



ISAMILO INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL,  
MWANZA



## Information for Prospective Teachers

### ABOUT THE SCHOOL

#### *The School*

Isamilo International School is an independent school for children aged from 3 to 18, serving the expatriate and local community in the Mwanza area of Tanzania. It follows the British National Curriculum to Cambridge Board Advanced Level, adapted to meet the needs of pupils living in Tanzania.

There are currently 430 children on role, of which 180 are in the Secondary Department, 125 in the Junior Department and 125 in Early Years with waiting lists for 2 year groups, reflecting a very wide range of cultural and social backgrounds.

It is a dynamic and popular school. All members of the school community, staff and pupils alike, are actively encouraged to unlock their potential whilst being continuously challenged to aim for excellence in every endeavour. The school has an ethos of building the individual, developing their strengths and encouraging students to grow into well-rounded adults – hence our slogan... **the right balance!**

Isamilo is a non-profit making school operating under the auspices of the Anglican Church of Tanzania. Our fees are between a quarter and a third of the level of other international schools in East Africa. It is registered as an international school with the Tanzanian Ministry of Education and Culture, with the DCSF in UK and with AISA (The Association of International Schools in Africa).

#### *School History*

Isamilo was established in 1956 as a primary school to serve the expatriate community. It was then taken over, first by the newly independent government in 1961 and then by the Anglican Diocese in 1965 to provide an English medium education for the local as well as expatriate communities.

In the 1990s the school adopted the British National Curriculum, modified to address the needs of an international school in Tanzania. In 1998 it started extending, by one year at a time into secondary education. The first cohort took their IGCSE exams in 2003, at which point Isamilo split into primary and secondary schools for administrative purposes. In 2008 the school split again into 3 departments, Early Years, Juniors and Secondary. 'A' levels started in August 2009 as part of the Secondary Department with a

separate Head of Sixth Form. The school also now offers boarding for pupils aged 11-18 years.

#### *The Pupils*

The children at Isamilo come from a wide variety of cultural, religious and socio-economic backgrounds. 54 countries are represented within the school. In the main pupils are Christian and Muslim but Hindu, Sikh and other religions are also represented. There are pupils from local orphanages (supported by the school's bursary programme), expatriate children, children from Mwanza town itself and increasingly pupils from outside of the Mwanza area, due to the introduction of our boarding facilities.

Many of the children and their families speak English as a second language and there is, consequently, a wide range of abilities in language. Some of our newest pupils have very poor English, but through additional support and immersion in the language they usually improve quickly. As pupils get older their ability to speak English and consequently their ability to cope with the curriculum becomes increasingly important in the selection process.

#### *The Staff*

Since the school follows the British National Curriculum all teachers must have been trained in the British or equivalent system and most are expatriates from the UK, although we do have teachers from different parts of the world, including South Africa, Australia, Uganda and India. Staff are expected to take an active approach towards their Continuing Professional Development, which is supported in school with a system of mentors and coaches.

#### *External Exams*

The children take external exams at the end of Key Stage 2, 3 and 4 and both A-level years. In 2009, at IGCSE, 93% of our students gained five or more passes at grade C or above and an outstanding 38% of all results were grade A or A\*. This is a tribute to the excellent foundation laid in the primary school as well as to the high quality of our secondary teachers and the determination instilled in the children.

## **Facilities**

The three departments share the many facilities the school has to offer. Sports facilities (which teachers can use after school hours) include a 25m swimming pool, a field, tennis courts, a netball court and a multi-purpose sports area. The school hall is used for assemblies, concerts, drama and dance as well as being equipped for basketball and badminton.

A music room and two computer suites are shared by the two schools. The computer suites contain forty computers which are networked with access to the internet. The school library is well stocked and is equipped with computers for internet research. Bishop Wiggins House has its own library with age relevant books and each classroom has at least one computer. In addition the secondary department has an art room and two science laboratories.

## **Extra-curricular Activities**

The school's ethos of building the individual and developing their strengths is demonstrated through the extra-curricular activities on offer. There are a number of after-school clubs, including sports, games and creative activities. Visits and trips are part of the curriculum in each area of the school. Each year, all children from Year Five upwards have an opportunity to take part in residential visits. Venues have included Zanzibar, Kenya and Rwanda as well as other towns in the region. Every year, all the children get the opportunity to perform in concerts and productions. The standard of drama is very high with children from Pre-school to Year 13 taking part in at least one performance every year.

The school is gaining an excellent reputation for its sporting achievements as well. The school has competed both nationally and locally in football tournaments, winning the Tembo League in 2009. During the inter-school sports weekend with two other International Schools we came first in both swimming and football competitions. Pupils from our school have also been selected to represent Tanzania at Under 13 and Under 15 cricket.

We are very fortunate that staff are willing and able to support these activities. In a school of our size this shows real commitment.

## **The Early Years Department**

The Early Years Department is split across two sites. Bishop Wiggins House contains the Pre-school 1 and 2, Reception and Year 1 classes, while Year 2 are placed at the Main School site. Bishop Wiggins House is 5 minutes walk away from the Main School and has the advantages of being a small unit, with a friendly, family atmosphere. The Early Years Department come

together for assemblies, productions, sports events and, of course celebrations!

All classes at Bishop Wiggins House have a full-time classroom assistant, who is able to speak both English and Swahili and often other languages. In Year 2 support is reduced throughout the year in order for the children to become used to the level of independence required in Year 3.

## **The Junior Department**

Each year group in the Junior Department has two classes which range between 15 and 20 in size. Teachers in each year group plan and work together. The children take SATs from the UK in Year 6 and optional SATs in Years 3-5. There is a classroom assistant who works with children needing extra help in specific areas and extra support is given to children with English as an additional language using specialist teachers and assistants.

The Junior and Early Years Departments work closely together as a whole Primary unit ensuring there is continuity across the school.

## **The Secondary Department**

The Secondary Department has entered an exciting stage of expansion and, in addition to two form entry from Year 7 to 11, our first Year 12 cohort started their A-levels in August 2009. Currently there are 180 pupils in the Secondary Department, but this is set to expand as A-Levels continue to grow and Year 13 is established. Class sizes are a maximum of 20, although some exam classes are much smaller.

Key Stage 4 pupils prepare for International GCSEs and the school is a registered Cambridge International Examinations Centre.

Currently we offer:

English First Language	French
English Second Language	History
English Literature	Geography
Mathematics	ICT
Biology	Art
Chemistry	Economics
Physics	R.E.
P.E.	'O' Level Swahili

Key Stage 5 pupils sitting for AS and A2 examinations can choose from:

English Literature	History
Mathematics	Geography
Physics	Business Studies
Chemistry	Economics
Biology	French
Applied ICT	Art

## *About Mwanza*

### ***Communications & Power***

Mwanza is not an international city, but it is the second largest town of Tanzania, and it is developing quickly. The town has a railway terminus with links to Kigoma and Dar es Salaam, a lake port with links to Bukoba and Uganda and an airport. Recently, E.U. aid has financed improvements to the road system. There are now good road links to the Serengeti (two hours) and to Kenya (four hours). Roads to other centres in Tanzania are currently being upgraded. Where roads do not have a tarmac surface they can be quite rough, especially in the rainy season. Telephones, water and electricity supplies can be erratic, especially after heavy rain. One does need to be blessed with patience as power cuts can last five minutes, one or two days, or occasionally more. The school has invested in generators that provide enough power for lights, computers and TVs in the evenings.

### ***Shops & Restaurants***

Teachers have found the social life quite good, if a little different to what they have been used to. There are many different bars, restaurants and clubs, some catering more for expatriates, although the choice of food can be quite limited. There are of course many small shops, in which almost anything can be bought, although the quality of many goods is often below a standard you may be used to, and the selection not so wide. There are a few western type mini-supermarkets. Food produced locally is quite cheap however, imported food can be expensive.

### ***Climate***

1,100 metres of altitude give Mwanza relief from the humid heat of tropical Africa. The climate is pleasant in the shade. It is like a continuous European summer, usually interrupted by two rainy seasons.

### ***Accommodation***

School accommodation is basic but comfortable on a secure compounds. The school provides the main furniture as well as a fridge/freezer, gas/electric stove and TV. Electricity, water and gas (where appropriate) are paid for by the school and accommodation for single teachers is usually shared. A reputable security company guards the properties at night. All accommodation sites are close to public transport, have small local shops nearby and are within a 20 minute walk of the main town and 10 minutes walk to school.

### ***Health***

Teachers should be in good health. We recommend that teachers seek medical advice about the inoculations and prophylactics required for living in East Africa. Malaria is present but the school supplies reliable test kits and treatment is readily available. More teaching days are lost due to the common cold rather than malaria! Medical insurance is provided by AAR.

Isamilo endeavours to provide high quality education for children in Mwanza at considerably lower cost than other international schools. We are only able to do this if we can find teachers who are prepared to work in a third world country for rather less money than they would earn in the U.K.

**We are looking for teachers who want to contribute towards the development of Tanzania, as well as their own professional development – who want to be able to feel that their presence in Mwanza has made a difference.**

Details of salary are given separately. When considered with the other benefits the total package allows staff to live comfortably and to travel extensively in East Africa and many of our teachers have chosen to extend their contracts for a third year or often much longer.