

# Early Years Policy

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**Policy area:** Curriculum

**Date established:** 20/06/16


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**Date of next revision:** 27/09/20

This policy will be reviewed in full on a yearly basis, or more frequently if there are changes in policy. This policy was last reviewed by the Head of School and the advisory body on 27/09/19. approved by the directors on...

It is due for review on 27/09/20.

## Signed



Rod Jackson  
Head of School  
Date: 27/09/19



Daniel Jones  
Director and Chair of Advisory Board  
Date: 01.10.19

## Overview

## Policy statement

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) at ICS applies to all students in Nursery/ Reception class. At ICS students are admitted to Nursery following their third birthday. Teaching and learning within the EYFS takes place within an IB PYP framework. This means that we use the areas of learning and development from the EYFS to frame learning within an inquiry - based programme.

At ICS we recognise the importance of early childhood in laying the foundations for the rest of each child's life.

## Purpose/Rationale

At ICS the set of beliefs that underpin early childhood and the Early Years Foundation Stage are based around the overriding guiding principles set out in the EYFS framework (update 2017):

- **A Unique Child** - ICS aims to develop each child's independence within a positive, secure and friendly atmosphere. We work to ensure that children understand their achievements in order to develop the confidence to achieve their next goals.
- **Positive Relationships** - ICS supports children in building relationships through the development of social skills, such as working together and sharing and promoting positive attitudes.
- **Enabling Environments** - ICS provides learners with new and exciting experiences to provoke learning and allow students to reach their potential.
- **Learning and Development** - ICS sets high expectations for learners- socially, physically, intellectually, emotionally. We structure learning to provide opportunities for development and for each learner to take the next steps in their learning.

As an IB World School, we aim to provide an inclusive learning environment fostering intercultural and international mindedness, multilingualism, inclusivity and global engagement.

## Applicability

This policy will be reviewed in full by the Head of School every year, or more frequently if there are changes in policy. This policy was last reviewed by the Head of School and the Advisory Body in September 2019 and approved by the directors in October 2019. It is due for review in September 2020.

## Statutory guidance

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) (March 2017)

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile 2018 Handbook (2017)

Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage (2012)

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile Exemplification Materials (2014)

Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2018)

Working together to Safeguard Children (July 2018)

Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales (March 2016)

Young Person's Safety Act (1995)

Management of Health and Safety Regulations (1999)

Health and Safety Advice for Schools, DfE February 2014

Making the PYP Happen in the Classroom (2009)

### Access

This policy is available on request from the School offices. We also inform parents and guardians about this policy when their children join ICS, through our newsletters and our website. The policy is provided to all teaching staff (including temporary staff and volunteers) at induction alongside our ICS Professional Code of Conduct.

### Failure to comply

All staff are expected to be familiar with this policy. Failure to abide by it will result in intervention by the Senior Leadership Team.

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# Early Years Policy

## 1 Key People

1.1 ICS has one Nursery/ Reception classroom. Each child in the Nursery Reception class is under the care of their key people, who are jointly the Class Teacher(s) and the Learning Support Assistant. The two full time members of staff share information and work together to monitor the children's progress in the Nursery Reception classroom. The class teacher makes the final judgments about each children's learning and is responsible for all planning and procedures in the classroom. There is also an Early Years Lead, who, in collaboration with the classroom teacher and LSA ensures compliance of EYFS regulations and teaching and learning in line with the PYP, EYFS, and current, evidence-based best practices. The key people:

- help ensure that every child's learning and care is tailored to meet his/her individual needs and help the child become familiar with the school setting
- seek to engage and support parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home
- help families to engage with more specialist support if appropriate.

1.2 All adults within the Early Years actively seek to form positive, respectful relationships with the children in their care and are responsive to their needs. The formation of healthy relationships between adults and children is essential in enabling children's wellbeing. On the rare occasions when key people are absent from the class, we aim to be consistent in who covers these absences. We provide learning support and emotional support for children.

## 2 Staff Ratios

2.1 ICS staff ratios are compliant with the EYFS framework (2017) for students in the Nursery Reception class. There is an early childhood teacher for every 13 children with qualified teacher status and another member of staff with a full and relevant level 3 qualification.

## 3 Learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

3.1 Learning is arranged through units of inquiry (incorporating more than one subject discipline) and standalone subject learning. The prime and specific areas of learning are taken from the EYFS, preparing students for the early learning goals.

3.2 The prime areas of learning in the EYFS are:

- Communication and Language: Listening and Attention; Understanding and Speaking
  - Physical Development: Moving and Handling; Health and Self Care;
  - Personal, Social and Emotional Development: Making relationships, Managing feelings and behaviour and Self-confidence and Self-awareness
- 3.3 The specific areas of learning develop essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society. The specific areas are:
- Literacy: Reading and Writing
  - Mathematics: Numbers and Space, Shape and Measures
  - Understanding the World: People and communities, The World and Technology
  - Expressive Arts and Design: Exploring and Using Media and Materials and Being Imaginative
- 3.4 Learning for the students is recorded in the Early Years Profile. The profile records the pupil's attainment in relation to the 17 early learning goals (ELG) descriptors

The profile is completed by the final term of the year in which a pupil reaches age 5 (EYFS Profile Handbook, 2017)

#### **4 The Learner Profile and the 3Rs**

- 4.1 A positive culture in early childhood sets a secure foundation for learners. At ICS students are encouraged to develop the IB Learner Profile and to become thinkers, communicators, reflective, risk takers, balanced, caring, principled, knowledgeable, inquirers and open- minded individuals. These traits are applied to all aspects of school life and help foster a culture of intercultural awareness, international mindedness and what it means to be a self-confident, empathic and effective learner.
- 4.2 The children are rewarded for exhibiting these traits through acknowledgement of their respect for others, respect for themselves and respect for the environment. This forms the positive behaviour strategy that promotes wellbeing and development across the school – the 3rs.
- 4.3 Sometimes children are prompted to reflect on their behaviour in accordance with the Primary Social, Emotional, Behaviour Policy. The reflection prompts are visual and engage children in a developmentally appropriate process of thinking about behaviour choices. They prompt learners to reflect on the choices made and the impact on others, themselves or the environment. They also prompt learners to take positive action based on what they have learned from the experience.

## 5 The Early Childhood Classroom

- 5.1 At ICS, learning in early childhood takes into account the interests, needs and stage of development of each child. Play-based learning is planned and purposeful, and opportunities are given for students to select activities. There are opportunities for children who are emergent bilingual to use their home languages.
- 5.2 Activities provide a balance of child initiated and adult-led activities, with the balance adjusting as students prepare for entry into Year 1. Weekly plans are summarised in the weekly class newsletter for parents. Class teachers are responsible for writing plans using input from support staff, whenever possible.
- 5.3 The three characteristics of effective learning in Nursery Reception are:
- *Playing and Exploring* – children investigate and experience things, and ‘have a go’
  - *Active Learning* – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
  - *Creating and Thinking Critically* – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

## 6 Assessment

- 6.1 Class teachers make regular observations to gauge the progress each child is making. They observe the child’s interests and their approaches to learning. Assessment helps staff tailor learning engagements to the students’ needs. Records of assessment are maintained.
- 6.1 Student portfolios are collections of work that indicate achievements within all the areas that students are working on. They form an important basis for measuring progress matched to their developmental goals.
- 6.3 Teachers use home-school communication tools such as Focus Child reports to share learning with parents.
- 6.4 Teachers report on the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELG) for each child against at the end of Reception. The school Reception report explains whether students are at the expected level of development, whether they are exceeding the level of development or whether they are emerging towards that expected level. The report also reflects the characteristics of effective learning that each student is demonstrating.
- 6.5 Throughout Nursery and Reception student progress is tracked using stages of development from the *Development Matters Framework*. We share information about each child’s development against these learning milestones in the school reports in June and December.

- 6.6 Data is collated from lesson observations and student assessments and progress is tracked. Moderation using exemplification materials, internal moderation across the Early Years team and PYP 1 teachers and moderation using work from other schools, enables the teaching staff to make informed judgments of levels and next steps. In the Early Years, the teaching staff maintains a moderation folder to ensure that standards are clear and assessment is accurate. Progress data is shared with the Primary Principal to ensure students are making adequate progress and that their needs are supported.

## **7 Visits and Visitors**

- 7.1 At ICS we recognise the importance of visits and visitors so that children are exposed to experiences that will engage and stimulate their imagination. Visits and visitors are linked to the learning goals.
- 7.2 Visits and school visitors are managed according to our Trips and Visitors Policy and Procedures. Risk Assessments are completed to assess the specific risks for our EYFS students. Reasonably proportionate control measures are put into place that include details about staff to student ratios, medical needs, SEN of students, safeguarding, dietary requirements, on-site hazards, travelling and other areas specific to the trip or visitor.

## **8 Outdoor Learning**

Children are encouraged to go out on a daily basis. Parents provide clothes for wet days and cold days so that children can go outside and experience outdoor learning and physical activity.

## **9 Classroom Environment**

- 9.1 Early Years classrooms at ICS are designed to provide learning across the seven areas of the EYFS Framework and children experience a balance of activities across the school day. The environment includes an annexed space, role-play area and areas for small world/ construction, creativity, a carpeted area, a book corner and mathematics.
- 9.2 Resources are labelled and spaces are designed to reflect the needs of the activity and curriculum area. For example a book corner is in a quieter spot.
- 9.3 Children have opportunities to use the Paddington Street Gardens playground and the Seymour Centre jungle gym areas as additional learning spaces, where they can run, climb, cycle and be active.



- 9.4 Early Years classrooms recognise the need to develop children's self-esteem and independence. To this end, each child has a peg where they hang their coat and bag.

## **10 Partnerships with Parents and Carers**

- 10.1 At ICS, we believe that parents are partners. We encourage parents and carers to speak to staff about their child regularly. We welcome parents into the classroom at the start of each school day to drop off their child..
- 10.2 We provide parents with information at the start of the school year to explain aspects of the curriculum such as assessment, literacy and play based learning. We host student-led conferences where parents come into the class and the children participate in various activities and show products they have made.
- 10.3 Many parents prefer for their child stay for half a day in the first few weeks of school while they get more used to their surroundings and the new people in their life. We host a settling in conference early in the first term where parents can discuss with the teacher how their child is settling into school.
- 10.4 ICS welcome parents in to read books and share aspects of their culture across the year. We also invite parents to join classes for school trips and for "Stay and Play" events.

## **11 Safeguarding including Health and Safety**

- 11.1 The active promotion of the welfare of all students and their protection from harm is a priority for all staff as children in early childhood are vulnerable. We follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Guidance (update 2017) and our school Safeguarding Policy and Health and Safety Policy is applied to early childhood.
- 11.2 We recognise the need to ensure a safe environment and a culture of vigilance at all times. Students in early childhood follow whole school procedures for child protection (see Whole School Safeguarding Policy). The Primary Principal is the named Designated Safeguarding Lead and all concerns are discussed with her.
- 11.3 School staff and volunteers are vetted and trained in safeguarding enabling them to recognise the signs of abuse and their responsibilities in school systems for swift reporting, whenever there is a concern. This includes the procedures for reporting a colleague.

- 11.4 Staff are trained and mentored in assessing risks and reinforcing culture of emotional security and wellbeing. Students are taught who to talk to if there is a problem.

Children in the EYFS are subject to the following policies affecting the promotion of their wellbeing and their protection from harm: Online Safety Policy; First Aid Policy; Primary Social, Emotional, Behaviour Policy; Attendance Policy; Safer Recruitment Policy; Intimate Care Policy; Whole School Safeguarding policy.

## 12 Facilities

The facilities used by children are regularly checked to ensure they are safe and there are systems in place for reporting maintenance problems swiftly. All outdoor equipment is checked daily and fire alarms are held regularly in line with whole school policy.

## 13 Mobile Devices of Staff and Visitors

- 13.1 It is important to note that members of staff do not use their mobile phones or personal handset devices in the classroom and are prohibited from taking photographs with their personal handsets. All mobile devices must be locked with a password.
- 13.2 Staff may use school iPads to take photographs as evidence to support the regular observation assessment cycle in the EYFS. These photographs are used in children's portfolios, in class displays and on the school website.
- 13.3 All parents are asked to state whether they give permission for their child's image to be used on the school website through the paperwork in their initial starter packs.
- 13.4 Visitors (volunteers, parents, carers, contractors) may not use mobile phones, cameras, tablets or other devices in the EYFS setting. If parents have children in the setting they may take pictures of their child(ren) and/or their work only. Any photographs or images that include other children must be deleted.
- 13.5 Other than in a medical emergency staff, students and visitors are not permitted to use mobile phones or any other mobile / recording devices in areas where students are changing.

## **14 Healthy Diet**

We are a healthy school and our children receive free fruit but we ask that parents regularly provide healthy snacks to share; these might be breadsticks, rice cakes or fruits such as grapes or a pineapple. Our staff model good eating habits when eating alongside the children.

## **15 Accidents and Incidents**

- 15.1 ICS has a trained Paediatric First Aid staff on the premises at all times during the day and on school trips. We take all accidents seriously and always log and phone home immediately if a child bumps their head.
- 15.2 We acknowledge that young children often have 'accidents' (i.e. wet themselves) and have stocks of spare clothes. When appropriate, we will change a child using the procedures stated in our Intimate Care Policy. We ask parents to help keep our stocks of clothes high by returning anything their child has borrowed. Whenever a staff member helps change a child another adult should be present, an incident form filled out, and parents notified.

## **16 Prevent Duty**

- 16.1 Staff working with young children understand their duty for due regard to preventing children being drawn into terrorism. We recognise the unique position that early childhood practitioners are in, given the frequent interaction with parents and we are trained to recognise the signs that a child may be vulnerable to extremist positions and the process for reporting swiftly any concerns.
- 16.2 We actively uphold and promote the values of democracy, mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs, individual liberty and the rule of law in developmentally appropriate ways through play and exploration, active learning and creative and critical thinking. Students get to make decisions, vote and learn about the beliefs and values of different people in a culture of inclusion and respect.

## **17 Monitoring and Review**

It is the responsibility of those working in Nursery and Reception to adhere to the principles of this policy. The Primary Principal leads the monitoring of learning and safeguarding in early childhood as part of the whole school Performance and Career Management System.

## 18 Transition

- 18.1 At the end of Reception, we recognise that there can be another significant jump as students move into PYP 1. Transition procedures at this time include building familiarisation across the school and the sharing of important information.
- 18.2 Work throughout the year and at the end of the EYFS prepares students for PYP 1 with students experiencing more formalised instruction and with increasing teacher-led activities.
- Children attend Learning Celebration Assemblies with PYP 1- 3, every 6 weeks
  - Joint playtimes enable students from NR to play with those from PYP 1 and PYP 2.
  - Continuation of play-based learning, role play, child initiated play, as part of PYP 1.
  - The transition of the EYFS Profile and the NR trackers are passed onto the PYP 1 teacher in the summer term. Literacy and Mathematics data are also shared.
  - Share opportunities to engage in activities with PYP 1 students, such as literacy and mathematics lessons through the year during collaboration time.

### Reference(s)

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile December 2017

Inspecting Safeguarding in Early Years, August 2016

Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2019

Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage, February 2018

The Common Inspection Framework, August 2015

ISSR's December 2014

EYFS Assessment and Reporting Arrangements 2018