



ST. PAUL'S CO-EDUCATIONAL COLLEGE

International Baccalaureate Information Booklet

2011 -2012

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Dear Parents and Students,

This information booklet sets out to provide a general introduction to the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP) and other issues relevant to its implementation.

Inside you will find an overview of the IBDP, brief course descriptions and answers to questions frequently asked about the programme.

SPCC offers the curricula of the local NSS and the IBDP in parallel. This booklet is the first of other publications on the IB and the NSS to be prepared by the school for you and your child. Briefing Sessions will also be hosted for you to receive updates and to ask questions. We hope, by doing so, to assist you to make an informed choice in Form 3 on which programme to choose.

Yours sincerely,



Dr. Anissa Chan

Principal

Mission statement of St Paul's Co-educational College

1. Uphold the founding Christian spirit of our schools: 'Faith, Hope and Love'.
2. Nurture academic excellence and lifelong learning.
3. Cultivate exemplary conduct, proper attitudes and correct values.
4. Develop an appreciation for the arts and competence in other activities.
5. Develop a global perspective, foster environment stewardship and serve humanity.
6. Advocate strong communication and interpersonal skills to promote harmony, mutual respect, appreciation and peace among humankind.
7. Adopt a shared and inclusive governance model.
8. Provide the best possible facilities and environment conducive to studies.
9. Maintain a professional and caring academic and administrative staff.

Mission Statement of the IBO

The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

The International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO)

Founded in 1968, the IBO is a non-profit education foundation aims at promoting internationally recognized programmes of study focussing on the development of the whole student. The IBO is based in Geneva, Switzerland and administered by the International Baccalaureate Curriculum and Assessment Centre in Cardiff, United Kingdom.

Educational Programmes of the International Baccalaureate

The International Baccalaureate (IB) offers three educational programmes for a worldwide community of schools:

- the Primary Years Programme for students aged 3-12
- the Middle Years Programme for students aged 11-16
- the Diploma Programme for students in the final two years of secondary school

Each of the three programmes emphasizes trans-disciplinary learning and intercultural understanding. Only schools authorized by the IBO may offer the IB curriculum.

The Rationale for SPCC to Offer the IBDP

The parallels between the educational philosophy at SPCC and the IBO in developing students into life-long learners and responsible global citizens are what attracted the school to offer dual curricula, the HKDSE and the IBDP. The School Council strongly believes that the provision of two meaningful academic options for its students enables the school to better cater to its diverse student body, which encompasses a broad array of talents and interests and different learning styles.

The IB Learner Profile

This is the IBO mission statement translated into a set of learning outcomes for IB students of all ages.

IB learners strive to be:

- Inquirers** They develop their natural curiosity. They acquire the skills necessary to conduct inquiry and research and show independence in learning. They actively enjoy learning and this love of learning will be sustained throughout their lives.
- Knowledgeable** They explore concepts, ideas and issues that have local and global significance. In so doing, they acquire in-depth knowledge and develop understanding across a broad and balanced range of disciplines.
- Thinkers** They exercise initiative in applying thinking skills critically and creatively to recognize and approach complex problems, and make reasoned, ethical decisions.
- Communicators** They understand and express ideas and information confidently and creatively in more than one language and in a variety of modes of communication. They work effectively and willingly in collaboration with others.
- Principled** They act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness, justice and respect for the dignity of the individual, groups and communities. They take responsibility for their own actions and the consequences that accompany them.
- Open-minded** They understand and appreciate their own cultures and personal histories, and are open to the perspectives, values and traditions of other individuals and communities. They are accustomed to seeking and

evaluating a range of points of view, and are willing to grow from the experience.

Caring

They show empathy, compassion and respect towards the needs and feelings of others. They have a personal commitment to service, and act to make a positive difference to the lives of others and to the environment.

Risk-takers

They approach unfamiliar situations and uncertainty with courage and forethought, and have the independence of spirit to explore new roles, ideas and strategies. They are brave and articulate in defending their beliefs.

Balanced

They understand the importance of intellectual, physical and emotional balance to achieve personal well-being for themselves and others.

Reflective

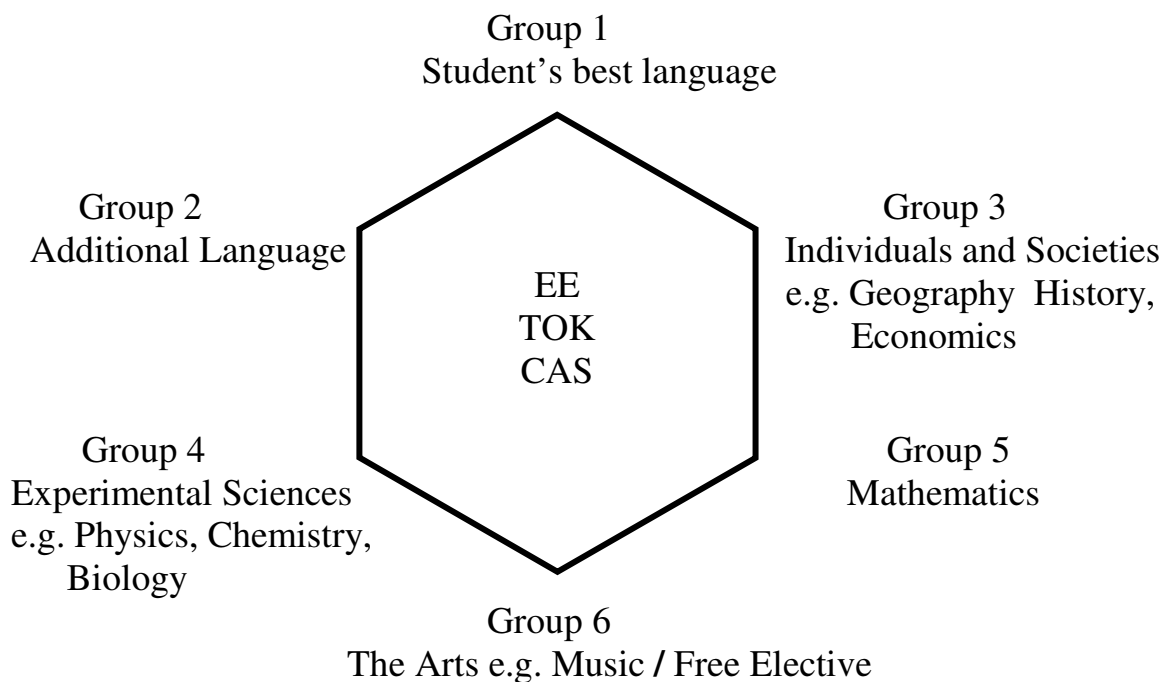
They give thoughtful consideration to their own learning and experience. They are able to assess and understand their strengths and limitations in order to support their learning and personal development.

(Source: www.ibo.org)

An Overview of the IBDP Curriculum Structure

The IBDP curriculum comprises a suite of six groups with equal focus on both the humanities and the sciences. Students must select one subject from each of these six groups – two languages (one from Group 1 and one from Group 2*), a humanities subject from Group 3, a science subject from Group 4, a Mathematics option from Group 5 and a subject from Group 6, ‘The Arts’. Students may choose their sixth subject from among those offered from Group one to Group 4 in lieu of Group 6**.

Students also have to complete three components which are central to the IBDP - Theory of Knowledge (TOK), Creativity, Action and Service (CAS) and Extended Essay (EE).



*Students who do two languages in Group 1 will be following a bilingual diploma and are not required to do a third language in Group 2 unless they so desire. In this case this third language will be a free elective chosen in lieu of a Group 6 subject.

** At SPCC, the subject at the moment that is offered in Group 6 is Music.

While the IBDP allows students to gain a broader view of the world, it also requires them to conduct in-depth study of some academic disciplines. They have to decide which three of their six subjects will be followed at Higher Level (HL) and which three at Standard Level (SL). They may opt to study four subjects at HL and two at SL. HL subjects require a greater depth of study across a broader range of content.

The Three Core Elements

TOK - Theory of Knowledge

The TOK course is central to the educational philosophy of the International Baccalaureate. It stimulates both teachers and students to reflect critically on the different areas of knowledge and the diverse ways we arrive at them, taking into consideration the strengths and weaknesses of each of these ways of knowing. In doing so, the various threads in the IBDP curriculum will be linked to allow students to reflect upon the knowledge they gain from science, literature, language, mathematics, and social studies.

The TOK course is composed almost entirely of questions. The most central of these is ‘How do I know that a given assertion is true or a given judgement is well grounded?’ Students as the ‘knowers’ apply this central question to many different, yet interrelated, topics. An awareness of the impact of culture on knowledge plays an essential role in helping students to reflect on these questions. For example, instead of being asked ‘Should creationism be taught in Biology lessons?’, a TOK student may be asked ‘How does your culture / community influence your views on creationism?’ Students are then encouraged to explore their own cultural and personal backgrounds and those of others and to examine the commonalities and differences among various academic disciplines in order to be truly balanced and objective critical thinkers.

EE – Extended Essay

The EE is a 4,000-word research project which provides the opportunity for students to develop individual research skills. They are required to choose a research topic and complete an in-depth investigation that will take them beyond the confines of the syllabus.

Each student is allocated an Extended Essay Supervisor according to his or her choice of research topic. The supervisor provides advice and guidance. For example he or she might advise students on how to formulate a research question, access appropriate resources, gather and analyse data, and document sources.

CAS – Creativity, Action and Service

The aim of these three strands of experiential learning in CAS is to enhance the personal and interpersonal development of the students. Such ‘experiential education’ provides an arena for students to develop many of the attributes described in the IB learner profile. Participation in CAS fosters in them a value system by which their spirit of open-mindedness, discovery and self-reliance is enhanced. It also helps in their development of new skills and the sharing of special talents.

CAS is an extension to subject work and students are required to spend a minimum of 150 hours in activities that display a reasonable balance between creativity, action and service. The focus is on the quality of the activities and on self-initiated service activity. Successful completion of CAS is a requirement for the award of the IB diploma.

Mode of assessment for the TOK and the EE

Presentations of the TOK work in class are assessed internally. The written work completed in the course and the Extended Essay are graded externally from Level A to E with Level A awarded to work of the highest standard.

A General Outline of the Six Subject Groups

Groups 1 and 2 - Languages

Group 1:

Each Diploma candidate must do a language from group 1. The chosen language must be one in which the students show a high level of competency, irrespective of whether it is their first language or not.

Students who choose to study two languages from Group 1 instead of one each from Groups 1 and 2 will be candidates for a Bilingual Diploma.

Group 2:

This is for students to learn an additional language. The chosen language should not be one in which they are highly competent. Two options are offered in this group - a *Foundation / ab initio* language which students have little or no experience with or a *Language B* which students have some prior learning in, about 2-5 years for SL and 4-5 years for HL.

Group 3 - Individuals and Societies

Subjects in this group, for example History, Geography, Economics, help students develop a critical appreciation of human experience and behaviour, understand the varieties of physical, economic and social environments that people inhabit and acquire historical knowledge of social and cultural institutions. Students are encouraged to understand that human attitudes and opinions are very diverse and to understand that a study of society requires appreciation of such diversity.

Group 4 - Experimental sciences

Subjects in this group, for example Physics, Chemistry, Biology, stimulate and challenge students to explore scientific study and creativity within global contexts. Their awareness of the moral, ethical, social, economic and environmental implications of using science and technology will be raised

and their appreciation of the possibilities and limitations associated with science and scientists will be enhanced.

A common curriculum model applies to all the subjects in this group. Both HL students and SL students will study a core of materials supplemented by the study of options. There are three kinds of options: those specific to SL students, those specific to HL students and those which can be taken by both SL and HL students.

All students are required to do practical/investigative work which includes a collaborative group 4 project.

Group 5 – Mathematics

The prevalence of Mathematics in our lives is a self-explanatory rationale for making this subject compulsory in the IBDP. Mathematical knowledge is important to our understanding of the world in which we live.

Group 6 - The Arts

Subjects in this group emphasize both creativity and practical research. They are essentially interpretive in approach and allow for adaptability to different cultural contexts, strengths and interests in the classroom.

The Grade Descriptors

The subjects in the six groups, be they followed at SL or HL, are to be evaluated externally by examiners contracted by the IB Curriculum and Assessment Office in Cardiff, Wales on a point scale of 1 (the lowest) to 7 (the highest).

Grade	Criteria
7 Excellent	A consistent and thorough understanding of the required knowledge and skills, and the ability to apply them almost faultlessly in a wide variety of situations. Consistent evidence of analysis, synthesis and evaluation where appropriate. The student consistently demonstrates originality and insight and always produces work of high quality.
6 Very Good	A consistent and thorough understanding of the required knowledge and skills, and the ability to apply them in a wide variety of situations. Consistent evidence of analysis, synthesis and evaluation where appropriate. The student generally demonstrates originality and insight.
5 Good	A consistent and thorough understanding of the required knowledge and skills, and the ability to apply them in a variety of situations. The student generally shows evidence of analysis, synthesis and evaluation where appropriate, and occasionally demonstrates originality and insight.
4 Satisfactory	A good general understanding of the required knowledge and skills, and the ability to apply them effectively in normal situations. There is occasional evidence of the skills of analysis, synthesis and evaluation where appropriate.
3 Marginal	Limited achievement against most of the objectives, or clear difficulties in some of the areas. The student demonstrates a limited understanding of the required knowledge and skills and is only able to apply them fully in normal situations with support.
2 Poor	Very limited achievement against all the objectives. The student demonstrates a limited understanding of the required knowledge and skills and is unable to apply them fully in normal situations, even with support.
1 Very Poor	Minimal achievement in terms of the objectives. Work that has been completed is well below that required for satisfactory performance. Work may be superficial or irrelevant to the assignments. Assignments may not have been handed in.

Mode of assessment

- up to 50% internal and up to 80% external assessable components across all academic subjects
- internal assessments which are internally marked and externally moderated are integrated into the teaching programme
- criterion-referenced assessment with performance measured against well-defined levels of achievement applied equally to all schools

Award of the Diploma

Performance in each subject as shown in the table above is graded on a scale of 1 to 7 points. A maximum of 3 points is awarded for the combined performance in the TOK and the EE. The maximum total point score is 45.

Group 1 First Language	Group 2 Second Language	Group 3 Individuals and Society	Group 4 Exper- imental Sciences	Group 5 Mathematics	Group 6 The Arts / Elective	EE& TOK	Total
7	7	7	7	7	7	3	45

In general, the Diploma is awarded to candidates whose total score reaches or exceeds 24 points (including any bonus points derived from the TOK or the EE) and who have met all of the CAS requirements.

Candidates who score between 24 to 27 points will also need to meet all the following requirements:

- at least grade D has been awarded for both the TOK and the EE
- there is no grade 1 in any subject
- there is no grade 2 at higher level
- there is no more than one grade 2 at SL
- overall, there are no more than three grades 3 or below
- at least 12 points have been gained on the three HLs
- at least 9 points have been gained on the three SLs

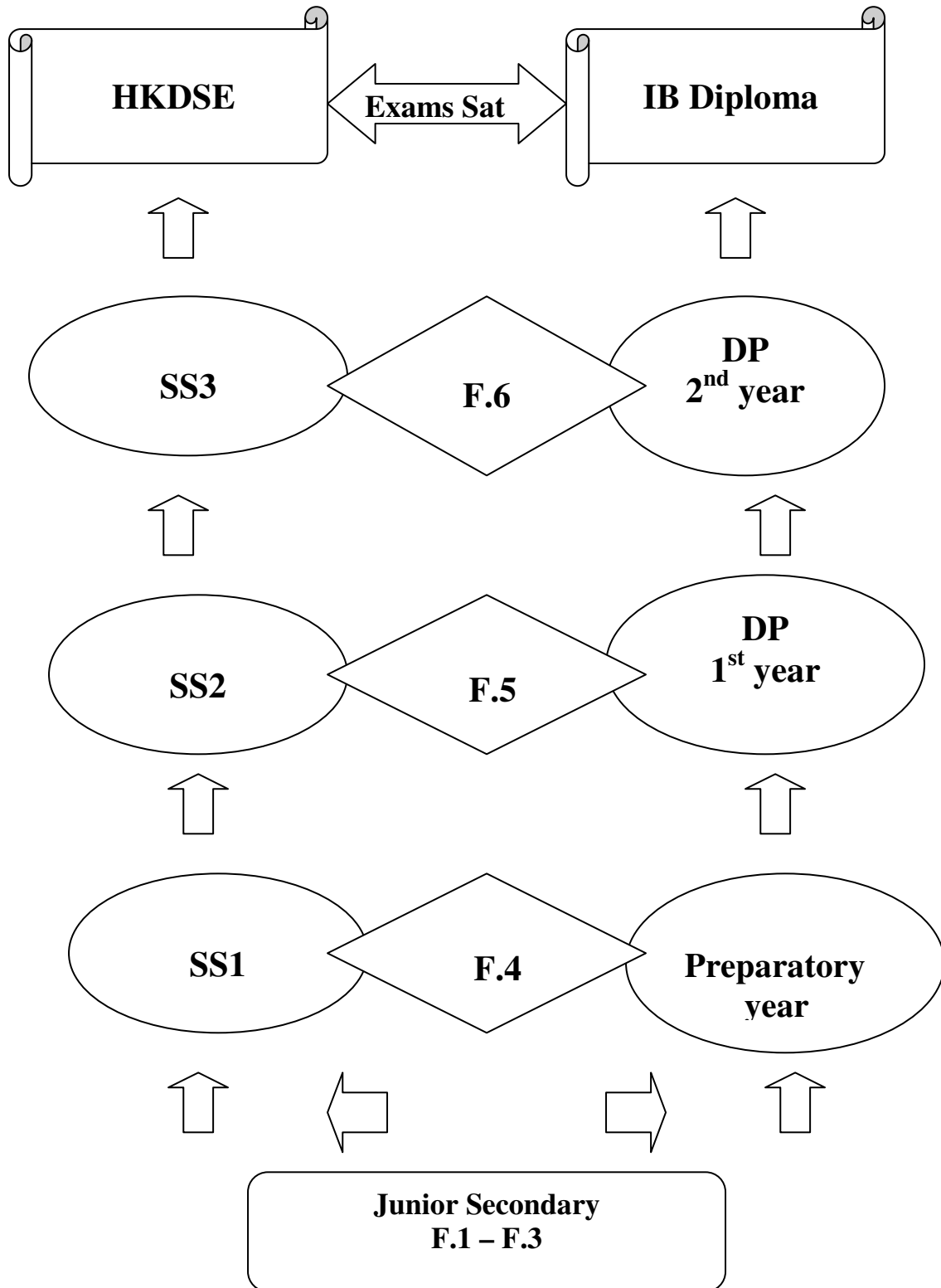
Students who register as full diploma candidates but fail to meet the requirements for the IB Diploma are awarded with certificates for examinations completed.

The table below shows the bonus point matrix for the EE and the TOK:

		Theory of Knowledge				
		A Excellent	B Good	C Satisfactory	D Mediocre	E Elementary
Extended Essay	A Excellent	+3	+3	+2	+2	+1 F*
	B Good	+3	+2	+1	+1	F*
	C Satisfactory	+2	+1	+1	+0	F*
	D Mediocre	+2	+1	+0	+0	F*
	E Elementary	+1 F*	F*	F*	F*	F

- F* 28 points overall will be required to be eligible for the Diploma if a student attains an 'E' grade in either the EE or the TOK.
- A grade 'A' in one of the requirements earns an extra point even if the other is a grade 'E'.
- A grade 'E' in both the TOK and the EE represents an automatic failure.

Dual Curricula at SPCC



Frequently Asked Questions

1. How is the IBDP different from the NSS? Is one better than the other?

While neither programme is better than the other, they each have different emphases. The NSS is a three-year programme aiming to provide students with successful transitions to post-secondary education, university level education as well as the workplace while the IBDP is a two-year programme which prepares students primarily for university level education.

The NSS permits students to choose 3 or 4 electives freely on top of the core subjects of English, Chinese, Mathematics and Liberal Studies. The IBDP on the other hand, requires students to take one course from each of the six IB subject groups plus the three core elements of TOK, CAS and EE. By requiring students to study both the humanities and the sciences, the IBDP by design requires them to have an all-round intellectual development.

For students who intend to do the IBDP, their F.4 year will be a preparatory year. Its objective is to help acclimatize students to the IB educational philosophy which demands a high degree of independent work and good planning. It also aims at developing their study skills and knowledge in curricular content so that they are well prepared for the two-year programme that follows.

2. As a student, how should I decide whether to take the IBDP or the NSS?

This is a complex issue and one that should be discussed with your parents, teachers and careers counsellor. You need to make an informed choice and to have a genuine understanding of yourself, both strengths and constraints. Reflect on your learning experiences in school and seriously consider your own learning style, your interest, aptitude and personalities.

Some students would do better to choose the NSS curriculum if they are strongly inclined to do either the humanities or the sciences. For the IBDP, besides having to do both the humanities and sciences groups, there is the

extra components of the TOK and the Extended Essay which involve an extra time and energy commitment in extensive reading and writing.

3. As a parent, how can I help my child prepare for the IBDP?

Students who plan to take the IBDP should begin their preparation early. Encourage your child to develop and practise good study habits and to work on time management skills. Proficiency in English and Chinese is essential. He/she needs to develop good reading and writing skills. Developing independence and encouraging self-motivation are important factors especially in IB study.

4. How to choose between Higher Level and Standard Level?

Choices should be made based on individual strengths and interests. Very often the HL subjects are those that students may want to pursue at tertiary level. They may use the free elective option in Group 6 to choose another science or humanities subject so as to allow them a degree of specialization necessary for university application.

5. What is the class size for every subject?

The IBO recommends a limit of 25 students per class for every subject.

6. Does a student have to take an IBDP course in order to take an IBDP exam?

Yes. The IBDP is a curriculum that requires ongoing assessments throughout the two years. As a percentage of the exam score is based on these assessments, a student cannot just sit an exam without having taken the course.

7. How many marks do students need to obtain to get into a highly competitive university?

It varies from university to university. Each university sets its own policy. You are advised to check with the careers counsellor and visit university website to check entrance requirements. A section of the IBO website is dedicated to providing recognition policies and contact information for many universities worldwide. Go to www.ibo.org → ‘Contact us’ → ‘Country Information’.

8. Is the IBDP more suitable for students who aim for overseas universities?

Not at all. The programme is well-recognized by both local and overseas universities. When applying for local universities, IB students will apply through NON-JUPUS admission which has no quota set on students who have the right of abode in Hong Kong.

9. What training is provided for teachers teaching the IBDP programme?

There is extensive, on-going training for teachers provided by the IBO and the IBO authorized sources.

10. What will be the nature of the interaction between the IB students and the rest of the school?

Students in the IB programme will interact with the larger framework of the school like any student at SPCC. There will be equal opportunities for every student to participate in the school’s extra-curricular activities.

11. May students re-sit the exam?

Yes, students may re-sit the exam the following year. They may register through their original IB school, or, if they have moved, through an IB school close to them.

12. If a student starts the IB preparatory year in F.4, must he/she carry on to do the Diploma Programme in F.5 and F.6?

Yes.

13. Can one decide to do the IBDP only when one is in F.4?

There will be a deadline at the end of F.3 for students to express their desire to enrol on the Preparatory Year. After this deadline it is no longer possible to change to an IB Candidate status. Once again, the emphasis is on making a carefully planned decision before entry into F.4. By doing your research and planning now, you will be able to choose a program that meets your needs.

14. Where can I get more information?

You are most welcome to contact Ms Jennifer Lo, the IBDP coordinator, at SPCC. You may also find it useful to explore the IBO website to learn more about this international community. Visit www.ibo.org.