



**St Dominic's International School**

**Board Policy Manual**

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This Board policy manual was created in August 2014, building upon many of the previous policies and seeking to provide a clear framework within which the school operates. It supersedes all previous policies. It will be reviewed annually, and should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- The employees' handbook (updated annually)
- The teachers handbook (updated annually)
- Parents Handbook
- SDIS IBO PSP Plan
- SDIS Recruitment Guide

Updated and Approved by the Board of Governors (date): 4 February, 2022

## **1.0 The School**

### **1.1 Background**

ST DOMINIC'S INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL, PORTUGAL® is the property of Veritas Educatio – Educação e Serviços, SA, Rua Maria Brown, Outeiro de Polima, 2785-816 S Domingos de Rana, with official recognition from the Ministry of Education Portugal, under the licence nº 2178 (Alvará nº 2178).

ST DOMINIC'S INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL, PORTUGAL® is a private School, serving the international community of students in the greater Lisbon area, from ages 3 to 18, through the medium of English and the three IB programmes: PYP, MYP and Diploma.

ST DOMINIC'S INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL, PORTUGAL® has been accredited by NEASC (New England Association of Schools and Colleges) since 1999.

### **1.2 Historical and current**

The rich history of the Irish Dominican Sisters in Portugal dates back to 1639. Unable to form a convent in their homeland due to the persecution of Catholics, the Sisters travelled to other countries. The convent of Bom Sucesso in Belém, Lisbon, is unique as the only religious community of nuns that has survived from that time and having had a continual presence in Portugal. In 1829, the Sisters accepted their first boarder student and established the Bom Sucesso Girls' Day School in 1954. Transition to a co-educational school began in 1963.

In 1964, during the building of the first Lisbon bridge over the Rio Tejo, the expanding English expatriate community asked the sisters to establish a new English language school. St Dominic's College started with fewer than 20 students but quickly outgrew its space. The sisters purchased land and the new school opened in 1975; it was re-named St Dominic's International School in 1988. The School was one centre of the Fundação Obra Social das Religiosas Dominicanas Irlandesas, a charitable foundation under which the school operated as a not-for-profit organisation.

In 2007, the Foundation signed an Assignment of Operation contract with VERITAS – Educatio. S.A. This entity assumed the management of the school from the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2008, releasing the Sisters resident in Portugal from day-to-day management activities, while ensuring the continuation of the values, principles, guidelines and social and educational strategy that have always constituted the practice of the Fundação Obra Social das Religiosas Dominicanas Irlandesas. As of 15 January 2010, St Dominic's International School was officially owned and managed by Veritas Educatio, SA, which established a Board of Governors in line with best practice in international schools.

### **1.21 Alvará/permit**

### **1.22 By-laws**

### **1.23 School Mission**

#### **“Nurturing and Educating International Minds”**

The mission of SDIS is to nurture people and cultivate international mindedness and a sense of global citizenship by offering a quality international education which develops the unique intellectual, social, physical, emotional, moral and spiritual characteristics inherent in each person.

#### **Learning at St. Dominic's International School**

The educational programme and learning at SDIS is inspired by, and constructed from, the twin influences of the International Baccalaureate Organisation and its IB Learner Profile, and the Dominican motto of 'Veritas' held by the founders of the school which value the commitment to learning through inquiry and an on-going search for truth.

#### **We value and promote**

- The role of parents as the first educators of their children and the school's role as coeducators;
- The contribution of parents to the development of school community;
- The commitment and shared contribution of all staff to the mission and philosophy of learning of the school;
- A concept of internationalism which includes the obligation to contribute to the development of a sustainable future for our planet; the need to embrace and respect diverse cultures, nationalities and religious convictions and the responsibility to play an active and positive role in creating a just society;
- The acquisition of the skills of cooperative learning and open, honest communication by all members of the school community;
- The exercise of thinking and reasoning powers of all learners enabling them to make positive and wise decisions.

### **1.24 SDIS Definition of Learning**

Learning is using our curiosity to explore.

We ask questions, take action and share our findings. We cooperate with our community to make the right connections.

Learning is without boundaries, taking place within the classroom and beyond. Learning is ageless, empowering and enables us to grow.

### **1.3 School context and relations**

The School values its role as a member of the community in Portugal. As such, the school works conscientiously to maintain close and longstanding relations with the local and national governments, religious and social institutions, health, police and judicial authorities and with the school learning community of families, students and staff.

The School was granted during the 1992/93 School Year 'Integração de Língua e Cultura Portuguesa'. According to this any student moving from St Dominic's to a Portuguese curriculum school will go to the next grade, having completed the preceding one in this school. Although the Portuguese Ministry of Education exercises no direct control over the educational policy and the curriculum of the School except for on class size, it is the policy of the school to foster positive relationships between the School and the Ministry of Education and also with Portuguese schools and Universities, in order to ensure that the students of St Dominic's will benefit as much as possible from the educational and cultural resources of the community they live in. In turn, the school and its students should contribute as much as possible to the community through educational and cultural programmes and exchanges.

Insofar as the school is subject to them, the requirements of Portuguese law are followed in all respects.

#### **1.31 Decision making**

When making decisions all staff need to consider the following criteria:

1. Impact on learning and benefit for student(s);
2. Best option for the improvement and safeguarding of the school;
3. Individual curiosity, development or interest.

In any decision being made, points 1 and 2 necessitate more weighting than point 3. All decisions need to be well considered for the impact they will have in short, medium and long term. They should be discussed, rested and matured prior to being communicated.

#### **1.32 Parent involvement in decision-making**

The Board of Governors endorses the concept that the parents are the first educators of their children. For that reason all parents are encouraged to express ideas, concerns and suggestions about the school to the Principal and the Heads of Schools, the Staff, existing advisory groups and the Board of Governors itself (on which the parents are represented). Parents are asked to participate in all Parents' Conferences and all social activities of the School. Parents are encouraged to serve on the PTA Committee. The Board of Governors also wishes to encourage individual parents who are especially qualified because of interest, training, experience, or personal characteristics to contribute their talents to the School and its programmes.

#### **1.33 Staff involvement in decision-making**

The Board of Governors encourage employee participation in decision-making for the School. In the development of regulations and arrangements for the operation of the school system, the Principal shall include at the planning stage whenever feasible, those employees who will be affected by such provisions.

The Teaching Staff have the responsibility and are given opportunities to contribute to curriculum development and in the development of policies and procedures pertaining to how the programme is implemented. Each Head of School shall maintain channels for conferring with both the teaching and support staff in establishing working regulations. The Principal shall develop with employees' channels for the ready intercommunication of ideas and feelings regarding the operation of the school. She /He shall weigh with care

the counsel given, and shall inform the Board of Governors of all such counsel in presenting recommendations for Board action. All such counsel, ideas and suggestions will be given due consideration, but will not necessarily be reflected in final decisions.

### **1.34 Student involvement in decision-making**

As individuals and members of the School Community students need to have opportunities to develop agency in their learning. Therefore, students should be encouraged, in keeping with their level of maturity, to take part in the development of educational policies, practices and regulations that impact on their learning and personal development.

## **1.4 Leadership structure**

### **1.41 Composition of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT)**

The Senior Leadership Team comprises the Principal, two Heads of Schools and the Head of Administration and Operations. The Principal leads this team and chairs all meetings of the SLT.

### **1.42 School handbook(s)**

A teachers' handbook is updated each year and is made available to all teachers. This provides guidance on day to day operational information.

All staff are expected to familiarize themselves with the contents of these handbooks and to follow the guidance therein.

A parent handbook is also updated annually and made available to existing parents online, and to new parents in hard copy.

### **1.43 The school year**

The school teaches for 180 days per year, beginning in early September and finishing in late June, with holidays at Christmas and Easter. The exact dates of these and other breaks and training days are published in or before January each year according to the calendar. If required, the school community is consulted in helping define calendar dates.

### **1.44 The school day**

The school opens at 7.30am and closes at 6.00pm, Monday to Friday. If needed, the school will open from 9.00am to 1.00pm on Saturdays.

Currently, Junior School starts at 8.20am and finishes at 3.30pm, while Senior School starts at 8.40am and finishes at 3.50pm with breaks and lunch included. Junior school students may enter school from 8.00am, Senior School students from 8.20am.

After school activities finish at 5.30pm.

### **1.45 Strategic planning\***

## **2.0 The Board Of Governors\***

The Board of Governors is the highest authority in the school's hierarchy and takes the role of the guardian of the school's integrity.



## **2.1 Relationship with the Board of Directors (Veritas) and the Principal**

## **2.2 Organisation of the Board**

### **2.21 Board sub committees**

### **2.22 Vacancies on the Board**

### **2.23 Board member removal from office**

### **2.24 Board member compensation and expenses**

### **2.25 Board member orientation and development**

### **2.26 Board self-evaluation**

## **2.3 Authority and integrity of the Board 2.31 Board powers and duties**

### **2.32 Board member ethics and conflicts of interest**

### **2.33 Selection and appointment of the Head of School (Principal)**

### **2.34 Principal - powers and duties**

The Principal is appointed by the Board to whom she/he reports directly. The Principal has the responsibility and the authority to manage the School, within the policies and regulations established by the Board.

She/He is expected to:

- hold responsibility and accountability for the school;
- make recommendations to the Board of Governors in respect of policy development;
- provide professional leadership for the faculty and staff;
- make regular assessments of the School's various programmes and procedures;
- take responsibility for the design and implementation of appropriate procedures for the efficient and effective administration of the School;
- assess its future needs and formulate appropriate plans to meet them, with particular attention to such matters as:
  - o enrolment objectives;
  - o the academic programme;
  - o class size;
  - o the size and qualifications of the professional staff.
- suggest alterations and additions to the physical facilities and equipment taking into account the School's financial position and requirements;
- take overall responsibility for the preparation of the school's annual budget;
- represent the School in the community at large such as public relations and publicity, communications with the various constituencies of the School, professional organizations and other schools, and some fund raising.
- The Principal may also be asked from time to time to assume other responsibilities, as may be determined by the Board of Governors.

### **2.35 Evaluation of the Principal**

The Board agrees targets with the Principal at the start of each school year. These are discussed and reviewed during the year at BOG meetings and/or in separate meetings called purposely to discuss points of interest.

### **2.36 Termination of Employment of the Principal**

The Board may terminate the employment of the Principal as stipulated in the contract of employment and in accordance with Portuguese law.

## **2.4 Complaints procedure**

### **2.5 Board meetings 2.51 Regular Board meetings**

#### **2.52 Special Board meetings**

#### **2.53 Notification of Board meetings**

#### **2.54 Agenda preparation, format and dissemination**

There is a standard agenda, to which additional items may be added by the Principal or by members through the Chair. The agenda is sent out prior to the meeting, with minutes of the previous meeting, and with any additional papers to be read in advance of the meeting.

#### **2.55 Minutes**

Minutes are taken by the School Secretary and checked by the Principal before distribution to the Board.

#### **2.56 Release of meeting information**

## **2.6 Development and adoption of Board policies**

The Principal works with the Board to review existing policies and to develop new ones as required. Board policies are adopted by majority vote at Board meetings.

### **2.61 Policy review schedule**

The Board Policy Manual is subject to annual review by SLT in the Autumn Term of each year, with any suggestions for changes presented to the Board by, at the latest, the February Board meeting. The Board and SLT may also suggest changes at any time when deemed necessary due to changing circumstances. All such changes are subject to Board approval.

Operational Policies Procedures, Protocols and Guidelines are reviewed annually by SLT. SLT may also suggest changes at any time when deemed necessary due to changing circumstances.

### **2.62 Non-board 'operational' policies, procedures, protocols and guidelines**

Operational policies, procedures, protocols and guidelines are the responsibility of the SLT, but must always align with and support Board Policies. These are maintained in the manual of operational policies, procedures, protocols and guidelines.

### **3.0 Finance\***

The school will manage its finances to support its mission and in accordance with its values, and to maintain its financial risk at an acceptable level. In practice, this means the school will:

- Be conversant and in compliance with all financial regulations as they apply to the schools' fiscal status;
- Work to high ethical standards, adopt an accepted accounting procedure, and follow good business practices, in all its financial dealings;
- Generate sufficient regular income to fund its day-to-day operations and sustain its capital requirements;
- Maintain sufficient reserves, or operate some other mechanism, to enable the school to deliver its mission despite unforeseen events that may significantly reduce income or increase expenditure;
- Develop and work to a financial plan that enables the long term development of the school;
- Report to the school community at least once per year on the school's finances.

#### **3.1 Annual operating budget**

#### **3.2 Financial year**

#### **3.3 Budget preparation**

##### **3.31 Budget deadlines and schedules**

##### **3.32 Budget reconciliation and control**

#### **3.4 Income from tuition and other school fees**

##### **3.41 Capital development fees, tuition fees, registration fees, refundable deposits**

##### **3.42 School fee payment and schedules**

##### **3.43 Late payment of tuition and other fees**

##### **3.44 Refunds/ pro-rated tuition and other fees**

##### **3.45 Leaving students: clearance / refund of deposits**

#### **3.5 Financial planning and reserves**

#### **3.6 Accounting and reporting**

##### **3.61 Audits**

##### **3.62 Purchasing controls**

##### **3.63 Value for money – quotes and tenders**

##### **3.64 Signatories**

### **3.7 Disbursements of funds 3.71 Payment of salaries**

#### **3.72 Expense reimbursements**

#### **3.73 Advances to staff members**

### **3.8 Use of school facilities**

## **4.0 Child Protection\***

### **4.1 Integrated Child Protection System**

The Board recognises that St Dominic's is a multicultural environment with unique characteristics and distinct community needs. Accordingly, the school has developed an Integrated Child Protection System that reflects the flexibility and inclusiveness demanded by an environment marked by dynamic ecosystems, change, mobility and diverse cultural ethos. The approach considers the uniqueness of child at the centre and ensures that all students feel safe, valued and protected.

## **5.0 Personnel\***

### **5.1 Staffing philosophy and goals**

#### **5.11 Academic and administrative management rights and responsibilities**

#### **5.12 Staff rights and responsibilities**

#### **5.13 Equal opportunities**

#### **5.14 Jurisdiction**

All staff are employed under the jurisdiction of Portuguese law.

#### **5.15 Classification of staff**

Teachers, teaching assistants, lab technicians, librarians, counsellors and any other staff who impact directly on the education of students are classified as academic staff.

All other staff, whose role does not impact directly on the education of the students, are classified as Administration staff.

All those with an additional 'management' responsibility are classed as leaders and managers within the school.

#### **5.16 Staff contracts**

The School uses standard contracts of employment, examples of which can be found in the administrative and financial procedures.

### **5.17 Job descriptions**

### **5.18 Personnel records**

The school maintains one file for each employee, divided into two sections:

1. Business section giving details of all school employees' work records and pay records essential to the business office, together with details of any disciplinary procedures. They are kept by the Administration Office and maintained in accordance with pertinent legal requirements;
2. Professional section which contains records pertinent to professional staff members' assignment, performance and evaluation, and which are also kept in the Administration Office.

### **5.2 Medical examination**

By Portuguese law it is required that all members of staff must have a regular medical examination.

These examinations are performed at school. The doctor who will take responsibility for these examinations is a Public Health doctor (Médico de Trabalho). All staff will be asked to make an appointment for the examination at some time during the year.

#### **5.21 Drug-free workplace**

SDIS is a drug free workplace.

### **5.3 Working conditions and staff conduct 5.31 Exclusivity of employment**

#### **5.32 Professionalism and ethics**

#### **5.33 Tutoring**

#### **5.34 Confidentiality of information**

Members of staff are required to maintain discretion with regard to information, both within and beyond the school community.

#### **Written information**

#### **Verbal information**

#### **5.35 Conflict of interest**

Staff members are required to act ethically at all times, and in a manner becoming of their position in the school. They are also required to declare any possible or actual conflicts of interest, whether emotional, financial or of any other nature, to the Principal at the earliest possible opportunity. Any breach of this code will be investigated by the Principal (or in the case of the Principal, the Board Chair will investigate) and the findings will be presented to the Board for action as appropriate, in line with the school's disciplinary procedures.

### **5.36 Grievance**

The school shall establish a grievance procedure which allows for the unbiased, transparent investigation and resolution of any staff grievance in accordance with the provisions of the Portuguese law.

### **5.37 Appraisal**

### **5.38 Professional development**

The school believes that the provision of quality professional development is crucial to achieving our mission and vision.

This provision should:

- Afford staff opportunities for critical reflection on their own practices;
- Offer staff a way of articulating their knowledge and experience in order to further their personal and professional growth and their commitment to education;
- Be targeted at developing the complete school staff rather than at individual teachers;
- Be based on the IBO PSP Development Plan and/or Integrated Child Protection Policy and/ or Accreditation requirements.

Professional development takes many forms, both internal to the school and through external providers including meetings, courses, seminars, conferences, workshops, peer observation and discussion, coaching and mentoring, professional reading, amongst others.

Any courses for staff development which incur cost must have the approval of the SLT.

### **5.39 Capability Concerns**

### **5.40 Disciplinary issues**

The school will establish an approach to handling of disciplinary matters that is in line with Portuguese Law. Any disciplinary procedure is implemented by the Board at the recommendation of the School Principal.

### **5.41 Leave of absence**

### **5.42 Salaries and benefits**

Details of salary scales and benefits are published in the Employee's handbook, which is updated annually.

## **6.0 Health and safety\***

The school recognizes its responsibility to maintain a safe and healthy environment for all staff, students, parents and visitors. To ensure compliance with the school's values as well as current legislation, regulations and procedures will be established, founded on the following principles:

- All injuries and ill-health arising from the school's activities may be prevented, given sufficient awareness, knowledge, forethought, and planning;
- Safety and health will be treated with equal importance to other parameters that shape decisionmaking, such as educational quality, finance or reputation;
- Board members, administrators and school personnel will act as role models for students;
- Faculty will be trained to educate students in matters to do with personal and communal safety, including the control of risk to an acceptable level;
- Some members of faculty will be trained to educate students in matters to do with personal and communal health, recognising and respecting different cultural sensitivities;
- Particular attention will be paid to the security, health and well-being of students, employees and where appropriate the wider community, when engaged in online activity, whether on school or private business;
- Incidents that cause or could cause significant harm will be investigated to root cause, and any necessary adjustment to policy, regulation or procedure implemented;
- Facilities and associated equipment will be safe and secure;
- A robust Emergency Management Plan will be in place and tested regularly;
- The school will have access to knowledge of best practice and legislation.

The focus will be firstly on prevention, then on response in the event of an incident or threat, and finally on sanctions if regulations or procedures have not been followed. Facilities and staff will be provided to treat minor injuries and illnesses.

With specific regard to health, the focus will also include:

- Taking responsibility for one's own health and well-being;
- Specific education on health and well-being when working or otherwise engaged in online activity;
- Protecting the school community from contagious diseases, serious communicable diseases and substance abuse (legal or illegal).

With specific regard to safety, the focus will also include:

- Taking responsibility for the safety of oneself and looking out for others;
- Specific education on safety and security when working or otherwise engaged in online activity;
- Organizing to respond appropriately to incidents and emergencies;
- Responding promptly to correct deficiencies.

The Board of Governors recognizes that the education of children depends on many factors, including a proper physical environment that is clean, safe, attractive, pleasant and functional.

The Board of Governors is committed to maintaining in the School's buildings and grounds in the same high standards that the Board of Governors sets for all aspects of the School programme, within the limitations of the School's financial resources and in proportion to its present and projected enrolment.

## **6.1 Security and key control**

## **6.2 Emergency procedures and drills**

### **6.21 Crisis management**

The school must have the means to cope with threats or actual events that could seriously damage the community and/or the school's ability to operate.

Crisis Management has two strands: the protection, care for and support of the people affected, and the recovery and continuance of the school's systems.

The Senior Leadership Team establishes a system of regular communication and discussion of possible crisis events. Solutions according to the current school circumstances and resources are planned. The Principal and Head of Administration and Operations communicate planning and solutions with the Board. The Senior Leadership Team and any Crisis Management Team that is established need to consider regular training and simulation exercises and must consider a variety of potential crisis, including but not limited to:

- Bereavement (including the suicide or murder of a student or school employee);
- Major environmental crisis (e.g. fire, flood, extreme weather, utility failure, earthquake);
- Attacks on, or threats to the physical safety of, students and/or employees;
- Serious accidents or other emergencies at school or on school-sponsored activities and trips;
- Major attack on or malfunction of the school's IT systems;
- Destruction of the school's facilities;
- Outbreak of a serious communicable disease;
- Other significant events of community concern;
- Handling communications and relations with the media during and after any of the above.

A Crisis Management Team must be capable of responding efficiently and effectively at very short notice, at any time of day or night, or day of the week. The crisis management plan should assign responsibilities and develop procedures.

### **6.3 Long term closing of the school**

The Board will do everything possible to ensure that the school is able to remain open, but acknowledges that, in certain circumstances, long term closure may be necessary. The Principal will advise the Board of Directors if such closure is deemed necessary for the safety and well-being of the school community, and subject to Board approval, will announce the decision and implement the long term closure procedures. As far as is possible, the school will maintain continuity of education during such a period through its electronic systems.

### **6.4 Health and first aid provision**

The School employs a full time nurse and the services of a doctor. The aim of this provision is to assure the health and welfare of the staff and students, and to provide an emergency response in the case of accidents.

### **6.5 Insurance**

The school will arrange adequate insurance coverage for the school's buildings and property, for its employees and students, and for any liabilities it or its employees or Board members may have under applicable laws.

The Principal, working with the Head of Administration and Operations and with appropriate representatives of sponsoring agencies, will ensure that proper coverage is obtained and maintained, and that insurance policies are in order at all times.

From time to time, the school administration will review the school's entire insurance package, and will together with the appropriate sponsoring agencies, explore ways to obtain coverage on advantageous terms.



## **7.0 Curriculum\***

### **7.1 Levels of instruction**

The school provides an IB education for students aged 3 – 18. The Nursery and Kindergarten classes follow an early years curriculum adapted from the PYP. Reception to Grade 5 follow the PYP, Grades 6 – 10 follow the MYP and Grades 11 and 12 follow the IB Diploma Programme. Whilst the IB programme is rigorous and academic, the school aims to adapt it to meet the needs of a wide ability range of students, especially in Early Years and Grades 1 to 8.

### **7.11 Learning and teaching**

The Board of Governors maintains that for all community members of St Dominic's learning is reflective of the SDIS Definition of Learning and the School Mission statement, and allows people to develop the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to be able to make informed choices and help them lead successful and rewarding lives.

The Board of Governors maintains that teaching at St Dominic's needs to be adaptive, student centred and be designed to foster an intellectual independence in students that will serve them on a life-long basis. The Board requires the SLT, in collaboration with staff and student bodies, to develop and review teaching policies and procedures on an annual basis to ensure they are relevant to student needs, and have a constructive and anticipated impact on learning. These policies and procedures need to be published in the Staff Handbook, or any other communication location.

Teaching policies and procedure developed in the school need to consider the following criteria:

1. The School Mission Statement
2. SDIS Definition of Learning
3. Methods, approaches and strategies that:
  - are well-matched with the IBO programmes;
  - are consistent with the school's IBO PSP development plan;
  - designed to challenge and engage all students;
  - prepare students for global citizenship.

### **Assessment Philosophy**

St Dominic's International School believes that the written, taught and assessed curricula are interdependent. Assessment is an important tool to evaluate what students know and can do. Further to this, it provides feedback to teachers regarding next steps in student learning and curriculum development. It is essential to determine when, how, and what to assess for planning, teaching, and learning. Teachers use a wide range of strategies and tools to assess student learning and to enhance student learning. Assessments are accessible in terms of design, content and medium to give every student the opportunity to

demonstrate their learning. St Dominic's International School promotes internationally minded students who understand concepts, acquire knowledge, take action, and master their attitudes and skills. We recognise the importance of assessing the process as well as the products of inquiry. It is important for the whole School community to understand the importance of assessment, what it is being assessed, and the criteria for success.

Assessment is used to monitor student progress, achievement, and effort. It is also utilized to adapt the curriculum and differentiate planning accordingly.

At SDIS we believe that assessment is an integral part of learning and teaching. Accommodations apply to students not only during summative IB assessments but are also made available throughout the course of study. This includes all classroom work and formative assessments that are part of everyday learning and teaching.

## **Purpose**

### **Purpose of assessment for teachers**

#### **Purpose of assessment for student**

#### **Purpose of assessment for parents**

#### **Purpose of assessment for SLT and Board of Governors**

## **Building Students' Assessment Capability**

### **7.2 Language**

At St. Dominic's school, we believe that communication, both oral and written, is the key to educational progress, to social integration and to personal development and happiness. Language is both rich and diverse, constantly evolving, enabling us to express ideas, feelings, emotions and opinions. It informs and reflects the culture and society in which we live.

#### **2. Purpose**

#### **3. Language programmes**

#### **4. Home Language**

The school acknowledges the vital importance of maintenance and development of language and literacy skills in the student's home language. It recognizes that this development is important in acquiring a second language, thus contributing to additive bilingualism. At the same time, the school sees this as an opportunity to increase intercultural awareness and foster cultural understanding for both the students, peers, teachers and other members in the school community.

#### **5. Host Country Language**

From grade 1 up and including grade 8, the school has a commitment to embrace teaching Portuguese Language and Culture to all students. Portuguese Culture is taught not only

through Portuguese Language lessons, but also in other subjects. Host country's traditions and celebrations are supported by the school community.

The school reviews mandated policies on a regular basis to ensure that they are cohesive and are aligned with IB Standards and Practices.

### **7.21 Language of instruction**

English is the language of instruction across the curriculum (except in classes of languages other than English) and the common language of communication in the school.

### **7.22 Maintenance of mother tongue**

### **7.23 Inclusivity**

### **7.24 English as an additional language (EAL)**

### **7.25 Course choices**

### **7.26 Portuguese language and culture**

From Grade 1, up to and including Grade 8, the school has an obligation, which it willingly embraces, to teach Portuguese Language and Culture to all students. Indeed our practices with respect to such "host country studies" go beyond this required minimum.

## **7.3 Instructional goals and objectives**

The school follows the IB curriculum and is committed to the holistic development of young people. It is also committed to preparing students for the future, and thus the focus is not only on the acquisition of knowledge and skills, but also on developing deep understanding and thinking that allows students to be able to transfer and use knowledge, ideas, concepts and designs between disciplines.

## **7.4 Curriculum design and development**

The Curriculum is designed within the framework of the IB curriculum. Developments occur through innovation within this framework and in response to changes to this framework.

## **7.5 Field trips**

The Board of Governors authorises and encourages field trips for educational purposes provided such trips are properly planned and have been approved by the Principal.

The field trip is defined as an educational activity that meets the following criteria:

- (a) it involves a specific class or classes;
- (b) it is intended for all students in the class(es);
- (c) it takes the class away from the classroom;
- (d) it has an identifiable educational objective;
- (e) it includes preparing the students for the activity, and follow-up evaluation after the trip.

Parental permission is required for all field trips. Where permission is not granted, and the rest of the class are going, the parent will be required to keep the student at home.

Arrangements and schedules for the trip must be approved by Head of School and then communicated to SLT in advance before final granting or denying approval.

School transportation vehicles, if available, may be used for School trips. No students will be transported in unauthorised vehicles; the School is only responsible for students who travel in authorised vehicles going to and from school- approved events. The School's maximum liability is that which is covered by the School's current liability insurance. The School Nurse should be notified of any field trip at least one week in advance.

Staff should note that their private vehicles should not be used for transporting students; they are not covered under the school's insurance, and may invalidate their own insurance.

On all School-sponsored trips involving students, provision must be made for proper supervision by School employees. Parents are permitted and encouraged to assist School staff in such supervision.

## **7.6 Teaching about controversial issues**

### **7.6.1 Alcohol, drugs and sex education**

#### **The objectives of ADS education**

### **7.6.2 Religious Education**

St Dominic's is rooted in the Dominican tradition. The entire school community is encouraged to have an open, tolerant attitude to all, and a commitment to the search for truth.

## **7.7 Evaluation of instructional programmes**

The instructional programme is viewed as a dynamic one. It should constantly be reviewed internally and its quality assessed against results obtained from formative and summative assessments, student feedback as well as external examinations.

The instructional programme will be adapted when and where appropriate as a result of pedagogical research, in order to meet the educational needs of the students and the requirements of the School population.

Regular evaluation of the instructional programme is the responsibility of the entire staff under the leadership of the Principal.

Results of these evaluations will be presented to the Board of Governors as required, but at least once every two years a full report on the curriculum will be presented formally by the Principal at a designated Board meeting.

## **8.0 Students\***

### **8.1 Philosophy**

At all times decisions, actions and relations should be aimed at working with students. Students should be respected, listened to and allowed opportunities to develop agency. Students need to understand and respect that the school staff make decisions for their well-being which are principally based on having a positive impact on learning.

## **8.2. Access and Admissions**

St Dominic's International School (SDIS) is a fully inclusive school which follows the International Baccalaureate Curriculum and offers an international education from the ages of 3-18. It provides an education for students who may move to/from schools in other countries, or who have Portugal as a base and wish to study in the English language. Admission is open to any student. The school facilitates access to the curriculum we offer in order to create a good chance of success in the IB programmes.

### **Purpose**

- To ensure that all students admitted to the school have access to the IB programmes
- To ensure that the school provides the necessary resources to enable all students to access the IB programmes

### **General admission conditions**

#### **Access to the IB programmes**

#### **PYP**

The school implements the PYP for all students across all early years and grades 1 to 5 in the Junior School. The PYP is open to any student in these grade levels.

The Junior School curriculum is based around the PYP curriculum framework and the PYP Scope and Sequences to establish the learning outcomes for each grade level. This ensures that the PYP curriculum at SDIS has the flexibility to be accessible to all students.

#### **MYP**

The school implements the MYP for all students in grades 6 to 10 in the Senior School. The MYP is open to any student in these grade levels. The MYP is inclusive by design; students of all interests and academic abilities can benefit from their participation. All students complete the Personal Project for the MYP.

Unit planners are reviewed regularly and, if necessary updated, based on departmental reflections, student interest, analysis of e-assessment results and MYP curriculum updates.

#### **DP**

The school implements the DP for all students in grades 11 and 12 in the Senior School. The DP is open to any student in these grade levels.

All students are given the opportunity to start the full IB Diploma Programme at the start of Grade 11. Continued participation in the full DP is based on academic performance, maturity, motivation and attitude to work. If the school feels that it is in the best interests of students to move to DP courses, then the school makes this recommendation to students and their families.

Students are given guidance during Grade 10 to help them to choose the correct DP subject options based on their ability and interests.

## **EAL**

At St. Dominic's, we welcome students from around the world and our students come to us with diverse cultural identities and language skills. After assessing each student's individual language needs, we design a programme that best helps each one achieve academic success. This may include in-class support or differentiated lessons in the EAL classroom.

The four skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking are not separate but inter-related, so our approach to teaching language is holistic.

To ensure effective learning, EAL teachers work alongside class teachers to plan, teach and assess students' understanding of our curriculum.

## **Learning Support**

### **Progression between programmes (PYP/MYP/DP)**

Progression from PYP to MYP is automatic, except in situations where the parents have been advised prior to the end of term 1 (December) of grade 5 that progression may be in question. In such cases, the school will work with the family to help them find suitable solutions for their child's future schooling.

Progression from MYP to DP requires completion of the MYP. Those students who do not achieve the MYP certificate are allowed to start the full DP but with certain conditions with regards to academic performance and attitude to work. Students who do not meet these conditions will be required to move to DP courses or, in extreme cases, repeat a grade level.

### **Progression between grades within a programme**

Students are occasionally required to re-sit a grade level. This decision is made by the school based on academic performance and attendance. Students are only required to resit a grade level in extreme circumstances and when the school feels that it is in the best interests of the student to do so.

The school reviews mandated policies on a regular basis to ensure that they are cohesive and are aligned with IB Standards and Practices.

## **8.3. Inclusion**

### **Purpose**

### **Scaffolding**

- We promote students' independence.
- We ensure all students develop the IB learner profile.
- We reinforce our student's strengths.
- We use teaching principles to build up learning.

## **Extended learning**

- We ensure students are accepted as they are.
- We remove learning barriers.
- We promote positive learning environments.
- We incorporate technology into our learning to support our existing curriculum.
- We plan our teaching to ensure variability is accounted for.
- We understand mistakes as a key part of learning.
- We include students in decisions about their learning.
- We encourage collaborative learning.
- We use approaches to learning that benefit the development of the IB student profile.
- We assess our students during the learning and teaching process so we can provide regular feedback and adapt our teaching styles.
- We teach all students no matter what specific difficulty they might have, making learning accessible to all.

## **Valuing prior knowledge**

- We ensure we connect with students' prior knowledge to build up their full potential.
- We clearly understand that diversity includes all members of community.
- We recognize there are gaps and overlaps in learning for each individual.

## **Defining Inclusion**

At SDIS, inclusion is the educational strategy that helps teachers provide teaching and assessment across abilities while delivering the same content. The aim is to create a more supportive environment for both teachers and students.

According to the IB Learning Diversity and Inclusion Policy, "inclusion is an ongoing process that aims to increase access and engagement in learning for all students by identifying and removing barriers. Inclusion is an organization paradigm that involves change. It is a continual process of increasing learning and participation for all students. It addresses learning support requirements and questions the broader objectives of education, the nature of pedagogy, curriculum and assessment. It is an educational approach to which all schools should aspire. Inclusion is facilitated in a culture of collaboration, mutual respect, support and problem-solving involving the whole school community."

UNESCO states inclusive education means that all children - no matter who they are - can learn together in the same school. This entails reaching out to all learners and removing all barriers that could limit participation and achievement.

According to the Portuguese Decree-Law nº 54/2018, July 6, ..."the need of each school to recognize the added value of the diversity of its students, finding ways to deal with that difference, adjusting the teaching processes to the individual characteristics and conditions of each student, mobilizing the means at its disposal so that everyone learns and participates in the life of the educational community."



## **Defining Special Educational Needs**

A student is deemed to have special educational needs (SEN) if he/she displays difficulties that are a barrier to learning and which call for special educational provision to be made to support their learning requirements.

### **8.4 Class Size**

In order to underscore that concern for children as individuals which is inherent in the School's philosophy, the school will do everything possible to ensure a student / teacher ratio which is in the best interest of all concerned, taking into account not only educational but also financial considerations. Parents and staff are expected to understand the complexities underlying target figures: the needs of a changing student population, the exigencies of a total school programme and all the uncertainties inherent in the operation of a private, international school. Because of these complexities, class size target figures may vary from one class to another at the discretion of the Principal.

### **8.5 Behaviour**

The school recognizes the importance of having an effective array of both rewards and sanctions in order to maintain good order and a positive impact on students learning.

**The aims of any Behaviour policy that is developed at St Dominic's is to:**

- reinforce the Vision and Mission Statement;
- ensure the well-being of all stakeholders;
- promote high standards of behaviour;
- protect the School environment;
- promote self-esteem;
- encourage students to share responsibility for their own development;
- help create and maintain a friendly, family atmosphere;
- encourage consistency in response to both positive and negative behaviour;
- provide a safe learning environment;
- support the development of an environment where close and effective partnerships between all staff, parents and students;
- ensure that when sanctions are used the outcome is positive and reinforcing;
- encourage self-discipline among students;
- encourage students to be responsible for their own behaviour.

## **Roles and responsibilities**

### **8.6 Questioning and Searches**

### **8.7 ICT Usage**

The use of computer equipment is regulated by-laws concerning data protection, copyright and privacy. These laws identify a number of prohibited actions relating to the use of computers which may lead a perpetrator to a fine or even imprisonment.

The use of computers (and other IT equipment) by students and staff at SDIS is subject to the conditions below. Computing management is provided by the SIMS Manager and the Vice Principal (Curriculum).



## **1. Computer Use and Misuse**

- a) Computing resources may only be used for properly authorized educational purposes. Unauthorized use includes a range of activities like playing games, writing viruses, hacking for passwords.
- b) Students and staff may not access, alter, erase or add to computer material (files or software) which has not been generated by them unless they are explicitly authorized to do so by the responsible computing management. This is an offence by-law.
- c) Students and staff may not use the computer system in a way that will compromise the integrity or the performance of the system. This includes changing of passwords, setting and screen savers.
- d) Students and staff may not tamper with or move systems or equipment, disconnect or attach peripherals, or tamper with network infrastructure.
- e) Students and staff may not transmit or store pornographic, discriminatory or defamatory materials using the SDIS computer system. This is an offence by-law.
- f) Students and staff must not cause willful damage to School computer equipment.

## **2. Security**

- a) Students are responsible for keeping secret any passwords entrusted to them.
- b) Students have to report any breach of security (eg a leaked password) to the responsible computer management immediately.
- c) Students must log in to the School system every time they use the internet

## **3. Copyright**

- a) Students and staff at SDIS are not allowed to use unlicensed software. This prohibits copying of the school's software resources and installing private software (like games) from home. This is an offence by-law.

## **4. The Internet**

- a) Use of the SDIS Internet access falls under these regulations. In addition, the following are inappropriate use of the Internet resource: chatting, including copyrighted or indecent materials (picture or text) on a webpage, hacking into the SDIS Internet account, changing Internet settings, use or abuse of social networking sites.

## **5. Disciplinary measures**

### **8.8 Academic Integrity**

The School is committed to values which reflect the attributes of the IB Learner Profile and therefore to personal responsibility, integrity and honesty, consistent with the policy and practice promoted by the IBO in its document on "Academic Honesty in the IB Educational Context" (IBO, Geneva, 2014).

SDIS is committed to nurturing principled and responsible global citizens who respect, understand and exemplify the principles of academic honesty. By demonstrating academic integrity the learner is making their knowledge, understanding, and thinking transparent. A safe and nurturing environment will support academically honest behaviours and help to instil the values and principles that lie behind such behaviours. Students understand the

need of acting with honesty and remain principled by taking responsibility for their actions. In addition, students will be able to be reflective on their academic actions and understand the possible consequences in case of malpractice.

## Purpose

- To ensure that all students are provided with instruction and guidance which will avoid placing their academic work or reputation at risk.
- To employ procedures and programmes to support the school's objective to be an IB World School of repute promoting academic rigour whereby all work by students is verified as authentic and being produced honestly and fairly.

## Primary Years Programme (PYP)

## Middle Years Programme (MYP) and Diploma Programme (DP)

### Definition of academic malpractice

**Plagiarism:** the representation of another person's work or ideas as one's own (i.e. ideas and direct quotations need to be acknowledged);

**Copying:** another student's work and submitting it as your own;

**Cheating:** in a quiz, test or exam by copying notes from a book, an internet source or another student;

**Collusion:** supporting dishonesty by someone else; e.g. by allowing one's work to be copied;

**Duplication of work:** presenting the same work for different assessment components;

**Misconduct:** during classroom tests and IB Examinations – taking unauthorized material into an examination room, communicating with others during examinations or having disruptive behaviours. Getting hold of examinations materials and /or photographing the examination work. Sharing the material with others. Asking someone (tutors) to do the assessment tasks. Inventing CAS records. Forging parent's signatures on documents. (based on the Academic honesty in the IB educational context, 2014)

The school reviews mandated policies on a regular basis to ensure that they are cohesive and are aligned with IB Standards and Practices.

## References

- Academic Honesty in the IB Educational Context. International Baccalaureate Organization (UK) Ltd, 2014, [www.ibo.org/globalassets/digitaltoolkit/brochures/academic-honesty-ib-en.pdf](http://www.ibo.org/globalassets/digitaltoolkit/brochures/academic-honesty-ib-en.pdf).
- The Learner. International Baccalaureate Organization (UK) Ltd, 2018.
- Learning and Teaching. International Baccalaureate Organization (UK) Ltd, 2018.
- Handbook of Procedures for Diploma Programme 2020
- Brochure Academic Honesty, myib/digitaltoolkit/brochures

## **9.0 Community \***

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

The Board recognizes the importance of an active Parent-Teacher Association, and does everything possible to support and facilitate its activities. The PTA is represented on the Board of Governors.

### **9.2 Staff Association**

The Board recognizes the importance of the staff being able to discuss issues and represent themselves appropriately, and it is incumbent upon the Principal to communicate such issues to the Board of Governors.

### **9.3 Alumni (Past Pupil) Association 'PPA'**

The Board recognizes the importance of an active Alumni Association. A staff member is appointed to facilitate and maintain links with previous students and facilitate both social and informative activities. Depending on the circumstances, the role may or may not be a paid position.

\*For the full version of this document, please contact the school Principal.

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