

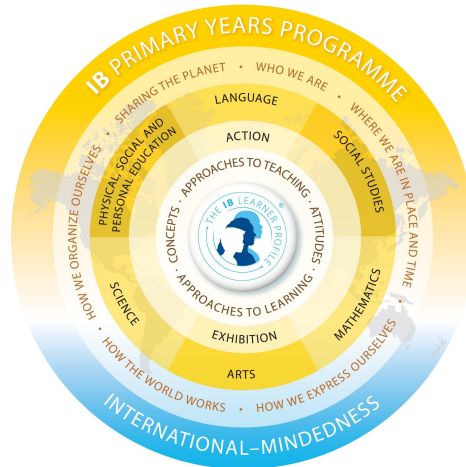
# Early Learning

# 3/4

CURRICULUM GUIDE

2023 - 2024





As an International Baccalaureate (IB) World School, we at Bonn International School are committed to the Primary Years Programme (PYP). This is the IB programme designed for students aged 3–12 years. At BIS, students are in the PYP from Early Learning until Grade 5. The PYP is the best preparation for the IB programmes that follow, the Middle Years Programme (MYP) in Grades 6 - 10 and the Diploma Programme (DP) in Grades 11 and 12.

The PYP is an international curriculum framework, based on best practice and research from around the world. The programme focuses on the development of the whole child, both in the classroom and in the world outside. We challenge students to excel in their learning and in their personal growth, and we aim to inspire in them a quest for learning throughout life.

**Learning in the PYP is:**

*Inquiry-based:* We believe children learn best through structured, purposeful inquiry. Students are expected to play an active role in, and take responsibility for their own learning. Students are encouraged to ask questions, investigate and find ways to answer these questions, and to sustain this enjoyment of learning throughout life.

*Collaborative:* Learning is a social endeavour, and there is great emphasis on sharing, group work and collaboration at our school. Students learn to communicate well, to encourage each other, and to develop an open mind so they can learn from each other.

*Differentiated:* The learner is at the heart of our curriculum framework. Children come to school with a range of experiences, backgrounds and prior knowledge. Teachers in the PYP aim to design learning to suit children at all different levels of competence or experience, providing support for those who need it, and extensions for those who need more challenge.

Concept-driven: Students spend their time at school exploring and learning about important concepts that have relevance in their own lives, and that they can transfer to other contexts. Our aim is to develop students' understanding of big ideas, not just their knowledge or skills.

### **The Learner Profile Attributes**

International mindedness is defined by the IB in the attributes of the Learner Profile. The PYP curriculum design supports students in developing these attributes, which are actively modeled by all members of our learning community. The Learner Profile attributes help develop internationally minded people. We want our learners to become:

#### **Inquirers:**

We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.

#### **Knowledgeable:**

We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.

#### **Thinkers:**

We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyze and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.

#### **Communicators:**

We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many forms. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.

#### **Principled:**

We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.

#### **Open-minded:**

We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.

Caring:

We show empathy, compassion and respect. We have a commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.

Risk-Takers:

We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.

Balanced:

We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives — intellectual, physical, and emotional — to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.

Reflective:

We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.

## **Concepts**

Our aim is for students to develop an understanding of big concepts, to explore these concepts in different ways, and to be able to apply their understanding of these concepts to new and unfamiliar situations. Our Units of Inquiry are organized in such a way that they offer opportunities for students to explore the **PYP key concepts** multiple times and in lots of ways throughout the PYP. These key concepts are:

Form (what is it like?)

Function (how does it work?)

Change (how is it changing?)

Connection (how is it connected to other things?)

Causation (why is it like it is?)

Responsibility (what is our responsibility?)

Perspective (what are the points of view?)

## **Approaches to Learning**

Students develop a range of transdisciplinary skills throughout the PYP. These skills are divided into the following sets of skills:

*Communication skills*

*Social skills*

*Self-management skills*

*Research skills*

*Thinking skills*

### **Action**

We believe that real learning will lead to some action or some change in attitude or thinking. Once something is learned and fully understood, it will lead to action of some kind. Student action in the PYP can be big or small, happen at school or at home, and will develop over time. Examples of student action might be: including more people on the playground, choosing healthy foods, trying a new activity, turning off the lights when leaving a room, and lots more.

### **Early Learning Philosophy at BIS**

Students in Early Learning 3/4 learn through “Continuous Provision” in a mixed age setting. They are provided with learning opportunities that enable them to learn independently as well as with adult support and through short sessions of direct instruction. The areas of provision are based on the needs of the students and linked to assessment.

#### **The key aspects are:**

**Flexible learning spaces:** We have two classrooms, a room for movement and an outdoor learning space available. This provides flexibility to organize the learning environment in different ways around the needs and interests of the children. This also offers opportunity for a variety of activities for the development of large motor skills.

When you walk through the rooms you will see:

- 1- a construction area
- 2- an expressive arts area
- 3- a gathering area where we meet in the morning and at the end of the day for circle time
- 4- a role play area
- 5- a table area used for snack, literacy and numeracy activities
- 6- an outdoor learning space with a sand area, water play, and structures for motor skills

**Flexible grouping:** Although each teacher has an assigned group of students for assessment and communication purposes, throughout the day, students group together based on learning needs, interests and developmental levels.

**Starting together:** We start each morning with all staff and children together, which helps to develop social skills and a strong sense of community. This also helps with establishing clear routines.

**Direct instruction:** There are times when children are grouped for short periods of time to allow for direct instruction of Phonics (Letters and Sounds), Literacy and Mathematics (New Zealand Maths).

**Child-directed learning:** At other times during the day, the children are able to access all the different learning areas and resources, including the outdoor space. The adults facilitate their learning, observe and assess, and reinforce the skills that are taught during direct instruction.

**On-going assessment:** Adults track how children are using the different learning spaces to ensure that all children get everything that they need, and monitor the children to ensure children's welfare and safety.

### **Why do we use this approach to learning?**

We know that young children learn and develop at very different rates and times. Using Continuous Provision allows for the learning to be differentiated and to match each student's emotional, language and physical needs. In addition, CP requires on-going use of the English language, promotes interactions between children with different interests, ability, language competency, ideas, thoughts, values, and backgrounds.

CP creates an environment that is challenging, stimulating and engaging and where children can build skills to become independent and competent as learners. Most importantly, CP promotes inquiry based-learning through play-based activities.

### **The Programme of Inquiry**

Each school year, EL 3/4 students explore four different 'Units of Inquiry'. The units are year-long investigations. The units are designed to be relevant, significant, engaging and challenging, as well as developmentally appropriate. Our units provide the context for much of the learning in Language and Mathematics, as well as all content within Science and Social Studies. Units of Inquiry are transdisciplinary and, where appropriate and authentic, connections are also made between the units and other curriculum areas such as Music, Visual Arts, German and PE.

## Early Learning 3/4 Units of Inquiry

The highlighted units are the units for the academic year, 2023 - 2024

<p style="text-align: center;"><b><i>Who we are</i></b></p> <p>An inquiry into the nature of the self; beliefs and values; personal, physical, mental, social and spiritual health; human relationships including families, friends, communities, and cultures; rights and responsibilities; what it means to be human.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><i>Where we are in place and time</i></b></p> <p>An inquiry into orientation in place and time; personal histories; homes and journeys; the discoveries, explorations and migrations of humankind; the relationships between and the interconnectedness of individuals and civilizations, from local and global perspectives.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><i>How we express ourselves</i></b></p> <p>An inquiry into the ways in which we discover and express ideas, feelings, nature, culture, beliefs and values; the ways in which we reflect on, extend and enjoy our creativity; our appreciation of the aesthetic.</p>
<p><b>Central idea</b> Understanding who we are as individuals and as a community empowers us to grow as learners.</p> <p><b>Lines of Inquiry:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● My personal interests</li> <li>● How emotions can affect learning</li> <li>● Our responsibility as learners</li> </ul>	<p><b>Central idea</b> Interpreting artifacts provides an insight into people’s histories.</p> <p><b>Lines of Inquiry:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Our own family history and traditions</li> <li>● How artifacts connect stories about the past and present</li> <li>● How have artifacts changed over time</li> </ul>	<p><b>Central idea</b> We explore and make sense of our world through our personal experiences which can be recreated.</p> <p><b>Lines of Inquiry:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How we communicate with verbal, non-verbal and mark-making</li> <li>● How we make meaning of our world through imaginative play</li> <li>● How we adapt materials creatively to suit our needs</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><i>How the world works</i></b></p> <p>An inquiry into the natural world and its laws; the interaction between the natural world (physical and biological) and human societies; how humans use their understanding of scientific principles; the impact of scientific and technological</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><i>How we organize ourselves</i></b></p> <p>An inquiry into the interconnectedness of human-made systems and communities; the structure and function of organizations; societal decision-making; economic activities and their impact on humankind and the environment.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><i>Sharing the planet</i></b></p> <p>An inquiry into rights and responsibilities in the struggle to share finite resources with other people and with other living things; communities and the relationships within and between them; access to equal opportunities; peace and conflict resolution.</p>

advances on society and on the environment.		
<p><b>Central idea</b> The Earth's natural cycles affect our choices.</p> <p><b>Lines of Inquiry:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Earth's natural cycles</li> <li>• How seasons change</li> <li>• How we adapt to changes in the natural world</li> </ul>	<p><b>Central idea</b> Human made systems can help communities to function effectively.</p> <p><b>Lines of inquiry:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How different systems work</li> <li>• Differences and similarities</li> <li>• Importance of systems in our own lives</li> </ul>	<p><b>Central idea</b> We share our environment with other living things.</p> <p><b>Lines of Inquiry:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The people, animals and plants around us</li> <li>• How we share with living things</li> <li>• Taking care of our environment</li> </ul>

## Areas of Development

In EL3/4, students learn across the following areas of development:

### Personal, social and emotional development

- Making relationships
- Self-confidence and self-awareness
- Managing feelings and behaviour

### Physical development

- Moving and handling
- Health and self-care

### Communication and language

- Listening and attention
- Understanding
- Speaking

### Literacy

- Reading
- Writing

### Mathematics

- Numbers
- Shape, space and measurement

### Expressive arts and design



- Exploring and using media and materials
- Being imaginative

### **German**

Children have eight sessions of German in each two week block. These sessions link closely with the homeroom Units of Inquiry. We use stories, role play and many different activities to provide beginners with the basics of German, and to enrich and extend the German language of children with German as a mother tongue.

### **Tapestry**

In EL3/4 formative assessment is recorded in Tapestry. This is an online assessment, journal and reporting tool. Teachers use it to record student progress, and to plan for their next steps in learning. Parents log on to see and respond to examples of their children’s learning.

### **Assessment and Reporting**

In the PYP, assessment is integral to all teaching and learning. We use assessment data to inform our planning of teaching and learning experiences. This enables us to differentiate our programme so that each student is included, engaged and challenged at their own level.

Teachers use a range of assessment strategies and tools for formative (assessment FOR learning) and summative (assessment OF learning) assessments. Students are also involved in learning how to assess, and reflect on, their own and others’ work.

### **Annual Reporting Cycle**

There are several opportunities each year for parents to be informed about their child’s progress at school. In addition to the scheduled conferences, parents are encouraged to engage in open conversations with their child’s teachers throughout the year, and can make appointments to speak with the teachers whenever they so wish. Teachers may also request additional meetings with parents if needed. Parents are also kept up to date through regular posts on the digital portfolios, Seesaw and Tapestry.

Scheduled reporting times are:

October	Students in Early Learning will participate in a three-way meeting with the teacher and parent to establish learning goals for the year.
January	Parent/teacher conferences are scheduled where you can discuss the progress your child is making.

March	Parents are invited in for a student-led conference whereby each student will talk through their learning progress with their parents.
June	At the end of the year, parents receive a formal written report for the academic year.