

School Programme of the Deutsche Internationale Schule Johannesburg 2022-2025



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1. FOREWORD

As a German-South African encounter school, the German International School Johannesburg (DSJ) has a distinctive identity. We are a school of diversity. Our approximately 1000 students speak over 40 languages, represent over 36 nationalities and over 35 religious affiliations. In addition, there is wide socio-economic and academic diversity. As early as 1989, during the apartheid era, the German government and the German International School Johannesburg expanded educational opportunities for children of other skin colors and social backgrounds. Our cooperation with elementary school from Soweto celebrated its thirtieth anniversary in 2019. We are an open all-day school with free homework supervision and a wide range of afternoon activities. In part for this commitment, as well as for the trusting school atmosphere and the resulting willingness of the students to perform, the German International School Johannesburg received the German School Award as the best German school abroad in 2016 and was also awarded an "Excellent German School Abroad" by the Bund-Länder-Inspektion for the second time in 2018. Maintaining this level requires great effort on the part of the entire school community.

We guide our learners to excellent national, German and international qualifications. The number of children and young people attending the DSJ whose first or family language is not German has increased significantly in recent years. For almost 50% of our students, their first language learned is English or another South African language, while

German is the first language for only about 20%. As a German school abroad, the DSJ has a clear mission: to teach the German language and culture, with the curriculum for the German Abitur or, alternatively, the German Language Diploma (DSD) in conjunction with the National Senior Certificate (NSC).

We shape the DSJ as a place where all children and young people - regardless of their first language, their social, geographical and cultural background, their gender, their religious or sexual orientation - are equally valued and prepared in the best possible way for the individually appropriate degree. To this end, we maintain a diverse range of learning opportunities, a variety of entry points, differentiated support services, and a variety of opportunities for learning process guidance and support - from early childhood education through 12th grade. All DSJ students learn German and English at an educational language level, providing them with access to an international world of study and careers. Our graduates study and work all over the world - study locations include Johannesburg, Cape Town, Hamburg, Munich, Cambridge or New York, careers range from advisor to the Obama Foundation in the USA, to lawyer, chief physician or teacher in Canada, to solar energy engineer in Germany.

The DSJ sees itself as a place of excellence for teaching and learning, preparing young people to find their own individual path as strongly developed personalities, with open-mindedness, tolerance and multilingual skills in a globalised world. We want to continue working on this in the coming years.

2. VISION AND Mission

Vision

The “Deutsche Internationale Schule Johannesburg” offers young people the best preparation for the complex challenges of a global world.

Mission

We offer our learners instruction in a co-educational system that is based on the highest academic principles

- by offering learners lessons that are didactically and methodically sound,
- by emphasizing the values of responsibility, achievement, knowledge and ability,
- by guiding them to independent and self-motivated learning,
- by offering them the opportunity to become highly competent,
- by encouraging them to be punctual, disciplined, diligent and orderly

We guide our learners in their achievement of South African and German school-leaving certificates both bearing international recognition

- by preparing them successfully for higher education both locally and abroad,
- by supporting newly-enrolled learners through assisted integration and accelerated language instruction,
- by providing career counselling focusing on tertiary education in both South Africa and Germany,
- by maintaining close and meaningful contacts with South African, German and other international schools, businesses and universities.

We welcome anyone wanting to learn German and who is interested in the German culture

- by offering classes for children from non-German homes in order to acquire German as a mother tongue from the age of one,
- by enrolling learners from non-German homes into the Kindergarten, the Fifth or the Eighth Grade,
- by offering German language courses in order to help newly enrolled learners and their parents,
- by running an intensive student exchange programme with Germany and other international partner schools.

We help learners to develop strong personalities and strengthen team spirit,

- by encouraging them to show consideration for one another,
- by promoting social awareness through teaching and learning programmes such as the co-operative learning method,
- by supporting learners with varying levels of ability through teaching methods which focus on differentiated education,
- by providing learners with the opportunity of giving feedback to their teachers,
- by offering learners counselling and assistance with personal and learning difficulties.

We encourage our learners to think critically and independently,

- by supporting them in their positive attitude to work and willingness to achieve,
- by advancing creativity and organisational competence through our curricula,
- when planning learner-focused cross-curricular lessons.

We offer learners the opportunity to accept responsibility for themselves and for others and to strengthen their intercultural competence

- by allowing them the opportunity to participate in cultural events,
- by practicing and setting examples of peaceful conflict resolution,
- by conveying and practicing democratic values in education and teaching,
- by advancing the multilingualism of our learners,
- by being a centre of cultural encounter.

3. DEVELOPMENT FOCUS OF THE SCHOOL AT DIFFERENT LEVELS

3.1 SCHOOL CULTURE

Main objectives concerning school culture:

- Annual uptake of 25 learners into the ISEK
- The best possible integration of all learner
- Continuous strengthening of proficiency in German
- A high level of satisfaction among all participants in school life

Focal points for development:

- Paths to graduation
- Integration of all learners into the school community
- The DSJ as a place of intercultural encounter
- Exchange with Germany
- Digitalisation

Paths to graduation

As a German school, it is our task to give as many learners as possible the opportunity to take the Abitur exams if they meet the relevant requirements. Our goal is to guide as many students as possible to the Abitur. Graduating from our so-called "Kombizweig" (simultaneous acquisition of Abitur + NSC) requires proficiency in German an educational language level. Our school and learning environment provide opportunities for ISEK students with appropriate potential, who do not join the DSJ until grade 5, to transition to the DaM-stream. In order to achieve this, we are continuously working to increase this permeability in the streams towards the Abitur and to offer an optimally differentiated learning environment in all grades, with the aim of realising a school of equal opportunity. This also includes the ongoing task in the coming years of supporting and accompanying each child in such a way that he or she takes the appropriate path for him or her, at the optimal time, towards the best possible school-leaving qualification while receiving the necessary support for this.

Structurally, it is important to examine existing entry options and transitions and, where necessary, to develop new future scenarios and to consider the resulting methodological-didactic consequences.

Planned measures:

- Revision of the concept for the transition process (coordinators)
- Examination of alternative future scenarios (SL, Board)

School career paths towards a graduation certificate

As a German school, it is our task to enable the highest number of students the possibility to successfully achieve the German Abitur if they meet the appropriate requirements. Our goal is to lead as many students as possible to the Abitur. The graduation certificate in our so-called combined branch (Abitur + NSC) requires a mother-tongue level in German. Our school and learning environment already offers pupils with the corresponding potential, who come to the DSJ as late as in grade 5, the opportunity to make the transition from the NSC branch to the combined branch. We work

continuously on a further development of this permeability in the Abitur branch and an optimally differentiated learning environment in all grades with the goal of providing equal opportunities for all learners. One of the on-going tasks of the coming years is to support and accompany each child in such a way that he or she takes the appropriate path at the best possible time, strives for the best possible graduation certificate and receives the necessary support.

Structurally, it is necessary to consolidate existing intra-school cooperation, to review existing entry opportunities and transitions and, if necessary, to develop new future scenarios and to consider the resulting methodological and didactic consequences.

Geplante Maßnahmen:

- Konsolidierung des Wechselprozesses (Koordinatoren)
- Prüfung alternativer Zukunftsszenarien (SL, Vorstand)

Integration of all learners into the school community

Currently, children without knowledge of the German language can join the school community at one of these stages: in Kindergarten at the age of 1 or 4, in grade 5 or in grade 8. Integrating the new children into the school is one of our core tasks. Orientation trips or orientation days are therefore scheduled at the beginning of the school year in these grades. The Saturday School prepares children from our partner primary schools for one year, before they join the DSJ in grade 5. School fee rebates and scholarships make allowance for the different economic situations of the learners and contribute to more equal opportunities in Johannesburg, as these learners can receive school fee rebates of up to 95%. We purposefully integrate the children and young people in all school streams from the outset, in individual subjects and courses as well as in our broad extramural programme in the afternoons. Children and young people from different backgrounds learn with and from each other at the DSJ, listen to each other and respect differing opinions. In this way, we help our students to build strong personalities and at the same time strengthen their ability to work in a team. A mentoring system helps newcomer children to integrate quickly into the school community. Older learners motivate younger learners during their time at school to put in the effort, and to reflect on and keep their own goals in mind. Greater measures should be taken to support this approach.. Former learners should also be encouraged to become more involved in enriching the current school life to a greater extent by becoming mentors on the strength of their own success stories, and by having a positive and motivating effect on the school community.

Planned measures:

- Motivational talks, involvement of former learners (ISEK).
- Evaluation and revision of the mentoring concept (coordinators)

The DSJ as a place of intercultural encounter

Cultural diversity and multilingualism are a great potential at our school, which we continue to promote and make visible. Every individual should be able to participate in our school, feel comfortable and be able to develop without fear in a space of safety. In this way, we enable the learners to take responsibility for themselves and others and to strengthen their intercultural competence. This must be consolidated in the coming years. German in particular should ultimately be an added value for every learner, opening up new possibilities - and this in a fear-free, trusting environment. The familiar first languages can be bridges for learning German in a playful and creative way that is fun and age-

appropriate. The Baden-Württemberg curriculum is our didactic basis for the design of the school's own curriculum up to grade 9 in the ISEK and throughout grade 12 in the German stream. In order to do justice to our identity as a German school in South Africa, we will continue to contextualise this identity in the coming years and thus integrate the special South African, intercultural background into lessons and school life. This includes, for example, the appreciation of the cultural heritage and the numerous languages spoken at our school. This is further reflected in the fact that we live our diversity in up to 200 events inside and outside the classroom each year.

Planned measures:

- Contextualising the curricula for life in South African (HODs).
- Development of culture or language days (cultural heritage / heritage appreciation)

Exchange with Germany

We are open to anyone who wishes to learn the German language and is interested in German culture. An increasing challenge is the growing number of children and young people whose first or family language is not German. Strengthening German, as measured by the results of the German Language Diploma and the results in the Kombi section, while at the same time valuing all languages spoken at the school, is an ongoing development focus for the coming years.

Further education through study or vocational training in Germany should ideally be an option for every DSJ learner. The German Language Diploma opens doors for this. In order to open up such further education opportunities, partners are needed who help shape the transition into the world of work and careers, as well as individual counselling by qualified study and career counsellors. The annual "Careers Day" at the DSJ is also geared towards this. Cooperating with external partners from education, business and culture supports the goal of making DSJ graduates attractive to German employers. There is development potential in establishing or expanding a network and cooperative relationships with German companies based in South Africa, but also with other possible partners in Germany, and closer cooperation with parents in their fields of professional expertise.

The exposure to and encounter with German culture takes place through many events within the framework of our school life, such as the annual school bazaar, readings and lectures in cooperation with the German Embassy or the Goethe Institute. These activities will be resumed now that the Corona pandemic is subsiding. The annual exchange with our partner school in Wangen is open to selected learners after they have gone through an application process. A stay in Germany is desirable for all learners during their school career. The feasibility of this being made available to all learners needs to be further explored.

Planned measures:

- Establishment and expansion of a cooperation network for career and life planning (StuBa officer, SL)
- Establishment of a working group "Stay in Germany" (SL, AG)

Digitalisation

The worldwide Corona pandemic has abruptly presented the DSJ with new challenges while simultaneously moving the school more strongly and comprehensively into the digital age more quickly than previously expected. Accordingly, at the start of 2020, a platform for online teaching was set up via MS Teams, and remains available as a communication medium and additional work platform even now that face-to-face teaching has resumed. An IT helpdesk provides quick and easy support for work in the digital space when needed. In the future, the interface between IT and pedagogy must be further expanded and existing tools and digital work in general must be fed into a sustainable pedagogical

concept of teaching and learning. This also entails making sure that all DSJ children have access to digital education. At the same time, in the spirit of a socially well-functioning school community and respectful interaction with each other, clear rules are needed for handling electronic media of various kinds during the school day and afterwards.

Planned measures:

- Review and adaptation of the guidelines for the use of digital media (SL).
- Technical equipment and digital access for all learners (School Board)

3.2 LEARNING CULTURE

Main objectives at the level of learning culture

- • As many Abitur graduates as possible
- • The highest possible pass rate for Abitur and NSC
- • Above average results in all subjects in the NSC
- • A minimum of a 60% pass rate in the DSD I and II exams

Focal points for development

- • Personal development of learners
- • Accompanying of learning processes
- • Language Education
- • Diversity of learning opportunities
- • Support services

Personal development of learners

Learning culture encompasses the development of tuition, as well as accompanying and complementary processes and offerings. Alongside academic education, personal development is at the centre of our school's activities - both inside and outside the classroom. It finds special expression, for example, in subjects such as Life Skills or Life Orientation, in which the adolescents engage with questions around

their own identity, personal goals, social interaction or cultural diversity. But we also tie additional workshops on these topics into the regular teaching activities. Our goal is to develop tolerant, independent and critically thinking personalities who take responsibility for themselves and others, reject violence and exclusion, and learn to deal with each other in a constructive and solution-oriented way. The coming together of different cultures and individuals requires appropriate spaces for fostering mutual understanding and getting to know each other. This we want to make possible on an ongoing basis, especially with the support of the Phoenix Support Centre, in order to continue to shape intercultural togetherness with everyone's participation and in a positive way.

The Corona pandemic has presented many learners with great personal and social challenges. The long absence of face-to-face lessons, the lack of social contacts and activities have led to loneliness, depressive moods and even burnout symptoms in some children and young people. The DSJ already had in place and continues to offer, a sustainable network of support for this. In daily interactions with each other, some cultural techniques have to be learned anew. This also includes the responsible and temperate use of digital media, to which our students are further regularly sensitised.

Planned measures:

- Regular training on intercultural cooperation (FC, coordinators, KLK).
- Regular training on responsible media use (FC, coordinators, KLK)

Accompanying of learning processes

Individual learning process support is an important offering at the DSJ, which has received greater attention in recent years and is now being established. From Primary School to High School, we guide young people to take the success of their learning into their own hands, to always keep an eye on their own learning progress, as well as on their individual goals and to reflect on them. Learning development discussions are therefore an integral part of grades 1 to 7 and will also be introduced in grade 9 in 2023.

Based on the experiences gathered during distance learning during the Corona pandemic, a self-learning concept for grades 5 and 6 was developed, called "SegeLn", which is to be further expanded in the direction of Primary School and finally consolidated and evaluated. With the help of a logbook, the learners develop, and reflect on, their learning more independently. The introduction of a corresponding concept is also being evaluated for the middle school. Similarly, in 2022 in the ISEK, after an interruption due to the pandemic, the establishment of a DaF learning office was resumed, to which an English class will also be connected on a trial basis. A learning coaching offering for grade 10 learners in the NSC stream came to a halt due to the pandemic and is now to be taken up for another trial period. Since the start of the 2022 school year, the High School learners in the "Kombizweig" have been working on their chosen focal points on up to five study days, self-directed and at their own pace. Teachers are available as learning guides.

For the school, feedback on learning progress in the form of grades and other qualitative feedback remains a constituent element. The consideration of so-called future competencies plays an increasingly important role. Formative feedback, which accompanies the learning process more strongly, should complement summative feedback and increasingly be given space in school performance feedback. One of the DSJ's development priorities is therefore to remain in dialogue within the school community about ways of measuring and assessing performance and, if necessary, to rethink and redesign these within the framework of the possibilities that have been set.

Planned measures:

- Implementation of learning development discussions in grades 7 and 9 (coordinators).
- Consolidation of the SegeLn concept from grades 4 to 6, evaluation of an extension to the middle school (coordinators, PLG)
- Consolidation of the Learning Office DaF and English ISEK (DaF and English faculty, ISEK)
- Implementation of learning coaching in grade 10 (NSC)
- Consolidation of the study days in the "Kombizweig" (OSK)
- Initiation of an internal school discourse on assessment principles for performance measurement and assessment (SL, steering group, PLG)

Language Education

As a German school, our core task is to teach the German language. Children and young people who initially learn German as a foreign language are required to take the German Language Diploma I and II at the DSJ in grades 9 and 11, respectively. Taking the Abitur also requires proficiency in German at an educational language level. The increasing number of non-German-speaking families at DSJ presents one of the greatest challenges in this regard and requires an ongoing structural, didactic, methodological and motivational effort on the part of the school.

The DSJ is a reference school in the pilot project "Overall Concept for Language Education" of the central agency for German schools abroad, the "ZfA (Zentralstelle für den Auslandsschuldienst). In this context, since 2019 a working group has been bundling and better coordinating measures for language support. The aim is to bring all learners up to proficiency at an educational language level in the two lead languages German and English by grade 12, and to create and develop a uniform framework of language support at the DSJ for this purpose. Differentiated language proficiency identification and language support is an ongoing focus of development at the DSJ. From nursery school to Abitur, the aim is to provide language learning opportunities that are as tailored and individual as possible, through which learners learn, work and receive appropriate support at their individual level in phases. Another focus in the coming years will be to further expand the existing differentiation concepts and to intensify the preparation for the DSD I and II exams. Language-sensitive and German-language subject teaching will also remain a development focus of the DSJ.

The bundling and control of all measures is summarised under the term "overall language concept". The development of this concept is to be completed by the end of 2023 and permanent steering mechanisms are to be installed.

Planned measures:

- Development of an overall language concept for DaM, DaF, DFU and English (SL, PQM, HODs).
- Intensification of preparations for DSD examinations

Diversity of learning opportunities

We offer learners co-educational tuition at the highest pedagogical level. Cooperative learning is the guiding methodological teaching principle. This promotes interaction by learners and enables them to contribute with their individual strengths. The learning opportunities are diverse. From interdisciplinary project learning to experiments, linking task formats to real-life contexts and creative approaches to various topics, the DSJ offers a corresponding variety of learning opportunities. Guest speakers and excursions to external places of learning complete the spectrum. Internal differentiation is a focal point of the development of teaching in recent years, which needs to be evaluated. Special learning opportunities, including extracurricular ones, are offered by the annual Literature Week, the Science Week and, from 2023, the all-new all-school Project Week to be established on the occasion of the school Olympics. The interdisciplinary, often project-oriented work in the sense of "deeper learning" has been increasingly deepened since 2019 through the creation of a whole-school material distribution plan with very good initial results. This interdisciplinary cooperation must be further promoted.

A spiral method curriculum for the entire school is currently being developed and written for Primary School upwards. Method days in grade 7 and 10 are now an integral part of the school year.

As already mentioned in 3.1, the worldwide Corona pandemic has abruptly presented the DSJ with new challenges and caused a push towards digitalisation. It is now necessary to carefully filter out which digital achievements for pedagogical and teaching purposes should continue to be used for educational benefit and in what form, and to integrate them into everyday school life. This requires a

concept of teaching and learning in the digital age, taking into account higher-level school goals at the level of learning culture, for example the use of digital tools for individual learning process design or for language learning. The learning offerings are therefore to be conceptually expanded to include digital offerings.

Planned measures:

- Evaluation of cooperative learning and internal differentiation (PQM)
- Comprehensive School Project week 2023 "Olympics" (school community)
- Interdisciplinary/interconnected work in projects (HODs)
- Methods curriculum (PS ascending, coordinators, HODs)
- Examination of the creation of the position of a media officer (SL)

Support services

Our Phoenix Support Centre supports individuals wherever there is need: psychologically, academically, socially, emotionally. The services offered are varied and range from reading and spelling training to psychological support and individual counselling on school and life issues. An inclusion officer is part of the DSJ's multi-professional team, as are two school psychologists. An occupational therapist, a speech therapist and a network of health experts are also affiliated. The team will be expanded in 2022 with the addition of a social worker, initially for a one-year trial period to test the need for such a position.

Experts will be integrated in multi-professional teams into the teaching in the Kindergarten as well as in the Primary School. Individual support plan agreements will be drawn up – where necessary - in consultation with all parties involved and will accompany the school attendance of individual children. The Phoenix Support Centre also helps to make the entry of children and young people into DSJ, as well as their transitions between the school-internal levels, as successful and as smooth as possible.

In addition to the Phoenix Support Centre, homework supervision was another support service offered in the past. Due to declining demand, this has been further developed in the run-up to the school year 2022 into the free "Genius Hub", with different content focuses. This has been very well received so far and is currently in the trial phase.

Planned measures:

- Strengthening of networking in a regular "meet and greet" (FC management).
- Testing of a temporary position for a social worker (FC management, SL)
- Testing and evaluation of the Genius Hub (homework supervision, SL)
- Development of a protection concept (FC management)

3.3 PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

Overall Objectives:

- as many Abiturienten as possible
- the highest possible pass rate in the Abitur and the NSC
- above-average NSC/IEB results in all subjects
- at least 60 % pass rate in DSD I and DSD II
- a high level of satisfaction of all those involved in school life

Focal points for development:

- Accompanying further training on the focal points of school development
- Strengthening middle management
- Further training of local teachers for teaching in the German High School
- Professionalization of handover management

In addition to the learners, the teaching and administrative staff are among the most important resources of an educational institution. The management of school personnel must serve the school's overall goals and promote the further development of the school and learning culture.

The school has a policy in which all processes of personnel management are described, from recruitment to evaluation.

In terms of in-service training, there is a wide range of national, regional and in-school offerings. A comprehensive induction program accompanies new teachers during their first six months at the DSJ to ensure a successful start. Within this framework, they are also assigned a mentor who, together with the responsible department heads, provides support during the induction period. At the end of the first term, all new teachers are invited to a two-day event for joint reflection on their work to date with the mentors and the school management.

Preparation days are held for all teachers at the beginning of each semester and during the school year, there are school development days or internal teacher training days (SET, SchILF), professional teaching and learning communities are established for the duration of a school year (PLG – professional learning group), as well as regular training cafés by teachers for teachers and selective offers from the support centre. In principle, all teachers also have the opportunity to learn from each other through observation days.

The thematic work in the teaching-related professional teaching and learning communities focuses on upcoming development projects in order to learn from each other and develop lessons together. In this context, the observation day approved by the school management should be used for mutual classroom visits with feedback discussions in order to learn from each other according to the "good practice model".

The training priorities for internal school training of the teaching staff are based on the school development goals outlined in 3.1 and 3.2 as well as on current needs. Consequently, offers in the area of continuous language education in the sense of the development of an overall language concept play an important role. In addition, two focal points in the sense of the overarching school development goals can be identified, for which the staff must be trained accordingly: the accompaniment of learning processes in the sense of stronger individualisation and a more formative performance assessment. This is reflected in the further training courses on offer and is consequently to be increasingly included in the range of courses on offer by 2025. The areas of digitalisation, class management, parental work and much more are also part of the further training on offer.

The school has a performance management system as a tool for staff management and development. The department head and members of the close school management regularly visit all teachers in class and conduct staff appraisals. Employees who perform well above average may receive an annual bonus

of up to two months' salary. In this area, department heads are to be further strengthened as members of middle management.

Handover management in a school with a structurally induced high turnover presents a particular challenge, but is especially important for ensuring continuity in teaching and school development. Therefore, this should be professionalised and formalised. In addition, it remains difficult to recruit suitable German-speaking teachers within South Africa, but especially from Germany. For this reason, local teachers will continue to be trained for teaching in the German school branch including the High School (FOLK training).

Regular evaluations of all personnel measures are carried out and form the basis for a data-based reflection of the current state and for the initiation of possible improvements.

Planned Measures:

- Improvement of handover management (SL)
- In-service training priorities (PQM; support centre, HODs, PLGs):
 - Consistent language education
 - Individualization of learning processes
 - Leadership skills for Middle management
 - Regional training for local teachers (FOLK)