

SECTION 6

HOME LEARNING

HOME LEARNING

6.1 Objectives

The sole purpose of home learning should be to support students and teachers in further developing a love of learning. The objectives of home learning are to:

- Allow students access to learning anywhere at any time
- Provide parents with an insight into, and allow them to contribute to, their child's learning
- Encourage students to develop the practice of self-directed learning
- Develop perseverance, self-discipline and organization skills
- Allow practice, where it is required, for skills learned in the classroom
- Consolidate previously learned knowledge and skills
- Allow students to demonstrate and develop knowledge or skills in an extended manner in an area of study that interests them
- Open up areas of study and to make possible the use of materials and sources of information that are not always accessible in the classroom
- Prepare for forthcoming lessons/topic areas
- Explore real-life application of concepts covered in school

6.2 Home Learning Expectations - Primary School

The PYP encourages students to take responsibility for their own learning and this applies at home as well. The emphasis on student action encourages students to continue their learning in the home including independent research, units of inquiry projects, single subject learning and practice such as math, language learning, PHE, Visual Arts, and Performing Arts.

All students should be reading every day, either to themselves or with an adult. The emphasis should be on reading for enjoyment. This may involve any area of the curriculum in alignment with the PYP. In single subject classes such as language, students and teachers will also determine purposeful and meaningful home learning where and when applicable.

Home learning should be a personal learning experience for each student. Tasks should represent student choice and interest. Therefore, we understand that there are the following types of tasks - (a) practice, (b) preparation and (c) exploration. The choice of tasks should be shared or negotiated with students and be purposeful to the needs or readiness of the learner.

The completion of daily and weekly home learning tasks is an expectation at the ISL Qatar. It is also expected that home learning is an opportunity to support learners in becoming more self-directed. The emphasis here is on nurturing a love of learning, not a learning system that involves merits or penalties. Students will be trained to develop tasks that suit their interests and/or their needs. Gone are the days of 'busy work' or practice for the sake of practice. Home learning should be dynamic, exciting, and personal and ultimately, it should support learners in becoming better self-adjusters.

At the ISL Qatar, we have not outlined the amount of time that students should expect to work on home learning. Learning pace, readiness and needs are personal to each learner. Students should expect to learn how to identify their own learning readiness and set reasonable learning targets in consultation with their teacher. Furthermore, it is expected that the length and complexity of tasks will increase as students move through the different grades.

In consultation with each other, teachers and students should consider the following when producing home learning tasks:

- Home learning can be set daily, weekly, monthly, or to coincide with a unit of inquiry
- The completion of home learning is a school expectation. Teachers will follow up if home learning is not completed on a regular basis, with consideration of individual student needs where appropriate.
- Students and teachers will review and feedback (oral or written) on home learning in a timely manner.

6.2.1 Role of the Primary Parent

As a learning community that embraces collaboration, perspective, and authentic learning, we recognize the invaluable role that parents play in the learning journey of their child(ren). We are partners in this journey, and the success of the PYP learning approach is entirely dependent on this relationship. This means that the learning that a PYP child engages with at home is just as impactful as the learning on campus. We believe that there are specific ways that all ISL Qatar parents can support their child(ren) with their learning.

Role of the EC/KG Parent

In the Early Years, our parents can support their child(ren) in the following ways:

- Take an inquiry stance:
 - Practice ‘wait time’, where the parents pause and wait, giving the child some time to think and process
 - Ask questions and invite children to explain their thinking
 - Look for answers together (model research skills)
 - Be playful
- Support conceptual understanding:
 - Remember the product is not the goal, it is the process
 - Ask a lot of questions about ‘how’ a child did something rather than ‘what’ the child did
 - Look for ‘other’ ways you can approach a task/problem
 - Value exploration and play rather than the ‘correct’ answer or outcome
 - allow children to explore, experiment, and make connections
- Support your child’s agency:
 - Provide a safe environment for the child to explore and discover new things
 - Engage them in the decision-making process as well as provide opportunities for independent decision-making
 - Listen to their verbal and non-verbal cues
 - Acknowledge and respect their ideas and feelings
 - Foster problem-solving skills
 - Allow for risk-taking (within reason)
 - Balance guidance and independence

- Prioritize reflection:
 - Facilitate opportunities for children to reflect on their experiences and emotions
 - Create calm and peaceful spaces for reflection
 - Ask open-ended questions to stimulate deeper thinking and reflection
 - Bring attention to progress and development
- Give feedback that goes beyond the moment:
 - Provide feedback that encourages and supports the development of growth mindset, focusing on effort and resilience rather than fixed abilities
 - Cultivate a positive and nurturing learning environment, where mistakes are seen as opportunities for growth
 - Promote self-reflection and self-evaluation, encouraging students to assess their own progress and set their own goals
 - Emphasize the importance of perseverance and continuous learning, encouraging students to always strive for improvement
 - Establish a partnership with parents and caregivers, involving them in the feedback process and keeping them informed about their child's progress and growth
- Support balance and routines:
 - Establish consistent morning and bedtime routines, including regular wake-up and sleep times
 - Offer balanced and nutritious meals provided at fixed times
 - Schedule playtime and learning activities, such as story time or creative play
 - Establish consistent rules and boundaries to establish a safe and predictable environment
 - Offer opportunities for physical activity and outdoor play (limiting screentime)
 - Organize playdates for regular interaction with other children to develop social skills
 - Introduce basic self-care routines, such as handwashing and toilet training

Role of the G1-G5 Parent

In the upper PYP (Grades 1 to 5), our parents can support their child(ren) in the following ways:

- Take an inquiry stance:
 - Meet questions with questions (*how could you find that out?*)
 - Support inquiry by modeling good learning with your child (*here's how we can find out...*)
 - Ask open-ended questions (*what did you notice?*)
- Support the learning process:
 - Value the process of learning over the product (*how did you do that?*)
 - Celebrate “mistakes” as courageous (it’s all part of learning!)
- Support your child’s agency:
 - Let your child make choices and express themselves
 - Support your child’s choices and let them own their learning
- Prioritize reflection:
 - Get your child thinking about how they think (*how did you know that? What makes you think that?*)

- Give feedback that moves learning forward:
 - Encourage your child to continue a learning journey (*what next? Where can we go from here?*)
 - Give specific feedback on the learning process (*I like how you did...What might you try next?*)
- Support balance and routines:
 - Help your child to find a balance between different activities that support a healthy lifestyle. This means addressing concerns about time with electronic devices, time with physical play, time with home learning, etc.
 - Once you establish the time balance, support your child with a consistent routine at home.
 - Alongside healthy balances of time is a healthy, balanced diet. Support your child in learning and “living” a healthy diet.

6.3 Home Learning Expectations – School

Purpose of Home Learning

Home learning is an important part of the Middle Years Program in the ISL Middle School. Home Learning’s main function is to allow students to further develop skills and dispositions required to be effective and independent lifelong learners. An emphasis on the self-management and organizational skills fostered through meaningful home learning tasks is critical to supporting the unique developmental needs of middle school-aged learners.

At ISL, Middle School teachers will assign Home Learning in their classes which meet one or more of the following needs of allowing a student to:

- PREPARE for an upcoming class
- PRACTICE learning from a previous class
- Make continued PROGRESS on a longer-term task

If a teacher does not assign a specific for Home Learning task, students are encouraged to independently review their learning from the day. And, as always, READING independently or with a parent nightly is strongly encouraged for Middle School students.

Student Role for Home Learning

To continue to build independence and self-management skills, Middle School students should take ownership of their afterschool and home learning routines, with parent guidance and support as needed. It is the role and responsibility of the student to:

- Ensure you understand the expectations of the home learning tasks, clarifying with peers or your teachers as needed
- Create a purposeful space in your home (ideally a space that is not used for any other purpose besides home learning) where you can work effectively. It is strongly recommended that MS students work at a desk or table and not on your beds
- Minimize distractions that might take away your focus. Specifically, it is recommended that you:
 - Put your phone and any smartwatches in a separate room when working on your home learning
 - Only have your laptops open if they are required to complete your home learning task

- Turn OFF all notifications during your Home Learning time
- Do not engage in Teams chats with your friends during home learning time unless it is necessary to complete the assigned task
- Complete all required home learning tasks by the due date, ensuring the work has been completed thoroughly, independently, and according to ISL Academic Integrity expectations
- Bring your completed home learning to school by the due date and, if required, submit your home learning in the correct place (either physically in the classroom or electronically via Teams)

Parent Role for Home Learning

Parents play a vital role in supporting middle school-aged children with building the independence, self-management skills, organizational skills, and learning dispositions required to be effective independence lifelong learners. It is the role and responsibility of the parent(s) to:

- Ensure your child has a purposeful space in the home to complete home learning (see more in Student Role above)
- Maintain an afterschool routine that allows adequate time for home learning tasks
- Ask your child questions about their day and talk to your child about their learning often. Learning science tells us the more often a learner attempts to retrieve information, the deeper that information “sticks” in their brain
- Set (and enforce) clear and consistent expectations for the use of phones, smartwatches, and other electronic devices during Home Learning time (see more in STUDENT Role above)
- Set and maintain a nightly bedtime. Most health experts believe a Middle School-aged child needs anywhere from 9-11 hours of sleep per night

School Role for Home Learning

ISL Middle School faculty design home learning opportunities that support both the learning and developmental growth of middle school-aged students. Specifically, it is the role and responsibility of Middle School faculty and leadership to:

- Assign purposeful home learning tasks that clearly aligns to a class’s learning objectives
- Provide opportunities in the classroom for students to discuss and/or seek clarification on the home learning task

Home Learning in High School

In the High School, we value a balanced and effective approach to education that supports students' learning and growth both inside and outside the classroom. Our home learning policy is designed to ensure that assignments given outside of school hours align with our educational goals and are conducive to students' academic progress. The following points outline our approach to home learning:

Purpose and Frequency:

Home learning will be assigned only when necessary to reinforce and extend classroom learning or to prepare students for upcoming lessons. It is not intended to be a routine requirement. Assignments will be designed to provide meaningful engagement and enrichment, rather than overwhelming students with excessive workload.

Communication:

All home learning assignments will be communicated to students through our online platform, Microsoft Teams. Teachers will post the assignment on the same day it is introduced in class, ensuring that students have a clear understanding of what is expected of them. This transparency allows students to manage their time effectively and plan their schedules accordingly.

Differentiation:

We recognize the diverse learning styles and needs of our students. Home learning assignments will be differentiated to accommodate various learners. Teachers will consider individual strengths, challenges, and interests when designing assignments, fostering an inclusive environment that supports every student's growth.

Quality Over Quantity:

Our focus is on the quality of assignments rather than their quantity. We encourage teachers to design tasks that encourage critical thinking, creativity, and application of concepts, rather than assigning repetitive or busywork tasks. This approach ensures that the time spent on home learning is meaningful and valuable.

Balance and Well-Being:

We acknowledge the importance of a healthy work-life balance for students. Our policy aims to prevent overwhelming workloads that can lead to stress and burnout. Teachers will consider students' existing commitments and extracurricular activities when assigning home learning, striving to maintain a balance between academic responsibilities and personal well-being.

Feedback and Support:

Teachers will provide timely feedback on home learning assignments to guide students' learning journey. This feedback loop encourages students to reflect on their work and make necessary improvements. Additionally, students are encouraged to seek support and clarification from teachers whenever needed, fostering open lines of communication.

6.3.1 Responsibilities for Home Learning**6.4.1 Parents:**

- support the school and teachers by providing a suitable environment for home learning
- guide and assist in assignments outside of school
- monitor television, radio, and any other activities so that home learning does not suffer
- communicate with the teachers as needed

6.4.2 Students:

Students are expected to ensure that they keep themselves informed of events currently happening in the world be they local, national, or international events as the ability to listen, read, watch and discuss is a critical skill essential for developing inquiring minds.

In many classes, home learning tasks are integrated into the lesson and students have sufficient time in class to complete the task. Students should ensure that they manage their learning by focusing on completing the task in class and within the given timeframe, rather than completing it at home.

Note: Grade 10 students will be expected to work on their personal project inquiries at any time of the week and/or weekend. Students should:

- Understand that home learning is their own responsibility
- Make certain that all assignments are understood before leaving class
- Inform their teacher before the due date if they are having problems completing an assignment
- Complete and submit assignments by given due dates
- Learn how to organize and set priorities for assignments
- Establish a suitable time and place for home learning
- Check ManageBac daily

6.4 Middle School and High School Late Submission of Work

All assignment instructions and due dates are clearly communicated to students via ManageBac.

If a student is unable to submit their work on time, they need to apply for an extension as soon as they know, but no later than 24 hours in advance of the due date. Later requests may not be accepted. Any student can be granted a time-bound extension depending on the validity of the reason given for the request.

The following consequences for the late submission of any assessments (without an acceptable excuse) apply to all secondary students.

First occurrence of late submission in any given subject

A written reminder (either email or via ManageBac) will be issued directly to the student of the expectation that the work will have to be submitted by the new deadline: it can be extended up to a week at the discretion of the teacher, but otherwise will be expected at 7.30am the following morning. If it is submitted by this time, levels of achievement will be awarded. The task must still be completed to provide evidence of student learning and demonstrate an ability to meet the assessment criteria for the given task and course requirements. The task, however, will be recorded by the teacher as a 'late submission' in the 'Comments' section on ManageBac. If the work is not submitted by 7.30am and no extension requested, the teacher should follow the procedure below as per the second occurrence.

Second occurrence of late submission in any given subject

An email or note via ManageBac will be sent directly to the student and the parent of the expectation that the student's work will be submitted by the new deadline. If it is submitted by this time, levels of achievement will be awarded. The task is still required to be completed in order to provide evidence of student learning and demonstrate an ability to meet the assessment criteria for the given task and course requirements. The task, however, will be recorded as a 'late submission' in the 'Comments' section on ManageBac.

Third occurrence of late submission in any given subject

If a student's assignment is not submitted on time for the extension (without adequate explanation), the relevant Leader of Learning will meet with students and parents. The student will be taken 'off timetable' and the required assignment will be completed and submitted within the stated time period and agreed upon by the Leader of Learning. The work will then be assessed using the appropriate assessment criteria. The student will meet with the homeroom teacher, in consultation with the relevant Pastoral Leader and agree on a 'success plan' to prevent future occurrences. A record of all parent meeting requests needs to be logged on the student tracking form.

In-class tasks

If a student is absent from school on the day an in-class task, e.g., a test, is to be completed, they must meet the teacher on their return and agree a new time for the task to be completed. Failure to follow this procedure could result in the student receiving no credit or feedback for the missed task.

IB Diploma Students (Grades 11-12) are expected to develop as independent learners. Internal and external due dates are published early in the course and regularly updated, and it is expected that students complete all necessary tasks while organising their time wisely. Students will receive guidance on the requirements of units of study and the timescale appropriate as to its completion. Should students miss a lesson, it is their responsibility to catch up on missed work and to ensure all home learning is completed.

Instructions for all home learning assignments and the associated deadlines are placed on ManageBac which parents have access to.