

# Early Childhood Centre

## Comprehensive Guide

2023 – 2024





## Welcome

Dear Parents,

We are happy to welcome you to the Early Childhood Centre AS (ECC) at the International School of Bergen (ISB), where we are looking forward to another inspiring and rich school year with our students and families. In our environment, we focus on learning through play, where we aim to provide a safe, inclusive, warm and engaging environment for our students.

The purpose of this Comprehensive Guide is to give you a one-stop place with all ECC specific information you will need to ensure you are familiar with ECC routines, expectations and curriculums that make up the framework for the learning and play environment we provide for our students.

The ECC has four classes: Preschool 1&2, Preschool 2, Preschool 3&4 and Kindergarten. We work in line with the Primary Years Programme (PYP) of the International Baccalaureate and the Norwegian Framework Plan (NFP) for Kindergartens, following the Norwegian Kindergarten Act.

Our goal when working in line with the PYP is to develop internationally-minded students with the knowledge, skills, concepts, attitudes and learner profile attributes needed to continue learning into the Middle Years Programme (MYP).

As our students progress through Preschool 1&2 to Kindergarten, they develop increasing independence, a greater sense of responsibility and understanding of the world around them. Their role to play as citizens of the world is nurtured over the course of their early childhood education, where the Programme of Inquiry, the subject areas outlined in the Norwegian Framework Plan and our core values, play a significant role.

ECC students, staff and the general school community aim to consistently exemplify ISB's core values of Community, Integrity, Respect and Responsibility, with the goal of helping our students develop into confident and caring citizens of the world. You can find more information about our school's mission, core values, beliefs and objectives in the ISB Parent Handbook and on our [school website](#).

Our staff is committed to working closely with everyone in the ISB community to make each and every year a special one for our students and families.

Thank you for choosing the ECC. We are looking forward to having your child join us.

Please contact your child's teacher or the ECC principal if you have any questions or concerns. We are always here to support our students and families.

We are looking forward to the 2023-2024 school year!



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## Daily routines

### School Day

Opening hours:	7:30 – 16:30
In class:	9:00 – 15:00
Supervision:	7:30 – 9:00 and 15:00 – 16:30

Preschool 1&2 and Preschool 2 follow separate routines adjusted to the children's age and needs. Their supervision takes place in a designated area adjusted to a toddler's needs. They have their own sleeping area outside, where they are safeguarded by a member of staff at all times. More details will be provided by the homeroom teacher at the beginning of the school year.

### Meals

Morning snack, lunch and afternoon snack are provided by the student's family. We encourage all families to provide healthy meals for their children to enjoy. Please read more about the importance of meals – nutritious and healthy food recommended for preschool children by the Norwegian health authorities [here](#).

### Birthday treats

We provide a tasty birthday treat for all our students. To ensure an inclusive and consistent celebration for everyone, we ask you not to bring cakes or other snacks from home.

### Indoors and outdoors classroom environment

ISB places a strong emphasis on the importance of having a positive and nurturing learning and play environment. Through learning activities and play, children develop skills to promote social competence, focusing on the core areas of empathy, emotion management (impulse control, emotion regulation, anger management), and social problem-solving.

There is also a strong focus on preventative bullying strategies and helping students develop a variety of relationship skills, including strategies for making and keeping friends and steps for joining a group activity.

## **Individual Needs**

Aiming for an inclusive and warm learning and play environment also means making sure that individual needs are met. Diversity is an important and valuable part of our ECC environment.

At ISB, we aim to ensure that students with individual needs achieve their potential through differentiating and adjusting our educational programmes, the PYP and the NFP, to the child's needs. When a child or a group of children need extended support and extra resources, we collaborate and receive support from The Educational-Psychological Service, the health services for children and other support services (all part of Bergen kommune), to develop appropriate programmes and ensure high-quality student support.

## **Assembly and circle time**

Our students meet in assembly and circle time on a daily basis. These are opportunities to come together, ensure a common focus, communicate, share ideas and reflections, learning experiences and performances.

## **General supplies**

You can find more information, including a [supply list](#) for students, on our [website](#), under [learning at ISB](#).

# **Communication ECC - Home**

## **Parent-teacher conferences**

The parent-teacher conferences and Toddle student learning journals play an important role in providing timely information to parents regarding their child's development, strengths and goals. The parent-teacher conferences are scheduled in November and May.

Parents can also arrange to meet with the homeroom teacher, specialist teachers or the ECC principal at any point during the school year to discuss their child's development, progress or other issues. We always accommodate parent requests for meetings.

## **Digital platforms of communication**

Toddle is the main avenue of communication with our families in the ECC and Lower School. For new families, please follow this [link](#) for parent information from the Toddle administrators.

## **Parent information meeting**

All parents are invited to a parent information meeting at the beginning of a new school year. More detailed information can be found in the Summer Mailing (which you will receive in June and August).

## **ECC Coordinating Environment Committee (ECC CEC)**

To ensure comprehensive communication and collaboration, where our families have a voice and a chance to contribute to the ECC learning and play environment, we schedule 3-4 ECC CEC meetings per school year.

The ECC CEC consists of parent representatives from the individual classes, ECC staff members and the ECC principal representing the owner/ISB. Parent representatives are elected during the parent information meeting at the beginning of the school year.

## **Student records**

Only authorized school personnel and a student's parents can access a student's records. Permission will be sought from parents for the transfer of records to another school. Parents who would like access to their child's records may contact the ECC principal.

## **School counselor**

The school counselor supports the school community in helping to ensure a positive and nurturing learning and play environment and is available to meet with parents.



## Curriculum

### IB Primary Years Programme (PYP)

The PYP has recognition worldwide as a model of exemplary educational practice. Its philosophy is based on constructivist theories of learning, which state that children construct their learning from what they already know and can do. Students build their learning by finding the answers to questions they inquire into. The teaching approach is transdisciplinary so that traditional subjects are integrated into one another to help students appreciate that the world is a complex place, in which it is important to see connections.

The PYP focuses on five essential elements of learning:

- Understanding of concepts
- Acquisition of knowledge
- Mastering of skills
- Development of attitudes
- Decision to take action

The knowledge component is developed through inquiries into six transdisciplinary themes of global significance, supported and balanced by six subject areas.

The six themes are:

- Who we are
- Where we are in time and place
- How we express ourselves
- How the world works
- How we organize ourselves
- How we share the planet

The six subject areas include:

- Language
- Social Studies
- Mathematics
- Arts (Visual Arts, Music, and Drama)
- Science and Technology
- Personal, Social and Physical Education

The IB/PYP is a concept-driven, holistic approach to education and consists of the Essential Elements:

- Transdisciplinary Skills
- Knowledge (Transdisciplinary Themes/Traditional subjects)
- Concepts
- Learner Profile
- Attitudes
- Action

The IB Learner Profile is the International Baccalaureate's mission statement translated into learning outcomes. It is at the heart of this common framework and an embodiment of what the IB means by "international-mindedness". These ideals inspire, motivate and focus the work of schools and teachers, uniting them in a common purpose. For more information, please follow the [link](#).

## The Norwegian Framework Plan for Kindergartens

The [Norwegian Framework Plan for Kindergartens - contents and tasks](#), make up one out of two management tools in the ECC and ensure that we work in line with the Norwegian Kindergarten Act when aiming for a high-quality learning and play environment for our students. The Norwegian Framework plan is also offered as the main curriculum to our youngest students in Preschool 1&2 and Preschool 2. The PYP program has been developed to support students learning and play from the age of 3, and from there both curricula make up the framework for the students' learning and play environment.

The Norwegian Framework Plan highlights the importance of our social mandate, where the plan describes nine key areas to ensure an inclusive, inspiring and challenging learning and play environment for all students.

The key areas describe:

1. Core Values
2. Roles and responsibilities
3. Objectives and content
4. Children's participation (agency)
5. Co-operation between home and kindergarten
6. Transitions
7. Kindergartens as a pedagogical undertaking
8. Working methods (approaches to teaching and learning)
9. Learning areas (subject areas).

The core values, subject areas, focus on transdisciplinary learning and approaches to teaching and learning comply with the PYP; therefore our Preschool 1&2 and Preschool 2 students also play and learn in line with the PYP learner profile and the Programme of Inquiry, adjusted to their developmental level and focusing on agency. This ensures alignment and progression throughout their time in the ECC and into Lower school. Please consult the [ECC](#) section on our website.

Weekly collaboration within the class team and teacher team, in addition to the individual teacher's monthly and weekly planning, ensures best practices in line with our curriculums, where plans and practice are well connected. Through weekly pedagogical documentation via *Toddle*, our families are invited to communicate, observe and experience how learning and play within the framework of these two curricula contribute to their child's development.

The outdoor classroom makes up an important part of our learning and play environment in the ECC. All our classes go for weekly walks in the local community, in addition to outdoor playtime in our playgrounds every day. It's a joy to observe how our students play and thrive outdoors in all kinds of weather. Please ensure that your child is dressed appropriately/according to the weather every day. If you are unsure, please consult the [ECC supply list](#) or ask your child's teacher.



