

# ISB Early Learning Centre Handbook



Revised August 2021

**\*This handbook does not reflect changes that may occur due to measures put in place regarding Corona-19 and variants.**





### General Welcome

Welcome to ISB Early Learning Centre where we work with families to provide solid foundations for each child's learning and education.

We trust that you and your child will have a successful and enjoyable year. Please read the following information carefully.

### School Contact Details

Address - Badgasteiner Str. 11,  
28359 Bremen

Telephone - 0421-515 7790

Email - [office@isbremen.de](mailto:office@isbremen.de)

Website - [www.isbremen.de](http://www.isbremen.de)

Office hours are Monday through Friday from 7:30am - 4:00pm.

### Early Learning Center Hours, Arrivals and Departures

Monday - Thursday 8:00 am - 2:50

Friday - 8:00 - 2:00

The arrival and departure area for children in the ELC is located down the path to the right as you face the building (Courtyard). EL1 and EL2 will enter and exit through the second gate located on the side near the sports hall. EL3 students will enter and exit through the first gate near the art and music areas.

When children arrive at school, the parents/carer must inform the teacher of any changes regarding the person who will be picking up a child. Staff cannot release a child to a person who has not been authorized to collect them. Please telephone the school if any change to these details occurs during the day.

Regular attendance and arriving on time are important for your child's progress. Please inform the office by phone or email([absence@isbremen.de](mailto:absence@isbremen.de)) if your child is ill. In case the family will be leaving for vacation during our operating school calendar, please fill out a 'leave of absence' form which is available at the front office

## **Mission Statement**

The International School of Bremen is a private school for students within the internationally oriented community of Bremen. In partnership with family and community, ISB maintains a high commitment to educational excellence in both teaching and learning. It provides an academic, social and physical education in English that promotes the development of responsible, ethical citizens in an ever-changing global society.

## **Beliefs**

The International School of Bremen believes:

- *All children have the ability to learn and learn at different rates.*
- *Children have different learning styles and interests.*
- *Children have the right to a safe and caring learning environment.*
- *Children can make positive contributions to their environment.*
- *Education is the shared responsibility of school, home and community.*
- *Education should develop an understanding of various cultures and appreciation of diversity.*
- *Character education is important in the development of responsible global citizens.*
- *Education should inspire students to become life-long learners.*

ISB Early Learning Center will prepare our students for tomorrow's challenges by nurturing inquiring attitudes and habits of mind. This enables individuals to continue their quest for knowledge throughout their lives. The Early Learning Center is committed to excellence and providing positive experiences of learning for all students.

## **Facilities**

- ISB Early Learning Center consists of three homerooms.
- Playground areas are easily accessible.
- The library is situated in the foyer area of the first floor.
- Sport is provided on site.

## ISB Early Learning Staff

Teachers, Specialists and Teacher Assistants work within the classroom themes and will be engaging in learning activities and curriculum goals with the students under the supervision of the class teacher.

### Early Learning Center Coordinator:

Mrs. Susan Huntington-Gienke

### Teachers:

Alexandra Underwood, Tanja Balog, Alberto Orti Roig

### Classroom Assistants:

Ute Raabe  
Apadsara Theze

### Specialist Teachers

- Music - Rachel Wolff
- Physical Education - Alberto Orti Roig, Michael Laass
- Library - Ruth Holsten

### Library

ELC children may check out books from the library each week. All concerns regarding library lending should be directed to Mrs. Holsten and/or Mrs. Gienke. Homeroom teachers are not responsible for library issues.

Parents are also encouraged to join our library and can borrow additional books for their children.

### Physical Education

A schedule will be provided indicating the days your child will have sport. On sport days, your child should come to school in 'sport friendly' clothes. They should plan on staying in these clothes for the entire school day.

If, however, students choose to wear specific, different clothes for sport, they should be able to get changed independently.

Students will be required to wear sport shoes or slipper socks with rubber grips. Please, no shoes with laces unless your child can tie them without assistance.



## [International Primary Curriculum](#)

The International Primary Curriculum, commonly referred to as the IPC, is a flexible, cross-curricula program.

### EL1 and EL2 and the International Early Years Curriculum

The key learning strands within the IPC Early Years curriculum are:

- **Independence and Interdependence**

This strand focuses to a large extent on the children's goals and their relationships with other children.

- **Communicating**

This strand is primarily about developing skills in communication including speaking and listening, reading and writing, early numeracy work and the expressive arts.

- **Exploring**

Through this strand the children's skills of inquiry are developed.

- **Healthy Living**

Using the statements within this strand children are encouraged to understand how to look after themselves and each other.

We focus on confidence development within the areas of physical, emotional, social and intellectual development.

### EL3 and IPC Milepost 1

The IPC has been developed to provide support to teachers so that four main aims can be achieved. They are:

- to help children learn the subject knowledge, skills and understandings they need to become aware of the world around them.
- to help children develop the personal skills they need to take an active part in the world throughout their lives.
- to help children develop an international mindset alongside their awareness of their own nationality.
- to do each of these in ways which take into account up-to-date research into how children learn and how they can be encouraged to be life-long learners.

The Early Learning Centre classrooms will use a variety of contexts for learning - play, real-life situations, investigations, routines and focused teaching and learning. In all of these situations, children will be challenged to construct new meanings and develop deeper understandings.

## [School Supplies](#)

Teachers will provide a list of required materials.



## Homework

Homework will be addressed by each ELC teacher.

Please take opportunities to discuss any art or other work your child brings home or proudly displays in the ELC.

## Items from Home

Generally, toys from home are discouraged. We cannot guarantee they will not be broken or misplaced. Please only bring items when asked by the teacher as part of show and tell or other requested special times.

IF your child needs to bring something from home to help make the transition easier, he/she will be encouraged to keep it with their things located in the ELC hallway. Exceptions to the rule would be at the discretion of the teachers.

## Behavior Management

ELC children are encouraged to be responsible for their own behavior. Conflict or discipline situations are talked through calmly so that a child may learn strategies to deal with a similar situation in the future.

Sharing, joining a group and dealing with anger and aggression are but some of the issues in young children's lives. Providing firm, understandable guidelines and a routine also assists in creating a cooperative, fair and positive environment.

## Communication

Parents can write a note, telephone the office, leave a message or make an appointment to talk about their child. Notes from the school about a range of issues also go home, so please check your child's red bag or school bag each day.

A communication book is provided by the school to help the communication between home and school.

ELC news will be published in our weekly ISB Parent Bulletin that is sent out by email to all parents generally on a Friday. Special event reminders will also be displayed on the door as you enter the Early Learning Center.

## Reporting and Documenting Your Child's Learning

Communication with parents regarding their child's development is of the utmost importance. From observations and interactions with the children, teachers make written notes. During the year, parent-teacher conferences occur and written reports are given. Should the teacher have any concerns regarding student development, parents will be contacted to discuss any concerns. Parents are welcome to contact the teacher at any appropriate time to make an appointment to discuss any aspect of their child's achievements, behavior or development.

**See attached documents at the end of this handbook for more details on ELC policies regarding marking and reporting progress.**



## Birthdays

We love birthdays and know they are very important for your child. Formal parties and swapping gifts are not allowed in class. However, parents may furnish cupcakes or cookies for their child's class for a special treat. Fresh fruit, cheese cubes and other healthy treats are preferred. We will gladly send home party invitations provided ALL children in the class are invited.

## Quiet/Rest Time

All children in EL1 have a quiet time every day to rest. Children are not required to sleep during this time, but they are encouraged to lay quietly for 15-30 minutes. Children who are not napping may have quiet time activities after the first 30 minutes. The duration of the nap will vary on the different ages of children and their needs. Children should keep a blanket & pillow from home in their cubby for quiet/rest time.

## Snack Breaks

ELC children are given a morning snack time. EL1 and EL2 students have an additional afternoon snack. (Please make sure that your child has enough to eat for both.)

No soft drink, chocolate or sweets please.

All snacks and packaging need to be manageable by the child.

Containers need to be clearly labeled with your child's name.

A water bottle that can also be easily accessed is a daily essential requirement.



## Lunch

ELC lunch is in the Dining Room. All students will be encouraged to eat the items packed from home or provided by our catering service. Staff will not force students to eat something they do not like or finish everything on their plate. We believe forcing a child to eat or making them finish their food increases anxiety and can lead to unhealthy eating habits in the future.

Appropriate dining room behavior is expected and reinforced.

Please review the menu provided by the catering service with your child. Students in the ELC can currently only access items on the buffet. This does not include rolls or snacks that are made available for an extra cost.

## School Clothing

Please keep in mind appropriate clothing for participation in Early Learning Center activities. Inside and outside activities are a part of our daily routine. Clothing and shoes should be ones which children can learn to manage themselves, as such important independence skills are encouraged.

Inside the classroom a pair of inside shoes or slippers will be required.

Aprons are required when children paint or play with water to protect clothing and keep them dry. An old long sleeve shirt is suitable.

Sometimes, a child may need a change of clothes (toileting accident, wet from enthusiastic water play or illness) so please send a change of clothes to school.

Outside our classrooms, each child has a hook and shoe space. Each child's place will be clearly labeled. Please encourage independence by having your child participate in the organization of their belongings.

ISB school clothing is available for purchase.

### Craft Materials and Donations

Children in the ELC will be provided many opportunities to use creative thinking, fine motor skills, social skills, problem solving abilities, language and more to create works of art. Teachers may make special requests throughout the year. However, if you are interested in donating any of the following items, it would be greatly appreciated.

- Magazines, stickers, costumes and clothes for creative areas, telephones, flashlights, Ziploc bags and miscellaneous fabric scraps.



### Keeping our children happy, healthy and safe

ISB respects each child and has policies and procedures aimed at keeping each child happy, healthy and safe.

- Photos

With the introduction of the new GDPR in May 2018, it is now extremely important for the school to receive parents' consent for use of their child/children's pictures on the school website and/or the school's business account on Facebook. Please complete the form provided by ISB regarding permission to photograph your child. ELC teachers often use photos of students when showcasing learning in the classroom and hallway. Please inform the school office and your child's homeroom teacher if this is not your wish.

- Hygiene Practices

A high standard of hygiene practices are implemented at the school. Hand washing is believed to be the most important way of controlling infections and preventing the transmission of disease. Children are encouraged to wash their hands at regular intervals throughout the day. Younger children are assisted to learn sound hand-washing techniques.

- Toilet

Your child should be toilet-trained when starting in the ELC. However, accidents do happen. Please send a change of clothes with your child. The clothes should be placed in a bag and left on the hooks outside the individual classrooms. Should it be necessary, a phone call home will be made. Please return any clothes belonging to school as soon as they have been washed.



- **Medical**

The school attends to any child who sustains an injury or becomes ill during the day. When deemed appropriate, parents will be notified by phone or communication book. Parents are always contacted by phone in case of a head injury. ISB staff are not permitted to administer medication.



- **Injuries and Sickness**

Regular attendance is important to your child's learning. However, in the interest of all children, the school requires that children be kept out of school for 48 hours after the final episode or symptoms in the following situations:

- Fever
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Discharge around the eye (pink eye)
- Undiagnosed skin rash
- Head lice: Students with head lice should stay at home.

If your child is being treated with an antibiotic, he/she should have received treatment for at least 48 hours before returning to school.

**A child recovering from an illness should not return to school until he/she is well enough to participate in the regular school day, including outside play, lunch and sport-unless a doctor's note has been provided explaining limitations due to illness.**

- **Allergies**

Please indicate to administration and the homeroom teacher of any student food allergies.

### Preparing your child for school - initial separation

It is not unusual for young children to be upset at the start of the year when they are settling in.

Teachers and their assistants have a nurturing, calm approach and quickly establish routines. These give children a sense of security when they know what comes next and what is expected of them.

Some parents stay with their child and are concerned that their leaving will make their child upset. While it is difficult to leave a crying child, staff are very capable of helping the child to become familiar with the new demands on their life. Children often settle quickly once the parents leave. Therefore, by saying goodbye and reassuring the child when they'll see the parent next, prolonged stress can be avoided. Be assured, school staff will contact parents if necessary.

- **Getting ready**

Encourage your child to participate in the organization of clothes for the day and bag preparation for school.

- **Sleep routine**

Establish a routine with a set bedtime each night to ensure your child gets enough sleep.

- **Dressing for school**

Encourage your child to dress themselves so they can manage things like taking shoes off and putting them back on at school by themselves.

- **Looking after belongings**

Label all your child's belongings and show your child where these labels have been placed. Such items would include clothing, bags, hats, snack containers, books and shoes.

- **Food for energy**

Be sure your child has a balanced breakfast.

- **Saying goodbye**

A short and reassuring goodbye encourages independence.

- **Going home**

Students will be ready in the classroom for pick up at 3:00 Mon - Thurs and 1:30 on Fridays.

### Tips for helping your child to make the transition to learning

- Read to your child frequently
- Talk about letters, words and numbers children see when they are shopping, on television, in books and on computer screens
- When your child is ready, model how to hold writing tools appropriately
- Talk about and draw events from books
- Let your child help with cooking - pouring, measuring, stirring, counting cups and spoonfuls
- Count and sort things together - washing, cutlery, groceries, etc
- Do jigsaw puzzles and build things out of construction toys or "junk" materials
- Talk about what happened during the day and about past and coming events.

# Early Learning Centre Marking Policy



## Philosophy

In the Early Learning Centre we believe that marking and feedback should form an integral part of the teaching and learning process by enabling teachers to inform children individually of their achievements, address misconceptions and celebrate good work. The responses to children's work should focus on successes and areas of development against learning objectives and success criteria, enabling children to become reflective learners. The information gained should then feed directly into assessment and planning to create a cohesive and efficient system.

## Reasons for Marking

- To recognise, encourage and reward children's efforts and celebrate successes with them.
- To provide a dialogue between teacher and child which provides clear, appropriate feedback, referring to the learning objectives and/or success criteria.
- To further develop children's confidence in reviewing their own work and setting their own targets by identifying the next steps in their learning.
- To indicate how a piece
- of work can be corrected or improved.
- To identify students who are below or exceeding expectations and therefore require extra intervention or further challenge.

## Marking and feedback should:

- Be manageable for teachers.
- Be both oral and written comments, with verbal comments being recorded (see marking code).
- Respond to individual learning needs.
- Indicate to what extent the learning objective has been met.
- Be related specifically to the agreed learning objectives or success criteria (the success criteria should be generated by students wherever possible).
- Give children regular opportunities to respond to their marked work.
- Have a clear distinction between comments relating to the child's achievement and their effort.
- Encourage and motivate students through realistic comments.
- Highlight what the next area for learning should be.
- Show students that their work is valued.
- Be used to inform the teacher's short and medium term planning of the next step.
- Show evidence of student's self and peer marking whenever appropriate.
- Recognise the importance of verbal discussions as well as written comments.
- Be consistent across the Early Learning Centre and understood by all those involved including the children.



## Organisation

- Wherever possible, the teacher will mark during independent work time or upon completion of task. This allows the teacher to give immediate feedback and deal with arising questions. Where possible, children should be encouraged to self-mark using a different coloured pencil or pen.
- Distance marking (i.e. marking completed away from the child) should be reviewed with individual students.
- Children should be encouraged to self-assess at the end of most lessons by using a thumbs-up, down or sideways system.
- Wherever possible, the teacher will correct tasks with individual students rather than use an X to indicate an incorrect answer.

## Expectations

- Not all pieces of work can be 'quality-marked'. Teachers need to decide whether work will be acknowledged or given detailed attention.
- Marking should focus first and foremost on the success criteria for the learning objective. The emphasis should be on the success against the learning objective.
- The marking code will be clearly visible in the classroom and in the children's communication books.

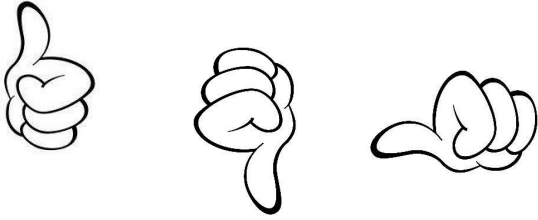
## Self-marking

Wherever possible, children should engage in self-marking so that they may receive minute-by-minute feedback about how they are progressing through the lesson. Children should be actively involved in discussing and generating the success criteria for their learning. Students should be given regular opportunities to self-mark their own work so that it becomes embedded in every day practice. Within lessons, children should be given time to reflect on their learning and identify their own successes and look for improvement points.



## Marking Codes:

### Hand Signal for Individual Self-Assessment in a Group Setting



### Written Symbols



I did it!



I almost did it.



I can do better.

(Should be accompanied by a wish.)



Correct answer – Tick/check

Circle around answer – Look again

Review at Home - **H**

Wish – What you could do to improve

Supported by a Teacher/Assistant - **T**

Independent Work - **I**



# Early Learning Centre Policy for Reporting Progress



The goal of assessment is to monitor student learning and to provide ongoing feedback to parents and students. Assessment information is used by teachers to improve their teaching and by students to improve their learning. The assessment of student learning is the responsibility of the teacher. Assessment is an ongoing process and is collected over time through observations, conversations and student products.

## **METHODS OF REPORTING STUDENT PROGRESS**

Teachers in the ISB Early Learning Centre (ELC) will consider all evidence collected through assessment to evaluate student progress. They will report their evaluation of student progress to students and parents through a combination of parent conferences, teacher generated reports and portfolios.

### Parent Conferences

Parent/Teacher Conferences are an important component of ongoing home–school communication and family involvement in our school.

The International School of Bremen includes two Parent/Teacher Conferences in their yearly calendar. Teachers are also available for meetings outside of the regularly scheduled conference dates. Parents will be notified if a meeting is necessary to discuss any academic and/or behaviour concerns.

### Progress Reports

Records of each student’s progress through school will be maintained and will be reported to parents at the end of each grading period. The purpose of the report is to indicate clearly the progress the student is making toward achievement of the learning goals established by the International Primary Curriculum (IPC).

### Portfolio Assessment

Teachers in the ELC maintain student portfolios. Portfolios are used to contain examples of children’s work at different time periods in a school year. Portfolios include work samples selected by both students and teachers, samples of artwork, photos and specially designed checklists and rubrics to help document student growth in addition to assisting teachers with developing individualized instruction.

Required portfolio entries include charts and rubrics that document progress of learning in the following areas:





Reading:

- Literacy Program (Read Write Inc.) Checklist
- Lowercase Sounds Assessment
- Lowercase Letter Names Assessment
- Uppercase/Capital Letter Names Assessment
- Sight Word Assessment

Writing:

- Writing Samples with Rubric Score (Minimum of three per year)

Social-Emotional:

- Social-Emotional Rubric

Math:

- General Math Assessment

**Evaluation Documentation**

All documented evaluation is considered confidential and will be stored and monitored properly to ensure that student information is secure.

ELC portfolios follow each student as they progress through the ELC program.

Parents may be provided with copies of documentation upon request.

