



International Baccalaureate®  
Baccalauréat International  
Bachillerato Internacional

Al Najah Private School, United Arab Emirates

# 10 YEARS OF BEING PART OF THE GLOBAL IB FAMILY

**2012**

Diploma Programme offered since

**2,554**

Total number of students

**Ahd Abou Ghazal**

School Director



## Reflecting on international excellence

Founded in Abu Dhabi in 1987, Al Najah Private School (ANPS) educates and inspires the learners of today to become the leaders of tomorrow, through a comprehensive international curriculum. Over the last 33 years the school has grown from strength to strength, and, in 2022 the school celebrates 10 years of offering its students, aged 16 – 18 years old, the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme (DP).

ANPS embraces the diversity of its international student cohort, which is enhanced by the school's status as an IB World School; the current DP cohort is comprised of 11 nationalities. Noel Debs, DP coordinator at the school believes that: "Being an IB World School gives us another dimension. We value diversity and students who are communicators and risk takers, who are trying to innovate and step outside of their comfort zone."

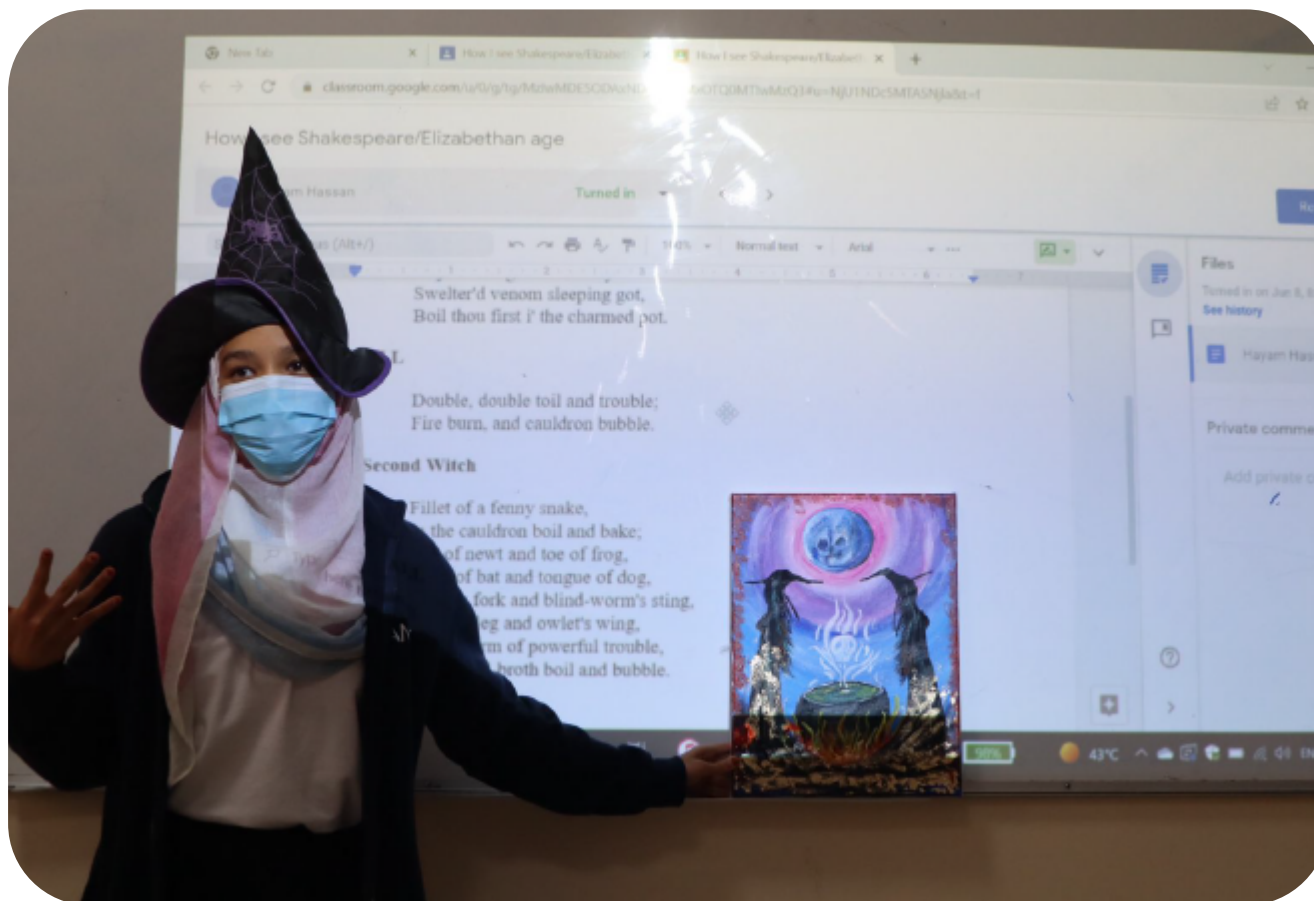
ANPS relishes the reputation that it has by offering the IB. This, alongside the DP's recognition with world-leading universities, are the two biggest benefits of offering the programme for the school.

"As an IB World School, we produce a certain calibre of graduates. Well-rounded students for whom the standard of education is reflected everywhere they go and in everything they do.

It is a testament to the power of the IB that ANPS has reached the milestone of offering the DP for 10 years", says Debs.

Despite obstacles faced as a result of Covid-19 restrictions, the school is continuing with plans to involve students in every aspect of its 10-year anniversary celebrations. These will include students creating visual reminders about the DP, displayed on posters and personalised t-shirts.

The shirts, which will be worn by the DP students at the school, will reveal messages about what the IB means to them. The idea behind these anniversary celebrations Debs says: "It is to encourage IB students to reflect on their IB experiences and how the course has impacted them and their lives".



## Addressing misconceptions

ANPS is an all-through school, therefore has the opportunity to internally recruit IB candidates for its sixth form. On top of this, it is a dual economy school, offering both the DP and A Levels at sixth form level. This, coupled with the fact that students study iGCSEs in the main school, means that students, and their families, tend to opt for the more familiar route of studying the British curriculum.

A number of students are also from countries where university recognition of the DP is still in development. In order to overcome the challenge of grade conversions at university level, ANPS uses student success stories to communicate the benefits of an IB education with parents and students; many of the school's students have secured places at leading universities around the world. The school also focuses on building strong relationships with universities to support students' applications.

The school has worked hard to address the misconceptions of the DP by placing emphasis on the programme's benefits and how it develops students' interpersonal qualities, while celebrating elements such as creativity, activity, and service (CAS).

## Students in the community

It is these added value elements of the DP core (which also includes the theory of knowledge course and the extended essay) that makes the students, and the school stand out in their local community.

Debs says: "Our students do not simply excel in certain examinations; they possess so many traits that will make them not only successful in university and later life but they will also go on to make positive contributions to their community.

"This is the true beauty of the IB; it provides opportunities for students to learn and develop outside of the classroom. Through CAS, students actively contribute to the community; they get hands on experience of the world around them and are then required to undertake a reflection as part of their personal development to evaluate and assess these experiences."

Noel shares a wide variety of different examples of CAS projects that students have completed, explaining how the projects have benefited the students as individuals and others around them: "I am proud of so many of the CAS projects that our students have completed. One project in particular that stands out to me is our students'

water bottle campaign, where they cycled around Abu Dhabi, offering water bottles to workers across the Emirate. It was a fantastic way of showing appreciation for their local community."

The students also extend their compassion towards the animal community of Abu Dhabi through projects such as Animalia, which sees them assist in the placement of animals in need of foster care.

ANPS students are encouraged to think outside of the box and take initiative when it comes to creating their CAS projects. Debs explains: "While at a prestigious hotel in Abu Dhabi, one of the students noticed a waste problem in the water surrounding the hotel. Seeing an opportunity to make a difference, one of the students spoke with staff at the hotel and organised a kayaking trip with a group of students, who then collected the rubbish and cleaned up the area."

The students' passion for their projects also extends to their creative sides: "Students were part of a large art exhibition, hosted in Abu-Dhabi, which involved both students and internationally-recognised artists both displaying portraits side by side. The students' interactions with these artists have certainly left a lasting impact on those involved."



## DP impact

Debs believes that the IB's international approach to education has helped students to become well-rounded individuals. They explain that within the IB curriculum frameworks: "the students are exposed to different opinions and points of view and learn to reflect and gain an understanding of the value of these different perspectives".

The approaches to learning and teaching also make the DP stand out from other programmes for ANPS. Students do not absorb and repeat content, in the style of rote learning. Instead, they analyse, reflect and think critically. Debs says: "In science, students are learning content as well as context, and so they can put their new knowledge into practice. Therefore, during experiments, they are able to reflect on what they have done and are able to communicate errors".



## The future of the DP

With 10 years of IB experience, ANPS is set for future success of delivering the DP. The school's legacy of producing well-rounded, international graduates is recognised not only in the local community but also their success on a global scale. Debs says, "a few of our students whom we regard as success stories have gone from shy students to outspoken individuals who can express and accept different points of view, can handle pressure and are ready for the next stage of their lives, at top universities and beyond". Here is to the next decade of IB excellence and success at ANPS.





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**Noel Debs**  
DP Coordinator

Find out more about the benefits of the IB:  
[www.ibo.org/benefits](http://www.ibo.org/benefits)