INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF FLORENCE

HEAD OF SCHOOL

July 2027

INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF
FLORENCE

SCOPE

Head of School Reporting to ISF Board of Directors. This is an outstanding opportunity to lead a thriving international school renowned for its academic excellence, multicultural ethos, and commitment to developing globally minded young people. Working alongside an outstanding faculty, highly motivated students, an engaged parent community, and a dedicated Board, the new Head of School will further strengthen our position as a school where heritage meets innovation.

HISTORY

Founded in 1952, the International School of Florence (ISF) is Italy's longest-established International Baccalaureate World School and a leading international learning community with a truly global outlook. ISF's Florentine location is central to its identify and offers unparalleled opportunities to enhance teaching and learning and student opportunities. Our community has a deep appreciation for the beauty and innovation that only Florence can provide.

As an independent, co-educational day school, ISF welcomes students from 36 countries, creating a vibrant, diverse and inclusive community where students are encouraged to thrive academically, personally and culturally. With 518 students across Early Years through Grade 12 and a dedicated full-time faculty of 100, the school combines the benefits of a close-knit community with the breadth and opportunities of a leading international school.
ISF offers a distinctive, internationally recognised educational journey. Students in Early Years through Grade 5 follow the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (PYP), alongside the Italian Programme. In Middle School, students benefit from the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme (Grades 6–10), complemented by the Italian Programme in Grades 6–8. At High School, students can pursue the highly regarded International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme alongside the American High School Diploma, providing multiple pathways to leading universities around the world.
An IB World School since 1983, ISF combines more than 70 years of educational heritage with a forward-thinking international approach. The school is accredited by the Council of International Schools (CIS) and the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (MSA), reflecting its commitment to high standards of teaching, learning and student development.

OUR MISSION, VISION AND CORE VALUES

Mission: Learning for our Shared Future
Vision: Engaging together to explore and grow in our complex world
Core Values: Respect, Responsibility Relationships and Resilience

OUR LOCATION

Our Junior School is located in the rolling Tuscan countryside of Bagno a Ripoli just a short drive from the city centre. The school owns this historic building, and it serves as peaceful and green environment for our younger learners (Early Years to grade 5).

Our Upper School is located in a magnificent 13th-century villa positioned just steps away from Florence's historic centre and the famous Piazzale Michelangelo. This campus is rented and there are potential plans to relocate.
Each campus has a dedicated Principal.

GOVERNANCE

Foundation Status: The school is incorporated in the United States as American Schools Abroad Inc., a non-profit educational organization.
Board of Directors: A 13-member dedicated board oversees the strategic direction, policies, and overall governance of the school. They are chosen from our community and professional networks for their expertise in education, law, finance, and strategic leadership. By maintaining this structure, we ensure that ISF remains stable, forward-thinking, and fully aligned with international best practices in school governance.
Leadership and Administration: The board appoints a Head of School who manages daily operations/ finance, academic programmes and quality standards, and faculty and staff.

IBDP RESULTS *Class of 2026*

AVERAGE SCORE (OUT OF 45)	PASS RATE	TOP SCORE (OUT OF 45)	BILINGUAL DIPLOMAS
33	96%	44	31%

The school's IB diploma results for 2026 were above the world average (30 points) with an average score of 33 and a top score of 44. Thirty-three percentage of the students obtained a bilingual diploma. We are proud that our ISF graduating students both now and in the past attend excellent universities throughout the world.

THE CITY OF FLORENCE

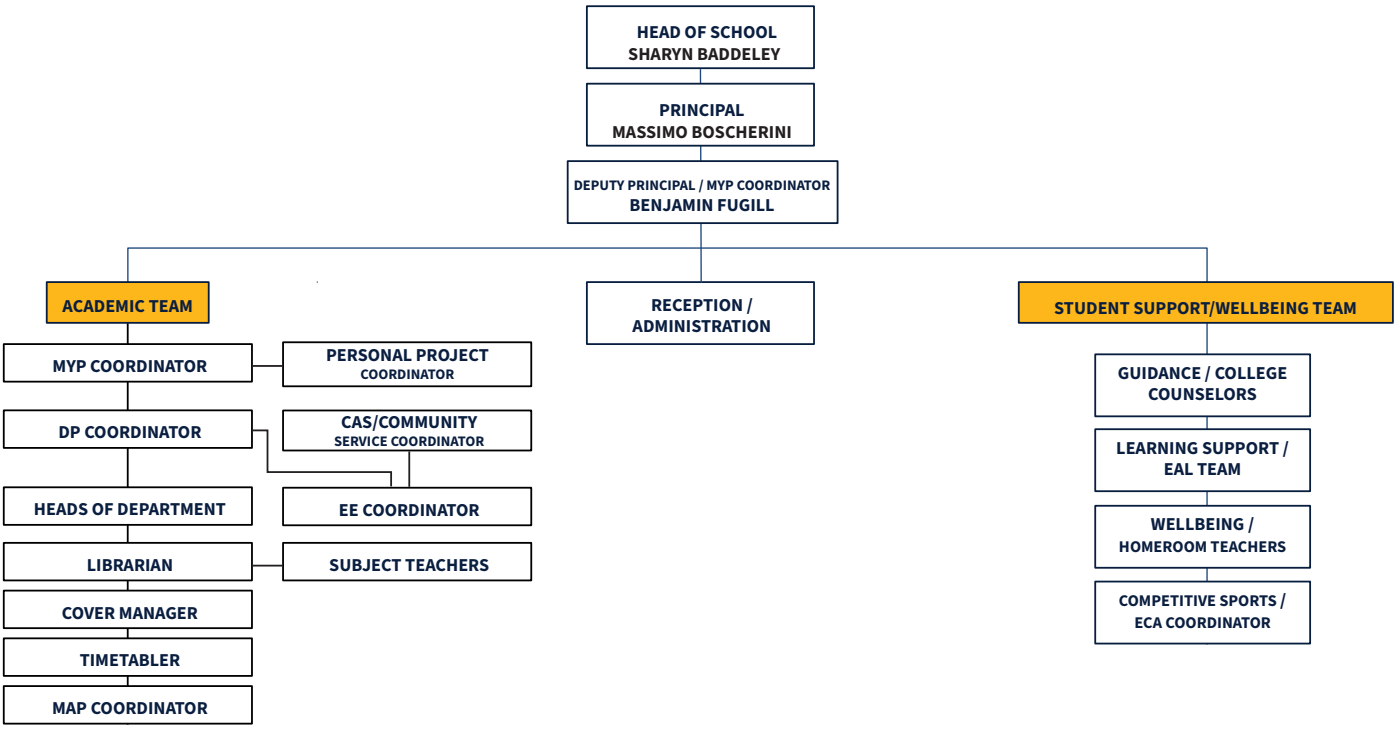
Known as the birthplace of the Renaissance, Florence is widely celebrated as the most beautiful city in Italy. It has the greatest concentration of art (in proportion to its size) in the world and is home to works by Michelangelo, Botticelli and Leonardo Da Vinci, to name a few. Over 50 million tourists throng the city's centro storico (historical centre) each year to marvel at the unique multi-coloured architecture, Brunelleschi's famous, orange-domed Santa Maria del Fiore Cathedral and the masterpieces that line the walls of the Uffizi Gallery.

However, to see this UNESCO World Heritage Listed city as just a tourist trap for art lovers would be to overlook its present role as a dynamic and modern metropolis. Despite its relatively small population of 1.5 million people, Florence boasts a large economy and is a major production and commercial centre. The ancient university also welcomes thousands of international students each year, giving the city a cosmopolitan and bohemian atmosphere. Being a comparatively smaller city, Florence has a lower crime rate, less pollution and a generally higher quality of life than many other cities.

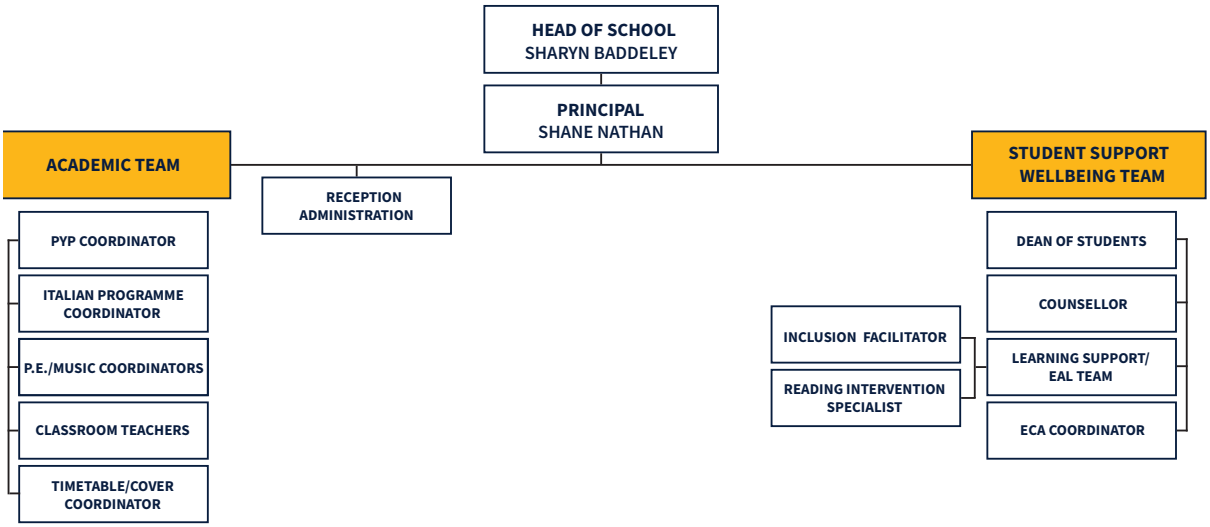
- **Family friendly:** Campo di Marte, northeast of the centre has a large sports complex, playground and excellent bus links. Also, Bagno a Ripolito the east is a quieter option to the city centre and a short distance from the International School of Florence.
- **Up-and-coming:** Oltrano is a characterful area with narrow streets and shops that lies south of the Arno. The area has been transformed since its main piazza, which previously served as a large car park, was returned to its former glory.

ORGANIZATIONAL CHARTS

UPPER SCHOOL

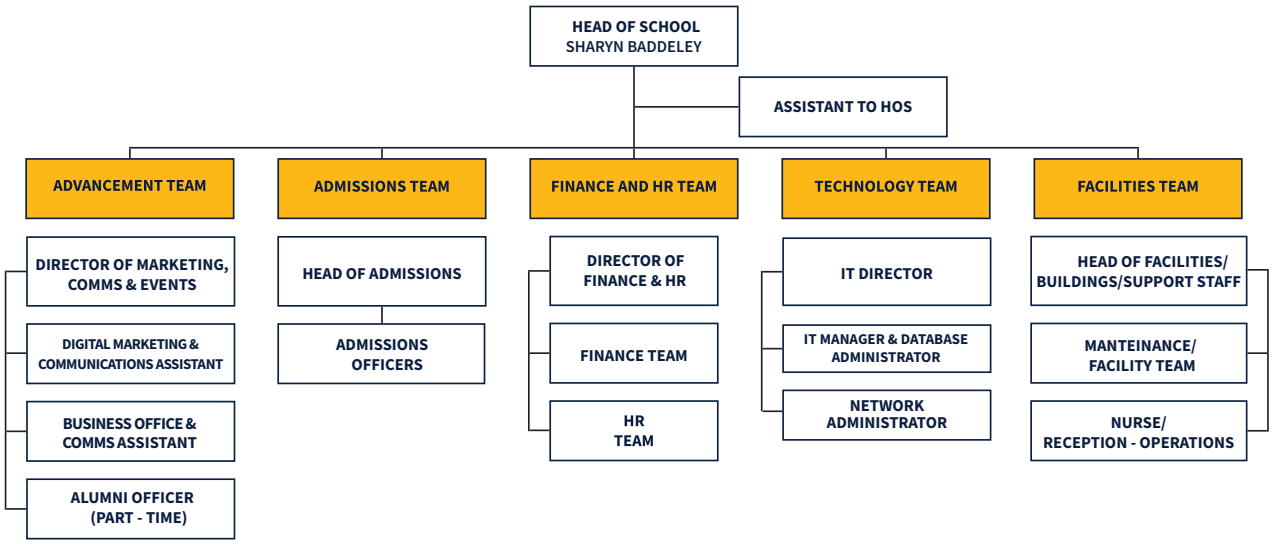


JUNIOR SCHOOL

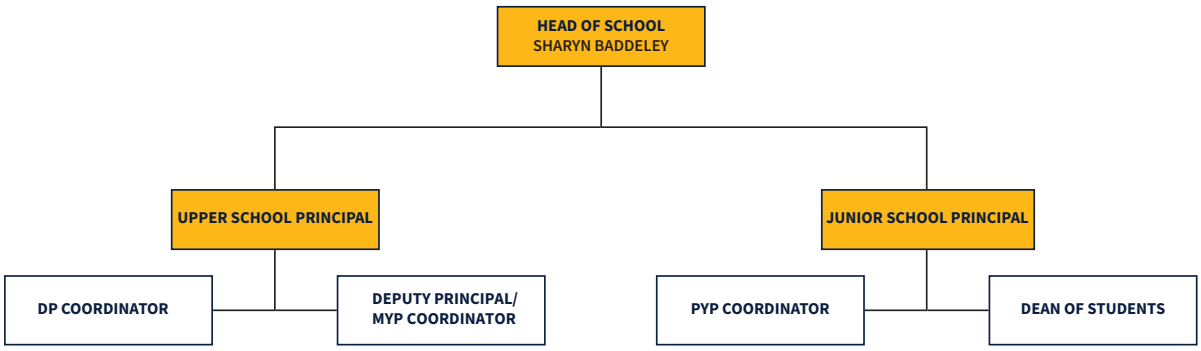


ORGANIZATIONAL CHARTS

ADMINISTRATION



SENIOR ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP TEAM [SALT]



JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title: Head of School
Reports to: Board Chair

Overall Purpose of Job

The Head of School is responsible to the Board Chair and is accountable for the leadership and directing all aspects of the financial and operational management within the school. This will include an understanding of market positioning, fee strategy and revenue optimization and technology and systems at enterprise level. He/she will be expected to ensure the achievement of the agreed annual strategic goals.

Main Responsibilities

The Head of School is the educational, financial and organizational leader and will have the knowledge and ability to demonstrate the leadership skills required to ensure the school's sustainable future. He/she will lead and motivate both the internal and external members of the community to live the school's guiding principles and fulfil the strategic plan.

Strategic Direction and Development of the school

- Assists the Board Chair in keeping an up to date and an insightful overview of the school's strategic development
- Reports to the Board Chair on activities concerning all aspects of the operational and financial running of the school
- Provides timely and regular reports to the Board Chair on financial trends and results in line with required targets
- Ensures that the school is marketed effectively, the school brand strengthened and enrollment is in line with forecast
- Understands the need for talent management and drives a clearly defined educational vision and direction which secures appropriate staffing, faculty progressions and commitment.
- Ensures effective teaching, successful learning and achievement by students and sustained improvement in their intellectual, emotional, and physical development and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.
- Secures the commitment of parents and the wider community to the vision and direction of the school to develop and implement the school's strategic plan, underpinned by sound financial planning and the sustainable use of resources.
- Identifies priorities and targets for ensuring that students achieve high standards, increases teachers' effectiveness and secures continuous school improvement
- Ensures that all those involved in the school are committed to its aims, motivated to achieve them and involved in meeting long, medium and short term objectives and targets which secure the educational and overall success of the school
- Ensures that the effective management of the school's finances and alignment between academic priorities, operational execution and long-term sustainability
- Informs and advises the board to ensure that policies and practises take account of international, national, local and school data and accreditation and authorisation requirements

Financial and Operational Leadership

- Demonstrates a deep understanding of finance and ensures strong financial management and the long-term sustainability of the school
- Actively markets the school to ensure awareness of the school and its offerings within the local market
- Oversees the effective allocation of financial, human and physical resources
- Actively drives enrollment growth in a competitive international school market
- Ensures compliance with regulatory, legal and safeguarding requirements
- Maintains the highest standards of safety, risk management, facility optimisation, and operational excellence.

Pedagogical Leadership

- Ensures high academic standards and a student-centred, future-focused learning environment
- Ensures a consistent and continuous school-wide focus on students' achievement, using data and benchmarks to

monitor progress in every student's learning.
- Ensures a culture and ethos of challenge and support where all students' can achieve success and become engaged in their own learning.
- Promotes innovation in teaching and learning, including the thoughtful integration of emerging technologies
- Determines, organises and implements a diverse, flexible curriculum with an effective assessment framework.
- As part of the talent management plan recruits, develops and retains high-quality faculty and school leaders within a culture of continuous professional growth, accountability and collaboration
- Leads and develops a cohesive, high-performing senior leadership team
- Monitors, evaluates and reviews classroom practice and promotes improvement strategies to ensure that underperformance is challenged at all levels and ensures effective corrective action and follow up is undertaken.

Person Profile

The successful candidate will demonstrate the following:

- A successful track record in school leadership supported by references from previous employers with clear evidence of the ability to successfully execute and manage change
- A strong track record in both educational leadership and financial and organisational management
- Deep understanding of the IB, and other international curricula
- Understanding either practically or theoretically of how to work creatively and productively with trade unions
- Expertise in collecting and dealing with data
- Demonstrated successful experience in all aspects of financial management including meeting financial targets, and executing result orientated strategic planning
- Proven success in growing school enrolment
- Proven ability to build, lead and retain high-performing teams
- Experience of effective and meaningful relations with for profit and not for profit school governance
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills, with the ability to engage and inspire diverse stakeholders
- Cultural fluency and the ability to lead globally diverse communities
- Knows how to seek opportunities to invite community figures, business, or other organisations into the school to enhance and enrich the school and its value to the wider community.
- Ability to judge, prioritise, maximise and sustainably execute initiatives
- Sound judgment and decision-making skills and resilience within complex environments
- A clear and active commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion safety and wellbeing

Qualifications

- Degree in Education ideally coupled with a post graduate qualification such as an MBA or PhD
- Working knowledge of an additional European language in addition to fluent spoken and written English
- Relevant track record in acknowledged successful schools
- Proven strong Financial/Marketing/PR and relationship-building capabilities

HOW TO APPLY

Please apply by 25 October to Adele Hodgson email address: adele_hodgson@educationparadigms.com

Applicants should provide:

- Current CV (no longer than 3 pages)
- Letter of application
- A targeted statement of educational philosophy relevant to ISF
- Contact details of three relevant professional referees including the most recent employer

International School of Florence is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The successful candidate will be required to undergo relevant background checks.