

LEIPZIG INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

POLICY MANUAL

[last edited 8 August 2011]



The following are the current policies of the Leipzig International School as approved by the Board of Governors.

The Board has sole authority to amend these policies.

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1. THE SCHOOL AND ITS GOALS

1.1. LEGAL STATUS

The Leipzig International School (LIS) is operated by a registered association (“eingetragener Verein”) under the laws of Germany. It is a not-for-profit entity with charitable status (“gemeinnützig”)¹. The Statutes of the association set out its purpose and the respective rights and obligations of the members and the governors

1.2. STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

Our Motto

Learning to be a citizen of the world.

Our Mission

Leipzig International School provides a high quality international education, conducted in English, to children of all backgrounds, thereby supporting the regional community and promoting international understanding.

Our core objectives

1. We create a safe and stimulating learning environment in which our students can discover and develop their intellectual, physical, social and creative potential.
2. We help our students to be happy, well-balanced, ethical individuals who work effectively and willingly with others.
3. We educate our students to think and act with openness to the perspectives, values and traditions of other cultures and communities.
4. We enable our students to understand and express ideas and information confidently and creatively in more than one language.
5. We employ caring, committed and talented international staff, and provide them with the training, the resources and the environment to further develop their professional skills.

Our core values

1. We uphold the principles of equality of opportunity and fair treatment of all individuals.
2. We embrace diversity as an essential part of our learning environment.
3. We respect ourselves, we respect each other and we respect our environment.
4. We value honesty, fairness and integrity.
5. We recognise that we are fortunate and assume our responsibility to make a positive contribution to society.

1.3. NON-DISCRIMINATION

Discrimination on the basis of race, religion, creed, colour, national origin, gender, or ancestry shall not be tolerated at LIS.

¹ Note that charitable status is granted provisionally by the tax authorities. Usually every three years, the charitable status is reviewed and may be withdrawn.

In reaching decisions on the admission of new students and the retention of existing students, LIS does not discriminate on the grounds of the income or wealth of the applicant's parents/guardians. Notwithstanding this principle, LIS is dependent upon attracting sufficient numbers of students whose parents are able to pay full fees.

2. GOVERNANCE

2.1. BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Governors are appointed by the members of the association for a period of 3 years. There must be a minimum of 4 and a maximum of 5 governors. They may be re-elected for successive periods. The elected governors choose from amongst their number two chairpersons, one of which must have foreign nationality, and the other German nationality. The Board may apportion responsibility for certain areas (e.g. finance, personnel, legal affairs, education) to individual Governors.

2.2. DUTIES OF THE BOARD

The Board plays an active role in the management and operation of the association. In this regard it

- draws up the financial statements and annual budget of the association
- monitors financial performance, and institutes any necessary corrective action
- sets school fees
- approves salary scales, any salaries not determined by scales, and any deviations from scales
- appoints the Headmaster and the Commercial Director
- appraises the performance of the Headmaster and the Commercial Director and fixes their remuneration
- manages any operations of the association outside the ambit of the school.

2.3. BOARD MEETINGS

Board meetings are held at least 4 times per year and more frequently when necessary. The Headmaster and the Commercial Director attend Board meetings but have no voting rights.

The agenda for the Board meetings is communicated by the Board Chair. Any Governor and the Headmaster may ask for topics to be added to the agenda. Minutes of Board meetings are kept.

2.4. STATUTES

The legal rights and obligations of the Board of Governors are set down in the Statutes of the association.

2.5. HEADMASTER

2.5.1. Responsibilities

The Headmaster is responsible for running the school from the educational point of view. He selects the members of the teaching faculty, and appoints the School Principals. He is responsible for setting the performance objectives of the members of the teaching staff and of appraising actual performance against those objectives. Whilst he may delegate many aspects of the running of the school, he retains the final responsibility.

2.5.2. Implementation Of Policy

He administers the school in accordance with the letter and spirit of this Policy Manual. He is authorized by the Board to establish regulations and procedures to ensure that the policies and decisions of the Board are carried out. The performance of the Headmaster is appraised by the Board of Governors.

2.5.3. Reporting Line

The Headmaster reports to the Board of Governors. His objectives are set by the Board, and the Board assesses the Headmaster's performance and determines the measure of any performance-related element of his salary.

2.5.4. Extent Of Responsibility For Commercial Matters

The Headmaster is held accountable for compliance with the budget to the extent that he has control over the relevant income and expense positions. The Commercial Director reports to the Headmaster in respect of those matters for which the Headmaster is held accountable. The Headmaster is not responsible for

- compliance with the tax and financial reporting obligations of the association
- the funding of the school
- activities outside the remit of the school which are pursued by the association
- the governance of the association.

3. PARENTS

3.1. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parents are important stakeholders in the school. Parents (and students) have opportunities to provide input into decisions concerning the curricular and extra-curricular programmes.

At the governance level, 4 parent representatives are elected to membership of the association.

3.2. ESCALATION PROCESS

A complaint by a parent should be taken to the member of staff involved. If the complainant is not satisfied, the problem should be taken to the appropriate Principal or Commercial Director, then to the Headmaster, if necessary. If the complainant is still not satisfied, the complainant may refer the matter in writing to the elected parent representatives who can take up the matter with the Headmaster and with the Board if necessary. Complaints against members of staff are dealt with by the Headmaster and shall not be considered by the Board.

4. STAFF

4.1. STAFFING GOALS

The Board is committed to having an outstanding teaching faculty and support staff.

4.2. PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

A complete set of Professional Standards, based on our Statement of Principles, is provided to staff as part of the staff manual.

Employees of LIS, whether members of the faculty or staff, are expected to maintain a high standard of conduct in their private and professional lives. The Board believes that the faculty and staff serve as role models for the students of LIS and are thus obligated to exemplify highly ethical behaviour both at school and within the community. The Headmaster shall make the employees aware of this expectation, emphasizing the areas of substance abuse, inappropriate conduct with students, and the customs and laws of Germany.

4.3. EMPLOYEE-BOARD RELATIONS

Communications between the Board and employees will be through the Headmaster.

4.4. EMPLOYEE EVALUATION

The Headmaster shall maintain a program for evaluating faculty members. The goal of this program shall be to improve the quality of the education provided to the students. This evaluation will include all aspects of professional competence and conduct. Staff appraisal takes place during the first six months, in the second year, and after that every third year.

4.5. FACULTY HANDBOOK

The Headmaster shall annually provide each faculty member with a Faculty Handbook that will explain the regulations, procedures, and expectations of LIS, as well as provide other information. The Headmaster and his delegates shall be responsible for updating the contents during the course of the school year.

4.6. PROFESSIONAL GRIEVANCES

All administrators and employees at LIS are expected to act with professional integrity in line with LIS Professional Standards and our Statement of Principles.

In accordance with our Professional Standards we expect all employees to attempt to resolve their complaints and grievances face-to-face and at the lowest administrative level.

Only after such attempts have failed, a complaint could turn into a formal professional grievance. Such a formal grievance must be submitted in writing to the Headmaster and should refer to a specific violation of our Professional Standards by colleagues or the administration.

Professional grievances may refer to, amongst other things:

- Unfair appraisal by a line manager
- Unethical practice of a colleague or administrator
- Bullying by colleagues
- Sexual harassment in the workplace

Upon receipt of a written grievance it shall be the responsibility of Management Team to come to a joint decision with regard to this grievance. Should any member of the Management Team be the subject of a grievance, he/she will not participate in the decision-making process.

The decision of the Management Team will be communicated to all parties within 30 business days of the initial written grievance.

Employees have the right to appeal the Management Team's decision to the Board of Governors within 7 business days of the decision.

The decision of the Board will be communicated to all parties within 45 business days of receipt of the appeal. In all cases the Board's decision is final.

Details and further guidance are found in the corresponding Professional Grievance Procedure in the staff manual.

4.7. DISCIPLINARY ACTION

In line with German labour law the following forms of disciplinary action against staff are possible:

Official Instruction

The employee may be given an official instruction, a copy of which will go into the personnel file. The official instruction can be in writing. Instructions may be issued more than once.

Official First or Final Warning (German: "*Ermahnung oder Abmahnung*")

The employee may be given an official warning, a copy of which will go into the personnel file. Official warnings may be issued more than once. They can be in writing. They can be issued as first or final warning. A final warning states that notice of termination of the contract may be given in case of a repeated breach of contract. There may also be more than one final warning.

Dismissal / Notice of termination

Dismissal can be with or without a period of termination depending under German employment law.

Before disciplinary action is taken, the employee will normally first be heard by either the Headmaster (for all educational staff including Hort and Student Support Services staff such as librarian, nurse or counsellor) or the Commercial Director (for all administrative and technical support staff).

The employee may be suspended without penalty to enable an investigation to be carried out. Suspension is not disciplinary action; it may occur at any time during an investigation and similarly a suspension may be lifted at any time.

When assessing the seriousness of a breach of Professional Standards, any previous breach will be taken into account. Normally, breaches that occurred more than 18 months ago will not be taken into consideration.

The employee may appeal in writing to the Board of Governors against any official warning awarded to them. There is no appeal possible against a written instruction. Dismissals may be appealed in a court of law.

The decision of the Board will be communicated to all parties within 45 business days of receipt of the appeal. In all cases the Board's decision is final.

Further details are provided in the Disciplinary Action Procedure in the staff manual.

5. STUDENTS

5.1. ADMISSIONS POLICY FOR LIS

- The basis of our admission policy is that we admit children from all ethnic, national, financial and other backgrounds to the school. In particular we try to admit as many students from less well-off families as is possible within the constraints of remaining financially viable.
- Whilst in no way limiting its intake to any particular group of students, LIS addresses itself above all to the needs of children whose parents – whether of German or foreign nationality – are or expect to become internationally mobile.
- The Headmaster will only admit students who meet the entry requirements and for whom there exist appropriate educational and support programs at the school. This will be determined by the school's administrative team.
- Appropriate proficiency in English language will be required, relative to the student's level of entry into the school.

The following age requirements apply:

Age on 30 June prior to start of school year	Grade level in August
3	Pre-School 1
4	Pre-School 2
5	Reception
6	Grade 1
	Etc.

- Children with birthdays in July or August, rather than June or earlier, can be accepted into the given grade level, or one grade level lower, depending on the best interests of the child.
- Children who have not reached the required age by 31 August will not be accepted in the given grade level, unless the school would support, based on evidence, a special request to accelerate, to be approved by the local educational authorities.
- Subject to the place availability children turning 3 during the course of the year may be admitted into Pre-School 1 after they have turned 3, but all of these children will repeat Pre-School 1 to be with their age group the following year.

5.2. STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

LIS offers the following student support services, with appropriately qualified staff to provide these services:

- Learning Support services to address the needs of students with mild learning disabilities and problems
- Health services to create a healthy environment for students and staff, and to respond to the needs of individual children.

- Counselling services to provide professional and confidential guidance within a caring environment to students who seek emotional and social support.
- University admission services to support students and teachers in university application procedures.
- English as a Second Language to support students whose proficiency in English is not sufficient to fully function in the school's language of instruction. Simultaneous continued development of the Mother Tongue is encouraged and supported where possible.

A Student Support Services Coordinator works school wide, and with external agencies, to ensure that the student support services offered by the school are operating effectively.

LIS shall admit a student with special educational needs only when it is clear that a) an educational program that meets that student's needs can be provided and b) the admission will not detract from the education of other students.

5.3. STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Regular school attendance is mandatory. The Headmaster shall implement procedures to enforce regular school attendance.

5.4. STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Students have the right: 1) to be treated with respect and courtesy, 2) to due process, 3) to be secure and safe in person and property, and 4) to know the expected standards of behaviour within the school community. Students have the responsibility to uphold the expected standards of behaviour and to comply with all reasonable requests and directives given by employees of the school.

5.5. STUDENT DISCIPLINE

School section principals may suspend students for up to one day.

The Headmaster may suspend students for up to one week.

The Headmaster may decide to expel students from school after having heard the parents and the student involved.

Parents whose child has been expelled may file an appeal with the Board.

5.6. PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK

LIS shall provide the students and their parents with documentation that includes relevant regulations, procedures, and expectations, as well as other information about LIS. The Headmaster shall annually review, update, and approve the contents of this documentation. He and his delegates shall also ensure that faculty, parents, and students are familiarized with the contents.

5.7. CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

The purpose of the policy is the protection of children and the prevention of child abuse or neglect, which, in this policy, means any kind of neglect, non-accidental physical injury, sexual exploitation or emotional ill-treatment.

This policy applies wherever staff or volunteers are working with students even when this is away from the School, for example at an activity centre or on an educational visit.

Students have the right to:

- feel safe and protected from any form of abuse or neglect
- a positive and supportive environment where they feel secure, are encouraged to talk, are listened to and have a sense of being valued
- a safe environment in which they can learn and develop
- know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried
- develop the skills they need, to recognize and stay safe from abuse, through the PSHE curriculum
- be protected by a behaviour policy, which is aimed at supporting vulnerable students in the school
- know that some behaviour is unacceptable and they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred

According to our Professional Standards every staff member at LIS has the responsibility to:

- actively supervise students and generally take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety and well-being of students under their supervision
- follow the school's child protection policies and safety procedures
- respect the rights of students, families, and colleagues to confidentiality and therefore only discuss students' or colleagues' performance with people who need to be involved professionally

The school shall appoint a designated Child Protection Team to deal with concerns and LIS employees are advised to report any concerns with regard to child abuse or neglect to these specialists. These staff members must have an adequate professional background complemented by appropriate training in terms of child protection issues. The Child Protection Team consists of:

- The Child Protection Coordinator (German: *Fallexperte*) – who is also the Student Support Services Coordinator – she/he will be the contact for the caseworkers, administrators, teachers, parents and external agencies.
- The Child Protection Support Staff (German: *fallverantwortlicher Fachkräfte*) consists of qualified social pedagogues/social workers/educators who will support the teachers, carry out the casework and are responsible for collection and collation of evidence in the case of child endangerment.
- The Child Protection Consultant (German: *insoweit erfahrene Fachkraft*) will be called in by the Child Protection Coordinator on request to operate cooperative individual consulting and for moderating risk assessments.

Decisions concerning CP matters will be discussed by members of the team; no individual action will be taken.

An expanded version of this policy, along with details of procedures, is found in the staff manual.

6. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME

6.1. SCHOOL YEAR

The school year will consist of no fewer than 182 days when school is actually in session.
The school year will normally begin in August and continue through June.

6.2. SCHOOL CALENDAR

School holidays are published at least one year in advance. The annual school calendar with all opening and closing times of the school is prepared by the Headmaster and approved by the Board.

6.3. SCHOOL DIVISIONS

The grade structure is

- 1) Pre-School
- 2) Primary School – Reception to Grade 5
- 3) Secondary School - Grades 6 to 12.

6.4. CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

The Headmaster shall establish a program of ongoing curriculum evaluation and development. The parents shall be kept informed as to any curricular changes. Appropriate curriculum guides for the Primary, Middle and High Schools shall be prepared and kept up to date. These guides shall be distributed to appropriate faculty members and be available to students and parents.

6.5. LANGUAGE POLICY

LIS is committed to

1. Teaching practices supportive of language learning, including language based activities with scaffolding in all subject areas.
2. Explicit teaching of language use in different genres and modelling language for the students; to show the links between reading, writing, speaking and listening.
3. Teaching foreign languages through language with a native language teacher, as early as possible, using real life contexts, whilst offering students varied resources and allowing them to use their mother tongue resources whenever appropriate.
4. Consistency in using English as the language of instruction and communication, whilst allowing and encouraging students to use their mother tongue where it scaffolds their learning. Also for consistency, all official school documents will follow British English conventions.
5. Cross-curricular collaboration among teachers, in-service training and professional development; resourcing classrooms and the school library with materials to help teachers develop solid language teaching practices.
6. Streaming of language courses where appropriate and differentiated activities in all classrooms for all subjects.
7. Providing support for Mother Tongue instruction.
8. Raising awareness of language related issues within the school community and involving parents in planning their children's language development.

We will regularly review this language policy in order to put our principles into practice. An expanded version of this Language Policy, with descriptions of our language programmes, is found in the staff manual.

6.6. CLASS SIZE

The normal maximum class size is 20. The Board authorizes the Headmaster to increase this up to 24 on a temporary basis when the situation warrants.

6.7. EXTRA - CURRICULAR PROGRAMS

LIS shall offer co-curricular activities for its students. While the scope and variety of such activities may vary from year to year, continuity shall be encouraged. The Board views a successful co-curricular program as an essential part of the school's program.

Participation in co-curricular activities is a privilege. The Headmaster shall establish regulations regarding student eligibility. These regulations shall include both academic performance and conduct.

6.8. LIS GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

The LIS High School Diploma is awarded on the basis of cumulative attainment in grades 9-12. One unit of credit is awarded for each successfully completed year of instruction in a subject at 4 lessons per week or more.

The minimum requirement for an LIS High School Diploma is 20 units of credit as follows:

- 4 credits in English
- 3 credits in Mathematics
- 3 credits in Social Studies
- 3 credits in Science
- 3 credits in a further Language
- 4 elective credits

Participation in the Theory of Knowledge course and the CAS programme is also expected throughout the 11th and 12th grades.

6.9. STUDENT EVALUATION

The Board believes that students respond more readily to the opportunity for success than the threat of failure. LIS seeks to create as many opportunities for success as possible and to recognize achievement whenever possible. The Headmaster shall establish guidelines for student evaluation, including systems for assigning grades and reporting to parents.

7. BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

7.1. SCHEDULE OF FEES

The Board shall annually establish a schedule of fees. This schedule will detail the fees for the school year, dates payable, and methods of payment. This schedule will be made available no later than 1 May for any ensuing school year.

7.2. TUITION REDUCTION

A minimum of 25% of all school contracts are offered at reduced fees. The application system is administered by the Business Office and official approval is given by the Board.

7.3. SCHOOL BUILDING AND GROUNDS

The Headmaster shall ensure that the school is safe, clean, and sanitary. Provision shall be made for: 1) security, 2) fire prevention and fighting, 3) emergency communication, 4) building evacuation.

Appropriate insurance coverage and the daily supervision of the above is the responsibility of the Commercial Director.

8. HEALTH AND SAFETY

8.1. HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

The school appoints one member of staff to act as the Health and Safety Coordinator. This person chairs the school's Health and Safety Committee.

The Health and Safety Coordinator ensures that the school complies with all legal safety obligations and that sufficient members of staff are trained in First Aid. To this end, he or she can call in external expertise.