

AI, empathy, and INNOVATION



NAZAH SALAWAT

Principal, Daffodil International School's

The Daily Star interviewed Daffodil International School's principal, Nazah Salawat. In the interview she spoke about DIS's vision of value-based, future-ready education and how the school integrates AI, STEM, teacher development, assessment and co-curricular programmes to prepare students for global challenges.

The Daily Star (TDS): How does the school's motto — "Value, Culture and Innovation" — shape daily practice?

Nazah Salawat (NS): The motto guides a blended approach: Cambridge and Edexcel curricula delivered with activity-based and Montessori-informed pedagogy. Classrooms prioritise inquiry, collaboration and hands-on learning while pastoral care, counselling and leadership opportunities reinforce character and resilience.

TDS: What distinguishes your school's pedagogy and student outcomes?

NS: DIS combines academic rigour with experiential learning. Signature programmes — a Montessori Lab, Life Skills Academy, STEM and robotics labs, and structured project work — produce strong

IGCSE results alongside growth in creativity, communication and problem solving.

TDS: How is AI changing your school's teaching strategy and what guidance do you give teachers and students about using AI?

NS: AI serves as an instructional enabler. Teachers use AI tools for lesson planning, personalised practice and formative checks; students learn critical evaluation of AI outputs and plagiarism avoidance. The school has an AI policy and ongoing teacher training to ensure ethical deployment.

TDS: How do you ensure ongoing teacher quality and professional development?

NS: Continuous professional development includes Cambridge and British Council workshops, in-house mentoring, peer observations and leadership pathways. Classroom observation and performance reviews keep teaching student-centred and aligned with global best practice.

TDS: What is your approach to assessments and how you support students who excel or who need extra help (academic and emotional).

NS: Assessment blends formative, summative and project-based tasks. Regular progression tests, portfolios and feedback inform instruction. High achievers access enrichment while remedial classes, shadow teachers and counselling assist learners needing support.

TDS: What extracurricular activity (ECA) and co-curricular programmes do you run (clubs, sports, arts, debate, MUN, competitions) and how do you think they are linked to student development?

NS: ECAs like debate, arts, music, sports, coding, MUN and community service have broad participation and are linked to leadership and resilience development. Facilities and coaching support active engagement across age groups.

TDS: What are your strategic priorities for the next 2-5 years (facilities, curriculum changes, new programmes)?

NS: Priorities include deeper STEM and AI integration, a digital learning hub and auditorium, stronger life-skills and sustainability education, and enhanced student wellbeing. Progress will be measured through academic indicators, participation rates and wellbeing metrics.

Turning curiosity into confidence

Daffodil International School consists of a bright campus, lively classrooms and a clear sense of purpose which makes it a place where curiosity grows into confidence.

A Modern Learning Home

From Play Group to pre university pathways the school blends global curricula with local culture. Classrooms use smart tech and hands-on labs so ideas move quickly from mind to practice. Students find familiar roots and new horizons in the same school.

Active Classrooms That Click

Lectures give way to projects, experiments and reflection. Teachers coach students to be confident, thoughtful and creative. Montessori and STEM labs turn tiny

questions into big discoveries and build habits that last beyond exams.

Play Labs and Outdoors

Learning steps outside the classroom with sports and outdoor time that boost fitness and focus. Teams in football, volleyball and athletics compete and grow together while open fields and play areas keep school days joyful.

Beyond Books and Trophies

Co-curricular life is rich and varied. Robotics, coding, music, art, chess and Model United Nations help students lead and collaborate. Community programs like tree planting and relief drives teach empathy and civic sense as much as theory.

Tech AI and Future

The school uses AI thoughtfully to personalize

lessons and support assessments while teaching students digital responsibility. Regular teacher training and an AI use policy keep innovation ethical and practical.

A Caring Work Culture

Teachers and staff thrive in a supportive environment where professional growth meets care for students. The result is strong academic outcomes and high wellbeing across the campus.

Daffodil International School feels like a close community and a launchpad at once. It prepares learners not just to pass exams but to think globally, act kindly and invent boldly. For families who want a modern curriculum with heart-centered values and space for every talent, the school offers a lively, future-ready option.



From Playgroup to A level

Little learners to future leaders at Daffodil International School (DIS)

WHY CHOOSE DIS ?

- Sister concern of the Daffodil Group
- British Council-affiliated exam venue
- Cambridge registered Primary and Lower Secondary School
- Cambridge Wellbeing curriculum
- Lower Secondary and upper secondary
- Experienced and qualified faculty members
- Free academic support classes
- Special care for "Need support students"
- Own campus and spacious playground
- Indoor and outdoor sports facilities supporting holistic development
- Regular ECA and club activities
- STEM lab, ICT lab, Science lab, Montessori lab and library
- Life Skills Academy and Activity Room

- Building internationalism and analytical thinking skills through Global Perspectives
- French offered as a third language; Arabic as an after-school program
- Transport Facilities



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