

## General principles

The Swiss International Scientific School in Dubai (SISD) accepts applications from boys and girls as day students from 3 years old up to the age of 18, and as boarding students from the age of 11 (Grade 6) onwards.

SISD welcomes students who are committed to the concept of an international education, whether they are local or international. They must be willing and capable to meet the academic demands of the school, to benefit from the education that is provided and to identify with our School Philosophy.

In order to meet its educational and pastoral obligations, it is vital that the individuals responsible for our students' education are in complete agreement with the school's educational principles and support the school in its efforts. SISD must therefore be in possession of all the necessary information relevant to the personal, academic and physical development of its students.

We encourage all prospective parents to make an appointment to meet the Admissions Team and take the time to visit our school and learn more about our curriculum. We offer personalized as well as weekly school tours and the opportunity to discuss the educational needs of each applicant.

The Admissions Team supports new families through the admission process to make the transition in our school as smooth as possible. All applications are considered individually, taking into consideration the following factors:

- Previous school history
- Language profile and level
- Final goals of the applicant
- Level of maturity
- Age as per KHDA regulations

## Inclusive Education

In line with the Dubai Inclusive Education Policy Framework (2017), SISD is committed to providing inclusive education that is reflected in the everyday life of our school community. We welcome students of determination and give them access to appropriate provision, resources and curricular options while ensuring all students have access to quality instruction, intervention and support.

### An inspiring, inclusive and challenging learning environment

The mission of SISD is to provide an inspiring, inclusive and challenging learning environment for all our students while celebrating academic excellence. In line with the Dubai Inclusive Education Policy Framework (2017), we are committed to educating all students, including students of determination experiencing special education needs and disabilities (SEND) in a common learning environment. We fully support all students, including those with additional needs and/or talented and gifted to become successful, global minded, enthusiastic lifelong learners who will confidently take advantage of future opportunities and help make a difference in this world.

At SISD we ensure:

- Students are not refused admission based only on their experience of SEND
- All applicants have the right to sit admission assessment tests
- All applicants are fairly assessed
- Collaboration between parents and previous schools to ensure a successful transition
- Provisions will be made to ensure barriers are reduced or removed during the assessment for applicants experiencing SEND. Access arrangements will be made based on the student's usual way of working
- Students who experience SEND will receive sibling priority subject to availability of spaces
- Students who experience SEND will be provided with appropriate levels of support, accommodations and curricular modifications in order to access the same educational opportunities as their peers

The Admissions Team will seek the support and advice of the SENCO and Inclusion Team to conduct assessments and determine educational needs for new joiners experiencing SEND. The SENCO and Inclusion Team will use the information gained from learning difficulty diagnostic testing or educational assessments provided to Admissions by the parents at time of application, together with assessment results, to determine the type and level of support appropriate for each student.

Please refer to our Inclusion Policy for full guidance.

#### Exam Access Arrangements

These are arrangements put in place to ensure all students have equal access to examinations. Students should not be disadvantaged by any special educational needs or disabilities. Access arrangements encompass a wide range of provision which include:

- Being allowed to sit examination in a smaller separate room
- Supervised rest breaks
- Use of colour overlays
- Prompter
- Extra time
- Scribe
- Practical assistant
- Modified tests

#### Disabled Access

The accessibility of the school premises is in accordance with the Dubai Universal Accessibility Code and includes ramps, lifts, disabled parking spaces and disabled toilets.

Please refer to our Health and Safety Policy for further guidance for disabled access.

## SISD Admissions Application Procedure – Day Applications

Applying to the Swiss International Scientific School in Dubai (SISD) is a simple process.

### Step 1: Online Application

1. Parents should be ready to upload the following documents
  - Copy of child's most recent nursery or school report (for KG1 and up)
  - Copy of child's passport (first page and Visa) and Emirates ID (front and back), if already available
  - Copy of both parents' passports (first page and Visa) and Emirates ID (front and back), if already available
  - Copy of a passport sized photograph of child and both parents
  - Copy of any learning difficulty diagnostic testing or educational assessment (if applicable) \*
  - Copy of any psychological assessments (if applicable) \*
  - Copy of custody papers (if applicable)
2. Parents should check the Year Guide for child's correct Grade level
3. Parents should complete and submit the online application form
4. Parents should upload the requested documents

\*Please note that we are asking for details of any learning difficulties, current Individual Education Plan (IEP), personal/social/emotional/behavioral issues or medical conditions. These will assist us in making reasonable adjustments and put appropriate arrangements in place during the assessments based on the student's usual way of working. Please be advised, failure to disclose any information at the time of application may result subsequently in a place being withdrawn.

### Step 2: Interview and Assessment

Once the fully completed application with complete documents has been received, Admissions request confidential Teacher Recommendation from student's former school for applicants G2 and above.

Applicants are then invited to interview and assessment (Sunday through Thursday 9am to 4pm). The non-refundable application fee of AED 525 (check, cash or credit card) is payable on the day of the assessment. Assessments can also be organized at the applicant's current school under supervision of either teachers or grade level leaders. Assessments should ideally take place at SISD, but can also be organized remotely if a trip to Dubai is not possible.

### Step 3: Offer and Acceptance

Once the child is admitted to SISD, parents will receive an Offer Letter within 5 working days. If they decide to accept the offer, the signed Offer Letter and payment of the Registration Fee (deductible from 1st semester fee) are due within 7 days. A child's place is not secured until the signed Offer Letter and the Registration Fee have been received.

To register your child with the Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA), we will need a Transfer Certificate for Grade 2 and above before the start of the school year. This mandatory document provides the KHDA

with the students' previous curriculum followed, age and grade level completed ensuring that students are not promoted or demoted without prior approval by all parties. Please follow the Guidelines and use the Transfer Certificate Sample provided by the Admissions Team.

## SISD Admissions Application Procedure – Boarding Applications

Applying to the Swiss International Scientific School in Dubai (SISD) for boarding is a simple process.

### Step 1: Online Application

1. Parents should be ready to upload the following documents
  - Copy of two most recent school reports
  - Completed SISD Medical File and completed, stamped SISD Medical Report
  - Copy of child's passport (first page and Visa) and Emirates ID (front and back), if already available
  - Copy of both parents' passports (first page and Visa) and Emirates ID (front and back), if already available
  - Copy of a passport sized photograph of child
  - Copy of any learning difficulty diagnostic testing or educational assessment (if applicable) \*
  - Copy of any psychological assessments (if applicable) \*
  - Copy of custody papers (if applicable)
2. Parents should check the Year Guide for child's correct Grade level
3. Parents should complete and submit the online application form
4. Parents should upload the requested documents

\*Please note that we are asking for details of any learning difficulties, Individual Education Plan (IEP), personal/social/emotional/behavioral issues or medical conditions. These will assist us in making reasonable adjustments and put appropriate arrangements in place during the assessments based on the student's usual way of working. Please be advised, failure to disclose any information at the time of application may result subsequently in a place being withdrawn.

### Step 2: Interview and Assessment

Once the fully completed application with complete documents has been received, Admissions request a confidential Teacher Recommendation from student's former school.

Applicants are then invited to interviews and assessments. Interviews are conducted by the Head of Admissions and the Head of Boarding. Assessments can also be organized at the applicant's current school under supervision of either teachers or grade level leaders. Assessments and interviews should ideally take place at SISD, but can also be organized via video conference if a trip to Dubai is not possible. Admission to SISD is subject to passing of the assessment tests as well as successful interviews with all parties involved.

### Step 3: Offer and Acceptance

You will receive an Offer letter for a place in full or weekly boarding once the Leadership team has signed off the application.

To reserve the place, you will have to

- return the signed the Offer letter
- pay the Registration fee
- return the completed and signed SISD Medical Report
- return of signed Boarding School contract

Your child's place is not secured until the above have been received and confirmed.

## Transfer Certificate

To register your child with the Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA), we will need a Transfer Certificate for Grade 2 and above before the start of the school year. This mandatory document provides the KHDA with the students' previous curriculum followed, age and grade level completed ensuring that students are not promoted or demoted without prior approval by all parties. Please follow the Guidelines and use the Transfer Certificate Sample provided by the Admissions Team.

## SISD Admissions Assessments

### Assessment

Applications are evaluated and candidates are invited to attend an interview as well as to take pre-admission assessment tests. The test results will help to determine the applicant's placement and to ensure that he/she is capable to access the school's curriculum within the levels of support that are available. Parents are subsequently informed of the school's decision to admit their child to the school.

In conjunction with previous school reports and teacher recommendations, assessments are designed to determine student's readiness for SISD programmes:

- **PreKG to KG1:**  
Observational/practical play assessment to determine school readiness and competence in strongest language.  
Sessions are conducted one-on-one by the Admissions Team and last approximately 20 minutes.  
Children must be toilet-trained before the start of school.
- **KG2:**  
Observational/practical assessment on one-on-one basis to determine level of verbal expression and literacy in strongest language, numeracy and school readiness. Sessions are conducted by the Admissions Team and last approximately 30 minutes.
- **Grades 1 to 5:**  
Assessments on one-on-one basis, encompassing oral and written language skills (English and French or German for bilingual streams) and numeracy.  
Sessions are conducted by the Admissions Team and last approximately one hour.

- Grades 6 to 10:  
CEM computer test (verbal, non-verbal, numeracy and spatial reasoning) as well as a reading comprehension and writing task in English. For aspirant bilingual students, the reading comprehension and writing task will be in French or German. Assessments are conducted by the Admissions Team and reviewed by the Secondary Leadership Team and assessed against MYP criteria. Sessions last two hours, three for aspirant bilingual students.
- Grade 11 Entrance Requirements for the IB Diploma Programme:
  - Assessments on one-on-one basis, encompassing written language skills, numeracy and critical thinking
  - Candidates with MYP Certificate: MYP Grades of 4+ in a minimum of 5 subjects including English, Math and Science to study subjects at Standard Level
  - Candidates with MYP Certificate: MYP Grades of 5+ in a minimum of 5 subjects including English, Math and Science to study subjects at Higher Level
  - CERFL: minimum level B2 required in English
  - GCSEs: Grade C+ in a minimum of 5 subjects including English, Math and Science
  - Other candidates: Grade of 4+ in SISD entrance assessments
  - Complete the Grade 11 student interview via Skype or in person with the IB DP Coordinator
  - Also taken into consideration when determining a student's suitability for entry into the Diploma programme: academic integrity, conduct, attitude, work ethic and contribution to the school community.

Students who don't have the requisite formal qualifications to pursue the full IB Diploma may wish to be considered for the IB Diploma Course option and take full advantage of all the educational opportunities and experiences that SISD has to offer.

Choices of IB subjects will be discussed with our Admissions and Secondary Team, based on previous scores and predictions in order to ensure the right pathway is chosen for progression onto university.

- Grade 11 Entrance Requirements for the IB Careers-related Programme
  - Show evidence of a B2 Level of English
  - Assessments on one-on-one basis, encompassing written language skills, numeracy and critical thinking
  - Identify and express interest in the IB CP pathway on the Admissions application
  - Complete the Grade 11 student interview via Skype or in person with the IB CP Coordinator and IB DP Coordinator to discuss pathways and options

In discussions, students and parents will be advised on future pathways available to IB CP graduates and what course options are and how the programme is organized. They will also receive advice on DP course options, language portfolio options and levels of BTEC qualifications that can be accessed.

## Dates for admission

While the best time to enter our school is at the beginning of a new school year, admission at the beginning of the second semester or during any other time of the school year is possible, provided places are available.

## Priority

Admissions allocates available places on a first come first served basis and is happy to give preference to siblings of SISD families, space permitting, for applications received within the month of October for the following academic year.

Admissions further offers priority placement to students of determination who are siblings to existing students.

## SISD Admissions Language Requirements

Admission to SISD is furthermore subject to successfully passing the SISD admissions tests in English and French or German.

### English

Our languages department supports students coming from abroad and being new to English. English support is provided for students joining KG1 to Grade 9, who require assistance in English.

English language requirements increase as students approach the IB Diploma grades. Below are minimal requirements for entry into Grades 6 to 9.

- PreKG to G5 – students may enter as non-English speakers until mid-year in grade 5.
- G6 – A.2.1 Junior
- G7 – A.2.2 Junior
- G8 – B.1 Junior
- G9 – B.2 Junior
- Grades 10 to 12 – Students must be able to function independently in English with a minimum CERFL level of B2

### Bilingual Streams - French or German

The following language proficiency levels are minimal indicative requirements at the start of the school year for admission to the respective bilingual grades:

- PreKG and KG1 – no specific language requirements
- KG2 aiming at G1 E+ - basic understanding and oral command of French or German, exposure to French or German at home
- KG2 aiming at G1 bilingual – oral Portfolino A.1 level, exposure to F or G at home
- G1 –A.1.1 Primary
- G2 - A.1.2 Primary
- G3 - A.2.1 Primary
- G4 - A.2.2 Primary
- G5 - B.1.1 Primary
- G6 - A.2.1 Junior

- G7 - A.2.2 Junior
- G8 – B.1 Junior
- G9 – B.2 Junior
- Grades 10 to 12 – students must be able to follow a native curriculum in either French or German

Please refer to the Portfolino, Primary and Junior Grids for level clarification.

At any point during a student's SISD school career a change to E+ will be discussed if progress reports, language support provisions and teacher feedback recommend this transition to the students' academic benefit.

English + Stream: French or German

No specific language requirements for either French or German.

### English as an Additional Language Program

SISD offers a personalized EAL (English as and Additional Language) Programme for new joiners from non-English speaking learning environments in Grades 6-9. Our EAL Programme is designed to substantially improve the student's English proficiency to fully integrate the academic content of the challenging IB curriculum after a minimum of one, and a maximum of two semesters in the EAL Programme.

SISD Admissions Policy November 2019