

# INSPIRE

BIS MAGAZINE 2026

AGENCY

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# Change as an opportunity

**Dear members of the BIS community,  
dear readers of our new magazine,**

The world is currently witnessing drastic change – from unimaginable wars to populist and nationalist tendencies, from climate change to the technological revolution of Artificial Intelligence (AI). This transformation requires all people, young and old alike, to demonstrate a high degree of openness, adaptability, and resilience, and, last but not least, a positive mindset that recognizes opportunities and does not shy away from problems.

In addition to imparting deeply rooted knowledge and interdisciplinary thinking, Bavarian International School (BIS) has always set itself precisely this goal: to provide young people with a stable value system, common sense, and, above all, a future-proof skill set. The four C's – communication, collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking – are naturally implemented in our International Baccalaureate (IB) curriculum. The principles of lifelong learning, wellbeing, and digital citizenship are lived out every day and become firm pillars of our young personalities. At BIS, we welcome innovation and see change as an opportunity.

**Innovation as constant companion**

It goes without saying that an international school with the reputation of BIS must keep pace with these major changes – which is why teachers, staff, leadership, and the Supervisory Board are working tirelessly to develop BIS as the school of the future. Prime examples of this are the construction of the €25 million Creativity & Innovation Centre (CIC)



and the implementation of an Artificial Intelligence (AI) strategy.

A school like BIS is also constantly changing: some families return to their home countries, while new families, teachers, and staff join the community. Last but not least, we welcome new members to the Supervisory Board, and in the summer of 2026, Dr Chrissie Sorenson will hand over the baton to John Barker as the new Head of School. Above all, there is a shared commitment to making Bavarian International School a little better, more stable, and more successful every day – for the benefit of our students. That is why every change is an opportunity and innovation is a constant companion on the path to the future.

Stay strong and positive.  
Warm regards,

**Marko Mädge**  
Head of Communications & Advancement  
and BIS dad of a Grade 4 student

**Note:** The BIS Magazine INSPIRE has evolved from the former Annual Report of the school. Therefore, it partially contains a review of the last school year 2024-25. But to make the magazine even more exciting, we have added a lot of current content and a special.



[www.bis-school.com](http://www.bis-school.com)



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# Inspiring global citizens and future changemakers

# The school of the future: a vision from BIS



**By Dr Chrissie Sorenson**

**As I reflect on my years at BIS, I am struck again and again by what makes this school truly extraordinary: our students. Their curiosity, their courage, their insistence on asking better questions – not just giving the right answers – are what have shaped BIS into the school it is today. And they are, without question, what keeps me inspired every single day.**

I believe that the future of education lies in the hands, hearts, and voices of young people. Over the years, I've been privileged to watch BIS students demonstrate exactly why this is true. When students are empowered to inquire, to challenge, to imagine possibilities, and to speak with unarguable authenticity, they ignite something powerful in the people around them. Their curiosity becomes contagious – lifting their peers, their teachers, and even those of us who have been in education for decades.

**Future-focused education**

That spirit of openness and growth is beautifully captured in the “above the line” mindset that has influenced so much of our thinking at BIS. Akin to “assuming best intent,” to live above the line is to stay

grounded in curiosity rather than certainty, to listen deeply, to question unarguably, to seek understanding over winning, and to treat one another with dignity. It means resisting the temptation to hold tightly to “I am right” and instead embracing the kind of learning posture that makes genuine collaboration – and genuine transformation – possible.

This mindset aligns seamlessly with the values that have always guided us as an International Baccalaureate (IB) school and with the vision of a future-focused education I wrote about in last year's Inspire issue.

While the world continues to shift at breathtaking speed, these principles remain steady and essential.

**“Seek first to understand, then to be understood.”**

**Stephen R. Covey**

They keep us connected not only to innovation, but to our shared humanity.

On a personal level, my gratitude runs deep. All three of my own children experienced the gift of an IB education, and my youngest has spent nearly his entire school life here at BIS. I have watched firsthand how BIS teachers and staff saw him, heard him, believed in him, and ensured his voice mattered. That is a gift no parent – or Head of School – ever forgets. My love for our students is inseparable from my admiration for the adults who surround them every day with dedication, empathy, rigour, and joy.

**A thriving school**

As I look toward the remainder of this school year and the leadership transition ahead, I remain fully committed to ensuring stability, clarity, and continuity for our students and staff. One of my greatest responsibilities is handing over a thriving school – a well-organised, mission-driven, innovative institution operating at a level comparable to the very best international schools not only in Germany or Europe, but also globally. I am deeply proud that BIS stands today not only among the top schools, but also as a community that leads with heart, purpose, and a relentless drive to improve.

I am equally committed to offering the next Head of School, John Barker, a smooth transition, with the confidence that he will inherit a school that is flourishing academically, culturally, and operationally. And while the future of BIS is no longer mine to steer, it is certainly one I will watch with immense pride and curiosity – especially as our long-awaited Creativity & Innovation Centre (CIC) comes to life. I am humbled that someone within our community chose to honour my tenure with the Dr Chrissie

Sorenson Scholarship, and it is my hope that future generations of BIS students will benefit from this type of support in the years ahead.

And yes, my love for Bavaria and for BIS means that I am not going far. This region has become home, and I look forward to remaining part of this community in new ways, cheering BIS on as it continues to innovate, expand possibilities, and light the way for what schools of the future can be.

**Shaping the future**

To our staff and my cherished colleagues: thank you for your brilliance, your compassion, your humour, and your unwavering commitment to students. To our families: thank you for your trust, your partnership, and your belief in our purpose. And to our students: thank you for reminding us – every day – what learning is supposed to feel like. You are the reason BIS exists. Your voices are shaping the future of this school and the future of education itself.

May we continue, together, to choose curiosity over certainty, dignity over division, growth over perfection, and always – to live and lead above the line.

Believe. Inspire. Succeed.

**About the Head of School**

Dr Chrissie Sorenson has been the Head of School and Executive Board of BIS since 2014. The American-German will hand over the position to John Barker (see page 22) at the start of the next school year.



# Academic excellence

The results of the Class of 2025 IB results once again underline Bavarian International School's (BIS) excellent reputation as one of the leading IB World Schools, combining top academic quality with a highly personalised education in a very international environment.

The largest graduating class in BIS history has achieved excellent results in the International Baccalaureate (IB): the 96 students who took the IB Diploma Programme (IB DP) exams achieved an average score of 34.3 points, which is once again well above the global average (30.56). The pass rate of 100% is also very impressive (81.2 worldwide). Two BIS students achieved the top score of 45 out of 45 points. 17% of BIS students received more than 40 points in the IB DP, which is equivalent to a 1.3 average in the German Abitur.



## IB DP results:

96

IB DP students

100%

IB DP pass rate at BIS

81%

IB DP pass rate worldwide

34.3

IB DP average score at BIS

30.56

IB DP average score worldwide

2.3

Converted into the German state system, 34.3 points are equivalent to an Abitur grade of 2.3, in Bavaria, the Abitur average in 2025 was 2.27.

45

Maximum points achieved by two students

17%

BIS students with 40 points or above

47%

BIS students with bilingual diplomas

## Additional statistics:

- 46.8% completed the bilingual diploma.
- 43.6% achieved more than 36 points in the IB DP (Abitur 2.0).
- 73.4% scored more than 32 points in the IB DP (Abitur 2.6).
- 100% (8 students) graduated from the IB Career-related Programme (IB CP).
- 32 different nationalities in Grade 12.
- 25 home languages spoken, 28,2% with two languages, 23 students with three or four languages.
- 7 years average time at BIS (min. 2 years, max. 15 years incl. Early Childhood).
- 22 graduating students at BIS since Grade 1.



The results of our students are particularly remarkable, as BIS is non-selective. To get into a state Gymnasium in Bavaria, you need an average grade of 2.33 at the end of Primary School. This selection does not exist at BIS – philosophically cannot exist as approximately 75% of our students come from 70 nations and respectively different school systems.

Furthermore, the achievements are all the more impressive because 40% of the 110 students in the cohort received some form of learning support. This underlines BIS's philosophy of providing students with a highly personalised education tailored to each individual – all in a diverse, highly international environment where everyone should feel they belong. "The increase in the need for learning support is a global trend in schools – from reading and spelling difficulties to ADHD and autism. We attribute this less on the coronavirus pandemic and more on the new age of smartphones, screen time and social media, which is demonstrably changing the way young people learn and pay attention," explains BIS Head of School Dr Chrissie Sorenson.

We would like to extend our heartfelt congratulations to the Class of 2025 and would also like to say a huge thank you to



A wonderful finale of the IB – the graduation ceremony.

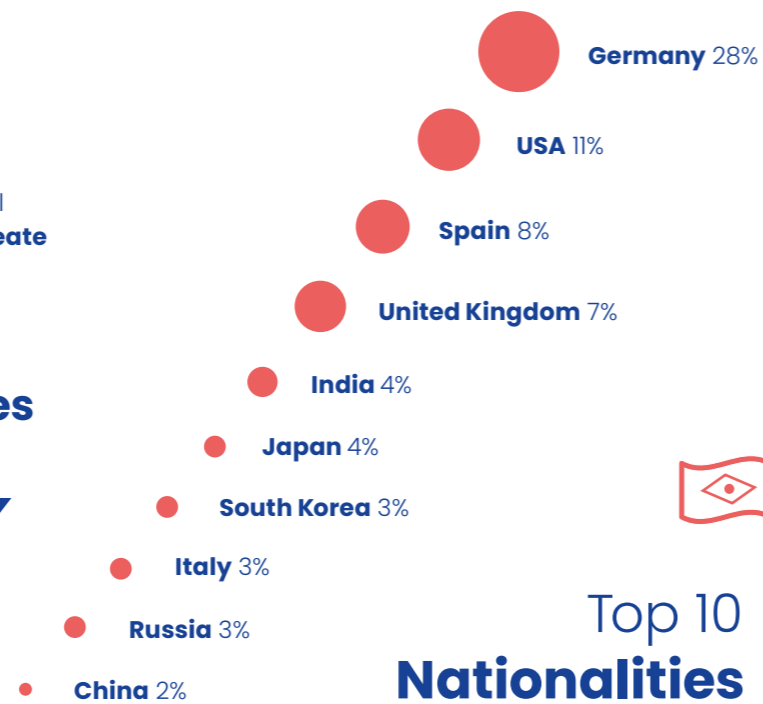
2025

all the BIS teachers, staff and, last but not least, the parents. This joint success is the living expression of our motto Believe. Inspire. Succeed. We are sure that our graduates are perfectly prepared for the future and wish them all the best for their future endeavours. You will always have a family with BIS and we are delighted to now have you as alumni in the community!

# Frontrunner in education

Only international school in Germany offering all 4 programmes of the International Baccalaureate Organization (PYP, MYP, DP, CP)

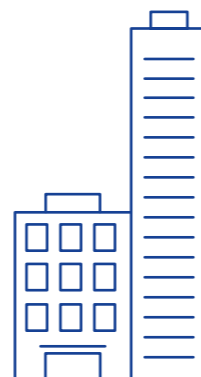
 **1 of 6000** accredited  
IB World Schools in **160 countries**



## Top companies

(With employees who enroll the most children at BIS)

- Eurofighter**
- BMW**
- Airbus**
- Samsung**
- Essity**
- Denso**
- MAN**
- Allianz**
- Apple**
- Google**
- Microsoft**
- Panavia**
- BAE Systems**
- Eni Germany**
- Magna**
- Danone**



## General facts

- 1991** Foundation of BIS
- 1 school, 2 campuses, 1 spirit**
- 1,250** students from more than **70** nations
- 180** teachers from more than **40** nations

 **3rd largest**  
international school in Germany



**After School Activities**  
approx. **80 per week** with more than **400 participants**

## Languages

- 5** modern native languages are taught at BIS: **English, German, French, Spanish, Mandarin**
- 17** languages in the Home Language Programme

## BIS Awards 2024-25



- Academic Excellence Award:**  
Prajwal Yadappanavar (GER)
- Theory of Knowledge (ToK) Award:**  
Adriana Sieira Vicente (ESP)
- ECIS Award:**  
Miguel Alonso Hernández (ESP)
- Community Award:**  
Henry Munteanu (NED)
- Service Award:**  
Meike Zeisler (GER)
- Creativity, Activity, Service (CAS) Award:**  
Marcel Gustavsson (SWE)
- Career-related Programme (CP) Award:**  
Toby Harding (GB)
- Shane Walsh-Till Award (Sports):**  
Dirk Sorenson (USA) & Leo Caddy (UK)

## BIS Students 1st choice of universities

(examples 2024-25)

- Technical University Munich (TUM)**
- Ludwig-Maximilians-University Munich (LMU)**
- University of Toronto**
- Imperial College London**
- Kings College London**
- Maastricht University**
- Trinity College Dublin**
- EHL Hospitality Business School**
- Purdue University**
- University of Edinburgh**
- IE University**

## Accreditations of BIS



# Future-proofing and financial resilience

The completion of the Creativity & Innovation Centre (CIC) is the cornerstone of a broader strategic master plan to develop our campus and make it fit for the future.



Eagerly awaiting the completion of the Creativity & Innovation Centre (CIC): BIS Business Director Marco Dahl.

Our vision includes sustainable infrastructure, campus-wide digital integration, and flexible learning landscapes that encourage collaboration.

The financial foundation of BIS remains robust, built on disciplined management of tuition fees and rigorous cost control. However, we navigate this stability against a backdrop of complex geo-political challenges. Shifting global markets have led to a reduction in traditional expat assignments in the region. To address these headwinds, we have adapted our strategic planning, diversifying our enrollment base and optimising operational efficiencies. This resilience ensures that BIS remains a world-class environment where future generations of global citizens can flourish, regardless of the shifting tides of the global economy.

### Vision becomes reality

The Creativity & Innovation Centre (CIC) stands as our primary, future-oriented

investment, marking a transformative milestone in the school's physical and pedagogical infrastructure. Spanning approximately 6,200 square meters over three floors, the CIC is architecturally designed as a "STEAM" hub (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics). Featuring state-of-the-art laboratories, art studios, and Design Technology workshops, as well as open and flexible learning spaces, this environment empowers students to combine critical thinking with creative freedom.

Upon its handover in February 2027, the CIC will also allow for significant campus rationalisation; the removal of temporary pavilions will restore our campus aesthetic and provide high-quality, permanent spaces for a Secondary School growing toward 800 students. This €25 million project is built on a robust hybrid funding model, secured by bank financing and school equity. By front-loading €3.5 million

from our reserves in 2024-25, we have proactively managed interest burdens to ensure long-term stability. As we move forward, our "Interior Equipment Fund" remains a priority, ensuring the facility is equipped with the cutting-edge tools our students deserve.

### The path to a new legal framework

Ongoing legislative negotiations in Bavaria mark a defining moment for our community, signaling a shift toward a legal framework that finally reflects the pedagogical reality of our schools as integrated, all-through educational journeys spanning all grades. This proposed transition aims to ensure a fair allocation of subsidies for all children attending our schools – rather than just a percentage – by extending state support to every grade level from primary through to graduation.

Central to this new framework is our unwavering commitment to inclusivity.

Currently, a relevant number of our students already receive reduced tuition fees, ensuring that BIS remains legally aligned and fully compliant with state standards for social access. The additional funding anticipated from this reform will be transformative, allowing for a significant increase in fee reductions for families in need while simultaneously empowering our schools to further invest in high-quality education and modern infrastructure.

**If you believe your family could benefit from our commitment to accessibility, we invite you to contact our admissions office to learn more about the currently available places in our fee reduction programmes.**



### A heartfelt thank you!

In closing, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Dr Chrissie Sorenson for her extraordinary leadership and dedicated service. Since joining us in the summer of 2014, Chrissie has been more than an Executive Board Member and Head of School; she has been a source of great companionship, wisdom and a steady hand through a decade of transformation. Her vision has been instrumental in navigating the complexities of our school's development, and her commitment to fostering a community where "everyone can grow and flourish" has left an indelible mark on the heart of BIS.

Thank you, Chrissie, for your unwavering passion and for guiding our school toward such a bright and ambitious future.



A vision becomes reality – the CIC will open in February 2027.

# Building the future of learning

**The longstanding vision is finally becoming reality: the construction of the Creativity & Innovation Centre (CIC) is progressing rapidly, meaning that the new heart of the Haimhausen Campus can be officially opened in February 2027.**

The facade structure is in place, the ceiling with its impressive skylight dome is complete, windows have already been installed on all three floors, and large exterior and interior staircases have recently been fitted to perfection. "Over the next 12 months, the interior will be fitted out with integrated systems for heating, ventilation, climate control, and sanitation, and the specialised rooms and open learning areas will be expanded to create an inspiring, future-oriented learning environment," says Marco Dahl, Business Director and Member of the Executive Board at BIS.

### Knowledge, values, future skills

At the heart of the new CIC will also be a so-called Innovation Stage, a supplementary

auditorium that can be imagined as a large theatre-style black box. This connects directly to the impressive central staircase, the steps of which easily double as spectator seating, while warm daylight streams through the skylight above.

With the CIC, BIS is building the future of learning and providing a world-class platform for imparting knowledge, values, and future skills such as collaboration, critical thinking, creativity, and communication. "With the CIC, we not only have a beacon for education, but also a unique selling point to attract new families and the best teachers and staff to BIS," says Marco Dahl.

## Support BIS and invest in the changemakers of tomorrow

The main financing for the Creativity & Innovation Centre (CIC) has, of course, long been secured – primarily through a bank loan, savings and supplemented by around €1.2 million in donations from the BIS community (including scholarships). However, the BIS fundraising campaign is continuing at full speed for two key reasons: Firstly, around €800,000 is still needed to be able to offer state-of-the-art technology, equipment, and furniture. Secondly, further donations will provide greater financial flexibility in the coming years, enabling us to maintain high academic standards in other areas and, last but not least, to repay the loan in a solid and secure manner.

### Investment in the future

BIS is therefore asking all members of the BIS community, whether as private individuals, through their own companies, or through their employers, to continue supporting the CIC project with generous donations. Companies, major brands, and foundations can, for example, associate their names with individual STEAM areas, the Innovation

Stage, or the entire CIC for several years. The benefits include enhanced branding and corporate social responsibility, a stake in the Munich economic area, access to BIS's unique high-level network, and – last but not least – early contact with the changemakers of the future.

In addition to these donation packages, individual options are also available for any interested supporters. The names of the donor families will be permanently displayed on a creative donation tree in the CIC foyer, if desired. All donations are tax-deductible, and for US citizens, we offer tax deductibility via 501(c)(3).

**From the bottom of our hearts and on behalf of all students, we say a thousand thanks for all past and future donations!**

**Contact:** John Jacobsen  
**Phone:** +49 (0)8133 – 917 134  
**E-Mail:** jjacobsen@bis-school.com

Watch our new CIC film:





The new Supervisory Board of BIS, elected in January 2026.

# Stability and strategic direction

**The 2024-25 school year marked a phase of deliberate progress and long-term positioning for Bavarian International School. In an increasingly complex international education landscape, BIS focused on what matters most to families and students alike: educational quality, financial stability, and sustainable development.**

A central milestone of the year was the continued development and construction of the Creativity & Innovation Centre (CIC). With the CIC, BIS is making a targeted, future-oriented investment in its educational infrastructure, designed to support modern learning, interdisciplinary collaboration, and innovative teaching. Crucially, this investment was planned and implemented with a strong emphasis on financial responsibility, contributing to the security and stability of tuition planning for families.

Across teaching and learning, the school continued to build on this foundation. Professional collaboration among staff intensified, team-teaching approaches were strengthened, and well-being monitoring became more structured. In parallel, BIS expanded its Learning Support provision, reinforcing its commitment to inclusive education and to addressing a broad range of learning needs. The focus throughout the year remained on sustainable quality for both students and staff.

## Educational values

Innovation played an increasingly visible role – BIS explored the responsible use of digital technologies, including emerging applications of Artificial Intelligence, to support learning, feedback processes, and organisational efficiency. The guiding principle was clear: technology should enhance pedagogy, not replace it. Innovation at BIS is therefore understood as thoughtful integration, aligned with educational values and the needs of a diverse international community.

Alongside pedagogical development, we further strengthened our organisational and governance structures. Internal coordination became clearer, documentation more consistent, and communication more aligned – resulting in a shared understanding of roles, responsibilities, and decision-making processes. Engagement with the parent community continued to follow established procedures grounded in transparency, respect, and fairness, reinforcing trust as a central institutional asset.

This commitment to openness was exemplified by the most transparent leadership search in our school’s history. More than 60 highly qualified candidates from around the world applied for the Head of School position. Three finalists visited our campus, each engaging in over 15 structured meetings and forums with more than 120 members of our community.

**“With its international, holistic and personalised approach to education, Bavarian International School creates an open learning environment in which students from diverse family backgrounds can develop their individual strengths, grow and flourish in a global society.”**

**Kai Klicker-Brunner**, Chair of the BIS Supervisory Board

Following this rigorous process, John Barker was selected as our next Head of School (read more on pages 22-23).

## Shaping the future of education

International schools continue to operate in a demanding environment shaped by regulatory requirements, cost pressures, and evolving expectations from globally mobile families. BIS navigated this context with financial prudence and a strong commitment to its non-profit mandate, while continuing to develop its Financial Assistance Programme to support access for families from diverse backgrounds.

The 2024-25 school year demonstrated that BIS is well-positioned to shape the future of international education – investing responsibly, innovating thoughtfully, and governing with purpose.



● Kai Klicker-Brunner.

## The current BIS Supervisory Board:

**Chair:** Kai Klicker-Brunner

**Vice Chair:** Rohit Sodha

**General Members:** Meng Jin, Prof Dr Bernd Martens, Prof Dr Anna-Luisa Stöber, Dr Philipp Tanner, Prof Dr Marija Vuksan Delić, Julian Wachinger, Jenny Yin Ngan



A thank you gift for his departure: BIS customized sneakers for Marc Aghili. Photo on the right: A big thank you also to Roger Hamada.

## “It's deeply rewarding”

Marc Aghili served on the BIS Supervisory Board between 2018 and 2026, one year as Vice Chair and seven years as Chair.

**After eight years of working on an honorary basis in the BIS Supervisory Board, you handed over the baton to Kai Klicker-Brunner. How important was this service to the school, the students, and the community?**

“Serving as the Vice Chair and then as the Chair has been one of the most meaningful commitments of my professional and personal life. The role is fundamentally about stewardship: ensuring that the school remains a place where students can thrive academically, socially, and personally. For an international school, stability, long-term vision, and a strong sense of community are essential. My service was important in helping to safeguard these elements: ensuring responsible governance, supporting the leadership team, and helping the school navigate challenges such as evolving educational expectations,

demographic shifts, the Covid-19 pandemic, and of course the unique pressures of recent global events.”

**What were the milestones you are particularly proud of?**

“A few milestones stand out to me:

- Strengthening long-term governance structures: We invested significant effort into professionalising processes, clarifying roles, and building a Supervisory Board framework that ensures continuity and transparency. These structures will serve the school for many years to come.
- Supporting leadership transitions: Every school goes through natural leadership changes. Ensuring stability during transitions is crucial for staff confidence, student success, and overall momentum.
- Strategic development and campus improvements: Over the years, we enabled important investments in

infrastructure, educational resources, and learning environments. Seeing the school's physical and digital transformation firsthand has been incredibly rewarding. In particular, the planning and start of construction of the new Creativity & Innovation Centre (CIC) were proud milestones.

- Strengthening community trust: From financial stewardship to stakeholder communication, maintaining trust was always a priority. I'm proud that we fostered a culture of openness, responsibility, and long-term thinking.
- Guiding the school through challenging periods: Whether global events disrupted education or local circumstances demanded rapid adaptation, the collaboration between the Supervisory Board, school leadership, teachers, and parents helped BIS emerge stronger and more resilient.”

**What would you like to tell the newly elected Supervisory Board?**

“First, my sincere gratitude. Serving on the Supervisory Board is a voluntary commitment that requires passion, time, and a deep sense of responsibility. To the new Supervisory Board, I would say:

- Stay true to the school's purpose and values. Every decision should be anchored in what is best for the students.
- Be a strategic partner, not an operator. Support the leadership team, give them room to lead, and provide guidance when needed.
- Foster continuity. Schools thrive when governance is stable, predictable, and forward-looking.
- Keep the community close. Listen, communicate, and build trust. Parents, staff, and students all contribute to the school's success.
- Think long-term. Educational impact unfolds over years; the best decisions are those that future generations of students will benefit from.

Finally, I'd tell them to enjoy the journey. Serving the school is not only an honor – it's deeply rewarding.”

**A sincere thank you also goes to Roger Hamada for his 15 years of dedicated service as a Supervisory Board General Member. We are equally grateful to Dr Manuel Cubero (6 years), as well as BIS alumni Leonardo Peruzzi and Dr Ralph Panzer (4 years), for their strong commitment.**

### Become a BIS Shareholder

All BIS families now have the opportunity to become shareholders of our non-profit BIS gAG. This initiative strengthens our founding spirit of community participation and ensures that parents can play an active, informed role in shaping the school's strategic direction. Becoming a shareholder is free, carries no financial obligations, and is entirely voluntary. The process of becoming a shareholder is simple too: Please write an email to [sb@bis-school.com](mailto:sb@bis-school.com) with the subject line “Yes, I want to become a shareholder” and your full name (as registered with BIS).

# A collective voice

By La Mór

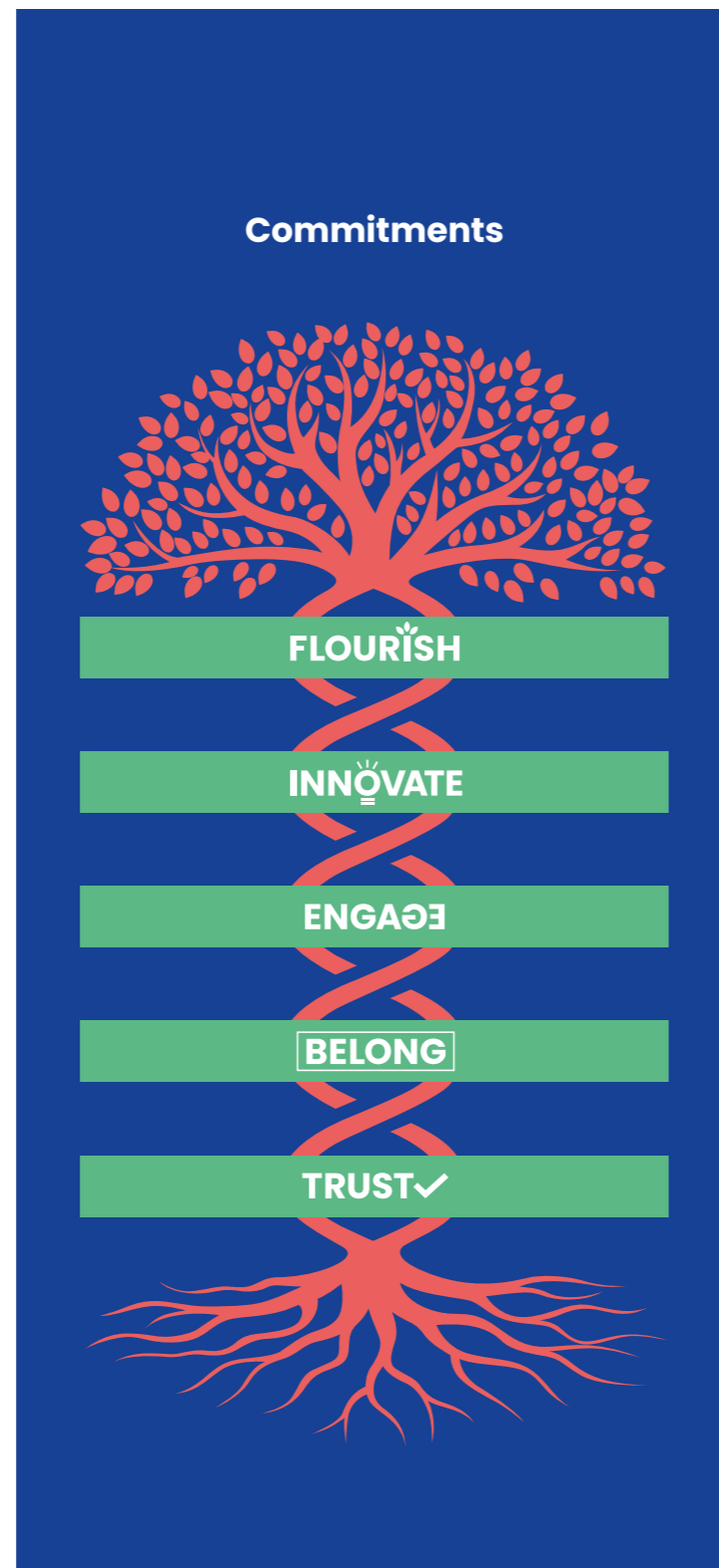
In 2024, we developed the new Statement of Purpose for the Bavarian International School (BIS), housed within which you see our five commitments of Trust, Belong, Engage, Innovate, and Flourish. A 2025 community survey collected initial results to support and assess our work in these five commitment areas. We can now compare this baseline data with results from our second BIS Community Survey held in January 2026.

The fact that we conduct a community survey of this complexity is a sign of our high standards and focus on continuous inquiry, action and reflection. Only a small fraction—less than 5%—of all IB World Schools globally gather this type of data.

The BIS Community Survey serves as a vital mechanism for our school’s growth, providing a structured way to listen to the collective voice of students, parents, and staff. This iterative process ensures that the school’s development is not merely administrative, but is deeply rooted in the lived reality of its community members, allowing for a transparent evaluation of progress over time. Last but not least, this survey promotes mutual trust and accountability within our organisation.

### 70% positive feedback

The participation rate rose slightly across all stakeholder groups (staff, parents, students in Grades 3-5, students in Grades 6-7, students in Grades 8-12), with a significant increase in parent participation (from 28% to 40%) but a decline in staff participation (from 59% to 49%). The vast majority of all responses are positive (agree & strongly agree) at around 70% (62% in 2025).



On the right side you will find more detailed insights into the quantitative survey results, broken down by our Statement of Purpose and Five Commitments, and identified as highlights and challenges:

2026	Highlights	Challenge
<b>Purpose</b> <b>70,1%</b> +9,9%	73% of the BIS community agrees that the school is 'a place for everyone to grow and flourish', an increase of 12% from last year.	This year 53% of staff agreed that BIS is 'a place for everyone to grow and flourish', a significant decrease from last year's result of 66%.
<b>Trust</b> <b>67,8%</b> +5,2%	Trust increasing as an overall result is a highlight, but a particular result worth mentioning is that students reported that their trust in adults, and the school, both saw significant increases this year.	Results indicate that an area for development is the transparency and communication around how actions are connected to the consistent application of clearly defined school policy.
<b>Belong</b> <b>73,6%</b> +4,2%	BIS being seen and felt as a safe environment saw a 7% increase overall. And it is worth mentioning that staff at City Campus agreed 100% with this statement.	An area for development indicated by secondary students, is that BIS values, respects, and ensures equal rights and protections for everyone.
<b>Engage</b> <b>72,4%</b> +8,2%	BIS' secondary student population indicated a significant increase in student agency from 47 to 61%.	Results indicate a need to focus on motivation and opportunities for all to voice ideas and opinions.
<b>Innovate</b> <b>61,9%</b> +7,7%	One of the biggest increases this year was the percentage of students reporting that they had opportunities to work on innovative solutions to difficult and complex problems, thereby knowing how they might contribute to making the world a better place as individuals.	A challenge indicated by this year's results presents a need to support the majority of the BIS community to have more opportunities to discover new ideas collectively, and the facilitation of finding of creative solutions together.
<b>Flourish</b> <b>62,1%</b> +6,2%	BIS being open to finding more efficient and better ways of working saw significant increases this year for staff at City Campus (up by 16%) and Grades 7 (up by 29%) and 10 (up by 24%).	The same area however presents a significant challenge for Primary and Secondary staff at Haimhausen, clearly indicating a need to work on finding better ways of working and increased efficiencies across the organisation.

Next steps involve working as a leadership team with the upcoming Head of School, John Barker in April 2026 to explore not only the (quantitative) data but also the comments to open questions from all stakeholder groups (qualitative data), and collaboratively create meaningful goals for our school and its sections as we embark on

strategic planning for next academic year, and beyond.

**A heartfelt thank you to every student, staff member, and parent who took the time to share their feedback with us. Your voice is essential in shaping the future success of our school.**



## “Listen, learn, and build trust”

**During the photo shoot with John Barker in the cafeteria, it became clear that the upcoming Head of School (starting in August 2026) is already part of the community. Teachers stopped by, parents paused for a chat, and even older students recognised the familiar face. No wonder, since John Barker served as Secondary Principal and Deputy Head of School at BIS from August 2014 to July 2019.**

“BIS holds a very special place in my heart. I have been fortunate enough to visit many international schools around the world and nowhere is quite like BIS. As a school, it lives and embodies its values and nowhere is this more evident than in the amazing students,” says John Barker. After his time in Haimhausen, he was Deputy Head of Harrow International School in Beijing, China, before taking up the Director’s position at International School Hannover Region (2021-2026).

Born in Nassau, Bahamas, the husband and father (wife Carole, two daughters, aged 17 and 21) is particularly delighted to return to the diverse, warm-hearted, and close-knit community of Bavarian International School. “Listen, learn, build relationships and trust with key stakeholders, especially students, staff and parents”, is his guiding philosophy. For him, it is vital to understand how the school has grown and developed, where its strengths and unique selling points lie.

He can then build on this foundation to shape the key strategic goals for the future. This vision, closely linked to the BIS’s statement of purpose and commitments, must always be co-created and owned by the entire community. “This vision is crucial as it is our promise to the students, families and staff of BIS”, explains the 52-years old English teacher Mr. Barker. “With that said, I want BIS to be the leading international school in Germany and beyond. I want BIS to be a research-led school that focuses upon excellence, impact and progress for all students. I want BIS to continue to be a service-driven community where everyone feels that they belong and where learning is student-led and, importantly, fun!”

### Personalised education

Academic excellence manifests itself in various forms. Grades certainly play an important role in Secondary, but in his view, they are not the sole marker of excellence in a school. Future skills such as collaboration, communication, creativity, and critical thinking are also crucial, as are feedback, student voice, and autonomy in learning and having the opportunity to pursue passions and interests. At BIS, everyone should have the opportunity to receive a highly personalised education in order to grow and flourish. With this fundamental academic orientation, John Barker is fortunate that he will be able to build upon the experience and strong foundations of Dr Chrisse Sorensen’s impressive 12-year tenure as Head of BIS. “As such, BIS already has so many strengths and excels in so many different areas. For any new or incoming Head this is already a positive place to start.”

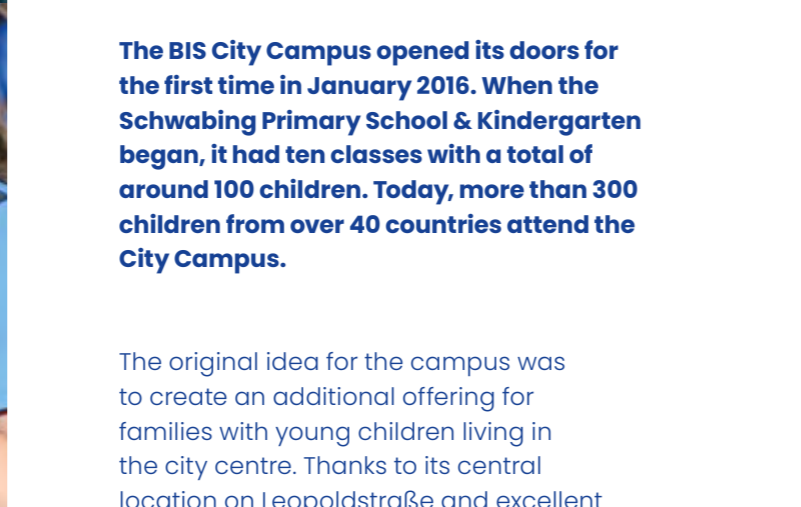
With John Barker, BIS gains not only an experienced leader with teaching experience in Taiwan, Hong Kong, China, Denmark, and Germany, but also a listening, always friendly, and humorous person who loves to be involved in the community in

**“I want BIS to continue to be a service-driven community where everyone feels that they belong and where learning is student-led and, importantly, fun!”**

John Barker

many additional ways. He plays various instruments (guitar, banjo, ukulele, drums, bass, piano, and synthesizers) and has been part of various staff music bands. John is very sporty, having coached varsity volleyball, run 14 marathons around the world, and, last but not least, being a big soccer fan – as a lifelong supporter of Middlesbrough Football Club.

Welcome back to the BIS community, John!



## More than just a school

**The BIS City Campus opened its doors for the first time in January 2016. When the Schwabing Primary School & Kindergarten began, it had ten classes with a total of around 100 children. Today, more than 300 children from over 40 countries attend the City Campus.**

The original idea for the campus was to create an additional offering for families with young children living in the city centre. Thanks to its central location on Leopoldstraße and excellent public transport connections, the easy accessibility of the BIS City Campus plays a key role. Today, as in the past, the school stands out for its highly motivated, world-class teachers & staff, an atmosphere of warmth, kindness and international-mindedness, and a very strong community. The colourful and spacious learning environment is loved by all, with large windows that provide plenty of natural light, a large playground with shady trees, and a

spacious sports hall. Other highlights of the school are the modern facilities, up-to-date technology (such as iPads, dash robots, 3D printer), a charming library, a cafeteria with an integrated stage, and dedicated rooms for art, music, and educational technology.

### From City Campus to the IB DP

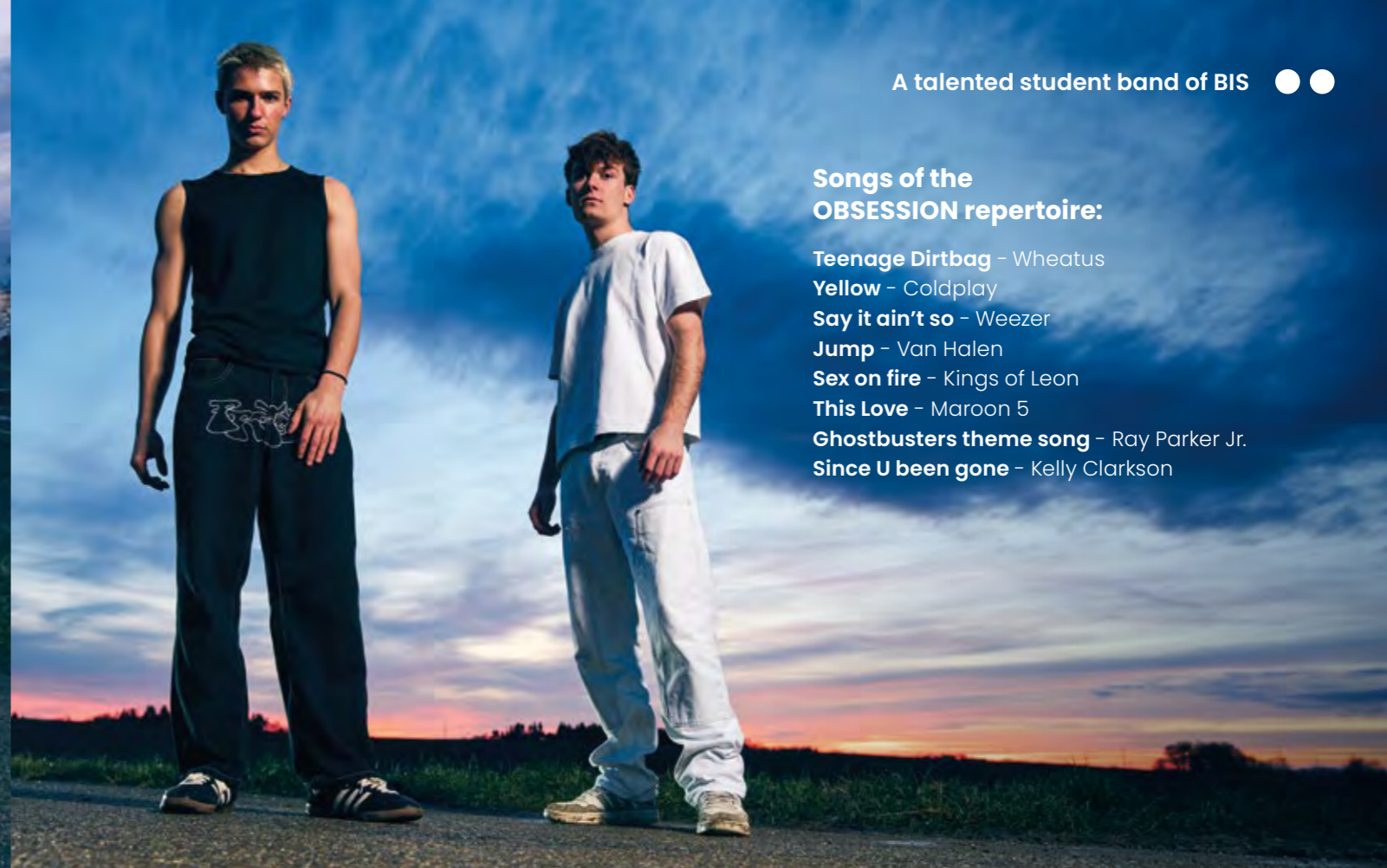
The first 15 students from BIS City Campus have already completed the entire International Baccalaureate Diploma (IB DP) programme and graduated in the classes of 2024 and 2025. Another seven City Campus students are currently in their final years in Grades 11 and 12. A total of 233 students have moved from Schwabing to Haimhausen – the retention rate of Grade 5 students transferring to Grade 6 in Haimhausen was 93% in the 2024-25 school year.

And, of course, there are also teachers and staff who have been with BIS City Campus since the very beginning – a big thank you goes to teachers Alex dos Santos, Julia Artinger, Heath Poluda, Shelby Lang, Susan Oswald, Mark Thompson, Graham Williams, and administrative staff Petra Douglas, Anita Henderson, Klaus Wengenmayr, and Predrag Juric.



**BIS is celebrating the 10th anniversary at the BIS City BBQ on Friday, 8 May 2026 (14:00 - 20:00) – all current and former City Campus families are warmly invited to join the celebration!**

# Music as an OBSESSION



## Songs of the OBSESSION repertoire:

- Teenage Dirtbag – Wheatus
- Yellow – Coldplay
- Say it ain't so – Weezer
- Jump – Van Halen
- Sex on fire – Kings of Leon
- This Love – Maroon 5
- Ghostbusters theme song – Ray Parker Jr.
- Since U been gone – Kelly Clarkson

**Naturally, the balcony concert by OBSESSION cannot be compared to U2's legendary 1987 performance on the roof of a liquor store in Los Angeles. However, in terms of creativity and coolness, the BIS student band from the current Grade 12 more than held its own.**

The band uses every free hour to practice, and the now five-piece combo turns every opportunity into a live concert – sometimes on the roof terrace of the library, as a lunch concert in the auditorium or on the big stage at the BIS International Festival.

“We are a student band who love performing on stage. We are trying to improve as much as we can with the little amount of school time we have left as seniors,” agree the young musicians, who got together in 2024 and held their first concert on 24 October 2024. The band members are Sherin Bhan (lead vocals/India), Sophia Halcoussis (bass/UK), Tobias Copping (guitar/UK), Gabriel Gonzalez (drums/USA) and Jules Levy (piano/UK). Gabriele Quaglia (ITA) was also a guitarist in the band during his time at BIS.

### Take the stage

The musical repertoire currently consists of cover songs from the genres of pop, rock and grunge, but in future the band may also

perform its own songs. For now, however, the band is concentrating on developing skills on the instruments, their interaction as a band, as well as their performance and stage presence. One of the highlights for OBSESSION so far was their professional performance at the BIS International Festival 2025, which will be repeated on 13 June 2026 – essentially the grand finale of their school career. “It always feels good being on stage because when we play music as a band it makes our playing more confident, and we like the feeling of playing in front of everyone. We love when our playing takes up the entire room, making it sound so rich and full,” says Jules Levy.

### Metallica as an idol

Some members of the band see music more as an ambitious hobby, while others can well imagine pursuing a professional career in this field. Toby Copping, for example, who started playing drums as a young boy being mentored by a Grammy award-winning drummer, Paul Riddle,

later learned bass and guitar, and can now effortlessly play the most outrageous riffs of his Metallica idol, James Hetfield. He is working hard to constantly improve. He is also playing in a local Metalcore band, “Emanate,” as the rhythm guitarist who plays and writes original music and releases it on all streaming platforms for fans to listen to. “I would love to grow in the music scene and do headline tours around the world as a guitarist, or become a professional in the music scene,” says Copping.

Jules Levy, who started playing the piano at the age of six and wrote his first composition at the age of nine, already composes on commission and has a “solid passive income”, but does not see music as a permanent career path. Sherin Bhan also has great respect for this, saying, “to take music as a profession takes a lot of guts.” For her, however, it remains a passion that will accompany her throughout her life.

Let's take a look at bassist Sophia Halcoussis: She began playing guitar at the age of eight and later discovered a passion for bass through her IB Diploma music studies. The 18-year-old Brit has



Live on the big stage of the BIS International Festival.

also taken on lead vocals for songs such as “2000 Miles” and “Sweet Child O’ Mine”. While she pursues music as a hobby rather than a career, Sophia remains dedicated to developing her skills and sharing her love for music, drawing inspiration from her teacher Zane Charron, guitarist Mark Knopfler, and her older sister.

OBSESSION is not the only student band at BIS; there are also “7-11” and “Passion”. And let's not forget our school's teacher band THE TUESDAYS. Both, OBSESSION and THE TUESDAYS, will be back live on stage at our next BIS International Festival, so save the date: 13 June 2026!

# A place for everyone to grow and flourish

## The Schultüte – a German tradition at BIS

The Schultüte is a long-standing tradition in the German school system, dating back to the early 19th century (around 1810) in Saxony and Thuringia. Filled with sweets, small gifts, and practical school items, the brightly decorated cone marks the important milestone of starting school. For generations, it has been a symbol of a new beginning.

At BIS, this beautiful tradition has become part of our international school culture. Each Grade 1 child receives a Schultüte, personally presented on stage by the Primary School Principals and lovingly prepared by our Parent Community Council (PCC). It is a simple yet meaningful gesture which honours both local heritage and the significance of this first step into primary school life.



## Christmas singing at City Campus

The BIS City Campus Winter Concert is one of the highlights in the calendar for the entire community every year. The sports hall is transformed into a large stage where students from Early Childhood to Grade 5 shine and are cheered on by parents, teachers, and classmates. The event beautifully showcases the students' learning experience, brings the community together, and conveys the true winter holiday spirit. In addition to solo performances and group or class performances, the City Campus Staff Band with Debbie Bull, Millie Godfrey, Kirsty Grace, Margaret Buckley, and Graham Williams once again delighted the audience. Speaking of which, a huge compliment and thank you for her passionate dedication to the Winter Concert and the entire music education programme at BIS City Campus goes to our teacher Debbie Bull.



## “Madagascar” as big finale

Captivating, colourful, lively and entertaining – that’s how the theatre production “Madagascar” at the BIS City Campus could be summed up in a few words. Around 30 Primary School students from Grades 3, 4 and 5 performed enthusiastically in the musical based on the well-known DreamWorks animated film. “The children did a great job, everyone was happy: the children, the parents, my colleagues and me too,” said director and German teacher Birgit Hauke-Swain.

However, there was also a bitter-sweet note mixed in with the celebrated success, as the long-standing BIS teacher (at BIS since 2013, at the City Campus since 2016) retired in 2025. “Theatre has always been my passion and it has meant a lot to me to be able to continue that at BIS. When we started at City Campus, we had nothing, no stage, no sets, no props, no costumes,” recalls Mrs. Hauke-Swain, who came to Munich from the International School of Paris. There, she directed the Middle School and IB Diploma performances for more than a decade and introduced drama as an IB subject. “I am really proud of what we have created here at City Campus because I know how much it means to the children and their families. There is a strong sense of belonging and team spirit in the productions,” said Birgit Hauke-Swain. She is handing over the theatre productions to her colleagues Alex dos Santos, Debbie Bull, Clara Giesecke and other teachers.

“A theatre production is a team effort and only possible with the help and support of many people involved.” Frau Hauke-Swain would like to take this opportunity to say a big thank you to everyone who made this high quality school performance possible: Alexandra dos Santos (Assistant director & Sound), Deborah Bull and Kirsi Jämsä (Music Director), Clara Giesecke (Choreographer), Alex Zöbisch (Set Design), Natalia Kludt (Costume Design), Lisa Wilhemsson, Tania Bulcao de Melo Barreiros, Chiho Chiba, Laura Castien (Costume work), Amanda Proebster and Chris de Bruinroperties), Verena Zimmer (Tickets & Programme) Thomas Wild Company (Lighting Design) Niko Lewman (Video), the facility & office teams and many other helpers!

After almost ten years of passion, professionalism and commitment to the BIS City Campus and a total of 13 years for BIS, we would like to express our heartfelt thanks: a huge virtual round of applause for Birgit Hauke-Swain!





## We are the robots...

In a heart-warming assembly of a Grade 2 Primary School in Haimhausen, parents, classmates and teachers experienced an impressive showcase of learning: the 16 students from Germany, Spain, England, USA, India, Russia, Ukraine and South Korea demonstrated skills such as collaboration, communication, creativity, critical thinking, paired with confidence and STEAM competences (Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths, Arts). Living robots suddenly appeared on the large stage in the auditorium. "We are the robots" by Kraftwerk sounded from the speakers and even "Spark", a dog robot, was integrated. "We developed the idea for the story together with the kids - but I was also inspired by a book about the future with AI robots being used in homes", explained BIS teacher Margaret Salter. "Innovation is one of our five commitments as a school", says Mr. Andi Pichler, Teacher Assistant of the class 2S and Science Specialist. "In our unit learning we always try to relate to the real world and are open to include the most recent advances in science and technology."

The Unit of Inquiry focused on the central idea: Patterns are innate in our everyday lives, language and other artistic forms. And so the decision was made to highlight patterns in math and coding since humanoid robots are at the doorstep to our living rooms.



## Maths & CERN

Four of our Grade 5 students from the Haimhausen Campus had the exciting opportunity to travel to Switzerland and represent Bavarian International School at the ECIS Math Competition, hosted by the International School of Geneva. The event brought together 84 students from 21 international schools across Europe for a weekend of collaborative problem-solving and mathematical challenges. In addition to the competition, the students visited CERN, gaining a unique perspective on the real-world applications of science and mathematics. It was a weekend filled with learning, teamwork, and enthusiasm, and our students made the most of the chance to connect with peers who share their passion for math.



## Courage and joy

Our primary production of Honk! Jr was a heartwarming highlight for the Haimhausen Primary School. With courage and joy, the children stepped onto the stage and brought the beloved story to life, filling each scene with energy and growing confidence.

The production was shaped by many hands. Beautifully designed costumes added colour and character, while dedicated staff guided rehearsals with patience and care. Parent volunteers supported every step of the journey, helping behind the scenes and contributing to the welcoming atmosphere on performance evenings.

More than a musical, Honk! Jr allowed our young performers to shine and reminded us of the strength and warmth of our school community.



## Mini graduation in Grade 5

In the 2024-25 school year, for the first time, BIS City Campus decided to hold a mini graduation ceremony for fifth-grade students completing Primary School. All students received a special certificate and were honored with a presentation. As a highlight, BIS parents also designed a special graduation T-shirt for each child. Special thanks went to Grade 5 teachers Eriks Kronitis and Shane Down. This emotional mini graduation marked the completion of the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (IB PYP) and the transition to Secondary School.



## Talk to the mayor, meet the firefighters

What an exciting learning and real life experience our Grade 1 students had at the Haimhausen Campus - they met the mayor, interviewed people from the town, worked in the community garden and were finally rewarded with a visit from the fire brigade. This was the highlight of the Unit of Enquiry "In a community people can share responsibilities to support each other. As this is geared towards Grade 1 we can really emphasise the importance of our community in the classroom which includes helping each other pulling in the same direction. We then expand that to our Primary School including the teachers within it, then the whole school, the home community and our local community," explained BIS Grade 1 teacher Richard Jermyn. The firefighter and his ultra modern fire engine was certainly the most fascinating, "but the students loved the unit as a whole".

# Talent, teamwork and fun

The 2024-25 sports season was another year marked by shared successes, learning from challenges, collaboration and team spirit – and, last but not least, lots of fun. Across all three seasons, more than 420 students in 18 BIS LIONS teams participated in dozens of competitions in the sports of soccer, volleyball, basketball, badminton, swimming, skiing, track & field and cross country.



## Badminton

At the German International School Sport Tournaments (GISST) badminton event in Berlin, the BIS LIONS team showed outstanding performance, spirit and sportsmanship! Among ten international schools, the girls' team (Leah, Azaria, Melisa, Liliya) secured first place and proudly earned the title of GISST Champions 2024! The boys' team also performed well, achieving a solid fourth place.

Team BIS also brought home additional medals that underscored how well they did: Our girls' doubles team claimed gold in both the 1st and 2nd seed categories, remaining undefeated throughout the tournament. In the singles matches, Kato won the gold medal for the 4th seed in the boys' category, while Leah and Liliya won in the girls' singles, earning gold in the 2nd and 3rd seed categories, respectively.

## Track & Field

One of the particular highlights was the success of the BIS Track & Field team, which defended its title at the European Sports Conference (ESC) Championships at our Haimhausen Campus, triumphing for the third time overall and, above all, taking home the Best Sportsmanship Award – a true mark of excellence on and off the track. With a jaw-dropping 313 points (vs. 119.5 for 2nd place), our BIS Lions team really dominated. We also celebrated new BIS and ESC records: Clara B. & Kai L. in shot put, Dino K. in 110m hurdles, the Varsity Girls & Boys in 4x100m Relays and Luke G. in long jump. Kai L. was the highest scorer in the entire competition. We would like to express our special thanks to the BIS teachers Sonny Lim, Jerry Nicol, Sarah Robertson and all the helping hands for their excellent organisation.



## Swimming

The swimming team welcomed international schools from Italy, Switzerland, and Portugal to the European Sports Conference (ESC) event in Oberschleissheim, took second place, and won the mixed relay – a remarkable achievement that left the team incredibly proud. “The event was filled with not only incredibly strong swimmers but also an inspiring sense of camaraderie and sportsmanship,” said Head of School and swim coach Dr Chrissie Sorenson, who supervised the team together with BIS coach Kirshten Caddy.



## History made at BIS – our first black belts in karate

For the first time, three BIS students have earned their black belts in Tang Soo Do Karate – an exceptional achievement. Congratulations to Kirill (Grade 12), Matias (Grade 8), and Benedek (Grade 6), who reached this milestone after nearly five years of dedication, discipline, and perseverance. Their accomplishment reflects the core values of Tang Soo Do: focus, discipline, and respect.

Karate at BIS began in 2019 with a small group of students and continued (despite months of online training during the pandemic) to grow into a thriving programme across both campuses. Today, it brings together nearly 70 students each year.

Under the guidance of Master Attila Balint, whose decades of experience span multiple martial arts disciplines, students develop not only technical skill but also confidence and character. This achievement marks an important chapter in the growing legacy of martial arts at BIS.





### In the footsteps of Tom Brady

In 2024-25, an exciting new After School Activity (ASA) has started in Haimhausen: Flag Football (the version of American football for younger players). This opportunity was made possible by the start of a partnership with the Munich Ravens American football team, which sent its linebacker Kevin Titz to coach the BIS students. The offer for students in Grades 5-8 was very well received from the start and is now a permanent part of the After School Activities programme. To get even more students excited about flag football, the Munich Ravens invited everyone to a show training session at the BIS International Festival.

[www.munichravens.com](http://www.munichravens.com)



### 20 years of BIS ski programme

For 20 years, the ski programme of BIS has been running, initiated by Jerry Nicol and Carla Tucker. In its jubilee year, the programme was still very popular amongst students, parents and staff. A total of approximately 250 students between the ages of four and 18 took part in the ski programme from December through March, plus around 50 teachers as chaperones and around 130 parents – so in total there are sometimes 220 BIS members on the white slopes in the Skiwelt Scheffau (Austria). “It’s important that everyone can take part, from beginners to pros. Thanks to the cooperation with the Scheffau Ski School, we have booked 10 to 18 ski instructors per Saturday,” said BIS teacher Jerry Nicol.

The sporting highlights of the season were the two races of the 24-member BIS Alpine Ski Race Team in Maria Alm (Austria) in January and a 38-member team at the Heinrich Harrer Cup in March in Seefeld (Austria). At the first race in Maria Alm, the BIS skiers placed in Top 10 positions and scored valuable points for the team. Competing alongside racers from Munich and Vienna added an extra challenge, and our team rose to the occasion, showcasing their growing potential. The BIS Alpine Ski Team concluded their season with a strong performance in their final race of the season in Seefeld.

“We are very proud of the achievements of our BIS Alpine Ski Race Team, but beyond that it’s all about having a great offer for all families & staff and the programme brings the community even closer together,” says Jerry Nicol.

# BIS International Festival 2025



**Bavarian International School**

Believe. Inspire. Succeed.



## One community, 70 nations, one unforgettable day

**From the international flag parade of PrimaryS school students to the last chord of the teachers' live band THE TUESDAYS in the late evening - the BIS International Festival with around 1,800 guests from 70 nations was the expected big, vibrant and joyful finale of the 2024-25 school year. And the summer festival demonstrated the belonging and commitment of our unique community.**

At no other International Festival has the programme been so extensive and varied, e.g. a musical programme on the large professional stage, seven international food stands, food, coffee and ice cream trucks, the Graduation Committee 2026 cocktail bar, rugby training, ninja gymnastics, face painting, alumni football, the charity "Africa on the Ball", and more. The stand with the presentation of the BIS Cookbook was a popular meeting point in the middle of the green campus - quickly selling the rest out all 150 copies of the launch edition!

Heartfelt thanks and congratulations on great performances to all our student performers and their teachers, with a special shout out to our student band OBSESSION and the teacher band THE TUESDAYS.

Thank you from the bottom of our hearts to all students, teachers, staff, parents and partners, because it is only through our collective commitment, teamwork and passion that a BIS International Festival of this dimension and quality can be realised at all.









[www.bis-school.com](http://www.bis-school.com)



## Who let the dogs out?

In the school year 2024-25, BIS welcomed three extraordinary new members to the community: the specially trained and certified school dogs Monty (Haimhausen Primary School), Nala (Secondary School) and Fyodor (City Campus).

The new pilot school dog programme, inspired by both community interest and the positive experience with emotional support dog Jack in 2022, is designed to support students' emotional wellbeing, social development, and sense of connection at school. Extensive research and best practices – guided by the “Schulhunde Bayern” framework – have shown that well-trained school dogs can have a meaningful impact on student success and happiness.

The three school dogs each belong to a teacher: Monty (a one year old Maltipoo) to Emma Taylor (English Language Acquisition and Visual Arts teacher in Grade 4 and 5), Nala (a 5 year old Vizslador) to Amy Gatesman-Meier (Learning Support teacher in the Secondary School) and Fyodor (a 3 year old Lagotto Romagnolo - Italian Waterdog) to Clara Giesecke (German teacher at BIS City Campus).

“Our school dogs have a very positive effect by bringing joy and the experience of petting an animal to many students. They make our learning environments even more welcoming and put a smile on students' faces,” says the teacher team.





## The highlight of the MYP journey

The Grade 10 Personal Project is the final highlight of the Middle Years Programme (MYP) of the IB. 100 students started their individual projects in August and after eight months, they presented their results in an exhibition in front of classmates, parents, teachers, and guests. The projects showed great diversity and quality, creativity, and innovation – for example, there were entries from the fields of design, architecture, cooking, art, science, business, cosmetology, website design, coding, documentaries, and fashion.

“I was truly impressed by the dedication students put into their projects, showing a level of commitment and effort that was evident in the quality of their work. Their passion during presentations was inspiring, as they confidently shared their creations with the community, showcasing skills and talent beyond what you would typically expect from Grade 10 students,” said Sarah Webster, Science Teacher and Personal Project Coordinator at BIS.



The students were supported by around 50 supervisors (teachers), who helped the students on the project journey with advice and reflection. In this way, the Personal Project perfectly mirrors our value system, which was defined in the new Statement for Purpose and the five commitments (Trust, Belong, Engage, Innovate, Flourish). The students trust in themselves and their supervisors, they belong in a close-knit working group and community, they show commitment and innovation to take their project to the next step of flourishing.

## The Addams Family Musical

Our Secondary students brought The Addams Family Musical to the stage in a production full of character and humour. The story followed the delightfully strange Addams family as they faced an unexpected challenge: Wednesday Addams has fallen in love with a “normal” boy, turning family life upside down in the most entertaining way.

After months of effort, 22 student actors and a crew of more than 25 students, teachers, and parents worked together to make the show come alive. From moody sets to lively musical numbers, every scene reflected the creativity and commitment behind the production. Funny, bold, and a little bit spooky, the musical brought joy to our community and celebrated art and teamwork.



## The castle as a gallery

At least once a year, Haimhausen Castle is transformed into a large art gallery when the students in the graduating class display their works in visual arts as part of their IB DP exams. In the 2024-25 school year, 18 students presented their artwork in the genres of painting, sculpture, mixed media, photography, film, and installation. To round off a proper gallery experience, there were drinks, snacks, and music, but more important were the dozens of conversations with the young artists, who spoke passionately about their ideas, processes, and finalization.

“The yearly art exhibitions on the Schloss are a highlight of the Grade 12 art programme. Students in younger grades know that if they continue on an arts path, they get to have this exhibition one day, something I hear them talking about and aspiring to reach. It is a celebration of the IB DP art students two years of hard work in a beautiful and unique setting,” said Anne Dirilgen.

In the future, the Visual Arts Team – Anne Dirilgen, Elizabeth King, and Renee Ferguson – wants to try out new and exciting exhibition formats. For example, students, teachers, and parents were delighted to enjoy an Arts Extravaganza for the first time in October 2025.



## Young authors at BIS

A new record for young authors in the BIS Infinity Programme: 43 students from 19 countries wrote 41 books. What makes this even more impressive is that the students were in Grades 3 (!) to 10 and wrote the books in four different languages (English, German, Spanish, and Japanese). Six of the BIS students wrote their second book, three sets of siblings wrote books together. The printed books remain with the students and their families, one book goes to the BIS library, and one book ends up in the admissions office. A big thank you to the mentors: Heather Prekop, Annika Eaton, Corneliu Roibu, Kate Moran, Shane Down, Nicole Bly, and Dr Alissa Carter. And a very special shout-out to our Secondary School librarian Melissa van den Ancker, who brought each book cover to life.





## BIS battle of bands

The Bavarian International School has always been known for new, innovative ideas in learning. In the 2024-25 school year, the music teachers launched the first Band Battle in the auditorium of the Haimhausen Campus. A total of ten bands with over 50 musicians from grades 6 to 10 took part, filling the stage with pop, rock, energy, and serious talent—and, of course, earning the applause of their classmates and teachers. Big congratulations to our winners: 1st place – Passion, 2nd place – Der grüne Planet, 3rd place – 7/11, 4th place – The Pop Rocks. A huge thank you to our music teachers Ms. Brierley and Mr. King for making it happen.



## History reminds us

Ten students from Bavarian International School (BIS) had an active, very touching part in the 80th anniversary of the liberation of the Dachau concentration camp. The students from Grades 7 to 11 gave a scenic reading with contemporary testimonies in the cinema of the camp memorial site. Quotes from letters, diary entries, Interviews, testimonies and newspaper articles by liberators, survivors and other contemporary witnesses provided an insight into the dramatic circumstances surrounding 29 April 1945.

“Students, your readings were delivered with such clarity and emotion that evoked a powerful insight to the perspectives of the prisoners and liberators present and involved in those moments of liberation. You allowed

for all members of the audience from army generals, diplomats to family members to feel the significance of this moment in history. Your respect and attitude towards your participation was beyond expectation and allowed for a fitting tribute, touching so many people locally and globally,” the BIS teacher Emma Morris praised the BIS students.

Our students also met the 99-year-old Richard Baum, who witnessed the liberation of the concentration camp. Thank you so much for your valuable, sensitive contribution, dear BIS students: Patrick B. (USA), Maria-Illiana C. (Greece), Fiona and Lara D. (USA), Amelia G. (Poland), Alexander H. (USA), Kai L. (USA), Nina O. (Ireland), George T. (France), Maxim Z. (Russia).

## Cosmopolitanism & diversity

The Home Language International Day is a wonderful example of the cosmopolitanism and diversity of BIS. And it emphasises that this school is a place of trust and belonging, where everyone can grow and flourish! In total, we have around 1,250 students from 70 nations and 180 teachers from 40 countries at both campuses. An impressive fact: around 10% of the team speak five languages, a further 22% speak four languages, 29% three languages and 38% two languages!

The members of our unique community come from Germany (27%), USA (13%), United Kingdom (8%), Spain (7%), India (4%), Japan (3%), Italy (3%), South Korea (3%), Russia (3%), France (2%) and China (2%). Five native languages are taught at our IB World School (English, German, French, Spanish, Mandarin) and a further 17 languages in the Home Language Programme. Year by year, the Home Language International Day is organised under the supervision of our Spanish teacher Marianella Muelle from Colombia, with the support of music teacher Ruth Brierley and many other faculty team members, students and parents.

## More than just a new playground

A brand-new playground was put into operation at the BIS Haimhausen Campus – a vibrant and inspiring space designed to spark imagination, promote physical activity, and encourage social connection. Right next to the large trees, fountain and with a view of Haimhausen Castle, the new climbing and play area has become a popular attraction. “Playgrounds are not just places for fun, they are vital in the holistic development of children, supporting physical activity and balance, boosting self-confidence and encouraging social interaction. Ultimately, the new playground is another important step for the well-being of our students,” says BIS Business Director Marco Dahl. Part of the cost for the new playground came from donations to the BIS Sustainability (Annual) Fund. This annual fund for specific school projects that fall outside of normal operational planning will be relaunched in 2026.





## Student charity for Valencia

In response to the devastating flood disaster in the Valencia region (Spain), BIS student Laia Bonafe Mercader has launched an information and charity campaign at the school. "I have always been involved in environmental projects since I was in third grade, I started as an Eco Agent at the age of 8 and now I am in charge of the Green Team. The Valencia project is particularly close to my heart because my family comes from this region," said the 14-year-old Grade 9 student. As part of her "Service as Action" project, the Spaniard presented an impressive slide deck to all students in Grade 6, 7 and 8, developed her own branding ("BIS Cares - Valencia floods project") and organised several fundraising events with a well-attended football match between teachers and students as a highlight. In total, 1,250 euros for the Spanish Red Cross were raised through the unique initiative of Laia - very well done!



## Intense drama play of the SCHAUBURG

More than 40 BIS students from Grade 9 German A classes experienced an extraordinarily intense drama play about the life of a young girl in a neo-Nazi family - and her later exit from the right-wing milieu. Based on Heidi Benneckenstein's autobiography of the same name, "A German Girl" ("Ein deutsches Mädchen"), Lucia Schierenbeck from the Munich children's and youth theatre SCHAUBURG portrayed the title character in an impressive, intimate and often distressing way.

Equipped with only minimal resources such as a projector, bomber jacket and desk, Lucia Schierenbeck delivered a brilliant performance that gave the 14 and 15-year-old BIS students plenty of food for thought about the mechanisms of the neo-Nazi scene and the parallels to the rise of extreme political movements today. Afterwards, the students discussed their



impressions and learnings with the actress and the SCHAUBURG crew.

More information about the play:  
[www.schauburg.net/de/ein-deutsches-maedchen](http://www.schauburg.net/de/ein-deutsches-maedchen)



## Magical Winter Festival

The BIS Winter Festival was the highlight of the holiday season, bringing together students, staff, families, and the wider Haimhausen community. Two stages buzzed with energy as students performed everything from karate, ninja gymnastics, capoeira, and flamenco to music from soloists, the orchestra, and student bands, showcasing incredible talent and enthusiasm.

Across the campus, the International Food Court and seasonal drinks created a cozy, welcoming atmosphere, while the Craft Village, children's activities, face painting, games, and photos with Santa brought smiles to our youngest guests.

The festival captured what is at the heart of the BIS community: a place where we come together to create unforgettable moments, both in and out of the classroom.





At BIS, student voice and choice begins at an early age in Primary School.



# The power of voice

By **Dr Russ Quaglia**

**Every thriving school begins with a shared belief that every person, student, teacher, and leader alike has a voice that matters. Voice is not owned by one group or confined to a particular role. It is universal. It is the lifeblood of connection, belonging, and purpose.**

Voice represents the conviction that each individual's ideas, insights, and experiences hold value and have the power to shape the community for the better. For voice to truly matter, it must be defined clearly and embraced collectively. When everyone in a school understands what voice means, what it looks like in action, and how it can be used responsibly, the result is a culture built on collaboration, respect, and shared purpose.

Voice is more than speaking. It is being heard and understood. It is the act of sharing thoughts and ideas in an

environment grounded in trust and respect, offering meaningful suggestions for the good of the whole, and accepting responsibility for both what is said and what must be done. When these three elements (trust, realism, action) come together, voice becomes a catalyst for transformation.

### Trust and respect

In an age of constant communication, it may seem that sharing ideas is effortless. With a few clicks, anyone can express an opinion. Yet true voice in schools runs far deeper. It is not about speaking the loudest or being first to share. It is about creating a space where every idea can be heard with sincerity, where people feel safe to express themselves without fear of judgment. Trust and respect are the cornerstones of that space. Trust does not appear by chance. It is built through authenticity, consistency, and care. It grows when students and teachers know their voices are valued, not dismissed. It flourishes through small,

everyday actions such as active listening, honest feedback, and appreciation for shared ideas.

In classrooms and staff rooms alike, respect transforms isolated individuals into connected communities. When trust and respect intertwine, something powerful happens. People no longer hold back. They share with courage, listen with curiosity, and grow together.

### Offering realistic suggestions

Voice without action is noise. True voice does not simply express an opinion; it contributes to progress. It is easy to share ideas, but the real challenge and opportunity is to offer solutions that are both imaginative and achievable.

Schools thrive when ideas are creative yet grounded in reality. A student might suggest fewer math requirements or a teacher might request international travel funds during a budget freeze. These ideas may come from genuine feelings, but they are not feasible within the school's constraints. Real voice balances inspiration with practicality.

### Responsibility & action

The most profound expression of voice is responsibility. Words alone will never change a school. Action will. Too often, great ideas fade because no one takes the next step. We often say that everyone is responsible, but when everyone is responsible, no one truly is. Voice requires ownership. It means standing behind your ideas and helping to bring them to life.

When people take ownership of their words and follow them with purposeful action, transformation begins. Competition gives way to cooperation. Isolation is replaced by collaboration. Insecurity is replaced by confidence. Teachers and students become partners in shaping a culture where everyone feels capable, seen, and essential.



### Symphony of growth

A school that truly embraces voice is alive with energy and purpose. It is a place where ideas spark innovation, respect fuels belonging, and action drives change. It is a community where students, teachers, and families work together toward shared goals, where diversity of thought is celebrated, and every voice contributes to a collective symphony of growth. The impact is undeniable. Schools that nurture voice see stronger engagement, better attendance, improved relationships, and a deeper sense of self-worth among students and staff.

Voice is not idealistic. It is transformative. It turns passive participation into active purpose. It turns words into movement. When every person in a school community feels that their voice matters, extraordinary things happen. Voice is not something we simply use. It is something we live. It is the heartbeat of a thriving school community where everyone contributes, everyone grows and flourishes - and everyone matters.



### About Dr Russ Quaglia

Dr Quaglia is a pioneer in the field of education, known for his unwavering dedication to student voice. He has authored the school voice suite of surveys and best-selling books, including "Student Voice: The Instrument of Change and Engagement by Design." His most recent book, "The Power of Voice" is getting global recognition.

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





# From dialogue to action

Prologue by Dr Rohan Skene,  
Secondary School Principal  
Grade 9-12

**Bavarian International School (BIS) recognised at a very early stage that student voice, choice and ownership (collectively referred to as student agency) play a central role in the International Baccalaureate (IB) curriculum. Student voice and choice empower learners to take an active role in their education, fostering motivation and critical thinking. For this reason, the approach was established at BIS almost 15 years ago and has since become an integral part of learning at the school, since 2016 also at BIS City Campus. While this is already a very familiar topic in the BIS world, it is only now emerging as a new trend in many non-IB schools.**

The student voice initiative at BIS Secondary School was established 2012-13 as a pioneering initiative. In September 2012, the respected student voice researcher Dr Caroline Lodge was invited to lead a series of workshops with both students and teachers. These workshops laid the foundation for a culture in which student perspectives were actively sought, valued, and acted upon.

### A credible force

Building on this work, the first Students as Researchers (SAR) project was launched. Students were trained to design and administer surveys, facilitate student and teacher focus groups, and analyse and

present their findings to the Secondary staff. The initial research focused on three key questions: what makes a good teacher, how students learn best, and students' views on the role of technology in learning. The presentation was very well received and marked a significant milestone in embedding student voice as a consistent and credible force within the school.

Since then, a student voice research group has been established annually, typically comprising Grade 11 students who undertake a year-long inquiry into aspects of learning and school life. Over time, these groups have successfully influenced meaningful change, including revisions to

the Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) curriculum, the creation of dedicated Grade 11 and 12 study spaces, the discontinuation of the behaviour report, and the identification of assessment overload as a key area for ongoing improvement. The initiative continues to reflect BIS's strong commitment to student agency and continuous school improvement.

### Part of BIS' school culture

Alongside the Students as Researchers (SAR) project, teachers are encouraged to engage with both informal and formal student voice within their classrooms. Informal student voice occurs naturally, as teachers routinely seek student perspectives on completed units, assessments, and lessons through open and constructive dialogue. In addition, there is a continued and deliberate focus on more formal methods of gathering student feedback, including written surveys, questionnaires, and other structured reflection tools. These approaches support deeper insight into student learning experiences and form an integral part of the teacher appraisal process.

We are proud of our long-standing tradition of student voice at BIS, which is embedded into the school culture through both formal



A group of BIS students presents environmental protection topics to the leadership team.

and informal channels. The current student voice group will present their findings to staff in April 2026. Their research focuses on three key areas: effective teacher feedback, the optimisation of study spaces, and students' perspectives on the timetable. This initiative reflects our commitment to ensure that student feedback informs meaningful improvements across the school.

**Dr Rohan Skene** - the Australian has been working for BIS since 2009 and is our Secondary School Principal for Grades 9-12.

## International Baccalaureate (IB): Key aspects of IB student voice and choice:

- **Student agency (voice, choice, ownership):** Students are not passive recipients but active participants who influence the direction of their learning.
- **Inquiry-based learning:** Learning begins with questions that matter to students rather than just content delivery.
- **Customised learning:** Students choose topics to research, project formats, and how to demonstrate their understanding, increasing engagement.
- **Collaboration with teachers:** Students participate in creating classroom agreements and setting learning goals.
- **Reflection and action:** Students reflect on their learning journey, setting personal goals to develop as independent, lifelong learners.



# Empower learners to take an active role

Voice, choice and ownership are practised in all divisions of Bavarian International School (BIS), from the Primary campuses in Munich and Haimhausen to the Secondary School. On the following pages, we highlight examples from everyday school life that showcase the vital role of student agency.

## The voice of City Campus

More than 20 students from Grades 2 to 5 are engaged in the Student Leadership at BIS City Campus. Since this school year, the leader and Learning Assistant Mark Loy has been trying out a new strategy and has set up four subcommittees, which the students themselves have chosen: Communications, Fundraising, Events & Fun, and Safety & Wellbeing. The advantage is obvious, as it allows students to delve deeper into the respective topics and acquire greater knowledge. The students are seeing many different ideas and projects through and navigating failure along the way, encouraging problem solving, building resilience and getting a sense of achievement that they may not obtain elsewhere.

Some examples of changes and actions brought about by Student Leadership include enacting a recess helpers programme, supporting the Student Ambassadors Programme, fundraising for the Hedgehog Project at Munich Animal Shelter, a pyjama day in line with the hot chocolate event organised by the Parent Community Council (PCC) and an optimised suggestion box.

“Student’s are the lifeblood of any school, so of course they should get a say in its day to day running. This year, we are putting a strong emphasis on surveying a much larger sample group than just the core student leadership group. The purpose of this is to give the student body a much louder, clearer voice,” explains Mark Loy.



## Leading with empathy

Another great project that highlights student voice and choice at BIS City Campus is the Young Leaders Conference of the “Arbeitsgemeinschaft Internationaler Schulen in Deutschland” (AGIS) on 18 April 2026, at our Munich campus. “Our theme this year is ‘Leading with Empathy’, and with the current global geo-political situation that we are facing, understanding the perspective and background of other people is of paramount importance for our young leaders”, explains BIS Grade 5 teacher Shane Down, who is coordinating the Young

Leaders Conference, in which students in Grades 4 and 5 can participate...

Of course, students are also involved, for example, several student-led workshops are planned on the event. One of the highlights of the event will be the keynote speech by Ed Kirwan from the renowned Empathy Studios (UK). This is the first AGIS Young Leaders Conference to be held at the Bavarian International School – and it certainly won’t be the last.

## NaNoWriMo

One of many examples of how student voice and choice is incorporated into everyday teaching at the Primary School in Haimhausen (and also at BIS City Campus) is the project with the mysterious name “NaNoWriMo.” This stands for National Novel Writing Month, in which 16 students in Grades 4 and 5 participated and had to submit a 40-page story in DIN A5 format by the first deadline in December. The topics ranged from time travel to fight bad guys, adventures with sea monsters in the Atlantic, animals with human abilities, or fighting for survival on a deserted island. “I love running this project! It’s so much fun to see the creative ideas the students come up with for their stories. My favorite part, though, is watching their faces when they’re handed their finished books. You can see how proud they are to be published authors,” says BIS teacher and NaNoWriMo coordinator Heather Prekop.

By February, the novels had to be revised and then finalised with the support of an adult, followed by fine-tuning such as the



table of contents and cover – and finally, they will be printed. Each student will receive several copies, and of course, one copy will go to the Primary School library. The initiative is also running at Munich City Campus, where a dozen Grade 5 students are participating in NaNoWriMo.



## Leadership, responsibility and collaboration



Guncha Bhan

The Student Council at the Primary School in Haimhausen has been in place for over ten years. This school year, Guncha Bhan took over as advisor of this dedicated group. “The magic lies in empowering young children to realise that their voices matter. The Primary Student Council is about nurturing trained young minds to speak up, listen to others, and make thoughtful decisions from an early age. It gives students a safe and structured space to practise leadership, responsibility, and collaboration skills that will stay with them far beyond primary school,” says the Grade 3 teacher, who is meeting the group once a week during lunchtime. Through the council, our students learn how to express opinions respectfully, consider different perspectives, and contribute positively to school life. It builds confidence, agency, and a sense of belonging, while

also encouraging critical thinking and empathy. In addition, the council also serves as a bridge between Primary and Secondary, helping students understand continuity in leadership and community involvement. A few examples make it clear that this is not just a matter of discussion, but that the issues raised are actually being implemented – action is an important final component of student voice. The students got engaged e.g. in fundraising activities to support our sponsored student, Tenzin, at the Himalayan School for Children in Nepal, volunteering to collect recyclable bottles for environmental responsibility, taking initiative to clean up the school grounds during recess, and giving up their own recess time to support “Football-Free Friday” by organising games and sports equipment for children who prefer alternative activities.

### Interview with Sophie McWhirter

## “Student voice is truly lived”

Four years ago, we told the story of a 13-year-old who had written a book about her passion for horses in Grade 8: Sophie McWhirter. Now 17 years old and in the middle of the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IB DP), the German–South African student not only graces the magazine cover, but also tells us about her perspective on student voice.



### Student voice and choice sounds like an abstract topic. How is student voice actually lived and implemented at BIS?

“At BIS, student voice is truly lived. The Student Council is elected by the students every year, and class representatives regularly attend meetings to provide feedback and enhance the wellbeing of our classes and the entire community. I am a class representative myself and can say that our voices carry weight! Whether it’s sustainability, spirit days or charity campaigns – our ideas are taken seriously and implemented.”

### What do you learn and take away for life when you, as a student, realise that your voice is heard and important?

“When you realise that your voice counts, your self-confidence grows enormously. You learn to take responsibility, argue convincingly and find compromises. Diversity becomes tangible, especially in a school with over 70 nationalities: you learn to respect and appreciate different perspectives – an experience that shapes you for life.”

### Great ideas often fail to be implemented in practice: Can you give some examples of student voice being put into action?

“There are many examples at BIS: student ideas have led to more recycling campaigns, less plastic in the café and Green Days. In the MYP ‘Service as Action’

programme, everyone gets involved – for example, in the Eco-Schools Project with the Litter Team and Green Team. In the Creativity, Activity, Service (CAS) programme, I am currently organising events on student wellbeing, such as mental health and sport. A particular highlight was Matcha Day, which the students requested and which the Student Council then implemented – thank you to Lusia, Patrick and the whole team! A perfect example of how student ideas quickly become reality.”

### How do you personally live out student voice? What projects, initiatives and ideas do you work on outside of the curriculum?

“I live out student voice outside of class as well. Last year, I started my podcast ‘In Her Element’ through the Personal Project in Grade 10, which is available on Spotify. There, I talk openly about self-confidence, mental health and identity – partly in German, partly in English. This also led to the expanded version of my book ‘Own Your Element’, which will be published this year and goes into various topics in even greater depth. In addition, I run the Routine Club at BIS, which brings balance, focus and wellbeing into everyday life. At the moment, I’m keeping my fingers crossed that I’ll be able to perform at our school’s TEDx event on 9 June 2026 to use my voice even more powerfully for mental health. All these projects show how powerful student voice can be and how it inspires others to take action.”





**TEDx talk by BIS student  
James Chung**

**Shaping society**

BIS student Jinyoung (James) Chung is organising a TEDxBavarian Intl School Youth on 9 June 2026 on the topic of "Shaping Society". He has received the green light for the TEDx licence for this famous format. "This is a crucial step and I am very excited to be able to move forward with the project as part of my Creativity, Activity, Service (CAS)," says the South Korean-American Grade 11 student.

James was inspired by the TEDx talk "The skill of self confidence" by Dr Ivan Joseph. "I loved how passionate he was and how inspirational a person can be. This was one of my stepping stones of initiating a TEDx," explains the 16-year-old, who plans to study law in the future. In the next step, James will take care of finding speakers for the TEDxBavarian Intl School Youth, sorting out all the organisational details and starting the marketing.

With the TEDxBavarian Intl School Youth, James wants to show what students are capable of doing, he hopes for ideas and inspiration for every participant and, last but not least, he wishes TEDx@BIS to become a long-term project.

TEDx is a grassroots initiative, created in the spirit of TED's overall mission to research and discover "ideas worth spreading" - incidentally, the abbreviation TED originally stands for Technology, Entertainment, Design. TEDx brings the spirit of TED to local communities around the globe through TEDx events. These events are organised by passionate individuals who seek to uncover new ideas.

<https://www.ted.com>



Handover of the baton from former Student Council president Felix Drabek (right) to the new president Patrick Bäumlner.

**The voice  
of the  
student  
body**

**The BIS Secondary School Student Council is the voice of the student body and a driving force for positive change within the school community.**

It represents student interests, promotes school spirit, and initiates events, campaigns, and service projects that reflect the diverse values and cultures of our international community. BIS is very proud that the Student Council begins in Primary School, with representatives elected from Grade 2 all the way through Grade 12.

The president of the ten-member Secondary School Student Council for the school year 2024-25 was Felix Drabek (elected while in Grade 11). "Being part of the Student Council is important to me because it allows me to make a real difference for all students and create fun, memorable experiences. It also gives me the opportunity to connect with different people in our community and learn from them," said the 17-year old Czech-German, who is now in his last year of the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IB DP).

Together with his team, the priorities during his tenure were to increase the quality and quantity of student events and ensure that the student voice was heard and valued. "We hope to boost school spirit by bringing together our diverse community and celebrating the achievements of all our students," explained Felix Drabek.

But the Student Council also plays an important role, because at BIS, leadership skills are developed at an early stage. The Student Council helps students grow into global citizens who are confident, compassionate, and committed to making a difference.

Thank you very much to all Student Council members for their passion, creativity and commitment to the BIS community!

#BISstudentcouncil

**The current BIS Student Council of the Secondary School (2026):**

- President:** Patrick Bäumlner
- Vice President:** Luisa March-Kramer
- Secretary:** Lisa Rädler
- Treasurer:** Austin Jin
- Sports Officer:** Oliver Christensen
- Publicity & Culture Officer:** Louise Munteanu
- Arts Officer:** Zafirah Meier
- Sustainability Officer:** Emily Tara Djamschidi





Secretary General Alina Hussein is welcoming the BISMUN guests. On the right photo: Alina Hussein, Marie Carmen Gispert and Francesco Motta.

## Skills for life

Ten highly committed students organised a Model United Nations conference for the second time at BIS. At the Haimhausen Campus, nearly 100 delegates took part in the BISMUN in October 2025, including representatives from the European School Munich, Phorms Frankfurt and, of course, BIS.

The students chose UN Sustainable Development Goal 16, "Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions," as the thematic focus, and therefore the keynote speakers also focused on this topic: Alexandre Aaron Vulic, Consul General of France to Munich, James O'Shea, Consul General of Ireland to Munich, and Nicolette Helling Kalbfell, Global Head of Internal Communications at Sandoz.

A Model United Nations (MUN) conference is a simulation where students role-play as delegates from different countries to discuss and debate global issues, following the procedures of the real United Nations.

**Alina, you were the Secretary General of the MUN conference. What is your conclusion from the 2nd event at BIS?**

"The 2nd MUN conference at BIS was a huge success. In just eight months since our first conference, I was able to make significant improvements in both number of delegates and guest speakers. We welcomed over 100 participants in this completely student-led event, which was both engaging and enjoyable. It was such a rewarding experience to receive positive feedback for all the hard work. I enjoyed bringing an inspiring event back to BIS, and setting an even stronger foundation for future conferences."

### Communication & coordination

**What did you learn from this conference – firstly, to make future conferences even better, and secondly, for your future careers?**

"The biggest takeaway from this conference was learning how to lead effectively. I learned how to manage people, coordinate tasks,

work with time pressure and set realistic expectations for members of my team. I also learned how to network, write effective cold emails and communicate clearly. This has provided a strong foundation for future conferences, as a range of impressive guest speakers and delegates who were unable to join this year, have agreed to speak or participate in BISMUN 2026. Beyond event planning, I've learned how to persevere and remain adaptable in professional environments. Overall, balancing my MUN responsibilities alongside a heavy IB DP workload have taught me the importance of time management, skills that will be invaluable in my future career."

**What feedback did you receive from participants from other schools or from the keynote speakers?**

"We received consistently positive feedback from visiting schools and keynote speakers. The relatively smaller scale of our conference was a strength, as it created a more personal environment, allowing our delegates to engage with each other."

### Passion, not obligation

**Is this commitment part of your Creativity, Activity, Service (CAS) programme, or are you doing it completely voluntarily "on top"?**

"Whilst I initially became involved with MUN out of personal interest, it has since become a significant part of my IB DP CAS experience. However, I have consistently contributed far beyond the required CAS hours and as a result, I don't consider MUN an obligation, but as a genuine passion."



BISMUN guest speaker: Thomas Gispert.

**How can you ensure that this idea of BISMUN is continued?**

"BISMUN was an event that brought so many members of our MUN@BIS club together. By involving Grades 8-12 in debate, photography, journalism and ad-staff, students across grade levels got to know each other, and still frequently communicate outside our Friday lunchtime sessions. We've built a community. MUN has become a key part of BIS, and I'm very proud of the role I was able to play in that!"

**More information on the BISMUN website, created by our students:**



### The BISMUN team:

- Alina Hussein (Secretary General)
- Annalena Frank (Conference Organiser)
- Jules Levy (Conference Organiser)
- Aarav Dixit (Deputy Conference Organiser)
- Marie Carmen Gispert (Head of Communications)
- Francesco Motta (Head of Finance)
- Stella Grisebach (Head of Hospitality)
- Tina Kronite (Head of Press)
- Nina O'Shea (Deputy Head of Press)
- Felix Drabek (Head of Ad-Staff)
- BIS teacher Amelia Green (MUN Director)



# Designing ownership of learning



**Bavarian International School (BIS) has always set itself the goal of being at the forefront of exploring innovative learning approaches and helping to shape the future of learning. In the current school year 2025–26, BIS tested the first courses of the Global Impact Diploma (GID) in Grades 9 and 10.**

To avoid confusion and ensure clarity from the very beginning, the Global Impact Diploma is not a new, official qualification from the International Baccalaureate (IB) – BIS remains a proud provider of the IB Diploma (IB DP) and the IB Career-related Programme (IB CP). Nevertheless, the GID is an exciting additional qualification that supports the development of the whole personality and, not least, sets students apart in future job applications.

The Global Impact Diploma is an innovative pathway that empowers students to take ownership of their learning while making a real difference in the world. It combines rigorous academic study with authentic, real-world projects, encouraging students to develop leadership, problem-solving, and collaboration skills. By integrating principles of agency, wellbeing, and meaningful learning, students design their own learning experiences, explore their passions, and tackle challenges that matter to them and their communities.

### Leadership & empathy

To explain it more concretely, let's use an example. One of the core courses taught in 2025–26 by Deputy Head of School La Mor and Secondary Science Teacher Sarah Webster, was the "Foundations

of Leadership for Impact Course", where students begin by exploring what it truly means to be a leader. Early in the course, we focused on ethical leadership and leading with empathy, examining scenarios that challenged us to make decisions thoughtfully and consider the impact of our actions on others.

"Through the course, we learned to build strong bonds and lead projects that our students were really passionate about: student voice and belonging", explains La Mor.

Our Grade 9 and 10 students brainstormed ideas on how to bring other students together and how to amplify student voice across the school. They planned and implemented a "S'mores Talk" (campfire talk) outside with a fire and snacks to host a focus group, asking questions and hearing students' voices on various topics like trust and involvement in decision making, as these were two areas

indicated by students as areas for development in our first community survey.

The students' impact initiatives were developed with support from a student leadership design process developed by Rachael Thrash at cocreateschools.com. Following this collaboration,



BIS students presenting online to Olli-Pekka Heinonen, Director of the International Baccalaureate (IB).

Find out more here:  
[www.globalimpactdiploma.org/](http://www.globalimpactdiploma.org/)



the student team was invited to present their work to IB leadership, including Olli-Pekka Heinonen, the Director of the International Baccalaureate Organisation. Their presentation focused on the growth they achieved while working together to coordinate a meaningful experience aimed at strengthening student voice among their peers at BIS.

### Tangible impact

The next step for this course is for our students to design their own leadership projects, collect evidence in their portfolios, and share ideas with the wider community. This phase encourages autonomy, creativity, and real-world application, allowing each student to translate the leadership principles into tangible impact.

Through this journey, the Global Impact Diploma and the "Foundations of Leadership for Impact course" have given students the tools to integrate academic knowledge with purposeful action, and experience firsthand how leadership can foster community, agency, and meaningful change.

"By connecting learning, reflection, and real-world impact, students gain not

only skills for the future but also a deeper understanding of themselves as leaders capable of making a difference in the world," says BIS Teacher Sarah Webster.

Grade 10 students at BIS will be offered three components of the Global Impact Diploma (GID) programme. These include the continuation of Foundations of Leadership for Impact course and two additional Collaboration for Impact courses: the Imperfect Art of Living and Entrepreneurship for Impact.

### Positive changes

The Imperfect Art of Living is an interdisciplinary course that has been connecting students and teachers from schools around the world since 2020. Students connect concepts from psychology, literature and philosophy to learn what makes humans flourish, and they use design thinking to generate positive changes in themselves and others.

Entrepreneurship for Impact is a hands-on project where students conceptualise, pitch, and develop their own business ideas. Along the way, they learn how to solve problems, create real value, and build entrepreneurial, impact-focused mindsets.



# The colours of learning

Since joining BIS in August 2023 as Secondary Principal for Grades 6–8, Kirsty De Wilde has brought a strong international perspective to her role. British/Dutch, she has lived and worked across Europe, Asia, Australia and the USA.



She holds a BA (Hons) in English and Commonwealth Literature with Education, a Diploma in Education, and an MA in International Education. We sat down with Kirsty, curious about her reflections on the IB Middle Years Programme (MYP) and its role in shaping young learners.

**The MYP is a crucial bridge between Primary and the IB Diploma or IB Career-related Programme. How does it support students academically, socially, and emotionally during this transition?**

De Wilde: “The MYP is powerful because it supports the whole learner during a critical transition stage. Academically, it moves students beyond memorisation towards conceptual understanding, inquiry, and real world application, focusing on key skills such as creative and critical thinking, which prepares them well for the rigour of the DP and CP. It also shapes mindset where globally minded learners who understand

what they are learning and why. Students learn to see themselves as reflective and curious. Explicit skill building enables students to collaborate, manage time and build independence. What inspires me most is that the MYP doesn’t just prepare students for the next programme, it prepares them for life. It helps them to become confident, resilient, self-directed good humans who learn to adapt and contribute meaningfully to the world around them.”

**The MYP can feel very different from the middle school experience many parents had themselves, with its focus on inquiry, concepts, and student agency rather than just content delivery. What are some common questions you get from parents?**

“A common question I hear is regarding knowledge and memorisation of content. I reassure them that the MYP absolutely values knowledge and this is the foundation of our learning; however, it goes further

by helping students understand how knowledge works, how subject knowledge connects and how to apply learning to real life situations. Another question is about the role of student voice and choice in the curriculum. I explain that this is intentional. This is the age where students need to start developing ownership of their learning, confidence in their thinking, and the skills to manage challenges, within a structured and supportive environment. The MYP is designed for this exact stage of development. We value a holistic approach where students are preparing themselves for life and beyond, not just school and the classroom.”

**Looking ahead, what skills do you believe MYP students most need for the future, and how does the programme help them develop these qualities?**

“Looking ahead, I believe MYP students most need adaptability, critical thinking, collaboration, interpersonal skills and a sense of self as life-long learners. The current and future landscapes are shifting so quickly that it is imperative that students know how to learn, question information and problem solve with others in order to solve complex problems in a world where curiosity, adaptability and empathy matter just as much as knowledge.”

**“Like a kaleidoscope, each experience in Grades 6–8 shifts perspective, builds confidence and reveals new patterns of understanding.”**

**Kirsty De Wilde**

**Technology is a big part of modern learning, but balance is key. How does BIS ensure that MYP students benefit from digital tools while also developing focus, critical thinking, and wellbeing through offline and analogue learning experiences?**

“Here at BIS, we believe that students should learn how to use technology purposefully rather than passively. Technology is treated as a tool for learning, not the centre of learning. We strongly value balance in our lessons in order to provide learning experiences that build focus, deep thinking and meaningful human connection. We encourage students to develop a healthy relationship with technology so that they are digitally skilled but also value learning not dependent on technology. It’s important to prepare our students to thrive in a digital world while still protecting their wellbeing and their ability to think deeply and independently.”

## About Kirsty De Wilde

Through her global experience and strong belief in concept-driven, student-centred learning, Kirsty de Wilde sees the MYP not simply as a programme, but as a transformative stage. Like a kaleidoscope, each experience in Grades 6–8 shifts perspective, builds confidence and reveals new patterns of understanding, preparing students not only for the Diploma- or Careers-related Programmes (DP/CP), but for the world beyond BIS.





## Caribbean rhythms shaping young voices

**Inge Schlüer, Music Teacher,  
Primary School Haimhausen**

**For Inge Schlüer, music has always been her life. Born in Trinidad and Tobago, her love for music was inspired early on by her grandfather and mother, both passionate singers. That love has taken her across four continents and into classrooms around the world, shaping both her character and teaching style.**

With 15 years of experience teaching in international and mostly International Baccalaureate (IB) schools, she has worked in Trinidad, Egypt, China, South Korea, and now Germany. Joining BIS in 2024 as Primary Music Teacher at the Haimhausen Campus, she describes her time here as “living the other half of my heritage,” reconnecting with her German roots while also bringing her Caribbean musical background into the classroom.

### Cultures come together

What Inge values most about BIS is its truly international community. “Of all

the schools I taught at, BIS has been the most international. Students bring their cultures into the room, especially through music,” she says. “It makes learning more meaningful, because music is all about culture.” This belief is at the heart of her teaching, where student voice and choice are central. Her goal is to tailor learning to each child, tapping into their interests so every student feels included and empowered to shine.

Her own musical journey is just as inspirational. She graduated first in her university class, holds a Master’s in International Teaching, a Bachelor’s degree in Musical Arts, and numerous IB and Royal School of Music certificates. As a child, she even performed for King Charles (Prince Charles at the time), and in Trinidad she was a member of the National Philharmonic Orchestra. Today, she continues her musical life as a member of a local orchestra and choir in Munich. Looking ahead, she plans to further develop and enrich a programme of musical excellence at BIS. Her BIS motto beautifully says: “BIS is a place where belief becomes melody, inspiration fuels creativity, and success resonates through everything we do”.



## A big heart for every child

**Stacie McGugan Nicol,  
Early Childhood Teacher,  
Haimhausen Campus**

**Every child has a story to tell, and for Stacie McGugan Nicol, Early Childhood is about creating the space where those stories can be heard and celebrated. Born in Newcastle, Australia, she has spent over 20 years dedicated to Early Years education, of which 18 at BIS.**

Stacie holds a double degree in Education specialising in birth to eight year olds and describes ages three to five as her favourite stage because “personalities truly begin to shine.” Children start sharing their thoughts, emotions, and ideas more openly, and their excitement is contagious, especially when they master something for the first time. “Being able to witness and support that growth is incredibly special and so much fun.”

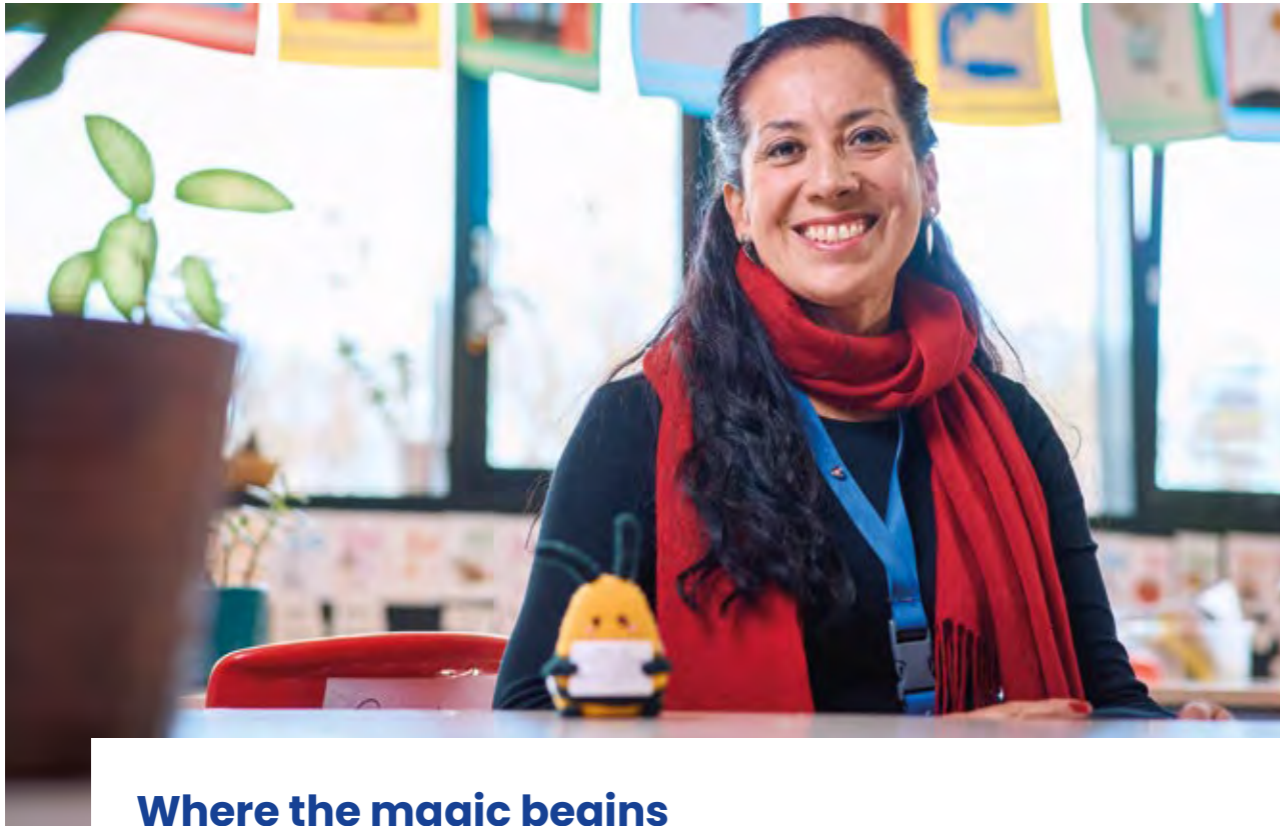
Even with the best plans, in Early Childhood, educators must follow the child’s lead. Observation is key. During free play, Stacie watches closely, spotting a child counting, building, or role-playing, and extends learning in the moment. This flexible approach allows learning to grow

naturally from each child’s interests and strengths. Student voice is central to her work, even before children can fully express themselves. “One of our most important roles is helping children understand that their voice matters, and we honour that voice in many forms,” she says.

### Time and space to flourish

Stacie joined BIS in 2008 and having lived and worked in Australia, the USA, England, and Germany, she brings a global perspective to her role. One of the strengths of the International Baccalaureate (IB), she believes, is giving children the time they need to develop socially, emotionally, and physically. “We give them the time and space to flourish,” she reflects.

Outside the classroom, Stacie enjoys an active lifestyle, family time, and discovering new places. She has travelled to over 70 countries, now a playful family challenge with her husband and children, all part of the BIS community. Travel brings curiosity and connection into her work and has even led her to become a National Geographic Educator. “BIS is an important part of our family’s life – a place where my professional values, passion for cultures, and personal world come together.” What a joy it is to have Stacie at BIS.



## Where the magic begins

**Monica Godoy Hidalgo, Grade 1 Teacher at BIS City Campus**

**Monica Godoy Hidalgo is celebrating her 10th anniversary at BIS – she taught in Haimhausen for the first two years and has been a Grade 1 teacher at City Campus for the last eight years.**

Mrs. Godoy Hidalgo sees first grade as an important point where the magic begins and truly comes together when the “harmonious teamwork” of students, teachers, and parents functions well. “In Grade 1, we place a huge emphasis on the growth mindset. We embrace mistakes, celebrate effort, and recognise that not being perfect is part of learning,” explains the BIS teacher. She emphasises that here is where students develop the foundational skills they will carry with them throughout their learning journey, enabling them to reach their full potential. “It is truly like opening a door to a whole new world for them.”

When you see “Mrs. Monica” in the classroom, interacting with students, having warm conversations in the hallway, or being friendly with colleagues, it underscores her

personal superpower: caring. “I love my job. I believe that we, as teachers, are very fortunate to have such an important role, and such a huge responsibility, in the lives of these little people. Children only succeed at school when they feel safe and that they belong, so I want my students to feel comfortable and happy at school,” says Monica Godoy Hidalgo. This caring and kindness may come from her roots, as she describes the people of Chile as “warm, friendly, and welcoming.”

The sense of belonging is the basis for three other essentials that, in her view, define BIS: community, empowerment, and growth. The mother of an adult son (a BIS alumni, holding a physics degree now) explains: “I love how the children work for their own community and take more ownership of their learning. This sense of empowerment helps them gain confidence and make their own choices, and it leads to real growth in the way they learn and develop every day.”

Last but not least, she is committed to eco-school initiatives at the BIS City Campus, sharing her passion for nature and inspiring students to adopt a sustainable mindset.



## Creativity as a mindset

**Amanda Proebster, Art Teacher at BIS City Campus**

**A quote from Pablo Picasso is world-famous: “Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once you grow up.” Amanda Proebster embraces this challenge at the heart of her teaching, drawing inspiration from the pure joy of creating, the sense of wonder, and the complete openness of every young artist who enters her studio.**

After working internationally in Hong Kong, New Zealand, China, Thailand, and north-west Germany, the British-Canadian is now in her eighth year at Bavarian International School (BIS), first as a Grade 1 teacher and for the past three years as an art specialist with a wonderful studio on the second floor. Her educational approach goes far beyond simply teaching artistic skills. “I consider creativity a mindset, rather than a talent. It is a willingness to experiment, to take risks, to stay open to uncertainty and to see mistakes as part of the process,” says the Hong Kong-born BIS teacher. When students practice creative thinking through artmaking, they also strengthen their capacity to evaluate, innovate, communicate and to express special

meaning – these skills are particularly important in the age of digitalisation. In addition, the physical act of artmaking also provides them with a quiet pause from the noise of technology and has the satisfying effect of having created something with their own hands.

### International, collaborative, nurturing

Amanda Proebster finds meaning and fulfillment in her work. She appreciates the open, mutually supportive spirit at City Campus (“Collaboration is a natural part of the culture”) and, above all, enjoys working with young artists every day. “Our children constantly remind me that creativity is joyful, messy, and meaningful work, and this is highly motivating. Children approach creative experiences with such an open mind, and in our studio, our students have the space and freedom to explore their own ideas,” she says.

Like many expats and teachers from around the world, Amanda Proebster considers BIS a home away from home, a place where she belongs and can flourish. She describes BIS in just three words: international, collaborative, and nurturing.



## Positive impact

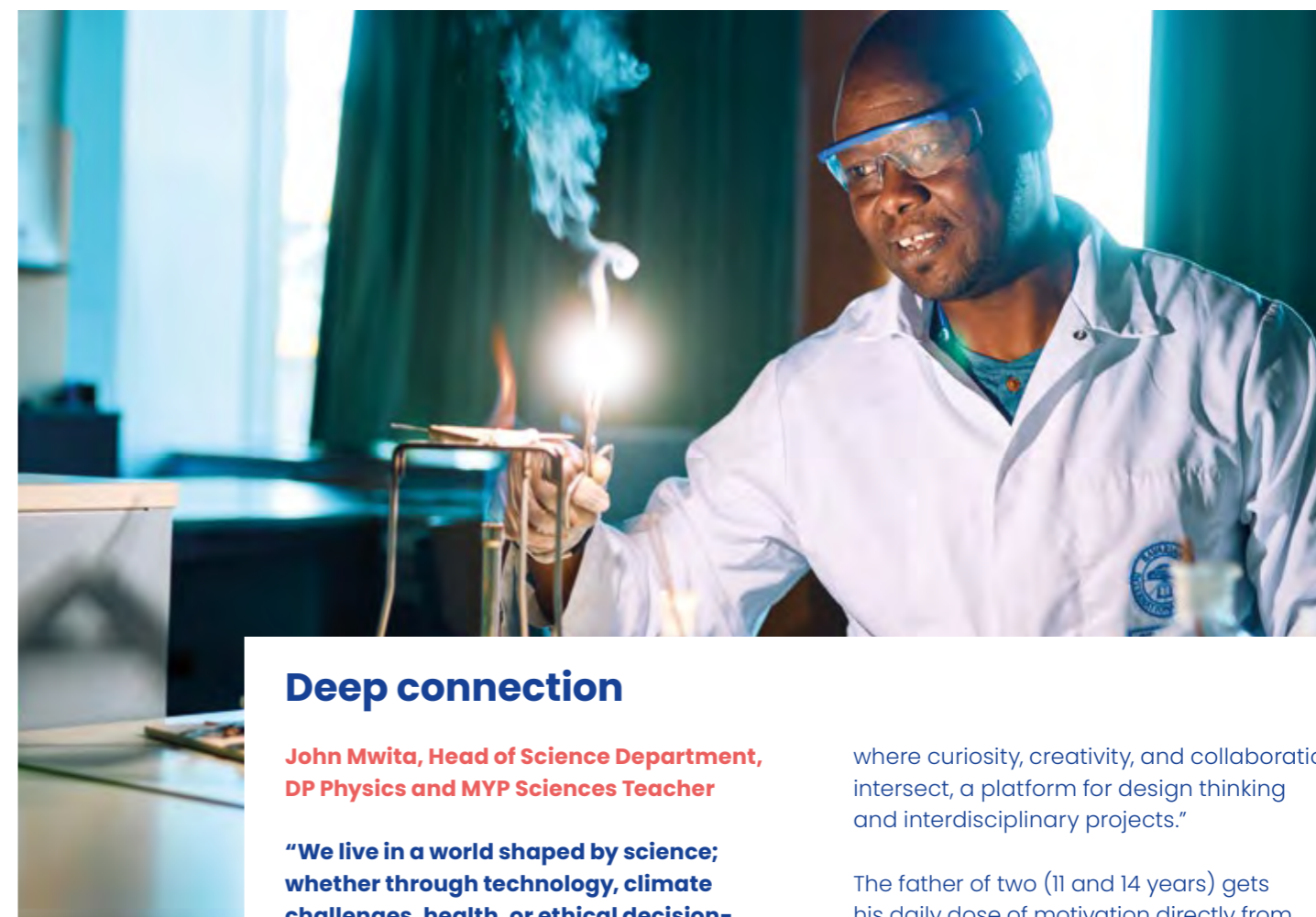
**Sandra Evans, IB DP Coordinator & German Teacher**

**Sandra Evans must remain calm and composed, radiating that sense of assurance to everyone around her. That's because as the IB Diploma Programme (IB DP) Coordinator at BIS, she looks after students in Grades 11 and 12 as they navigate the demanding final stretch of their school careers.**

In her important role in Secondary School, she is responsible for the administration and organisation of examinations in the IB DP and manages the transition process in conjunction with the IB CP Coordinator, the Head of University & Career Counselling and others. "It is a fulfilling role, but certainly challenging at times. These two years are crucial in a student's educational journey, which makes this job important, especially as exams can be stressful," says Sandra Evans. The pressure is definitely there, but it is reduced somewhat by the possibility of retakes in November – which recently led to a pass rate of 100% of the Class of 2025 at BIS! She values the IB's focus on developing the whole personality and future skills that go far beyond the transfer of knowledge. She cites Theory of Knowledge (ToK) and the Extended Essay as examples. "These core components are preparing students for academic studies, developing critical thinking and research skills."

Student voice and choice is also very important, and this takes many forms at BIS, from the dedicated Student Council to participation in discussions about assessments. "Student voice & choice should be an integral part in every classroom. If students are offered a choice in how they achieve their learning goals or can choose individual goals, the motivation increases which will have a positive impact on the learning atmosphere," explains the German-British, who was born in Nuremberg and has two children (aged 13 and 15).

With excitement, openness, and curiosity, she and the entire teaching and leadership team are exploring the topic of Artificial Intelligence ("opportunity and challenge") and look forward to the upcoming opening of the Creativity & Innovation Centre ("innovative learning environment"). From her perspective, BIS in three words: global, engaging, unique.



## Deep connection

**John Mwita, Head of Science Department, DP Physics and MYP Sciences Teacher**

**"We live in a world shaped by science; whether through technology, climate challenges, health, or ethical decision-making. Science education equips students with critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and the ability to evaluate evidence in an increasingly complex world."**

This quote from John Mwita underscores his passion for his job, his deep connection to the IB, and above all his academic approach to shaping science learning at BIS as concept-driven, inquiry-rich (student voice), and deeply connected to real-world context. Ultimately, the goal is for students to experience science not as content to memorise, but as a way of thinking.

### Creativity & collaboration

Born in Nairobi, Kenya, he has worked in his home country, Oman, Turkey, and Germany during his career and is now Head of Science Department. His vision is to lead and develop a cohesive, forward-thinking Science Department where collaboration, consistency, and innovation thrive. He is particularly looking forward to the Creativity & Innovation Centre (CIC): "A vibrant hub

where curiosity, creativity, and collaboration intersect, a platform for design thinking and interdisciplinary projects."

The father of two (11 and 14 years) gets his daily dose of motivation directly from his students. "I am energised by seeing students develop confidence not just academically, but as thinkers and individuals. Working with young people keeps me reflective, grounded, and optimistic." He sees teaching as a reciprocal process, because his students challenge him to continuously learn and improve. Direct exchange with his students is at the core of his work, which is no surprise, because John Mwita is a real people person, authentic, always open, and known for his great sense of humour.

He finds balance in staying active, spending time with his family, focusing on fitness: weight training and intermittent fasting. John also loves traveling, and Turkey will always hold a special place in his heart. "Travel, for me, is about connection, understanding people, traditions, and perspectives through everyday experiences," says John Mwita. A true citizen of the world.



## Driving innovation

**James Renz-Shrimpton, Teacher of Computer Science & Digital Design**

**Two to three times a week, James Renz-Shrimpton rides his racing bike from Schwabing to Haimhausen. His record time so far is 44 minutes. So it's no surprise that the Computer Science and Digital Design Teacher is also involved in the legendary Grade 9 bike trip from Passau to Vienna (more on page 66)...**

Born in Eastbourne, the Brit transferred from a state comprehensive school with 1,700 students in the UK to BIS in August 2023 – and has become a valuable and popular pillar of the Secondary School. Since then, he has further developed Computer Science and established a special BIS Digital Design course. “What fascinates me most is how a few lines of code can change the physical world. In my courses, students write Python programs for Microbit robotics and watch their ideas come to life through movement, sensors, and interaction. That link between digital logic and physical outcome is incredibly powerful,” says Mr. Renz-Shrimpton.

### STEAM skills

The BIS teacher places great emphasis on real-life solutions and on students developing a mindset that they can be part of innovation. “Computer Science drives innovation across almost every industry – from AI and automation to medical technology and sustainability solutions. In our courses, students develop foundational STEAM skills alongside essential transferable abilities.” He is particularly proud of his students, who are currently working on physical computing and electronics projects, building real prototypes. Staying ahead of technological change is integral to his job. James Renz-Shrimpton is therefore closely involved with the rapid developments in AI. He uses AI with his students as a tool rather than a shortcut, focusing on its intelligent, thoughtful use and the critical evaluation of results. He has a clear opinion on the matter: “AI can enhance learning, but it must never replace understanding.”

34-year-old James Renz-Shrimpton is married to his German wife and they are expecting their first child. Moving to Germany was a major achievement for him, as it meant not only leaving his comfort zone, but also making a long-term commitment to integrating into the local culture. The electronic music fan, who collects vinyl records and works as a DJ, has mastered this big step perfectly and is even going one step further. He is working on his German language skills and would like to obtain German citizenship.



## Student voice, shaped by culture

**Paul Kropman, Grade 6 Teacher and Grade 7 Pastoral Leader, Secondary School**

**When you meet Paul Kropman, his calm and attentive presence immediately puts you at ease. His years reading people – first in customs and immigration in Australia, and now in the classroom – have sharpened his intuition, helping him sense what students need before they even speak. That insight, combined with his steady, non-judgemental nature, is at the heart of his work.**

He was born in Queensland, Australia and raised mostly in Melbourne, but his personal and professional journey, as well as passion for travel have taken him across Australia, the United Arab Emirates, Germany, Malaysia, Jamaica, South Korea, and back to Germany.

The 42-year-old joined BIS initially in 2016 and returned in 2024. He believes the Grade 6 programme is truly unique. Serving as both a mentor and teacher of four subjects allows educators to build strong relationships while bridging the

gap between the cosy primary environment and the more structured Secondary School. “The BIS Grade 6 programme is a unique model,” he says, “and incredibly powerful for students at this stage.”

### More than academics

Supporting students is so much more than academics. In pastoral care it's like being both an anchor and a compass – providing stability while helping students find their direction. Paul values connection, motivation, and celebrating small wins, while supporting families through challenges around friendships, engagement, and wellbeing. His superpowers are staying calm, always considering multiple perspectives and making every student feel heard.

In the classroom, he is committed to student voice. He understands that cultural backgrounds influence how students participate – whether they prefer lively discussion, quiet reflection, or something in between. “There's no one-size-fits-all,” he explains. “It takes careful reading and adjustment to make sure everyone is heard.”

What Paul values most about BIS is its cultural diversity, a strength he believes must always be protected. As he puts it simply: “We can all see what makes us different, but focusing on what brings us together is what truly strengthens relationships and communities”

# Community is key

**Bavarian International School is more than just a school. It is a close-knit community and, for many international families, a home away from home. Through their voluntary commitment, many parents underline the motto “Community is key,” which is put into practice in a wide range of projects, events, and initiatives. This dedication to the school is organised in a concentrated form in the Parent Community Council (PCC), whose members deserve a special thank you.**



## A delicious masterpiece – the BIS cookbook

BIS can proudly claim to have one of the best community cookbooks of all international schools – thanks to the fantastic commitment of several BIS mums, led by Simona von Woikowsky, Ciera Dobson, and Tea Yrjölä. The delicious masterpiece has been created with over 100 recipes from 33 different countries on 228 pages. “It’s been a true labor of love, brought to life with incredible support from our amazing community” said Simona von Woikowsky. The limited edition of 150 copies sold out quickly, with the last copies going for €36 each at the BIS International Festival. Thanks to the fantastic support of Venkateswara Rao ‘Venki’ Pushadapu (CEO and owner of

‘Roberto Beach’), who covered the printing costs, the BIS Cookbook also became a charity project. 15% of the proceeds of around €5,000 went to teacher Emma Morris’ Eco-school team “Giving Greens,” 15% to Andi Pichler’s school garden, and 70% to Friends of BIS e.V.

Once again, heartfelt congratulations on this masterpiece and many thanks to Simona von Woikowsky, Ciera Dobson, Tea Yrjölä, Liz Askaryar, Josien Berkenvelder, Carla G Velázquez, Dr Velika Kambourova and everyone else who contributed to this project!

## “Nation of Hoop” at BIS City Campus

The BIS City Campus has a unique selling point in sports that is second to none. The special basketball training for talented, advanced players is led by German basketball icon Steffen Hamann himself. The top coach is a 131-time German national player, multiple German champion, and German U15 head coach. “Basketball thrives on enthusiasm – and that’s exactly what I felt from the kids in the first session of our training. The slogan in the sports hall couldn’t be more fitting: Fail – learn – try again,” said Steffen Hamann, current over-40 Vice World Champion.

He is supported by different high-level trainers, and BIS parent Chris Grosse also joins in. It is thanks to the commitment of Chris, a former regional league basketball player and founder of KICKZ, that this wonderful cooperation between BIS and FC Bayern Basketball was established. The project is called “Nation of Hoop” and is intended to develop into a complementary basketball performance center in Munich in the long term. “With two excellent coaches per session, we can offer solid individual development, and it’s really fun to watch the children’s progress,” says Chris Grosse.



## Community cohesion

Martin Strutz is an outstanding example among the many dedicated parents in the Parent Community Council (PCC). Born in Hamburg and having spent part of his life in New York, he is the PCC representative for BIS City Campus. “I see my role as a bridge between parents, teachers, and school leadership. We create spaces where parents can get involved – and we ensure that school is not just a place where children are dropped off in the morning and picked up again in the afternoon, but a living part of everyday family life. It’s about participation, listening, appreciation – always with the aim of making the experience for our children even better,” says the former creative director of Jung von Matt, entrepreneur, and current founder of the detox program NOUWELL. The PCC team is organised into grade reps, language reps, alumni reps, the Culture Club, and regular get-togethers, etc. – deliberately kept flat, without rigid hierarchies.

Volunteer work is extremely important for community cohesion and is evident in countless projects, such as Spooky Day, BIS City BBQ, Hot Chocolate Day, Wine & Cheese evenings, the Grade 1 Schultüten action, the Grade 5 mini-graduation, and classroom support (e.g., Mystery Reader). Martin Strutz, a father of two, loves being actively involved and seeing children’s eyes light up with excitement when ideas come to fruition. “Last but not least, it’s also a way for me to set an example. I want to show my children that community is not something that can be taken for granted, but something that is created when you get involved. Personally, I find serving the community very enriching.”



## One school, many cultures

At the heart of our international community is a group that has brought immense joy and connection over the years: the Parent Community Council (PCC) Language Communities, led by Karla Noboa-Eckardt. With passion and remarkable energy, Karla now leads a team representing 16 language communities! Together, they enrich school life in meaningful and memorable ways. From the Winter Festival and the International Festival to many other school celebrations, these incredible volunteers contribute far more than delicious meals and sweet treats. Through creative crafts, interactive games, and cultural traditions, they share a piece of their heritage with the entire BIS family.

Growing stronger each year, the Language Communities continue to build bridges across cultures and they warmly welcome new members and new communities to join them.

## From museums to mountains

The PCC Culture Club has been bringing the BIS parent community together for over a decade, with Josien Berkenvelder and Tea Yrjöla as our current Culture Club representatives. These two wonderful and dedicated organisers plan a vibrant programme of events across Bavaria for BIS parents throughout the year. Passionate about both the local cultural scene and the great outdoors, they curate an impressive variety of monthly activities. From engaging museum tours in Munich and guided sightseeing experiences to local cuisine tastings, cooking courses, and, of course, the iconic Oktoberfest - there is always something new to discover. For those who enjoy outdoor adventures, the programme includes skiing, cycling, stand-up paddleboarding, and much more. Everyone is welcomed with open arms, and there truly is something for every interest and taste.

**Get in contact with the PCC:**  
[pcc@bis-school.com](mailto:pcc@bis-school.com)



## Home away from home

Since joining the community in fall 2021, BIS dad Jeff Kimling has already become involved as a sports coach in soccer, basketball, and volleyball. The American from Chicago, who is married to BIS Secondary Learning Support Teacher Kat Kimling and has two daughters, currently coaches the girls' U14 basketball and mixed basketball teams at Primary School. Coach Kimling won the GISST tournament in Berlin with the girls last spring, and the team was also awarded the sportsmanship trophy. "For me I get so much joy and satisfaction from helping the kids improve and be the best they can be both individually and as part of a team. Also I really feel that sports can mirror 'real life' in certain ways and helping kids overcome obstacles (physically, emotionally, mentally) that happen in sports makes me feel like I am making a positive difference in their lives," says Jeff Kimling.

## "AI does not replace jobs. But it replaces people without AI skills."

Aleksejs Plotnikovs worked for Microsoft for more than 15 years, most recently as EMEA Lead Data & AI Strategy, Governance and Analytics, before deciding to become an independent executive consultant for AI. He also shares his experience and knowledge with the BIS community, whether at BIS Careers Day, in sessions with students, or in AI workshops for parents. All on a voluntary basis, of course. Aleksejs recommends that everyone in the community familiarize themselves with AI, try out tools, learn, and be open to change. "People who don't learn how to form efficient partnerships with AI will feel lost and disadvantaged compared to those who master these skills," says the BIS parent from Latvia. Early collaboration and co-creation with AI also helps to establish critical thinking. He sees opportunities for AI in education in particular, for example, closing the knowledge gap for many or personalising learning.



The AI world is still in its early stages, but it already gives us a taste of what is yet to come. He takes a political stance and warns against excessive caution. "To me, Europe is a high-risk zone due to its resistance to change and unwillingness to learn, including learning from risks. China, the US, and Africa will be much faster and gain plenty of advantages, while Europe will simply try to preserve the status quo - a dead-end path in a fast-paced, innovative world."

# Real-life experiences

The holistic development of personalities, learning far beyond the classroom, and unique real-life experiences are highly valued at Bavarian International School (BIS). That is why becoming the first school to serve as an official 'Academic Partner' of the beyond economy festival in Munich was such a meaningful milestone for our IB World School.



## beyond economy festival

14 Secondary School students were given the opportunity to attend the beyond economy festival at the House of Communication in Munich's Werksviertel. As part of a total of 1,000 participants, they spent the entire day experiencing inspiring lectures, panels and workshops, and got to know personalities such as Florian Schörghuber, CEO of the Schörghuber Group and BIS alumnus, and Microsoft icon Magdalena Rogl. "Some of our Grade 11-12 students didn't just hear about the future, they stepped into it. At the beyond economy festival they met professionals tackling people, planet, profit trade-offs, sat in on live founder pitches, and heard top-of-mind industry challenges they'll face as tomorrow's leaders. Connecting class concepts of ethics, sustainability, creativity, and change to real decisions in AI, sustainability, and entrepreneurship. Learning that sticks

because it happens outside the classroom," says BIS teacher Thomas Murray.

### More empathy!

Five interesting key insights from the presentations and panels: 1. Robots are getting stronger and stronger - If we continue viewing employees as human resources, and not as human emotional intelligence, we will lose the battle. 2. More AI? More empathy! 3. 65% of today's students will work in jobs that do not yet exist. 4. We need a paradigm shift - a true transformation - we need to measure other things than growth and revenue. Can we make it? 5. We need to involve Gen Z employees in important decisions - they will one day lead the company.

Many thanks to the beyond economy festival, especially to founder and CEO Marc Fricke, for allowing us to be an Academic Partner.



## Tradition with impact

An important school event with a long tradition is the BIS Careers Day, which takes place for the 15th time in 2026. Every year, students in Grades 10 and 11 have the opportunity to spend a morning getting to know four of a total of around a dozen speakers from a wide range of industries. The speakers provide exciting insights into their career paths, talk about skills and competencies, developments in the industry (e.g., through AI), and are available for Q&A. In recent years, BIS has succeeded in attracting an exciting

range of speakers from within and outside the school community. These include companies such as BMW, Google, Microsoft, META, Infineon, SAP, Nvidia, Airbus, Texas Instruments, Linde, Sandoz, LEGO Group, TUM, Flix SE, LinkedIn, MAN, Danone, United Nations, and European Patent Office.

Ultimately, the BIS Careers Day is another important building block in the holistic development of students and an element of BIS's University and Career Counselling.



## Community engagement

Building on the foundations learnt within the Middle Years Programme (MYP) Service as Action throughout Grade 6-10, the students deepen and foster their skills by curating a portfolio for either their Creativity, Activity, Service (CAS), Service Learning (SL) or Community Engagement (CE) programmes all of which are core components of the IB Diploma (IB DP) or the IB Career-related Programme (IB CP). Without completing their portfolios the students do not receive their full qualifications. Students must participate in experiences regularly over 18 months, complete a project that lasts at least one month and produce a portfolio of reflections and evidence that shows their development against a set of learning outcomes. "The purpose of CAS, Service Learning & Community Engagement is to encourage students to develop personal and interpersonal skills through experiential learning. To grow as balanced, reflective, reflexive and responsible individuals; and to engage with real-world issues and community involvement," says the Coordinator, Emma Morris.

## Charity meets sustainability

German-Iranian Emily Tara Djamschidi has been elected as the new Charity & Sustainability Officer of the BIS Student Council. During her mandate, she has set a particular goal of making the school more sustainable than it currently is, with a focus on reducing plastic waste. For this purpose, she is seeking direct contact with the school caterer and would like to raise awareness of the deposit system in particular. "I want to inspire everyone to be more engaged and proactive, for example by organising creative, fun events and campaigns with the Student Council," says the 17-year-old Grade 11 student. Emily Tara Djamschidi



volunteers in another field in her free time – tutoring immigrant children at Arche Munich. She sees her professional future in medicine. "But I do believe that both fields share important values like empathy, responsibility, and the understanding of others."

## The art of persuasive speech

Giving a speech at the United Nations? Defending an idea at a company board meeting? Or simply convincing a community to become more involved in environmental protection? Students at BIS are prepared for all of this, both inside and outside the classroom. More than 30 students from Grades 6 to 11 are involved in the BIS Debating Club.

"Students learn how to debate competitively, they learn the underlying logic of arguments and how to make evidence compelling. They learn rhetoric – how to speak confidently and persuasively. But they also learn how to have fun and collaborate," explains Oliver Blackley, BIS teacher and leader of the debating club together with Kat Kimling and Tayla McGregor.

### Speak with confidence

As Team BIS, students participate in national competitions in both the junior and senior leagues. Some of the seniors, such as Austin Jin and Aarav Dixit (both Grade 11), who have been in the Debating Club since



BIS student Austin Jin, member of the German national debating team.

Grade 8, have now taken on leadership roles themselves. Aarav in particular has been instrumental in mentoring the junior debaters. Austin has been coaching the senior debaters, and offers this advice for aspiring competitors: "Read – if you don't know specific topics, you need to learn about them so you can use them when preparing. Structure your speeches clearly and concisely so the judge can follow your argument. And speak with confidence – it will convince both you and the audience that they should believe you."

This year, German National Team coach Leander Mathissen has also launched an advanced debate club at BIS. And speaking of national-level talent: Austin Jin is a member of the German national debating team!



## Fostering solutions for positive change

Emma Morris wears several important hats at BIS – and all of her lessons and projects are closely linked to student voice and learning outside the classroom. She is the coordinator for Service as Action (Grades 9 & 10), Creativity, Activity, Service, also for Service Learning & Community Engagement (Grades 11 & 12) and last but not least the Peripatetic Music Programme Coordinator. She leads the Green Team in the Secondary School, while her colleague Andi Pichler takes care of the Eco Agents in Primary School.

### 35 eco projects

"The Green Team is one of 35 Sustainability Projects taking place on a weekly basis within our Service programme. Others include BIS BLOOMS, The Litter Team, The Lost & Found Team, Social Justice Committee, Franziskuswerk Schönbrunn, Multilingual Services, The Permaculture Project and The Sustainability Hub as examples. The Green Team has 35 students from Grades 6-12 which supports the development of student voice and student activism that inspire changemaker solutions focusing on tackling global issues on topics of sustainability and peace," explains Emma Morris.

The Green Team focuses on topics such as making school events greener, installing a deposit bottle system, optimising the vending machine and snack bar with expensive, unhealthy, plastic-wrapped products, reducing electricity and paper consumption, and avoiding food waste. Their work contributes to the application for the European Eco-school Award, which BIS has received for the past seven years, usually with the highest rating of three stars.

# A legend – the Grade 9 bike trip



For more than 20 years, the Grade 9 Bike Trip has been one of the most cherished traditions at BIS. Founded by former BIS teacher Sigi Joseph, this unique experience has grown into far more than a cycling tour – it is a powerful journey of resilience, teamwork, and personal development.

Following Sigi Joseph's retirement, Marianella Muelle and Aki Schwan took on the responsibility of continuing this remarkable tradition, which takes all participants (the whole Grade 9 cohort!) on a journey of almost 400 km from Passau to Vienna. Each year in June, our Grade 9 students embark on a multi-day cycling adventure that challenges them physically, mentally, and socially. Covering significant distances each day, students push beyond their comfort zones, support one another through difficult moments, and celebrate shared achievements at the finish line. For many, it is the first time they experience this level of sustained physical challenge –

and the sense of accomplishment is unforgettable.

### Spirit of collaboration

What makes the BIS Bike Trip truly special is the spirit of collaboration behind it. The program is made possible by a dedicated team of teachers, pastoral leaders, office staff, the school nurse, and administrators who work together to ensure the experience is safe, inclusive, and meaningful. It is a whole-school effort that reflects our commitment to holistic education – developing not only academic knowledge, but character, independence, perseverance, and empathy.



# A hero of the sea

**“400 million tons of plastic are produced every year, 50% of which are only for single use. 12 million tons end up in the oceans every year. The plastic breaks down into microplastics and enters our food chain, so we are poisoning our own food sources. The sinner becomes the sufferer.”**

This was just one of many examples that York Hovest presented at the BIS Sustainability Summit, which was both impressive and alarming. The founder of the NGO platform “Heroes of the Sea”, author and National Geographic photographer inspired the nearly 100 Grade 9 students with his presentation, in which he focused primarily on topics such as coral bleaching, overfishing, mass tourism and plastic pollution in the oceans. “The Earth is 71% water, and around 70% of the air is produced by the oceans. So why do we take such poor care of our seas?” asked Munich-based York Hovest, who answered curious questions after his presentation and supported the student teams in workshops.

But he also gave positive examples, such as coral nurseries, of which there are already 2,500 worldwide, and the “Social Plastic” product logo, which indicates that the plastic used has been recycled in countries such as Haiti. Ultimately, he called on everyone to use their meaningful voice for environmental protection.

“At BIS you are the minds shaping tomorrow. Our oceans don’t need superheroes – they need young leaders who understand that every sustainable decision you make today creates waves of change for the future,” says York Hovest.



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## A toolkit for life

**For 15 years, the Bavarian International School has been offering the opportunity to achieve the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award. Over 320 students aged 14 and above have successfully participated to date and acquired this special 'toolkit for life'.**

The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award is a worldwide programme designed to promote self-reliance, independence and perseverance for young people. Since its founding in 1956, around 1.2 million young people from over 130 countries now take part each year. The programme levels bronze, silver and gold each include voluntary service in the community, physical education and the development of skills. On each level, participants organise self-sufficient expeditions and challenge themselves to overcome barriers.

### Learning future skills

"Our students find the expeditions particularly exciting, as they have to plan and undertake two multi-day treks independently. For many, this is a new experience in an adventurous environment, with physical exertion and the weather as challenges," explains Peter Weinig, who heads the Award programme at BIS. The practical skills required for these expeditions include navigation, cooking, camping and the like, but above all,

they promote independence, teamwork and problem solving, not to mention a sense of responsibility. All of these future skills play an essential role at BIS, and are further reinforced by The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award. Depending on the level (bronze, silver, gold), the expectations for students and the time commitment increase. To date, 218 students have completed the bronze programme, 85 the silver and 20 the gold. Currently, 18 students are in the bronze programme and 6 are working towards the silver award.

The Bavarian International School (BIS) has been a proud partner of The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award - Germany e.V. for 15 years and will continue to promote the programme with great commitment. Interested students should contact Peter Weinig directly at [p.weinig@bis-school.com](mailto:p.weinig@bis-school.com).

[www.duke-award.de](http://www.duke-award.de)

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# “The best fit for every student”

The University & Career Counselling team of BIS (from left): Beverly Conway, Jane Costley and Christopher Kan (during her parental leave, Jane Costley will be substituted by Sarah Robertson).

**At a high-quality international school with a strong reputation, a dedicated University & Career Counselling department is essential. The BIS team – Jane Costley, Beverly Conway and Christopher Kan – works together to offer students from Grade 10 onwards highly personalised advice.**

Guiding students on the right pathways at this pivotal stage of their lives, according to their strengths, interests and aspirations, is of paramount importance. “Many students feel overwhelmed by academics, social media, societal pressures, and uncertainty about the future. Helping them navigate through all of this and find clarity is meaningful. It makes the job so incredibly rewarding when students have their lightbulb moment, identify their path or are later accepted to their dream university,” explains Jane Costley, Head of University & Career Counselling.

The Scot focuses primarily on European applications, specialising in Germany, Austria and Switzerland as well as the Russell Group universities in the UK (e.g. Oxford, Cambridge, King’s College, Imperial College). Her colleague Ms Conway provides

guidance on the Netherlands, UK, Spain and hospitality programmes in Europe, while Mr Kan’s speciality is North American and Asian universities. “As part of our individualised support for each student, we strive to identify the best fit option for each student. What matters is not which university is No. 1 in a ranking but rather which university is the No. 1 option for a particular student,” Mr Kan explains.

### Comprehensive and passionate service

The advice of the team ranges from helping students to identify suitable post-graduation pathways to revising application essays to managing the collection of necessary documents to complete the applications. Ms Conway and Mr Kan are both English Language teachers, in addition to their role as university counsellors. Ms Conway explains that, “Our expertise with

writing and revision is extremely valuable to students, during the application process.”

In addition to hundreds of conversations, there are special offers such as the BIS Careers Day, Interview Day, university visits and fairs, workshops (e.g. special skills for writing an application, CV & Career guidance) and much more. The team also helps with internships and guidance on how to make the most of a gap year.

### Access to German universities

Jane Costley is used to answering a recurring question by now, especially for German families: Can my child study at a German university with the International Baccalaureate Diploma (IBDP)? “We do have many students each year apply to German state universities and be accepted into various programmes. The process is slightly more complicated as you have to get the IB DP recognised as the equivalent of the Abitur and this involves picking a particular combination of subjects in the IB DP at the beginning of Grade 11,” says Ms Costley, who at the same time emphasises that the International Baccalaureate programme prepares students much better overall for university. “Every year we have students who go to the Technical University of Munich (TUM) or the Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich (LMU), only to name a few.”



Teamwork with trust and fun: the BIS University & Career Counselling team.

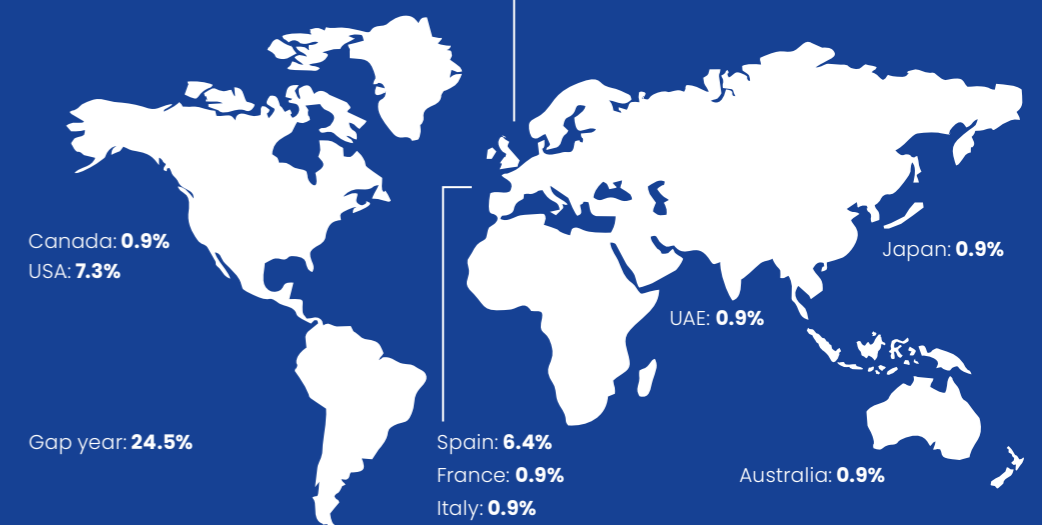
The university counselling team has a unified approach: to simplify the process, reduce stress and help each student present the strongest possible application. Each counsellor emphasises student agency, in order to empower students to take ownership of their future paths.

## Global Citizens

### Intended University Courses of Study (Class of 2025)

Business/Finance:	26
Law and Criminology:	9
Medicine and Pharmacy:	8
Engineering:	7
Natural sciences:	6
Computer science:	5
Art/Design/Art History:	3
History:	3
Psychology:	3
Political Science/	
International Relations:	3
Sports-related fields:	3
Journalism/Communications:	3
Architecture:	2
Hospitality Management:	2

Norway: 0.9%    UK: 17.3%    Germany: 25.5%    Austria: 1.8%  
Denmark: 0.9%    Ireland: 0.9%    Netherlands: 8.2%    Switzerland: 0.9%



# Beyond the comfort zone

The incredible story of Niklas Mertens began when he was born in India with a tragedy which turned into a wonderful happy ending in the decades that followed. As a toddler, he was abandoned by his parents on the streets of the northern Indian city of Pandharpur. At the age of three, the young Indian boy was finally taken into an adoption programme run by "Terre des Hommes" and was taken in by a lovely German family in Munich-Schwabing.



Niklas Mertens, Co-founder and Chief Partnership Officer of the new all-in-one finance app called "oneBanking".

His new parents and his new sister, an academic German family, enabled him to follow the traditional school path in Bavaria from Kindergarten to Primary School to Gymnasium, but for Niklas Mertens, one thing was always clear: "I always wanted to be able to focus on international issues and didn't want to spend all day studying Latin," he recalls. In Grade 8, he transferred to the Bavarian International School, then located in Hallbergmoos near Freising, and earned his International Baccalaureate Diploma (IB DP) in the first graduating class in the history of the young school – as one of 17 graduates in the Class of 1997.

### A new home

"I always went to school feeling positive. There was no pressure from the system; instead, each student was encouraged to develop their personal strengths. The focus was on the individual, regardless of race or religion," says Niklas Mertens. He felt at home in the international community. A class trip to England during the 1996

European Football Championship and the graduation trip to Kilimanjaro in Tanzania with class teacher Chris Mantz remain unforgettable.

After finishing school, he went straight into professional practice. "I wanted to work in the media – with people, for people," says Niklas Mertens. He did an internship at Deutsches Sport Fernsehen (now Sport1), later worked on football programmes at SAT.1 and Premiere (now Sky), and in the meantime switched to magazine and talk shows at ProSieben and Günther Jauch's team ("Who wants to be a millionaire?"). Through his work, he developed a close connection to FC Bayern Munich that stretched far beyond his job. As a friend of the team, he was invited to celebrate their 2000/01 Champions League victory on the balcony of Munich City Hall. "It was a dream come true," says the family man, who lives with his wife and daughter near Frankfurt am Main.



### Learning from mistakes

Even though Niklas Mertens' career path always seemed brilliant and steeply upward from the outside, it is a matter close to his heart to emphasise that he too has failed, questioned himself, and ventured out of his comfort zone to explore new paths. "The trick is to see challenges as opportunities and learn from your mistakes – that's the only way to grow. It takes courage to go your own way and always be open to new things," says Niklas Mertens.

Easier said than done, he bid farewell to the glitzy world of television and began training as a golf operations manager, leading clubs in Cologne and Kitzbühel. The energetic manager also left this comfort zone and eventually immersed himself in the world of digitalisation, cryptocurrency, and artificial intelligence. Since 2024, Niklas Mertens has been working on his new major project as co-founder and Chief Partnership Officer – the all-in-one finance app called "oneBanking," which combines traditional banking with crypto and AI-supported financial advice.

At the same time, he is a partner and city host for "oneBanking" exclusively in Frankfurt

and a driving force behind the development of "The Power of AI International," a platform for AI specialists to exchange ideas, create space, and connect in the real world.

### Per aspera ad astra

From sports to management, from finance to artificial intelligence – a unique career path based on a strong value system, openness, and courage, while also requiring a mindset that is cultivated at international schools from an early age. Per aspera ad astra – through hardship to the stars (from the streets of Pandharpur)...

**We are very proud and grateful to have Niklas Mertens as an alumnus and are all the more delighted to welcome him as a speaker at the 15th BIS Careers Day on 25 March 2026!**



The platform for all BIS alumni: <https://bis-connect.org/>



# A life-changing opportunity

**Bavarian International School is offering the opportunity of a lifetime to a student. The non-profit private school is awarding a new, fully funded scholarship for Grades 9-12 starting in 2026-27. Talented, committed students can apply until 16 March.**

The new "Dr Chrissie Sorenson Scholarship", coordinated by the Friends of BIS e.V. and named after the current Head of School, is funded entirely by a private donor from the BIS community and is available to German or international children who are permanent residents of Germany and whose families can demonstrate financial need. Applicants should have very good academic performance, a high level of commitment and excellent English skills, as well as making an outstanding personal impression overall. Students who are already enrolled at BIS are not eligible to participate in this scholarship programme.

After BIS launched the three scholarships "Believe", "Inspire" and "Succeed", this is now the fourth scholarship. "We are very proud and grateful to be the only international school in Germany to offer a scholarship programme. We want to expand this programme further and are looking for interested corporate partners who would like to get involved in corporate social

responsibility" says Head of School Dr Chrissie Sorenson.

### "The scholarship changed my life"

The words of Isabella, the first BIS scholarship recipient, underscore the value and significance of a scholarship: "The BIS scholarship really changed my life; it gave me self-confidence and enabled me to realise my dream. My time at BIS has advanced me academically and enabled me to develop holistically. And finally, the IB Diploma opens all doors to universities!"

Interested? Contact us via [scholarship@bis-school.com](mailto:scholarship@bis-school.com)

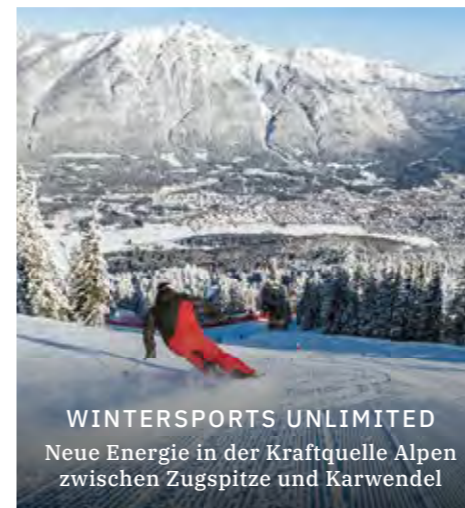


**Learn more about the unique scholarship programme of BIS.**



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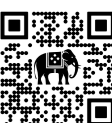


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