



# Faculty & Staff Info book

@ IPS

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Staff Info  
Booklet

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# **ABOUT SCHOOL**

## **OUR MISSION**

In partnership with the school community, the mission of the International Programs School is to:

- Engage students from diverse cultural backgrounds in a comprehensive and an international college preparatory program that challenges and encourages high competency for success.
- Empower students to become independent, critical thinkers whilst sharing their skills at global scale.
- Promote understanding, tolerance, and compassion for others and develop citizens of integrity and Principle.

## **OUR BELIEFS**

- Every child is a unique individual with potential for growth.
- The best learning and teaching environment is free of prejudice, violence, and bullying.
- A student's full potential comes forth under the guidance and care of a professional staff.
- The skills to utilize technology are essential to prepare students for the future.
- All students are responsible for active participation in their own learning.
- Development of the sense of responsibility and service to others by teaching ethical and moral Issues.
- High standards of excellence in teaching as an important tool in challenging our students.
- A respectful, honest, and constructive communication among all members of the school community.

## **GRADUATE PROFILE**

International Programs School graduates are academically, intellectually, and technologically competent. Through creativity and innovation, they are able to conceptualize a better approach to problem solving. While expressing themselves intelligently and interestingly both orally and in writing, they possess the Necessary 21st century skills to advance to a higher level of education and be successful in the school of their choice.

Furthermore, they can adapt to change and are capable of thinking independently as well as working and Engaging in teams, a virtue that comes with being a part of a culturally diverse community.

## IB mission statement

“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.” (© International Baccalaureate Organization)

## IB Learner profile



### IB learner profile

The aim of all IB programmes is to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world.

As IB learners we strive to be:

<p><b>INQUIRERS</b> We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.</p>	<p><b>OPEN-MINDED</b> We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.</p>
<p><b>KNOWLEDGEABLE</b> We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.</p>	<p><b>CARING</b> We show empathy, compassion and respect. We have a commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.</p>
<p><b>THINKERS</b> We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyse and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.</p>	<p><b>RISK-TAKERS</b> We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.</p>
<p><b>COMMUNICATORS</b> We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.</p>	<p><b>BALANCED</b> We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives—intellectual, physical, and emotional—to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.</p>
<p><b>PRINCIPLED</b> We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.</p>	<p><b>REFLECTIVE</b> We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.</p>

The IB learner profile represents 10 attributes valued by IB World Schools. We believe these attributes, and others like them, can help individuals and groups become responsible members of local, national and global communities.

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## I. About IPS

### A. Introduction

The International Programs School (IPS) opened in 2000 with 19 pupils and currently has approximately 740 students representing over 35 different nationalities. IPS is a gender-segregated school that offers a North American curriculum, with International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (PYP) candidacy and Diploma Programme (DP) authorization. Our faculty is a diverse mix of 93 teachers and administrators from over 10 different nationalities: American, Canadian, British, Lebanese, and Saudis to mention some. We pride ourselves in providing a top quality classroom environment for our students. IPS is fully accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools and is licensed by the Saudi Ministry of Education.

### B. School Campus

The school is located on the EuroVillage compound. The school is surrounded by a calm, secure, and spacious environment. Our facilities are constantly improved to facilitate learning. A new school building project is currently under construction!



January 2017

### C. Class Size and Teaching Load

Class size is kept small to ensure individual attention and assistance for all students. The guideline is no more than 20 or 21 students in a class. The 5-day school week consists of 35 periods of 45 minutes each, Sunday through Thursday. All staff are expected to be on campus from 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The teaching load is kept in the 25-30 periods per week range.



### D. Duties

In addition to the regular teaching load, teachers are expected to:

- Provide extra help to students as needed
- Lead two after school clubs per school year
- Participate in school events as organized
- Do morning, break and lunch recess supervision according to schedule
- Attend faculty meetings and contribute to committee work



## II. Al Khobar, K.S.A.

### A. General Information about Saudi Arabia

Capital:	Riyadh
Largest City:	Riyadh
Official Language:	Arabic
Government:	Monarchy
Currency:	Saudi Riyal (SAR)

The [Kingdom of Saudi Arabia](#) is an Arab country and is the largest country of the Arabian Peninsula. It has an estimated population of about 29 million, and its size is approximately 2,150,000 square kilometers. The Kingdom is sometimes called “The Land of the Two Holy Mosques” in reference to Makkah and Medina, the two holiest places in Islam.

### B. The City of Al Khobar

Al Khobar (or Khobar), part of the Dammam metropolitan area, is a large city located in the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia. Traditionally, Khobar has been a city of shopkeepers and merchants. Today, the city boasts numerous modern malls and streets with internationally-recognized franchise shops and dining establishments.



(Google Images)

Many of Khobar’s residents are foreigners who work for large oil companies or associated industries. Most foreign families enroll their children in private international schools such as IPS.

### C. Geography and Climate

Except for the southwest, Saudi Arabia consists of semi-deserts and deserts with oases. There is very little rain. The Eastern Province consists mostly of lowlands. During most of the year, Al Khobar has a pleasant climate. During the months of June through August, the weather is very hot and humid with high temperatures of 36 to 50 °C (97 to 122 °F). In the months of December and January, the weather can be cold with an average temperature of 11 °C (52 °F). Source: [Saudi Today](#).

### D. Language

Arabic is the official language in Saudi Arabia. Classical Arabic may be heard on the radio and in TV broadcasts. However, most Saudis also speak English. Many shop owners and taxi drivers understand and speak enough English to communicate. Arabic courses are offered by many institutions.

## E. Religion

The official religion in Saudi Arabia is Islam. Saudi Arabia is strict on tradition and does not permit religious freedom, alcohol, and pork products. Prayer time is observed 5 times a day, and it is wise to be aware of these times as most individuals and businesses alter their work rhythms at these times. This does not alter rhythms at school. Free smartphone applications are available to help you navigate the prayer times!

## III. Travel to and from Al Khobar

### A. Visa and Work Permits

To work in Saudi Arabia, foreigners need to have a work visa stamped in their passport. Visa costs are covered by IPS. Passport photos are required throughout the process both before and after you get to Saudi; **start with 10** and that should get you through the initial process!



(Google Images)

The process of obtaining a visa and work permit for Saudi Arabia may seem slow and ‘overly’ bureaucratic, but it does work. IPS submits all required paperwork on the “Saudi” side and hires agents in home countries to assist with interactions with embassies and consulates for employees. It is very important that new employees carefully and promptly follow all directions from visa agents, act quickly in getting “things” done, and use courier services (with tracking numbers) for the movement of all paperwork.

When you receive your passport from the embassy, you will notice that the visa stamp is only valid for three months on arrival in K.S.A. This is not a problem; once you arrive in Al Khobar, IPS will apply for your iqama (residence permit) which is valid for one year. This requires taking medical tests again and submitting passport photos (good reason to have *at least 10* of these on hand). The school covers the iqama costs. You need to carry your iqama with you at all times, unless you travel out of the country. In that case, you exchange your iqama for your passport with a copy of the iqama, which you keep at home in a safe place. Until you have your iqama, you will not be able to open a bank account in Saudi Arabia, so make sure you have your finances in order in your home country (IPS will pay in cash until bank accounts are set up). With the iqama you also can get your first Exit/Re-entry Visa. Generally speaking, iqamas are issued within the first 30 days of living in Saudi Arabia.

### B. Multiple Exit/Re-entry Visa

As Bahrain is close to Al Khobar, many teachers like to go there during the weekends—some even fly off to Dubai and other close destinations on weekends. You will need an exit/re-entry visa to do this. A single exit/re-entry visa costs minimum 200 SR for 2 months and 100 SR per additional month up to 6 months while a multiple exit/re-entry visa costs 1,100 SR and is valid for 6 months. Most teachers choose the multiple visa, and IPS carries the expenses for the first multiple exit/re-entry per year, the teacher will pay 500 SR for the second multiple exit/re-entry. New employees should not plan to travel out of the country in the first few months of employment until they have received their iqamas and exit/re-entry visas.

### C. Couples

Married couples are advised to authenticate their marriage license from the Saudi embassy from place of origin, and carry it with them when traveling within the Kingdom. This is strongly recommended if a wife does not use her husband’s family name. Couples whose passports do not bear the same last name may have difficulty checking into hotels or traveling unless they have proof that they are married.

## D. Travel to and from Al Khobar



Initial travel to Al Khobar for overseas hire faculty members from point of hire or home country is arranged and paid for by the school. Other travels for vacation or recreation purposes during school holidays are at the expense of the teacher. Most major airlines service Dammam or Bahrain. The school travel agent assists teachers with their summer travel and IPS uses this agent's cost estimates to provide tickets (or cash) for this travel.

(Google Images)

## E. Being a Guest in Al Khobar

By Royal decree, all expat workers are considered “guests” of the Saudi people; most IPS teachers are guests. While you are here, be prepared to listen, observe, and learn, rather than to speak out and criticize before you know the reasons why people say and do things the way they do. Vocal and open criticism of Saudi society, culture, governmental politics, for example, by foreigners may provoke a strong reaction.

## IV. Communications

### A. Telephone

Long distance and overseas calls can be received at the teacher's residence as well as the school. However, long distance and overseas calls of a personal nature can only be made from a teacher's residence or personal cell phone. The international dialing code of Saudi Arabia and the area code of Al Khobar is (00966) (13).

### B. Cell Phone

Expat staff are provided temporary basic cell phone with active number upon arrival into the Kingdom. As there is no public address (PA) system at school, we use cell phones to contact each other as the need arises. This cell phone number will also become a part of the school's emergency phone tree. IF using a smartphone is desired, the SIM can be easily transferred – check for global compatibility before assuming a smart phone from home will work here in Saudi Arabia. The SIM cards will have some money on them to start and be used for the first couple weeks. These phones will be returned to the business office once iqamas have been issued and employees can get their own SIM cards from providers.

### C. Fax

The school's fax number is (00966) (13) 857-0076. Teachers may have faxes sent to this number.

### D. Internet and Email

All classrooms have computers with internet connection. Internet connections in housing are also easy to establish and there are a wide range of products now available for this. Teachers are expected to use school computers for professional purposes during school hours. The school's email address is [admin@ipsksa.com](mailto:admin@ipsksa.com). All new staff will be issued a school email address for professional communications and work. IPS is a Google for Education school and maximizing the potential of this resource is a goal for ALL!

## E. Website

Information about the school can be found on our website [www.ipksa.com](http://www.ipksa.com).

## F. Airmail and Courier Services

All mail is delivered to P.O. Boxes in Saudi Arabia. There are post offices through the city, even on some residential compounds. To receive personal mail, teachers can use the school's mailing address:

*P.O. Box 691  
Dhahran Airport 31932  
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia*

Courier services are widely used for international mail as well as locally within the Kingdom. A wide choice of carriers is available including DHL, FedEx, and Aramex. To receive parcels, teachers can use the address below:

*International Programs School (IPS)  
EuroVillage Compound  
In front of Taba Center  
Al Khobar, Saudi Arabia 31952*

## G. Television and Newspapers

Most villas have televisions and access to basic cable service. Channels include comedy and movie channels along with news and sports networks.

Newspapers and magazines can be purchased from stores and even some compound groceries. The best Arab newspaper in the English language is "The Arab News", which is published daily.

## V. Shops and Services

## VII. Banking

### A. Banks

The currency in Saudi Arabia is the Saudi Riyal (SAR). Once you have an iqama, you can open a bank account. Riyadh Bank is the bank that IPS uses for direct deposit of teacher salaries. There are plenty of ATMs everywhere you go and you are not charged for withdrawing money from another Saudi bank.

### B. Money Transfer/ Exchange

Exchanging dollars for riyals or any other currency and vice versa is very easy. The current exchange rate is 1 USD = 3.75 SAR.

There are many money transfer and exchange companies in the city. Most of them can be found in downtown Khobar. However, like the bank, they will ask you to present your iqama.

## VIII. Recreation



(Google Images)

### A. Touring and Outdoor Activities

Some popular outdoor activities in Al Khobar are desert camping and deep sea diving. Beaches are 40-minutes away from IPS. There are a number of private beaches that are open to foreigners including Sunset Beach and the British Aerospace Beach. Such places do not require foreigners to dress conservatively, but do require invitations from a member. Bahrain is a popular weekend getaway.

### B. Sports

Sports and gym facilities can be found in most housing compounds. The facilities may include: swimming pools, basketball, tennis, squash courts, soccer fields, and fully-equipped gyms. There are also aerobic and yoga classes in some compounds and spa centers.



## IX. Medical Facilities

Al Khobar provides excellent health and dental facilities. The most modern and up-to-date hospital is Al Riaya (ProCare) Hospital which most IPS teachers use. Bupa is the health insurance company used by IPS and international coverage is provided for all overseas hired employees.



(Google Images)

## X. Advice on Clothing

### A. Men

Men should dress conservatively; long-sleeved shirts and t-shirts along with long trousers or pants are recommended when going outside the compound. The summer months can be extremely hot while the winter months can be on the cool/cold side, especially at night. It is strongly advisable to bring jackets, windbreakers, and sweaters.

## B. Women

Since this is a traditional Muslim country, women of all nationalities are required to dress conservatively. Outside the compound, women wear a garment called an *abaya* at all times. It is a black cloak worn loose over clothes. In some areas of the country, a scarf needs to be worn to cover the hair. Although within most housing compounds women are not required to wear the abaya, it is wise to dress on the conservative side. In winter, you will also need a supply of sweaters, jackets, and windbreakers.



(Google Images)

## C. STAFF DRESS CODE (from IPS Policies and Procedures)

IPS believes the partnership between all members of its community is the basis for the respect, integrity and honesty that is expected to be seen on and off the campus. IPS staff DRESS PROFESSIONALLY and students WEAR UNIFORMS, and in their clothing choices show consideration for local cultural sensibilities.

### *Aims:*

- Demonstrate IPS' respect for the host country sensitivities regarding dress.
- Ensure staff at IPS act as role models to students regarding local dress sensibilities and culture.
- Make clear that IPS staff take their professionalism at work seriously and present to all visitors to IPS a well-dressed and professional appearance.
- Link student requirement to wear uniform to the greater IPS expectation that everyone should dress appropriately in school.
- Ensure IPS abides by the rules and regulations laid down by Saudi authorities.

We follow these simple expectations:

**IPS Female Staff:** Women may remove abayas when on campus and may wear below the knee length dress slacks, skirts, or dresses. Dress blouses, sweaters, or button down shirts must cover from sight shoulders, upper arms, and chest. Blue jeans, cargo pants, denim fabric, and any clothing that looks like blue jean material, tightly/form fitted garments, t-shirts, shorts, spaghetti straps, and transparent or low-cut blouses are not considered professional attire. Underwear and midriff should never be visible. Shorts (knee length or longer) may only be worn if/when a staff member is coaching or teaching PE. In respect of the host country sensitivities all crosses and crucifixes jewellery and accessories are prohibited to wear.

**IPS Male Staff:** Men may wear a buttoned dress shirt (the type of shirt normally worn with a sports jacket; jacket and/or tie optional; both long and short sleeves okay) or a collared polo shirt with dress slacks. Blue jeans, cargo pants, denim fabric, and any clothing that looks like blue jean material, t-shirts, and shorts are not considered professional attire. Underwear and midriff should never be visible. Shorts may only be worn if/when a staff member is coaching or teaching PE. It is not considered culturally appropriate for men to wear jewellery such as earrings, visible chains and necklaces.

### Procedures:

- Staff dress expectations will be shared only with staff and is an internal understanding.
- The policy will be explicitly presented in staff orientation week and published in the Teacher Handbook, Parent Handbook, all admission materials, and the New Staff Information Booklet.
- The expectations will be made explicit to staff new to working in Saudi through the recruiting process and to families during the admission procedure and beginning of year communications.
- The community mentors each other to ensure all abide by the expectations.
- Administration will monitor compatibility with the staff/students dress expectations,
  - When dress style is not compatible with the above expectations individuals will be asked to discuss the issues involved with the administration.
  - Continued lack of adherence to expectations will be asked to discuss the issues again and a record put on file.
  - Further complaint will be grounds for disciplinary action which may include being sent home to change.

Unprofessional dress will offend Saudi authorities, and will result in punitive measures against the school. The Ministry of Education has made it clear that they will impose a dress code on all members of staff and the students if they have evidence suggesting lack of respect for Saudi culture in regard to dress.

### EXAMPLES

(All photos from Google Images)



IPS is an IB World School offering the Primary Years Program (PYP) and the Diploma Program (DP).