

Bishkek International School

LEARNING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION TEAM 2021/22

Inclusive education is a core commitment of BIS, with all staff involved in supporting the diverse needs of individual students, and several staff with specific skills and experience in meeting different needs. Leading this approach we have a dedicated learning diversity and inclusion team to ensure that needs are met.

Learning Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator



Kathryn Ryder

Ms Kathryn graduated in French and German from the University of Exeter in 2001 and taught English abroad until 2004. After a break from teaching to explore other areas, she returned to education in 2010 with an MA in Special Educational Needs/Dyslexia while supporting children who needed extra help during and after school. Ms Kathryn joined BIS in September 2020. She is passionate about giving every child the chance to succeed at whatever they want to do in life and is happy to have found a position at BIS which will enable her to do this.

Learning Diversity and Inclusion & ELA Teacher



Kyzjibek Tekenova

Ms Kyzjibek graduated from the Kyrgyz Russian Slavic University and has a Diploma in Theory and Practice of Translation. She taught English before joining BIS in August 2017. In August 2018, Ms Kyzjibek joined the Learning Diversity and Inclusion team based on her interest and commitment to this area of work. Ms Kyzjibek is also currently studying a Masters in Special Additional Learning Needs University of East London, UK, via remote learning.

Learning Diversity and Inclusion & ELA Teacher



Aikel Tashtanbaeva

Ms Aikel has a degree in English Language and Literature from the Kyrgyz-Turkish Manas University and a Master's degree in Linguistics from the Social Sciences Institution in Kyrgyz Turkish Manas University. Ms Aikel says that "teaching is learning twice", as she believes that children are the ones from whom adults should always learn to love and be happy. Ms Aikel joined BIS in November 2020.

Learning Diversity and Inclusion & PE Teacher



Faez Kanji

Mr Faez is the creator of Hockey Jam Sessions, an international ice hockey and floorball school promoting skills development and social emotional resilience in challenging circumstances. He has worked with children in North America, Europe and Central Asia through his Hockey Jam Sessions program. Mr Faez has a degree from the Sauder School of Business at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada. Mr Faez joined BIS in January 2020.

One to One Learning Support Assistant



Janyl Namazbekova

Ms Janyl graduated from Arbaev Kyrgyz State University as a Biology teacher, and has work as both a school teacher and research in the Agency for Geology. In this role she had an internship in the Natural Historical Museum in Oslo, Norway, to expand her knowledge and skills in paleontology, which contributed to her being part of team which discovered dinosaur fossils in Kyrgyzstan. Ms Janyl joined BIS in August 2021.

One to One Learning Support Assistant



Diana Amanova

Ms Diana has a Bachelor's degree in Psychology from Ala Too Ata Turk University. She is a certified Behavioral Analyst and has experience working in a children's development center. While studying at the university, she went to Malaysia to volunteer to support refugee children from Siriya and Pakistan. Ms Diana joined BIS in August 2021.

School Counseling Consultant



Alexandra "Ali" Savidge

Ms Ali graduated from Florida State University with a Master's degree in Social Work with a special focus on clinical practice, play therapy, and expressive arts therapy. Ms Ali is licensed in the USA for clinical social work and has 15 years' experience providing psychosocial counseling to children and families. She has worked in nonprofit health clinics, as well as in schools and private practice, including a year volunteering with orphaned youth in Nepal. Ms Ali is child-centered in her engagement with children, school teams, and parents in the counseling process. She is also a yoga instructor and practitioner and enjoys incorporating relaxation exercises in her work with children and adults.

Primary and Middle School Counselor

Zhibek Kenzhebaeva



Ms Zhibek has a Masters degree in Applied Psychology with a Child and Adolescent Counselling Concentration, from the American University in Central Asia. Prior to her Masters, she worked as an educational consultant after graduating from the Ulsan National Institute of Science and Technology (UNIST) in South Korea with a Bachelor's degree in Biomedical Engineering with a minor in Biological Science. Ms Zhibek enjoys reading and is a founder of an online book club. Ms Zhibek joined the BIS team in summer 2021.

High School Counselor

Valeria Totolina



Ms Valeria graduated from the American University in Central Asia with a Masters Degree in Applied Psychology with a special focus on adolescents and adult counselling. Her work experience includes individual and group counselling sessions with adolescents and adults under the Psychological Health Institution, and providing individual career counselling and leading career-oriented lectures and events for adolescents. Ms Valeria joined BIS in June 2020 and is responsible for university and career counselling for High School students and High School Counselor.

Head of Student Welfare & Community Engagement

Laura Kircough



Ms Laura graduated from the Swansea Institute of Higher Education and has many years of experience teaching in different schools in the UK. In 2017 she moved to Sierra Leone where she volunteered as a Head Teacher at a local school for one year, before teaching– at the American International School of Freetown, Sierra Leone, for two years. In her spare time, Ms Laura enjoys singing, many types of exercise, and has just learnt to ride a motorbike. Ms Laura joined BIS in August 2020.