



## HEAD OF SECONDARY

Start Date: August 1, 2027

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Chinese International School

Hong Kong, China | [cis.edu.hk](http://cis.edu.hk)



**Carney  
Sandoe**  
& ASSOCIATES

# MISSION STATEMENT

CIS is a community of learners at the confluence of East and West, each empowered by a bilingual, intercultural programme to discover new paths, build bridges, and flourish on a life's journey in pursuit of excellence, commitment to service, and stewardship of our future.

漢基國際學校植根於東西方文化交匯之地，發揮雙語和跨文化教育優勢，引領全體漢基學子在追求卓越、甘於奉獻和把握未來的人生旅途中開闢新徑，搭建橋樑，綻放自我。

## At a Glance



**1983**  
school established



**900+**  
secondary school enrolment



**30+**  
nationalities represented in  
the secondary student body



**150**  
total faculty in the  
secondary school



**92**  
secondary faculty with  
advanced degrees



**8:1**  
secondary student-faculty ratio



**10+**  
staff retention rate  
(average years)



# OVERVIEW

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Chinese International School (CIS) is one of the world's leading bilingual international schools, distinguished by the ambition of its mission, the clarity of its sense of purpose, and the strength of its outcomes. Founded in 1983 by three visionary women, CIS has grown into a globally respected institution serving approximately 1,650 students from Reception through Year 13 (ages 4-18) in Hong Kong, including a distinctive residential Year 10 programme in Hangzhou. CIS is now seeking its next Head of Secondary, presenting an outstanding leadership opportunity to join a forward-thinking school with a compelling mission, visionary strategic plan, and widely shared community values, surrounded by one of the world's most dynamic entrepreneurial regions, and located in a major vibrant and flourishing city at a consequential time in global history.

Students begin in Reception, and many continue through Year 13, providing a stable and loyal community. Following the bilingual Chinese (Mandarin)-English immersion programme in the Primary years, CIS offers a carefully crafted dual language academic programme for Years 7 through 13. The IB Middle Years programme is introduced to students in Years 7-9; a bespoke CIS curriculum is offered in Years 10-11, and students in Years 12-13 follow the IB Diploma Programme. A balanced curriculum is delivered using a personalised, project-based, interdisciplinary learning approach, with experiential and real-world dimensions as key components, along with an authentic focus on student well-being. Secondary students expand bilingual fluency in Chinese (Mandarin) and English through required courses in Chinese, a two-week travel immersion China Experience Programme in Years 7-9, and a year-long residential experience taking place on the CIS Hangzhou campus in Year 10.





Five years ago, CIS created a far-seeing strategic plan called *Vision '33* through an inclusive design process that involved students, alumni, staff, parents, and governors, outlining three key priorities in the lead-up to the school's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2033:

- **Each Learner Flourishing:** ensuring that each learner in the CIS community, whether student, staff, or parent, has the tools to thrive.
- **New Paths Discovered:** ensuring that the school remains forward-thinking and adapts its educational programmes to better prepare its students for successful futures in a rapidly changing world.
- **Bridges for Good:** ensuring that service learning, intercultural understanding, sustainability, and global citizenship are key pillars of a CIS education.

This living framework provides priorities for action, resource allocation and accountability for initiatives ranging from visible well-being and personalised learning to new pathways to upper school graduation and partnerships in the Greater Bay Area (GBA) surrounding the Pearl River Delta. Additional initiatives are underway to develop a distinctive middle school, build a new innovation lab, and establish a performing arts centre focused on intercultural understanding. CIS continues to develop meaningful partnerships and cultural exchanges in Mainland China, particularly through its Hangzhou programme, providing further areas for innovation.

CIS is a high-performing, values-driven school distinguished by the quality of its students and staff, its coherent bilingual and intercultural identity, and its ethos of entrepreneurialism, well-being, and continuous innovation. Students are exceptionally motivated and empowered through strong emphasis on agency, voice, and leadership, while staff are deeply committed, collaborative, and closely aligned with the school's mission. Strong academic outcomes, university placements, and longstanding community support provide CIS with both the credibility and confidence to innovate beyond traditional models, infusing significant momentum for "Vision '33" and an exciting opportunity for the next Head of Secondary at a pivotal moment in the school's evolution.

Located in what is often referred to as Asia's world city and connected to the broader opportunities of the GBA, CIS offers an extraordinary educational environment shaped by intellectual vitality, intercultural vibrancy, and global engagement. Hong Kong offers a dynamic blend of cosmopolitan connectivity and vivid culture, and is an especially safe city with excellent public transportation and easy access to the outdoors, making it a remarkably exciting and convenient place to live. The school is attractively situated near the heart of Hong Kong Island, with spectacular views of Victoria Harbour and the surrounding hills

# OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

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## Key Opportunities and Challenges

The Secondary School at CIS presents a compelling leadership context shaped by both complexity and possibility. Reporting to the Head of School and serving as a core member of the whole-school Leadership Team, the next Head of Secondary will be responsible for delivering a cohesive learning experience for all students in Years 7-13, advancing the priorities of Vision '33 as it enters into its sixth year of implementation in 2027-28, and ensuring a deep sense of community engagement amid the challenges of an ever-evolving educational landscape. The following domains capture the most essential areas of opportunity and challenge.





- **Leading Through Complexity, Culture, and Change** - CIS is a dynamic school with a commitment to a limited increase in its Secondary enrollment related to a government land grant to expand its Hong Kong campus within the coming three years. In August 2028, it will also be moving its Hangzhou programme from its current location to a new and larger site just a few kilometres away. The Head of Secondary must lead effectively at scale, balancing growth and innovation with strong systems, clear structures, and thoughtful resource management. The role requires successfully navigating key polarities: maintaining academic rigour, while supporting student and faculty well-being, and responding to high community expectations with understanding and care. At the same time, the Head of Secondary must be able to sustain and continuously strengthen CIS's distinctive culture, grounded in a deep commitment to student well-being, an entrepreneurial spirit, a strong sense of purpose, and a belief in service to the greater good. This leader will be expected to foster belonging, bridge cultural perspectives, and support both English and Chinese (Mandarin) language development and cultural insights. The ability to clearly communicate direction, build trust, and help to lead change with a high degree of intercultural competence and sound judgment will be essential.
- **Advancing Vision '33 Through Innovation in Teaching and Learning** - CIS is in the midst of advancing Vision '33 and is seeking a leader who can drive continued innovation in teaching and learning aligned with that strategic blueprint. This emphasis includes developing personalised, data-informed learning pathways and expanding options beyond the current IB Diploma Programme. The Head of Secondary will need to have a coherent, future-focused approach to curriculum and instruction across all disciplines, supported by strong interdisciplinary collaboration and a project-based orientation. Instructional practices will need to meet the academic needs of today's students, while always reinforcing student agency, voice, leadership and overall well-being. There is a clear opportunity to leverage emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, to further enhance learning, building on already robust foundations in this area. At the same time, CIS is expanding faculty-led research and development through its Innovation Lab Fellowships, weaving a number of global citizenship threads through all facets of its curriculum, and deepening its engagement within the GBA and through the Hangzhou programme, all of which is further strengthening its position as a leader in bilingual, intercultural education.



- **Strengthening a Cohesive and Inclusive Secondary Experience** - An additional priority for the next Head of Secondary will be to ensure coherence and alignment across the Secondary School. This includes strengthening transitions between divisions and campuses, as well as planning for the creation of a distinct Middle School identity, which CIS is aiming to build after moving its Primary Years 2-6 programme to an adjacent new campus by August 2029. The role also requires extending inclusive support for diverse learners and ensuring consistency in teaching and learning practices across the division, in keeping with the school's ongoing commitment to instructional excellence of the highest order. These efforts will be grounded in CIS's strong foundation in positive education and a strengths-based approach to student well-being. Together, this work will reinforce a cohesive, inclusive, and forward-looking educational experience that supports every student to thrive.
- **Developing and Empowering Leaders** - The Head of Secondary will play a critical role in developing leadership capacity across the division. Working with the Head of School, this includes collaborating closely with deputies and middle-level leaders to establish clear roles and responsibilities and to ensure strong alignment with school-wide priorities. The role requires an experienced leader who actively coaches and mentors others, while also providing clear, actionable feedback, supporting professional growth, and building confidence and capability in colleagues. The Head of Secondary must foster a culture of accountability, collaboration, and continuous improvement, wherein leadership is intentionally distributed and developed. Equally important is the ability to inspire others and to continuously reinforce the conditions for faculty leaders at all levels to take initiative, lead change, and contribute meaningfully to the ongoing evolution of the Secondary School.

# QUALIFICATIONS & PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

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## Qualifications and Experience

### Educational Leadership and Pedagogical Expertise

- Mature and experienced senior-level educational leader with strong academic credentials and intellectual depth
- Demonstrated success in leading a complex and ambitious secondary school, with strong IB experience and extensive understanding of rigorous academic programmes
- Deep curriculum development, assessment and instructional expertise, with active leadership of teaching and learning practices
- Ability to inspire and lead educational excellence and innovation, including in the areas of project-based learning, experiential learning, competency-based learning, and AI-enhanced learning
- Passionate commitment to student agency, voice, leadership and well-being across Years 7-13

### Intercultural Competence

- High cultural and emotional intelligence and ability to navigate East-West dynamics and unite diverse parent communities and expectations
- Fluency in English required, with proficiency in Chinese (Mandarin) and a proven commitment to Chinese culture and understanding of bilingual education an advantage
- Experience in international environments with experience in Asia preferred

### Strategic and Operational Leadership

- Track record as an effective member of a whole-school Leadership Team with significant educational, operational and strategic responsibilities, including beyond the Secondary division
- Skilled at managing institutional change by articulating and conveying vision, building alignment, and guiding communities through school-led initiatives
- Well-versed in all aspects of resource allocation, scheduling, and staffing

### Developing Others

- Collaborative style with demonstrated ability to build teams and develop others
- Outstanding ability to recruit, retain, evaluate and grow faculty
- Skilled at communicating with and engaging a diverse community of students, faculty, staff, parents and governors



## Key Personal Attributes

- Has a personal journey resonating deeply with the school's Chinese values: 仁 (rén): kindness and empathy; 義 (yì): fairness and justice; 禮 (lǐ): respect and inclusiveness; 智 (zhì): wisdom and good judgment; 信 (xìn): integrity and trustworthiness
- Possesses core leadership dispositions, providing decisiveness and clarity, along with humility and a learner mindset
- Demonstrates emotional intelligence as a relationship-builder who is trusted by students, staff and parents
- Is an excellent communicator across all stakeholders, displaying empathy, kindness and compassion towards everyone, with cultural competence and sensitivity to adapt to the high-context Hong Kong/China environment
- Exhibits leadership presence, conveying a resilient, adaptable and energetic leadership presence that inspires confidence in a demanding and fast-paced environment, and demonstrating visibility and accessibility to all stakeholder groups in the school community.

# LEARN MORE

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- [School Website](#)

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- [School History](#)

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- [Strategic Vision](#)

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- [School Profile](#)

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- [Working at CIS](#)





## TO APPLY

Interested and qualified candidates are invited to contact the consultants in confidence. Candidates will ultimately need to submit the following materials as separate PDF documents:

- A cover letter describing the candidate's interest in this particular opportunity and the experience and qualifications that make them well suited for the role;
- A current résumé;
- Names of five professional references with relationship to the candidate, current position/title phone number, and email address of each (references will not be contacted without the candidate's permission) to:

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