yuen
Extended Essay Coordinator	Amanda Lenk
Personal Project Coordinator	Amy Keus
Substitution Coordinator	Oksana Barder

Acronyms at NIS:

ACAMIS	Association of China and Mongolia International Schools
ASA	After School Activity
ATL	Approaches to Learning
CAS	Creativity, Activity, Service
C&S	Community & Service
CISSA	China International Schools' Sporting Association
DP	Diploma Programme
EAP	English for Academic Purposes
EE	Extended Essay
ELL	English Language Learner
EY	Early Years (PreK-K2)
GCD	Global Citizen Diploma
HL & SL	Higher Level & Standard Level (in the DP)
IB	International Baccalaureate
ISTA	International Schools Theatre Association
ISA	International Schools Assessment
IT	Information Technology
Language A:	First language
Language B:	Additional language
LGR	Large Group Room (Second Floor-Main Building)
LSS	Learning Support Services
MAP	Measures of Academic Progress
MS	Middle School (Grades 6-9)

MUN	Model United Nations
MYP	Middle Years Programme
PAC	Performing Arts Centre
PL	Professional Learning
POI	Programme of Inquiry
PP	Personal Project (Grade 10)
PS	Primary School (Grades PreK – 5)
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
PYP	Primary Years Programme
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)
UOI	Unit of Inquiry
US	Upper School (Grades 10-12)