Our Heritage

An Australian School in Hong Kong

Australian International School Hong Kong (AIS HK) is a leading co-educational school in Hong Kong. Located on a modern, award-winning campus in Kowloon Tong, the school delivers an Australian curriculum from the State of New South Wales, along with the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program. It follows the Australian school year and provides a seamless transition to tertiary education around the world, in particular Australia. AIS HK incorporates Chinese Mandarin and Chinese culture as an integral part of the curriculum, drawing positively on the multi-cultural elements of both Hong Kong and Australian life. The school recognises and celebrates the cultural diversity of the Australian and Hong Kong communities.

Historical Perspective

Founded to fulfill the growing demand for an Australian educational institution in Hong Kong, the school was incorporated on the 26th January 1996 and was established as a co-educational, non-denominational, English medium international school. It was first housed in a rented school building at 121 Boundary St, Kowloon Tong with 24 students in attendance on the first day, 6th February 1996.

In July 1995, through the generosity of the Hong Kong Government, the school moved to the Gun Club School at 127 Austin Road, Tsim Sha Tsui. This was also the year that the Secondary Division commenced in the school with one Year 7 class.
Our Focus

A Student Centred Philosophy

Children are our focus. AISHK is dedicated to providing its students with quality of whole education that develops them into responsible world citizens who think creatively, reason critically, communicate effectively and learn enthusiastically throughout life. Belonging to the AISHK family is an important part of a lifelong philosophy about learning and commitment to achieving excellence.

Our Values and Beliefs

The shared beliefs and vision of the school community are based on a set of core human values and principles, which permeate all our programs. These are:

- Excellence
- Collaboration
- Respect
- Responsibility
- Honesty
- Integrity
- Diligence
- Equity
- Trust
- Creativity

The 1996 academic year started with 132 students and AISHK enjoyed 16 months in the Gun Club School’s comfortable space before moving in December 1996 to a portion of St. George’s School in Kowloon Tong. The school stayed on this site for two years, 1997 and 1998.

In July 1997 the Foundation was granted approximately 6800 sqm of land at 3A Norfolk Road, Kowloon Tong in order to build the new school campus. Architects, Design Consultants Limited and builders, Leighton Construction (Asia) Ltd were engaged to bring to fulfillment the school's building dream.

The first temporary school move was made in December 1998 to enable the construction to take place. The 275 students moved to a vacant secondary school in Tonkin Street, Cheung Sha Wan.

During 1996 the first Year 10 students were awarded the NSW Higher School Certificate and by 2001 the first Year 12 class sat the NSW Higher School Certificate examinations.

On 4th September 2001 with more than 500 students, AISHK opened its new campus at Kowloon Tong with construction completed on time and below budget.

The construction was also made possible due to the financial and strategic support of The Hong Kong Jockey Club and the Hong Kong Education and Manpower Bureau.

The continued success and growth of the school is because of the development of its landmark facilities and the dedicated work of its staff and community.

The Kowloon Tong campus contains exceptional facilities for art, music, drama, sport and academic studies in an 18.600m² multi-ervy property.
Governance and Management

The Australian International School Foundation Limited is a charitable status body which provides governance for the school and guardianship of its future. The Foundation Board has permanent representation from five key Australian organisations in Hong Kong:
- The Australian Consulate General in Hong Kong;
- The Australian Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong;
- The Federation of Australian Alumni Associations Hong Kong Ltd;
- The Australian Association of Hong Kong Ltd and
- The Australian Chinese Association of Hong Kong Ltd.

Other members are seconded to the Board, including a representative from the AISHK Parent Association.

The Board's role is to appoint the Head of School and in consultation with the Head, develop policies and strategies which fulfills the school's mission.

The school is led by the Head, who is in turn assisted by the Executive Team of Primary and Secondary Principals, Assistant Principals and Business Administrators.

Senior staff work as Heads of Departments and Coordinators in the Leadership team.
Our Culture and Practices

AIS HK is a supportive community. New students, families and visitors comment on the friendly, welcoming atmosphere on campus. It is an environment with family at its core. The Australian values practised by the school form the bedrock of its ethos. Every student is encouraged to feel at home from the outset - and they, in turn, are inspired to make others welcome. Special programs such as Buddies and Peer Support facilitate the inclusion of new students into the school fabric. New parents to the school family are warmly welcomed by the AIS HK Parent Association. Wellbeing initiatives also offer support to a mobile, international community. Most importantly, our students develop enduring friendships and experience personal enrichment as they progress through the school.
Our Community

Staff

ABSHK teachers are highly qualified and bring a host of subject specializations, breadth of education and a wide range of life experiences to the school.

Teachers and support staff are also actively involved in the organization of additional programs such as music and theatre productions, sporting tournaments, extra-curricular activities, travel and learning experiences plus after-class student support and monitoring.

Parents

At ABSHK, education is a partnership in which parents and school work closely together to ensure that our students become accomplished, well rounded and capable citizens.

The relationship between school and home is a critical one. ABSHK welcomes and expects parental involvement in the education of its students and encourages volunteers in many capacities within the school.

The ABSHK Parent Association is an active, vibrant and integral part of the school community. It provides services and support for parents, students and teachers throughout the year.

Alumni

Students’ lives are enhanced by their experiences at ABSHK. Their attendance at the school ensures they are adequately equipped to succeed when transferring to an education system in another country or to higher education. Past students are enthusiastic ambassadors of the school and make frequent return visits. The ABSHK Alumni Association fosters the communication between old boys, old girls, past staff and the school. Through the work of its Patrons and designated activities, it furthers the valuable relationship between the school and its alumni both in Hong Kong and overseas.
Our Programs

Early Childhood (Reception to Year 2)

AISHK places great value and importance on the early years of education. Since the most important learning years of a child’s life are between birth and the commencement of school, parents are recognised as the first and the most important teacher the child will ever have.

A secure transition from home to school in the first year at school is seen as vital. An important aim of the Early Childhood Department is to establish an environment where the child develops a sense of responsibility for self and others, through cooperation with teachers, other children and other staff members. We aim to develop the child’s self-esteem and positive image.

Welcoming, inviting and stimulating, the Early Childhood classrooms at AISHK provide an environment specifically designed to engage the curious young minds of children from Reception to Year 2.

This innovative and collaborative area of the school draws on the best of theory and practice from a variety of philosophies. Through interactive experiences and activities, such as informal, imaginative play, children are encouraged to create meaning, practise social skills, learn how to solve problems, gain confidence and develop positive attitudes to school and learning. The children have opportunities to construct, discover, experiment, hypothesise, manipulate and share a variety of materials, resources and learning experiences.
Primary

The Primary years continue to focus on the child's development and increasing independence. The teachers are aware that, for education to be successful, children must be eager to learn and must gradually take responsibility for their own learning.

Teachers aim to develop students' self-motivation, their skills of independent learning, and a tolerance of differences. At all stages, critical thinking and creativity are nurtured within a safe, structured, yet flexible environment.

Our curriculum continues to cover the Key Learning Areas of:

- English;
- Mathematics;
- Chinese;
- Science and Technology;
- Human Society and its Environment;
- Creative Arts; and
- Personal Development, Health and Physical Education.

Teachers thoroughly plan all aspects of the school curriculum and implement individual and small group activities designed to meet particular needs. A wide variety of teaching strategies are used but the emphasis, at all times, is on the active participation of each student.

We recognise that the acquisition of literacy and numeracy skills is fundamental to the development of life-long learners. These skills are developed through flexible groupings, subject integration and masterful teaching.

Active classroom environments encourage students to develop independence and ownership of their own learning. Classrooms are organised so that student experiences are dynamic and purposeful, with frequent opportunities to investigate, communicate and explore.

The Primary Division is friendly and productive, and aims to develop the child in their formative years.
Middle Years

Careful attention is given to the learning needs of 11 to 15-year-olds. A focus on their progress and growth, along with a seamless transition between primary and secondary education, facilitates their journey through secondary school.

Senior Secondary

Students in their senior years are encouraged to pursue their goals with focus and determination, with their teachers as mentors. The curriculum provides for a holistic learning journey at international standards. Sound, relevant careers advice is offered, with the aim of guiding students towards their aspirations in the most practical way possible. Graduates of AISHK progress to university or the workplace on completion of their final year with consistently high levels of achievement. Both the HSC and IB courses require students to complete demanding public examinations. Students leave AISHK with a great sense of achievement and an anticipation of success in facing the new challenges before them.

The New South Wales Higher School Certificate (HSC)

The HSC is the culmination of 12 years of Australian schooling. Its rigorous curriculum offers students a wide range of subjects matched to individual abilities, interests and goals. The HSC is the intended tertiary entrance program undertaken by Australian high school students, who then choose to enrol at university either in Australia or elsewhere, or enter the workforce.
International Baccalaureate Diploma Program (IB)

ABSHK students can, if they wish, take advantage of the IB Diploma Program in their final two years of secondary school. The IB Diploma curriculum provides an excellent foundation for further study and employment. The IB program has been called the “passport to international education” as it also provides entry into universities around the world.

Learning Enrichment Centre

The Learning Enrichment Centre (LEC) supports students who are identified as having specific learning needs or teaching requirements. These students are given in-class assistance, working on mainstream or modified curriculum, or by withdrawal sessions, where a student works on a specifically developed program. The LEC works very closely with classroom teachers, parents, and other specialists with the ultimate goal of having students working independently.

The LEC also provides a Reading Support Program for students in Year 1 and Year 2 and Special Provisions support for senior students during examinations. Specialists are employed as required and the LEC can provide consultations for parents as well as information about outside agency support.
English as a Second Language

ABSHK takes a whole school approach to English as a Second Language (ESL). In the primary years, ESL is delivered in different modes of withdrawal, in-class support and team teaching. In the secondary years, ESL is a mainstream subject within the English curriculum area with a well-articulated pathway to the HSC and the IB programs.

The Chinese Language Program

The Chinese program is an important part of the curriculum at ABSHK. It aims to facilitate opportunities for students to be proficient and competent in using the Chinese language to speak, read and write. Students also gain an appreciation and understanding of the literature, history, culture and geography of China. The teaching media is modern standard Chinese, commonly known as Putonghua (Mandarin) and the simplified form of characters is used.

It is compulsory to learn Chinese from Reception to Year 7 and it becomes an elective subject from Year 8 to Year 12.

Students learn Chinese in their homeroom as a group in the years of Reception, Preparatory and Year 1, where the Chinese lessons are organised on themes and topics. From Year 2 onwards, students are grouped according to their language background and enjoy a daily lesson to build their language expertise.

From Year 7 to Year 12, the study time of Chinese language is conducted according to syllabus guidelines. Each year we celebrate Chinese Week, to promote the understanding of Chinese culture and history, and to encourage the use of the Chinese language within the school community.
The Co-Curricular Program: Enduring lessons for life.

Every AISHK student can benefit from the breadth of available activities – academic, sporting, cultural and leisure. Students often discover subjects and encounter situations they may never have otherwise experienced, leading to a well-rounded appreciation of all that international life has to offer.

Team and individual sports play a major part at AISHK. Competition against local and overseas international schools operates through these organisations:

ACAMIS - Association of China and Mongolia International Schools;

ISSFHK - International Schools Sports Federation of Hong Kong;

HKSSF - Hong Kong Secondary Sports Federation.

Matches are mostly played according to the Northern hemisphere school season.

Sport is also fostered through the school’s Physical Education program and the house sports competitions.
The Arts

Performing Arts and Visual Arts Programs provide many opportunities for students to develop their talents. School choirs, orchestras, and bands, as well as the school’s drama students, give regular showcase performances. Visiting music specialists are engaged for additional teaching during the week. The Visual Arts Program engages students at all learning levels and themed exhibitions of work are regularly produced.

Community Service

Our commitment to the wider community, through service work both locally and internationally, is a hallmark of the school. Students are expected to work for the enhancement of the community and are provided with many opportunities through our connections with agencies. Whether it’s building houses in Cambodia, preparing meals for asylum seekers in Hong Kong, sponsoring children in Vietnam or participating in the 30 hour Famine; learning to serve provides a valuable lesson in leadership development for AISHK students.

Essential Learning Opportunities

Excursions

At AISHK we believe that students need to understand and appreciate the global nature of our modern world. This understanding is partly developed through the curriculum and the fact that there are many international visitors to the school. We also aim to encourage genuine international experience through travel. Conferences, tours, student exchanges, outdoor education, sporting commitments and leadership training form a part of the integral learning opportunities for AISHK students and teachers.

Extra-Curricular Activities

Students at every level are encouraged to try new disciplines, experience various extra-curricular activities and aim high in their chosen fields of endeavour. The school extra-curricular program runs every term and includes the highly successful AISHK Swim Program.

Outdoor Education

The Outdoor Education program is designed to challenge students and develop resilience, tolerance and an awareness of others. A graduated program from Year 2 to the senior years provides opportunities for whole-person development where students are expected to move out of their comfort zones and complete challenging activities. The senior secondary students are also guided through the Hong Kong Award for Young People, also known as the Duke of Edinburgh Award in other countries.
The School Support Network

Health and Wellbeing

One of the enduring standards of ASHK is the dedicated and caring staff. Structured pastoral care classes and tutoring ensure that connected and meaningful mentoring takes place, and that each student is understood, supported and encouraged. The School Guidance Counsellor and outside support agencies are available for student and parent support.

Leadership

The House system, across Primary and Secondary Divisions, is a significant means for students to be given responsibility to organise, lead and assist fellow students. Leadership opportunities are provided through sporting, arts and cultural activities and community fundraising events. The four school houses – Eucalypt, Jacaranda, Waratah and Wattle – provide a way of dividing the school for performance, competition and cross-age pastoral care activities. The Student Representative Council ( SRC ) operates in both Primary and Secondary Divisions. Its purpose is to give leadership opportunities at class level and to provide an avenue for student voices and opinions. The Secondary Division makes Prefect appointments. Students who are selected each year from Year 11 and 12 have exceptional abilities and strengths which they demonstrate in working to lead the student body. The Primary Division also selects two prefects to lead the Division and oversee the Primary House Captains in their leadership work.
Processes

Admissions

Students are admitted subject to availability of places, and the capacity of students to meet applicable entry criteria. Admission is based on nationality, student records, teacher references, interviews and a strong capability in written and spoken English. Academic achievement, motivation, work habits and behaviour are considered in the admissions process.

AISHK is a day school and the academic year commences in late January or early February and ends in December. Students are welcome to enter the school at other times throughout the year but may need to meet certain course admission requirements prior to commencing their studies.

For further admissions information, application forms and calendar dates, please contact the Admissions Office; email admissions@aishk.edu.hk or tel: +852 23046078.

Awards

Speech Night, Primary Presentation Day, the Sports Award Ceremony and the Year 7/8 Values Day activities are celebratory occasions of student academic, sporting and social successes. Awards and prizes are formally distributed on these public occasions.

Scholarships

AISHK offers scholarships of various types, some of which are supported by generous donors. These scholarships are open to students with a strong command of English, exceptional academic ability, and a proven commitment to school life. There are also scholarships for students in need, named in honor of The Hong Kong Jockey Club.

For further information and application forms, please email scholarships@aishk.edu.hk.

Fees and Giving at AISHK

AISHK believes in promoting a spirit of philanthropy amongst its families, alumni, and friends. To this end, the school encourages charitable contributions for its academic programs, the professional growth of its teachers and for the maintenance, renovation and expansion of its campus. The AISHK development program strengthens the school overall and supports its mission and vision. Alumni and parent relations, publications, annual giving and capital giving activities engage our worldwide community in supporting the school. Development programs are essential to the health and growth of independent schools like AISHK where the cost of a quality education cannot be met through tuition fees alone.

For further information and sponsorship info, please contact the Development Office or email development@aishk.edu.hk.

Publications

The school communicates with its community through its website, the weekly newsletter "Dhanar", "The Year Book", and community news from the development office.
What Our Parents Say

- “The flame of Australia will always burn”
  You only have to listen to the children singing the words to the “School Song”, to feel a pull at the heart strings and to realise, just how lucky we are, to be a part of such a strong school community in Hong Kong.

- We, as a community, have been given the unique opportunity, to have an incredible “International education of excellence, with a strong Australian ethos”. We become an important part of a school, that highly values the individual talents and work of each in its community.
AISHK is a community that cares and in which the “development of the whole individual” is central to what education is all about.

- This School makes me never want to leave Hong Kong because my children are thriving. School for them is an inspiring, enriching, child centred and supportive learning environment with incredible teachers. Thanks to the school and its extended community my children are being developed into well rounded, confident and articulate young men and women with the skills, knowledge, values and attitudes needed to shape their future.
  I feel this school recognises that although we are an Australian school, we are in an international setting and have a unique opportunity to develop worldly knowledge and understanding – the future world diplomats.