

Bishkek International School

PRIMARY TEACHING TEAM 2019/20

Primary 6S Homeroom Teacher



Shannon Coppock

Ms Shannon graduated from McMaster University with a Master's Degree in Occupational Therapy and from Canadian Union College with a Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education. Ms. Shannon has taught Primary School in Yemen, the UK, and Canada. She is also a registered Occupational Therapist and has worked for several years in this role which has given her further experience of working with children and supporting their development. Ms. Shannon joined the BIS staff team in February 2019.

Primary 6S Co-Teacher



Elina Ignatova

Ms Elina graduated from the Faculty of Linguistics and Translation of Chelyabinsk State University, Russia. She took the opportunity to live and work in the United States during her summer vacation to practice her English and learn about American culture. After graduating in 2015 she moved to Bishkek and has been teaching English as a private tutor with international students of different ages. Ms Elina joined BIS in August 2018 as Co-Teacher in Primary 6.

Primary 6A Homeroom Teacher



Alexander McQuillan

Mr Alex graduated from the University of Wisconsin (B.A in Languages and Cultures of Asia) and had five years of experience teaching English, Math and Science to a variety of multi-cultural students, ranging from Second Grade to upper High School in the USA and Palestine before joining BIS in August 2017 as Primary 4 teacher. Mr Alex sets high standards as an inspiring teacher and he is also a leader of the BIS Cross Country Team, Ski Club, and our Eco-Bishkek program. For 2019/20 he takes on a new role as a Primary 6 teacher. Mr Alex firmly believes in the power of education and the ability it has to create a more dynamic world, filled with more inquisitive, and compassionate learners.

Primary 6A Co-Teacher



Elena Kharchenko

Ms Elena graduated from the Kyrgyz Russian Slavic University and joined BIS in May 2016. She has worked as a Librarian, as a Co-Teacher and as a Language Teacher. In 2018/19 Elena was both Primary 4 Co-Teacher and overall ECA Coordinator. For the 2019/20 academic year she has moved to Primary 6 as Co-Teacher.

Primary 5 Homeroom Teacher



Rona Butler

Ms Rona graduated from the University of California with a degree in Political Science, then later trained as a teacher. She has worked in South Korea as both an English language teacher and for 10 years as a teacher trainer for the Seoul Metropolitan Education Training Institute. During that time, she completed her Post Graduate Diploma at the University of Birmingham. After leaving South Korea, Ms Rona taught in a research center for autism at Youngstown State University, Ohio. Ms. Rona joined BIS in August 2018 as Primary 5 Homeroom Teacher.

Primary 5R Co-Teacher



Nuraida Asanbaeva

Ms Nuraida graduated from the Kyrgyz Russian Slavic University and has a diploma in the Theory and Practice of Translation. She has 5 years' experience working with school students from age 7 to 10. She very much enjoys the opportunity to be with children to help them grow and flourish. Ms Nuraida joined BIS in August 2019.

Primary 4 Homeroom Teacher



Katie Baxter

Ms Katie has a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education from the Indiana University of Pennsylvania, and 6 years of experience teaching primary level students in international settings in the Czech Republic, South Korea, Oman, and China. She also enjoys long-distance running, reading, and traveling. Ms Katie joined BIS in August 2019.

Primary 4 Co-Teacher



Elvira Tonueva

Ms Elvira studied Linguistics and New Computer Technologies at Bishkek Humanities University. Before joining BIS in August 2017, she studied at Kingsborough Community College in New York. In the 2018/19 academic year Elvira was Co-Teacher for Primary 3 and she is excited to move up to Primary 4 with her class for the 2019/20 academic year.

Primary 3 Homeroom Teacher



Jamie Hesse

Ms Jamie has a teaching certificate from the University of Missouri, St Louis, and a Bachelor of Science in Parks, Recreation and Tourism from the University of Missouri, Columbia. She has taught primary grades and middle school grades across the curriculum in different schools in the USA. She is a very understanding teacher who enjoys helping children succeed. Ms Jamie also enjoys outdoor sports and is looking forward to coaching our volleyball teams.

Primary 3 Co-Teacher



Saltanat Talantbek kyzy

Ms Saltanat graduated from International Ataturk-Alatoo University with a Bachelor degree in Translation and Interpretation, including one year at Eastern Mediterranean University in Cyprus. Since graduating she has worked as a translator, English teacher, dance teacher and in sales and marketing. Ms Saltanat joined BIS in April 2019 and her excellent work with students led to her appointment as Primary 3 Co-Teacher from August 2019.

Primary 2S Homeroom Teacher



Shelby Pohndorff

Ms Shelby is a qualified primary school teacher from the United States who also has a Bachelor of Science in Recreation, Sport, and Tourism from the University of Illinois and a Masters in International Development from Concordia University in Portland. Ms Shelby has four years of teaching experience in Kyrgyzstan, Mexico, and Sudan. She has taught a variety of curriculums, including the IB Primary Years Programme, for students from age 6 to 10. During her free time, she enjoys traveling, spending time in nature, and reading. Ms. Shelby is excited to return to Kyrgyzstan and join the BIS faculty as a Primary 2 teacher.

Primary 2S Co-Teacher



Kyzjibek Tekenova

Ms Kyzjibek graduated from the Kyrgyz Russian Slavic University and has a Diploma in Theory and Practice of Translation. She taught English before joining BIS in August 2017 as a Co-Teacher. In August 2018, Ms Kyzjibek moved to the position of Primary 2 Co-Teacher.

Primary 2A Homeroom Teacher



Alicia Grinsteinner

Ms. Alicia is entering her seventh year of teaching with a range of experiences. She worked as both a preschool and ELA instructor in South Korea prior to coming to Bishkek. She holds an elementary teaching license from Washington D.C. as well as a M.Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction with a focus in Early Childhood Education from Arizona State University. Ms Alicia joined BIS in August 2019.

Primary 2A Co-Teacher



Nurai Begaliev

Ms Nurai has a Bachelor's degree in Pedagogy and has diverse experience working with children within the Kyrgyz Republic and overseas. She believes that early development is important and has significant influence in children's future life. Ms Nurai joined BIS in August 2018 as Primary 1 Co-Teacher and is Primary 2A Co-Teacher in 2019/20.

Primary 1 Homeroom Teacher



Caitlyn Clark

Ms Caitlyn graduated from Western Michigan University with a Degree in Early Childhood and Elementary Education concentrating on English, Math and Social Sciences. During this program she earned one of five 'Intern Teacher of the Year' awards from the state of Michigan. She also holds a Degree from Western Michigan University in Anthropology and Comparative Religion. Ms Caitlyn has a Professional Level Teaching License from the state of Michigan and she is part way through a Master's Degree in Early Childhood Development. Ms Caitlyn has taught for 8 years in the United States, China, and Kyrgyzstan.

Primary 1 Co-Teacher



Alina Almasbekova

Ms Alina graduated from the American University of Central Asia with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology. During university, she volunteered with different NGOs working with children with a range of needs. Since finishing university in 2017 she has worked in a private school in Jalalabad as a preschool and primary teacher. Ms Alina enjoys dancing, singing, cooking, reading, and spending time with children to help develop their skills.

Primary school students are also taught by specialist teachers following the PYP approach for language options, Art, Music, Dance, Physical Education, and 'Host Country Studies'.