

2025

2026

High School Handbook

*Imagining and
designing a
better world
together.*

Core Values



We value diversity, inclusivity, and individual perspective, promoting acceptance and appreciation.



We try our best to be honest and to do what is right.



We foster passion, perseverance and a growth mindset to overcome challenges and meet our goals.



We promote empathy, compassion, and respect to foster a caring community.


**Mission
& Vision**

Empowering learners to lead through compassion, collaboration, creativity and critical thinking.

Imagining and designing a better world together.

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1. Guiding Statements & Introduction

Welcome Message:

Dear Families,

Welcome to the High School at ISL Qatar, where learning is both a personal journey and a shared adventure. Whether you are new to our school or returning for another year, we are pleased to partner with you in supporting your child through these formative years.

Our community is truly international, with students and families joining us from all over the globe. Each student brings their own story, aspirations, and path—and it is this diversity that makes our school so vibrant and dynamic. Some students come with clear goals for university, others are still discovering their passions; some will pursue the IB Diploma Program, others will follow the High School Diploma track. Both pathways are rigorous and meaningful, preparing students for success in life beyond school, whatever direction they choose.

What unites us, across cultures and academic journeys, are ISL Qatar's shared values: Belonging, Grit, Kindness, and Integrity. These principles shape who we are and how we work together. They guide our approach to learning, relationships, and community life—ensuring that each student is known, challenged, and supported to grow into their best self.

We encourage you to take the time to explore this handbook, our course guidebooks, and other important handbooks and documentation that is linked below. They contain important information about our academic programs, learning and behavioral expectations, and the many ways we support students throughout their high school experience. In particular, we invite you to review the section on Pastoral Learning, which reflects our strong belief that well-being, character, and personal development are essential components of a meaningful education. A shared understanding of these priorities helps us work together to create a safe, respectful, and engaging environment for all.

Thank you for entrusting us with this important chapter of your child's education. We are honored to be on this journey with you.

Scott Schaffner
Head of High School



2. ISL Qatar Senior Leadership Team

ISL Qatar is a vibrant, inclusive international school committed to high-quality learning and the development of the whole child. Our diverse and experienced Senior Leadership Team plays a key role in shaping the school's direction and ensuring a supportive, engaging environment for all students. Their leadership is guided by our core values and a strong commitment to building a connected and caring school community.

Position	Summary of Responsibilities
Dr. Sean Areias Head of School sareias@islqatar.org	All academic and non-academic matters. Implementation of school policy, learning and teaching, strategic thinking, financial planning, fund-raising, accreditation, international organizations, human resources, marketing and PR, admissions, student and staff welfare, parental liaison, student support services, professional learning, non-academic and support services, school publications, technology, library, health, and safety.
Joanne Gillan Director of Learning, Analytics & Innovation jgillan@islqatar.org	Design and development of the whole school professional learning program. Leadership to support whole school operations for the continuous development of our identities as learners and best practices in the classroom. Leads the collection, analysis, and planning with learning data. Provides motivation, inspiration, and support to staff to innovate, pilot and incubate new methods and projects with potential meaningful learning impact within the scope of the school's mission and strategic directions.
Scott Schaffner Head of High School sschaffner@islqatar.org	Student welfare and discipline, curriculum development, staffing and timetable, staff duties and cover, professional learning and staff evaluation, policies and procedures, assessment and reporting, external examinations procedures, admissions, parental liaison, budget planning and implementation, strategic thinking, extra-curricular activities and school trips.
Leigh Anne Toller Head of Middle School ltoller@islqatar.org	Student welfare and discipline, curriculum development, staffing and timetable, staff duties and cover, professional learning and staff evaluation, policies and procedures, assessment and reporting, external examinations procedures, admissions, parental liaison, budget planning and implementation, strategic thinking, extra-curricular activities and school trips
Roula H. Ismail Head of Primary rismail@islqatar.org	Student welfare and discipline, curriculum development, staffing and timetable, staff duties and cover, professional learning and staff evaluation, policies and procedures, assessment and reporting, admissions, parental liaison, budget planning and implementation, strategic thinking, extra-curricular activities and school trips.
Marwa Nsouli Head of Early Years mnsouli@islqatar.org	Student welfare and discipline, curriculum development, staffing and timetable, staff duties and cover, professional learning and staff evaluation, policies and procedures, assessment and reporting, admissions, parental liaison, budget planning and implementation, strategic thinking, extra-curricular activities and school trips. Extended Wh
Dounia Slaoui Head of Operations dslaoui@islqatar.org	All matters related to operations, overseeing the evaluation and professional learning of the non-academic staff, participating in the budgeting projection, maintaining cost effective running of the non-academic operations to create a conducive work environment.
Extended Whole School Leadership: WLT	
Joris Deckers Leader of Tech Hub jdeckers@islschools.org	All matters related to the school's technology infrastructure, covering hardware, software, and network systems, while also guaranteeing the current upkeep of all technology equipment and software in accordance with the international school's standards, while ensuring that all stakeholders can readily access technical support for any technology-related issues.
Joe Toler Director of Athletics and Sports jtoler@islqatar.org	All matters related to the development and maintenance of a comprehensive athletics and activities program, including interschool events and broad extra-curricular program across the school that allows each student and staff to participate in a variety of challenging and meaningful activities



Reinette Evert Head of Inclusion & Student Wellbeing & Inclusion revert@islqatar.org	All matters related to the development and implementation of student support strategies, fostering an inclusive environment, and ensuring student well-being, while collaborating with various stakeholders and maintaining alignment with educational standards.
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High School Key Contacts

Role	Name	Email
Head of School	Dr. Sean Areias	SAreias@islqatar.org
Head of High School	Scott Schaffner	SSchaffner@islqatar.org
Dean of Students and Pastoral Care	Vanessa Zilio	VZilio@islqatar.org
IB Diploma Program Coordinator	Heather Saur	HSaur@islqatar.org
HS MYP Coordinator	Moneeb Minhas	MMinhas@islqatar.org
G9 Level Leader	David Broodryk	DBroodryk@islqatar.org
G10 Level Leader	Thomas Robertson	TRobertson@islqatar.org
G11/12 Level Leader	Lynette Brink	LBrink@islqatar.org
Comprehensive Counsellor	Eiman Obaid	EObaid@islqatar.org
Comprehensive Counsellor	Darlene Urena	DUrena@islqatar.org

3. Learning in the High School

Learning Framework: IB MYP & DP

Our high school curriculum is built upon the internationally recognized frameworks of the **International Baccalaureate (IB): the Middle Years Programme (MYP)** in Grades 9–10 and **the Diploma Programme (DP)** in Grades 11–12. These programs emphasize holistic education, nurturing not only academic development but also personal, emotional, and social growth. Both frameworks equip students with the skills, knowledge, and mindset needed to thrive in a complex and interconnected world.

MYP (Grades 9–10)

The MYP provides a broad and balanced education that supports students in making meaningful connections between their studies and the world around them. It also provides a challenging framework for students in Grades 9 and 10, preparing them for the academic rigor of the IB Diploma Programme (DP) and fostering a holistic approach to learning.



- **Disciplinary and Interdisciplinary Learning:** Encourages students to explore concepts and ideas within and across subject areas, fostering deeper understanding.
- **Global Contexts:** Frames learning within global themes to promote international-mindedness and cultural awareness.
- **Approaches to Learning (ATL):** Emphasizes skill development in areas such as communication, critical thinking, collaboration, research, and self-management.
- **The Personal Project:** In Grade 10, students undertake the MYP Personal Project, an independent research project that allows them to explore a topic of personal interest. This project fosters creativity, inquiry, and self-management, and serves as a valuable preparation for the Independent Study in the DP.
- **Subject Offerings:** In Grades 9 and 10, students are offered a variety of subjects from which to choose. [Please refer to the linked Grade 9/10 Subject Guide](#) for further information. For questions specific to our MYP program and/or grades 9 & 10 teaching and learning, please contact our HS MYP Coordinator, Mr. Minhas (mminhas@islqatar.org).
- **Math Policy:** Please refer to the [HS Math Department Policy here](#), for information specific to Math courses and placement

Preparing for the IB Diploma Programme

The MYP in Grades 9 and 10 serves as an essential foundation for the IB Diploma Programme (DP) in Grades 11 and 12. The curriculum helps students build essential skills, such as time management, academic writing, research, and independent learning, which will be vital as they move forward into more advanced studies.

The DP is a rigorous, two-year academic program that prepares students for success in higher education and life beyond school.

- **Core Components:**
 - Theory of Knowledge (TOK): Encourages students to reflect on how knowledge is constructed.
 - Extended Essay (EE): Provides the opportunity for independent research on a topic of interest.
 - Creativity, Activity, Service (CAS): Promotes personal growth through experiential learning outside the classroom.
- **Subject Groups:** Students select courses from six subject groups, allowing for both breadth and depth of study while maintaining a balanced curriculum.
- **Assessment:** Combines internal assessments (e.g., projects, presentations) and externally marked examinations to provide a comprehensive evaluation of student performance.
- **Courses:** For more detailed information about what course are taught in the High School, be sure to access the [Grade 11/12 Course Guide](#). For questions specific to the IB DP and/or grades 11 & 12 teaching and learning, please contact our HS DP Coordinator, Ms. Saur (hsaur@islqatar.org).



- **Math Policy:** Please refer to the [HS Math Department Policy here](#), for information specific to Math courses and placement

Resources:

[Middle Years Programme \(MYP\) - International Baccalaureate®](#)

[Diploma Programme \(DP\) - International Baccalaureate®](#)

Graduation Pathways

ISL Qatar provides two academic pathways that lead to graduation: the High School Diploma and the International Baccalaureate Diploma. Placement in the IBDP is contingent upon a student's demonstrated academic readiness, commitment, and ability to meet the demands of the program.

To understand what requirements must be met to earn an IB Diploma, please read here: [DP passing criteria - International Baccalaureate®](#)

ISL Qatar is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), which ensures that our High School Diploma is a fully recognized qualification that provides access to a wide range of post-secondary institutions. In order to earn a High School Diploma, students must earn a minimum of 24 credits during their time in High School. Students earn a credit by passing a year-long course, and must earn credits in the following subjects:

Subject	Minimum Number of Credits
Language and Literature	4
Language Acquisition	3
Individuals & Societies	3
Sciences	3
Mathematics	3
PHE/Art/Design	2
Service As Action/CAS	2
Electives (including Islamic Studies & Qatar History)	4
Total	24



For more information related to transcripts, please refer to the [Transcript Guidebook](#)

IB Diploma Exam Registration Policy

ISL Qatar is committed to supporting each student in achieving meaningful academic outcomes. While the IB Diploma Programme (DP) is a rigorous and rewarding pathway, registration for IB examinations is not automatic. Final decisions regarding exam registration are made collaboratively by the IB DP Coordinator and the Head of High School, based on a holistic review of each student's readiness.

This review includes, but is not limited to:

- Anticipated grades at the end of Grade 11
- University predicted grades
- Mid-term report grades
- Internal and external assessment results
- Completion of key IB requirements (e.g., Extended Essay, Theory of Knowledge essay)
- Demonstrated Approaches to Learning (ATL) skills
- Ability to meet deadlines and manage workload

Our goal is to ensure that students are set up for success. In some cases, data may indicate that focusing on the High School Diploma—an essential qualification required by the Ministry of Education—is the most appropriate academic path. This decision is made with care and professionalism, always prioritizing the long-term well-being and achievement of the student.

4. Ministry of Education (MoE) Equivalency Requirements

Qatar is home to a vast number of schools, each offering a variety of curricula. Starting in 2025, the Ministry of Education (MoE) in Qatar requires all high school students to obtain an official equivalency certificate in an attempt to standardize academic performance across diverse curricula and ensure fairness in grading and recognition, particularly related to university admissions and scholarships. ISL Qatar offers two recognized pathways for MoE equivalency, the IB Diploma and the High School Diploma. To understand what the Equivalency Requirements for High School Diploma and International Baccalaureate Diploma, [please click here](#).

[Ministry of Education \(MoE\) Equivalency Requirements](#)

Arabic, Islamic, and Qatar History

Arabic Language, Islamic Studies, and Qatar History are the three compulsory subjects mandated by the Ministry of Education (MOE):

- All students must take Qatar History until Grade 9, which is the final year for this subject.
- All Arab students (registered with an Arab passport) must take Arabic A.
- All Muslim students (registered as Muslim) must take Islamic Studies.



Regarding Arabic language levels and the studying language of Islamic Studies and Qatar History, students are categorized into four groups:

1. **Student A:** An Arab and Muslim student.
2. **Student A+:** An Arab student with ministry exception approval and a Muslim.
3. **Student B:** An Arab but not a Muslim student.
4. **Student B+:** An Arab student with ministry exception approval but not a Muslim.
5. **Student C:** A non-Arab but Muslim student.
6. **Student D:** A non-Arab and non-Muslim student.

Based on these classifications:

- **Student A:** Must take Arabic A, Islamic Studies in Arabic, and Qatar History in Arabic.
- **Student A+:** Must take Arabic B, Islamic Studies in Arabic or English, and Qatar History in Arabic or English.
- **Student B:** Must take Arabic A and Qatar History in Arabic.
- **Student B+:** Must take Arabic B and Qatar History in Arabic or English.
- **Student C:** Can take Arabic (level depends on years of study), must take Islamic Studies in Arabic or English, and Qatar History in Arabic or English.

Student D: Can take Arabic (level depends on years of study) and must take Qatar History in Arabic or English.

Additional Notes:

- If a student from any group (A, B, C, D) takes Arabic and Literature during the MYP, they must take Arabic A in the DP.
- If a student from groups A+, B+, C, or D takes Arabic Acquisition during the MYP for 3 years or more, they must take Arabic B in the DP.
- If a student from groups C or D takes Arabic Acquisition during the MYP for 2 years or less, they can take Arabic Ab initio in the DP.

5. Teaching & Assessment Philosophy

Our approach to teaching and learning is rooted in the belief that students learn best when they are engaged, challenged, and supported. We value **student-centered learning, formative feedback, and reflective practice** as essential components of academic success and personal development.

Teaching Philosophy

- **Inquiry-Based Learning:** Encourages curiosity, critical thinking, and active exploration.
- **Differentiated Instruction:** Adapts teaching methods to meet diverse learning needs, abilities, and interests.
- **Collaborative Learning:** Builds communication and teamwork through group work and shared inquiry.



Assessment Philosophy

- **Formative Feedback:** Provides regular, constructive feedback to guide student improvement and inform teaching.
- **Summative Assessment:** Measures learning at the end of units or courses through tests, essays, projects, or presentations.
- **Reflective Practice:** Encourages students to assess their own progress and set personal learning goals

Resources:

[Diploma programme assessment - International Baccalaureate®](#)

[The IB Teaching Style - International Baccalaureate®](#)

[Benefits of IB for students - International Baccalaureate®](#)

Annual progression

Progression at the end of each year in Middle and High School is based on each student demonstrating sufficient evidence of learning such that, in the opinion of their teachers, they will be able to successfully access the curriculum. Evidence will be gathered by analyzing the grades awarded at the end of the academic year, level of engagement in class and attendance. Where a student receives a grade of 2 in any one subject or their attendance falls below the stipulated minimum of 90%, the student may be required to repeat the year. This would result in the recording of a 'failing condition' on the Ministry of Education database.

6. High School Counseling

The High School counseling department at the International School of London-Qatar consists of two dedicated counselors who serve students in Grades 9-12, with caseloads divided alphabetically by last name to ensure personalized support.

Rooted in a student-centered approach, the department offers comprehensive social-emotional, academic, and college counseling. The team adheres to the professional standards of the [International School Counselor Association \(ISCA\)](#) and follows the ethical guidelines set forth by the [National Association for College Admission Counseling \(NACAC\)](#).

Through the use of [Unifrog](#), a leading platform for career and college guidance, counselors help students and families make informed decisions about their post-secondary plans. Committed to internationally recognized best practices, the department strives to empower every student to achieve their full potential as lifelong learners.

Families can read more about the university application process in Beyond High School: [A University Application Handbook](#).

You can read more about our Counsellors' roles in student well-being below.



7. Pastoral Care

“All children have the right to be protected from harm, to feel safe and to be safe in school.”

– Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), UK Department for Education

Commitment to Student Wellbeing

At ISL Qatar, we believe that wellbeing, belonging, and personal development are central to every student's success. In the High School, we build a culture of care that prioritises character, resilience, and respectful relationships. Our pastoral systems are inclusive, proactive, and student-centred, supporting young people to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

All staff at ISL Qatar are trained to adhere to international safeguarding standards and best practices, ensuring that children are safe, included, and respected. We maintain detailed records on our Management Information System (MIS) to track student wellbeing, behavioural patterns, attendance, and safeguarding indicators. Pastoral leaders meet regularly to review these data points and ensure proactive follow-up on any concerns, with assigned responsibilities by Grade Level and coordinated case management as needed.

Our pastoral work is woven through every aspect of school life and is underpinned by the ISL Qatar Core Values:

- **Belonging** – we create inclusive communities where everyone feels known and valued.
- **Integrity** – we act honestly and responsibly.
- **Grit** – we persevere through challenges and setbacks.
- **Kindness** – we treat others with empathy and respect.

These values guide our approach to relationships, behaviour, leadership, and learning. We embed them deeply through daily interactions and our Community Time Programme, which is a cornerstone of our pastoral provision.

Behaviour Expectations and Positive Culture

The following expectations and guidelines are specific to student behaviour in the High School. They are designed to reflect the developmental needs of adolescents and the academic and social responsibilities of students in the Middle Years Programme (MYP) and Diploma Programme (DP).

These guidelines work in conjunction with the school's overall Behaviour Policy, which provides a comprehensive framework for all grade levels. All members of the school community are expected to consult and adhere to the full Behaviour Policy, which can be accessed from [here](#).

The High School's approach to behaviour is grounded in **restorative practice** and **positive reinforcement**. We believe that young people should be guided to make good choices, take responsibility, and repair relationships when mistakes occur.



High School students are expected to:

- Show respect for others, themselves, and the school environment.
- Demonstrate integrity in their work and actions.
- Persevere through challenges with grit and resilience.
- Act with kindness in words and behaviour.
- Contribute to a culture of inclusion and belonging.

We use **Positive Notes**, verbal praise, and recognition in assemblies to celebrate student contributions. When expectations are not met, we intervene with clarity, compassion, and structure.

Levels of Intervention

We use a tiered behaviour response to support and guide students:

Level 1 – Teacher-led:

- Classroom reminders and discussion
- Behaviour or Positive Notes logged on Toddle
- Break-time reflection, if required
- Initial parent contact (copied to Grade Level Leader (GLL)/Dean).

Level 2 – Grade Level Leader (GLL) / Dean of Students:

- GLL-led meeting or intervention
- For behavioral incidents a Student Statement sheet is used to record the student response and explanation of incident
- Use of behaviour trackers or pastoral check-ins
- Further communication with home
- In school suspension.

Level 3 – Dean of Students / Head of High School:

- Thursday after-school Reflection (Dean's Reflection)
- Parent meetings and formal contracts
- Internal or external suspension (see below).

Student Accountability

We uphold student dignity while enforcing clear boundaries. For serious and/or repeated incidents, consequences can include:

- **Internal Suspension** – student works in a supervised area outside of lessons
- **External Suspension** – student remains at home; parents are informed in writing
- **Reintegration Meeting** – held with Dean, GLL and parent(s); student must submit a written reflection aligned with school values

Examples of behavior that could lead to Suspension:

- Physical violence or aggression
- Violations of our Core Values
- Academic dishonesty
- Violation of Qatari Law
- Continued defiance of, or inability to follow, school rules and/or Core Values.



The examples provided above are illustrative and not exhaustive. The High School Leadership Team retains the discretion to determine appropriate consequences based on the context and severity of each situation, ensuring that responses are consistent with the values and expectations of our school community.

University Disclosure

As a member of the International School Counselor Association (ISCA) and the International Association for College Admission Counseling (IACAC), ISL Qatar upholds ethical standards in the college admission process, as outlined by NACAC's Guide to Ethical Practice.

In accordance with these principles, the school reserves the right—and in some cases, the obligation—to report significant disciplinary actions or behavioral concerns to colleges and universities as part of a student's application process. This may include academic dishonesty, suspensions, or other breaches of the school's Code of Conduct. Students and families will be informed when such disclosures are made.

Academic Honesty

In alignment with the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) expectations, ISL Qatar upholds the highest standards of academic integrity. Academic honesty means ensuring that all submitted work is authentically the student's own and that any sources, including artificial intelligence (AI) tools, texts, ideas, images, or data that are not original, are properly cited. Students must be transparent about any use of AI in the completion of assignments or assessments. Violations of academic honesty include but are not limited to:

- **Plagiarism:** Presenting another person's work, words, or ideas as one's own without proper acknowledgment.
- **Collusion:** Unauthorized collaboration with another student, resulting in work that is not independently produced.
- **Duplication of work:** Submitting the same piece of work for different assessments.
- **Misrepresentation:** Fabricating data, sources, or academic credentials.

Breaches of academic honesty are taken seriously and will be addressed in accordance with school disciplinary procedures. Students will be supported in learning the skills of responsible research, citation, and ethical scholarship throughout their high school journey.

Resource: [IB Academic Integrity Policy](#)



Attendance and Punctuality

- Students must maintain a **minimum of 90% attendance** per MoE guidelines.
- We use a RAG system to track attendance:
 - **Green:** 90%+
 - **Amber:** 80–89%
 - **Red:** below 79% (risk of repeating the year and MoE escalation)

Punctuality is recorded per lesson. Persistent lateness is followed up with:

- Reflection time (break or after school)
- Escalation via GLL or Dean
- Parental meetings if needed

Attendance and punctuality appear in student reports and university references. We apply the Behaviour Levels of Intervention and escalation as listed above.

Phone Policy

In line with the Qatar MoE Circular 227/2024, and to support focus, wellbeing, and safety:

- Phones must be switched off and stored in bags throughout the school day.
- This includes trips, events, breaks, and extra-curricular activities (ECAs).
- No student may use a phone during the school day
- For illness/emergency please contact the Front Office
- If students are unwell, they should visit the school nurse who will make a medical assessment. Following this, parents may/may not be contacted to collect the student.

Medical exceptions for phone use require formal documentation and approval through the School Nurse and Dean.

Failure to comply:

- First offence: confiscation until end of day
- Repeated offences: referral to Dean, reflection time, parental contact to collect the device
- Further escalation may lead to suspension or removal of phone privileges on campus.

Dress Code

Students must wear clothing that is respectful, modest, and aligned with Qatari cultural expectations:

- Shoulders must be covered
- No shorts or leggings
- Trousers, or skirt with leggings/tights underneath for girls
- Tops must have high necklines and not be opaque
- No offensive or inappropriate slogans/images.



Students in breach may be asked to change and students may be held out of classes until appropriate dress is brought from home. Repeated violations may lead to further action, including suspension.

PHE Kit:

- ISL Qatar PHE shirt
- ISL Qatar PHE shorts
- ISL Qatar PHE jacket
- ISL Qatar PHE trousers (to be worn as needed, especially during winter)
- Appropriate footwear

Swimming Kit:

- Modest swimwear with sleeves and coverage extending to the knees (for both boys and girls)
- Swimming cap – two silicone caps are recommended
- Towel
- Swim bag
- Tinted swim goggles

Community Time

Community Time is a core component of our pastoral programme. This dedicated time reinforces our Core Values–Belonging, Integrity, Grit, and Kindness–while supporting personal and academic growth. Topics include:

- Social & Emotional Learning (SEL)
- Digital Safety and Citizenship–digital footprint, cyberbullying, online safety
- University & Career Guidance (UCG)
- Assemblies and House activities
- "What I Need" (WIN) Time for personal development and academic reflection.

This is a valuable time for students to connect, grow, and lead.

8. Counselling, Inclusion, and Wellbeing

ISL Qatar High School benefits from a Comprehensive Counselling Team, providing academic, social-emotional, and university guidance to students. Our counsellors work confidentially with students and families to:

- Provide 1:1 support and group sessions
- Support transitions (new joiners, graduation, mid-year moves)
- Collaborate with teachers on wellbeing strategies

Our Inclusion and Wellbeing Leads ensure that all students, including those with additional needs, are supported through appropriate interventions, personalised plans, and referrals when necessary.



Further details will be provided by the team in collaboration with families. For any questions, please reach out to your child's Grade Level Leader, the Dean of Students, or the High School Counsellors. Together, we build a community where every student feels safe, valued, and empowered to succeed.

9. Administrative Procedures

• Communication

Communication is one of the most important aspects of a successful school. The top things that parents want to know from school are:

- Updates on their child's progress and insight on how their child can improve
- Information about how their child is assessed and what grades they have obtained
- Information on what their child is expected to learn during this year
- Curriculum descriptions and information on the programs their child is following
- Timely notice if their child's performance is slipping
- A calendar of events and meetings
- Timely reminders and clear descriptions about events and meetings
- Information about how their child gets along with others
- Information on graduation and university course requirements

We are continually striving to ensure parents receive information, and are able to communicate with us, in ways that suit them. We communicate regularly through:

- E-mails to parents and students
- Monthly newsletters (sent by e-mail)
- Social Media platforms
- Toddle

However, we understand that sending an e-mail or a weekly newsletter or posting information on social media does not always ensure that the message we want to convey is fully received and understood.

The best channel of two-way communication for parents are:

- Toddle
- Email

These are valuable communication tools and enables us to get feedback from parents and helps us understand if our message is being understood.

The receiver of a communication is much more important than the sender: it is essential that the receiver obtains information in a way that is understandable and applicable to them. We regularly survey parents about ways to improve our communications.



- **Face-to-Face Communications**

Other channels of communication that are perhaps more important than those mentioned above are the face-to-face 'live' communication opportunities we offer. They include:

- Celebrations of Learning and Class Assemblies – parents get to see the result of their children's learning in action.
- School Reports and Parent/Teacher/Student Conversations Consultations – parents learn how their child is progressing and are able to establish a relationship with their teacher
- Student-led Conferences – parents get to see their child's work and discuss, with their child, what he/she has learned
- Presentations/Workshops for Parents – parents learn about the programs and services we offer and establish contact with key staff
- Parent Coffee Mornings, Parent School Association, Parent Advisory Group and other Parent Support Groups – parents meet other parents and/or senior staff and have the chance to ask questions and discuss matters of interest and form relationships in an informal setting.
- Ad-Hoc appointments – these can be made at any time when your child's teacher is available either to establish a relationship and/or discuss your child's progress.

- **Communicating with the school/teachers**

Open and timely communication between parents and teachers can help to clarify misunderstandings, permit staff to put a stop to undesirable behaviours or counter-productive arrangements and improve a teacher's understanding of a student's needs.

The teachers and administrators of ISL Qatar welcome contact with you and would stress that most concerns or issues are easily addressed if the person responsible is made aware of the situation. Only when a teacher or administrator is informed can they take steps to deal appropriately with an issue. When the school and parents work together, students will always benefit. Therefore, when you are concerned about something that has happened at school, you should follow the steps outlined below:

- **Step 1:** If there is an issue or concern, communicate directly with the staff member involved. If you are unsure who to approach, the following should serve as a guideline:
 - Class or Subject Teacher – if you have concerns directly related to your child's learning.
 - Homeroom Teacher or Counsellor – if you have concerns regarding the behaviour of your child, or that of another student, that is impacting upon your child's progress at school.
 - IB PYP, MYP or Diploma Coordinator – if you have general questions about the curriculum or program your child is following.
- **Step 2:** If concerns still exist after this then you are invited to contact the Head of Early Years, Primary or Middle and High School, after informing the staff member that you intend to do so.



- **Step 3:** If a parental concern is not addressed sufficiently at the Early Years, Primary or Middle and High School administration level, parents are invited to discuss their concerns with the Head of School.

If you are unsure how to deal with a particular issue then please do feel free to contact the Head of Early years, Primary or Middle and High School for advice at any time.

How to make contact...

It is possible to make direct contact with teachers by email. Alternatively, you can leave a message with the School Office staff:

Email: mail@islqatar.org

Tel: +974 4433 8650

Your message will be passed on to the teacher who will then contact you at their earliest convenience. Discussion can then take place via a phone call, email or by setting up an appointment at a mutually agreeable time. Teachers will make every effort to get back to you as quickly as possible but as a teacher's day is very busy with students, it may take a day or two. However, it should not take longer than two working days for a teacher to reply to you.

It is important that parents do not make unannounced visits, as teachers or school leaders might not have the time to meet with you and give you the attention that you respectfully deserve. If you make an appointment with your child's teacher, he/she will be able to provide you with more time to adequately address any issues you may have.

All communication should be conducted in a mutually respectful manner in order to ensure the child's well-being continues to be the priority. By working together, we can strengthen our commitment to excellence.

- **Active and proactive communication skills**

A key aspect of successful communication is active and proactive communication skills. Here are some tips for active and proactive communication:

- Check your child's Communication Book, and/or Toddle (Early years and Primary parents, only) regularly and give feedback or send messages regularly through these channels.
- Proactively look for regular communications from the school e.g., weekly newsletter or daily Instagram posts.
- Check frequently for communications to parents and students via e-mail.
- Immediately highlight important dates and events and add them to your calendar.
- Highlight important and relevant sections of an email or newsletter (this can be done electronically or by printing them out).
- Have a message board in a prominent place in your home and stick important messages on it.
- Have a calendar of school events in a prominent place in your home and highlight important dates on it.
- Provide feedback to messages you receive to help the school understand if our messages are being interpreted correctly.



- Respond to requests as soon as possible.
- Mark messages as important or requiring attention (this can be done electronically or by printing out).

Most importantly, get involved in school, and try to attend the face-to-face sessions listed above whenever possible.

Parents are requested to keep the school informed of any changes with regards to their contact details, particularly email addresses, to ensure the smooth flow of communication. It is essential that the school always has a number where a parent or designated guardian can be contacted in case of emergencies. Changes in contact details must be communicated to the front office in a timely manner.

- **Student Withdrawal from School**

Students who withdraw from the school must complete a “Withdrawal Form” before school report cards can be released. Students must secure the signatures on the “Withdrawal Form” from all their subject teachers, the librarian, the homeroom teacher, the relevant section heads and the finance department. On receiving the official withdrawal notification, the school can then issue the following documents on request:

- Certificate of Attendance
- Copies of previous report cards
- Letters of recommendation from homeroom teacher/subject teachers and/or interim report card/s. The school will endeavour to assist students in securing a place at a subsequent school outside of Qatar

- **Parent Visits and Appointments with Staff**

Staff are available for conferences during non-contact time and after the school day if an appointment has been made via the front school office. The front office can also take messages for staff.

Front Office ISL Qatar Frontoffice@islqatar.org

- **Student driving (G11-G12 only)**

Students in Grades 11 and 12 who wish to drive their cars on to the school campus must first gain permission from the High School Dean of Students. In order to receive the permit, students must present the school with three documents: valid car insurance, a driving licence and a signed letter which outlines safe guidelines and gives parental permission. When the school has received all three of these documents, a permit can be issued.

- **Students in Grades 11 and 12 who have been given permission to drive to and from school must do so in a safe, courteous manner. The right to use the school car park is a privilege that may be withdrawn**

- **Booking School Facilities**

Details of booking school facilities are available from the Facilities & Activities Development Director, Robert Nidsjö (rnidsjo@islqatar.org).



10. Resolving Parent Concerns

- **Introduction**

At some time in your child's schooling, you may find that there is an issue that causes you concern. The school realizes that this may happen and encourages parents to come forward as early as possible if they would like to discuss any issue affecting their child's education. It is in everyone's interest that concerns be resolved at the earliest possible stage, and our policy is to take them seriously to resolve them before they develop into problems. Most issues are resolved very quickly, as parents may simply require more information, or there may be a misunderstanding, or the matter may be resolved with a simple acknowledgment of a mistake and an apology.

- **What to do first**

Experience shows that most parental concerns can be sorted out quickly by speaking with the child's class teacher, homeroom teacher, leader of learning, or leader of student development. Staff will make every effort to resolve the problem informally within one week. They will make sure that they understand the concern and explain their actions to parents. The school understands that sometimes it may be difficult to discuss a concern with a particular member of staff. In these cases, the matter can be referred to another more senior member of staff. Where the concern is related to the Head of School, it can be referred directly to the Managing Director.

- **What to do next**

If parents are not satisfied with the response of the teacher, homeroom teacher, leader of learning and no solution has been found, the concern should be passed on to the leader of student development. This could be in writing or through making an appointment to discuss the problem. If parents are not satisfied with the response of the pastoral leader and no solution has been found the concern should be passed on to the Head of Early Years, Primary, Middle or High School. This could be in writing or through making an appointment to discuss the problem. At this point, the parent may also be dissatisfied with the way the concern was initially handled. The Head of Early Years, Primary, Middle or High School will meet with the parent to discuss the problem within one week. A friend or someone else may accompany the parent if they so wish. The Head of Early Years, Primary, Middle or High school will conduct a full investigation and may interview any members of staff or pupils involved. The parent will then receive a response to their concern within one week of the meeting.



- **Further Steps**

If parents are still unsatisfied with the response of the Head of Early Years, Primary, Middle or High School, and no satisfactory solution has been found, they can take the concern to the Head of School, either in writing or by making an appointment to discuss the problem. At this point, they may also be dissatisfied with how the concern has been handled so far. The Head of School will meet with the parent to discuss the problem within one week. A friend or someone else may accompany the parent if they so wish. The Head of School will conduct a further investigation and may conduct further interviews with members of staff or pupils involved. The parent will then receive a response to their concern within one week of the meeting with the Head of School. The Head of School may choose to be involved earlier in the process to enable the concern to be resolved more quickly.

- **If the matter is still not resolved**

If parents are not satisfied with the response from the Head of School, they may contact the Managing Director. This referral will be to review whether the initial investigation is fair and reliable and to ensure there is no miscarriage of justice. The Managing Director will either confirm the decision or ask for a further review of evidence and then make a final decision. Parents are informed in writing of the decision.

Health, Safety & Safeguarding

Hot Weather

ISL Qatar is diligent in monitoring weather and air quality to ensure the safety of our children during the school year. Should the weather become unhealthy per our guidelines, we do not go outside. However, due to the limitations of our climate, we do go outside for play and activities whenever safe. **During our outdoor play months, children must have a water bottle and hat or cap with them at all times.**

During the hot weather months where outdoor play is prohibited, students must remain in designated classrooms and hallways. When available, PS students will be able to use the gym, atrium or MPH for indoor play during break times.

11. Visitors Policy

12. Health Services

13. Facilities

14. Extra-Curricular Sports & Activities, Week Without Walls, Service

15. Service Programs, Events, Performances & Excursions

16. Admissions Policy

17. Fee Regulations



International
School of London
Qatar

We hope this handbook has provided valuable insight into our school's programs and expectations across all divisions. At ISL Qatar, we value our partnership with families and are committed to supporting every student's growth as an internationally minded, lifelong learner.

Warm regards,

Scott Schaffner
Head of High School