



International
School of **London**

ISL London Early Years Policy 2021-22

**Date reviewed
July 2021**

**To be reviewed
July 2022**

Mission statement

Since 1972, we have established a welcoming and inclusive community. Our diverse cultures and languages drive all our learning experiences.

We nurture creativity and curiosity to stimulate deep thinking. We foster insight, compassion and resilience to enable us to play a meaningful part in a changing world.

Vision statement

We celebrate our stories, our worth and our purpose to make a difference in a shared world

At the ISL London Primary School, we believe in:

- Empowering students to maximise their learning opportunities and to fulfil their potential.
- Actively integrating cultural diversity in the curriculum.
- Creating inclusive, vibrant and innovative learning communities.
- Offering a diverse and extensive international programme that supports personal, social and professional growth.

Principles and aims

Throughout the Early Years at ISL London Primary School, we actively encourage the children's enjoyment of learning, their creativity and curiosity, whilst ensuring the highest safeguarding and welfare standards. We follow the principles and guidance of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), emphasising the development of children's unique and individual potential as inquisitive, active learners by providing a broad, stimulating and balanced curriculum.

At ISL London Primary School we firmly believe that every child should feel welcome, loved, safe and secure when entering our setting. Our aim is to provide a safe, nurturing, stimulating environment that accommodates and embraces differences. We believe every child is unique in terms of life experience, developmental readiness, and cultural heritage. Partnerships between family and school is, therefore, essential to the optimal growth and development of each child. We believe in learning through play, as children learn best by hands on experiences. We strive for a balance between teacher-directed and child-initiated activities, providing the foundation of a developmentally appropriate early childhood program. We offer a wide range of opportunities to explore the world around them, so our young students become active, involved learners. We encourage the children to become independent, resilient learners who approach problem solving with confidence and an open mind. We believe, with this foundation, children become inquisitive and adaptable learners. They will develop into strong communicators who are able to make independent choices and act responsibly.

We believe it is important to have high, realistic expectations for every child. We believe in our children and encourage them to have high expectations of themselves. We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers and strive to achieve this through our open-door policy and ongoing communication channels.

Structure

At ISL London Primary School, we offer places for children who have turned three by the 31st August of each academic year. Our Early Years provision is for three to five year olds and consists of EC1 (Early Childhood 1) for the 3-4 year olds and an EC2 (Reception class) for the 4-5 year olds. This is a full day, (08.30-15.30) five days a week.

Curriculum

Our Early Years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage (applies from 1 September 2021) as well as the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme. Through the IB Units of Inquiry we teach all aspects of the EYFS framework.

The EYFS seeks to provide:

- Quality and consistency in all early years settings, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind.
- A secure foundation through planning for the learning and development of each individual child, and assessing and reviewing what they have learned regularly
- Partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers
- Equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported

The EYFS specifies requirements for learning and development and for safeguarding children and promoting their welfare.

The learning and development requirements cover:

- The areas of learning and development which must shape activities and experiences (educational programmes) for children in all early years settings
- The early learning goals that providers must help children work towards (the knowledge, skills and understanding children should have at the end of the academic year in which they turn five)
- Assessment arrangements for measuring progress (and requirements for reporting to parents and/or carers)
- The safeguarding and welfare requirements cover the steps that providers must take to keep children safe and promote their welfare.

Overarching principles

Four guiding principles should shape practice in early years settings:

- Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured
- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships
- Children learn and develop well in enabling environments with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- Importance of learning and development. Children develop and learn at different rates.

Learning and Development Requirements

The EYFS learning and development requirements comprise:

- The seven areas of learning and development and the educational programmes
- The early learning goals, which summarise the knowledge, skills and understanding that all young children should have gained by the end of the reception year
- The assessment requirements (when and how practitioners must assess children's achievements, and when and how they should discuss children's progress with parents and/or carers)

Three areas are particularly important for building a foundation for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships and thriving.

These are the prime areas:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

Providers must also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

The specific areas are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

In planning and guiding what children learn, practitioners must reflect on the different rates at which children are developing and adjust their practice appropriately.

Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning 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

Learning Opportunities

Each area of learning and development are implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of child-initiated and adult-led activities. During Free Flow, the Early Years team respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interactions. Where relevant, class topics are largely generated by the children's interests through observations of their play while staff extend the children's learning through sustained-shared thinking.

The Early Years team considers the individual needs, interests, and stages of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each individual. They set realistic yet challenging expectations that meet the needs of all

children with the learning opportunities offered reflecting the individual needs of all students. The SENCO, who links with relevant agencies when appropriate, supports the Early Years team.

Our learning environments are organised in such a way as to foster independence. The children are encouraged to take ownership of their learning environment and this, in turn, promotes responsibility and respect. Our young learners have access to a, well-resourced indoor and outdoor environment. All children in the Early Years benefit from Physical Education and Music classes plus time with their Mother Tongue language teachers.

Assessment

At ISL London Primary School ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development process. Our child-centred approach to learning recognises that children develop at different rates and in different ways. Through interactions and observations the team are able to identify each child's interests, learning styles and levels of development with the intent to develop and provide a personalised learning experience for all.

Parents and/or carers should be kept up-to-date with their child's progress and development. Practitioners should address any learning and development needs in partnership with parents and/or carers, and any relevant professionals. Assessment should inform an ongoing dialogue between practitioners and year 1 teachers about each child's learning and development, to support a successful transition to key stage 1.

Throughout the Early Years staff track the children's learning against the development statements and learning goals set by the EYFS. This information is shared with parents and carers in line with the ISL reporting cycle.

What?	Who?	Guidelines/Expectations	When?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent Survey • General information about the child 	All grade levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be sent home to parents of all children at class presentation evening 	Beginning of year
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) 	EC2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) is a short assessment, taken in the first six weeks in which a child starts reception. • The statutory guidance for the administration of the RBA is set out in the Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage. • The guidance covers all intakes in reception within an academic year including during autumn, spring and summer terms. 	First six weeks of when a child starts in EC2.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Portfolios • All disciplines 	All grade levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to Student Portfolio Guidelines in assessment policy 	Throughout the year

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Portfolio Reflections and Self-Assessment 	All grade levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflections and Self Assessments will be kept in the Student Portfolios on Seesaw. Reflections for UOI will be conducted at the end of each unit. Reflections for all other key learning areas to be completed as per the guidelines 	<p>Half-termly</p> <p>Termly</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Checkpoints for student learning and development. 	EC 1 and 2	<p>Check Point 1 (Three-way conferences)</p> <p>Check Point 2 (Term 1 Reports)</p> <p>Check Point 3 (Student Led Conferences / EYFSP)</p> <p>Team to agree on which aspects of the Prime areas they will review in checkpoints 1 and 2 *see example</p> <p>Check point 3 will review each child's progress within each of the Early Learning Goals.</p>	<p>CP1 – October</p> <p>CP2 – February</p> <p>CP3 - May / June</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Goal Setting UOI and ELGs 	All grade levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students, teachers and parents will develop goals during the first Three Way Conference (goals will relate to aspects of the prime areas). Goals should be recorded on appropriate goal setting templates Teachers will review and update goals with students each term Goals should be sent home by the end of the Week 2 of each term to be shared with parents (end of Week 4 for first term) During the Student Led Conference the goals will be reviewed 	<p>Beginning of year (end of Week 4)</p> <p>December</p> <p>Termly</p> <p>Termly</p> <p>May</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) 	EC2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Below 	June

Assessment at the end of the EYFS – the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP)

In the final term of the year in which the child reaches age five, and no later than 30 June in that term, the EYFS Profile must be completed for each child.

Practitioners may include the following to support their judgements:

- Knowledge of the child

- Materials, which illustrate the child's learning journey, such as photographs
- Observations of day-to-day interactions
- Video, tape, audio or electronic recordings
- The child's view of their own learning
- Information from parents or other relevant adults

An EYFS profile completed by a practitioner alone only offers a partial picture of a child's attainment. Practitioners must actively engage children, their parents and other adults who have significant interaction with the child in the assessment process.

Practitioners should use their professional knowledge, and the statutory EYFS framework, to judge whether a child's learning:

- **Meets** the level expected at the end of the EYFS
- **Exceeds** that level
- Is best described as '**Emerging**'

Practitioners should also use the information in this handbook to help describe each child's characteristics of effective learning. Their judgements will be subject to moderation in order to ensure national consistency and accuracy.

Kindergarten teachers will be given a copy of the Profile report. EC2 teachers will provide a report on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective teaching and learning. These should help inform a dialogue between grade level teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs.

Schools must share the results of the Profile with parents and/or carers, and explain to them when and how they can discuss the Profile with the teacher who completed it.

If a child moves to a new school during the academic year, the original school must send their assessment of the child's level of development against the early learning goals to the relevant school within 15 days of receiving a request. If a child moves during the summer term, relevant providers must agree which of them will complete the Profile.

The Profile must be completed for all children, including those with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND). Reasonable adjustments to the assessment process for children with SEND must be made as appropriate. Providers should consider whether they may need to seek specialist assistance to help with this.

Transition/Settling In

At ISL London, we aim to provide a smooth transition where each child feels safe and secure and confident therefore each child's needs are continually observed and monitored. At ISL London Primary School we have a rolling admissions programme and children may start at different times during the year.

To ensure a smooth and successful transition into school life at ISL, in the first week of school Early Years students are invited to come in for a trial session to meet their teachers and fellow students. This gradual start supports students in familiarising themselves with the classroom layout and transitions before a full school day.

Depending on a child's well being when starting, families can choose to have a 'staggered start'. This provides families and teachers the opportunity to find a schedule that suits the needs of each child.

We also provide a welcome meeting in the first few weeks. This will be an information session which families can join to find out about the day to day in our early years setting and ask any questions they may have.

Being Healthy

ISL London Primary School believes in promoting healthy living habits from an early age. Early Years children enjoy fruit for snack in the morning which is provided by the school and fruit is always available during the day if needed.

Fresh water is available at all times and students self-help themselves to this throughout the day. Children are asked to bring a reusable water bottle from home that is easy for them to use independently.

During meal times, discussions, gardening activities and cooking opportunities, children are made aware of the importance of making informed food choices. Children are also encouraged to be risk takers and try new foods.

During transitions between indoor/outdoor experiences, children are encouraged to become independent in their self-care. Children are encouraged to be active throughout the day and the importance of physical activity and its effect on the body is regularly discussed and reflected on.

We believe that outdoor learning is essential in promoting a healthy and active lifestyle and ensure that students access the outdoors on a regular basis throughout the day.

Role of Parents/Carers

At ISL London Primary School we recognise and value parents/carers as the child's primary educator.

We believe that all parents/carers have an important role to play in the education of their child; we recognise the role that parents have played, and will play in educating the children. We seek to develop an effective partnership with parents/carers through our open-door policy and ongoing communication channels (informal chats/ Seesaw / newsletters / email / parent-teacher meetings / reports / information sessions).

We aim to provide a professional, friendly atmosphere where parents/carers feel comfortable to share concerns, questions or suggestions and feel welcomed and valued. Collaboration with families is highly valued and appreciated. Parents and carers are welcome to take part in different activities throughout the year or offer an activity of their choosing.

The following procedures are outlined in our whole school policies:

- *Safeguarding and Welfare procedures*
- *Health and Safety procedures*
- *Complaints and grievances procedures*
- *Behaviour policy*

At ISL London, Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all practitioners should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.