

# Early Childhood Center

Parent Guide 2024–2025



# Welcome to the ECC!

We are a preschool that focuses on the development of the whole child by promoting and incorporating play-based learning in all age groups each day.



We provide a safe, inclusive, warm, and engaging learning environment for each child in our care. We follow the Norwegian Framework Plan (NFP) for Kindergartens and the IB's the Primary Years Programme (PYP).

This guide is meant to answer some of the most frequently asked questions we encounter from new members of the community, but it's a good reminder for our returning families, too. 😊 You will find information about our routines, practices, and curriculum information, as well as our expectations for positive interactions and collaboration with and among parents.

We aim to help our students develop into confident and caring citizens of the world by putting ISB's Core Values of Community, Integrity, Respect, and Responsibility into practice throughout the ECC. You can find more information about our school's mission, core values, beliefs and objectives in the ISB Handbook and on our school website.

Your child's teachers are wonderful sources of information and guidance, so please feel encouraged to ask any lingering questions you may have to any of us on the ECC team.

Alyssa Dyrdal, ECC Principal



# Table of Content

<b>ECC Groupings</b>	<b>3</b>
Preschool 1&2 Star 	3
Preschool 2 Sun 	3
Preschool 3 Moon 	3
Preschool 4 & Kindergarten 	3
<b>Substitutes</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Interns</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>School Day</b>	<b>4</b>
Field Trips/Community Walks	4
Classroom Environment	5
Settling In	5
Indoors and outdoors	5
Clothing, Footwear, and Food	5
Meals	7
Birthday Treat	7
Sickness	8
Administration of Medicines	8
Iodine tablets in the event of a nuclear accident	8
Individual Needs	9
Child Protection	<b>9</b>
GDPR	9
Student Records	9
Photographs of Children	9
Parent-Teacher Communication	10
Toddle	10
ISB's Weekly Newsletter Orca Splash	10
Open Apply & Vigilo	10
<b>Parent-Teacher Conferences</b>	<b>11</b>
Parent Information Meeting	11
ECC Coordinating Environment Committee (ECC CEC)	11
Planning and Curriculum	12
ECC Staff Collaboration	12
IB Primary Years Programme (PYP)	12
UDIR: The Norwegian Framework Plan for Kindergartens	13
<b>Calendar</b>	<b>14</b>

## ECC Groupings

We adapt our classes according to the ages of children at the beginning of the academic year. For school year 2024/25 we have 4 classes and each class has a Homeroom Teacher who is the main contact person for your child.



### Preschool 1&2 Star ★

Homeroom teacher: Iryn Ella Jensen

Teaching assistants: Aynigar Hamit and Melissa Bernald Laufer

From left: Melissa, Iryn and Aynigar.



### Preschool 2 Sun ☀️

Homeroom teacher: Miriam Grauf

Teaching assistants: Rosie Bjerkestrand

From left: Miriam and Rosie.



### Preschool 3 Moon 🌙

Homeroom teacher: Torill Stenseth

Teaching assistants: Sneha Pahrek

From left: Torill and Sneha.



### Preschool 4 & Kindergarten 🌈

Homeroom teacher: Yutong Pu

Preschool teacher: Vivien Herbrich

Teaching assistants: Ania Nowak and Amrita Varma

From left: Vivien, Amrita, Ania and Yutong.

## **Substitutes**

There are times when our staff are sick and we need to employ substitutes. The ECC has developed and uses our own private sub list, where we know each substitute well and are intentional about who comes into our environment. All substitutes must provide a police certificate prior to commencing employment. We will do our best to inform you when we use substitutes. We strive not to use new substitutes with the youngest children.

## **Interns**

Throughout the year, the ECC welcomes interns from around the world to our school. They are completing parts of their teaching practice and usually stay with us for a minimum of 3 months. Prior to starting their internship, interns are required to sign a declaration confirming they have read and agree to the Child Protection and Confidentiality Policy in addition to supplying a full Police Clearance. We have had very positive experiences taking internships from the Erasmus programme, which furthers our interests in providing a diverse and inclusive teaching and learning environment by welcoming interns from other European countries.

## **School Day**

Opening hours:	7:30 - 16:30
Core learning time:	9:00 - 15:00
Supervision:	7:30 - 9:00 and 15:00 - 16:30

We like to encourage parents to bring their child for 09:00 to ensure that children can participate in their classes daily circle time. During this time the homeroom teacher prepares the children for the day ahead and takes the register. This is an excellent opportunity for the children to communicate, share news, and foster a sense of community within the classroom.

**The Star and Sun classes (Pre 1&2 and Pre 2)** collaborate and 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 your child's homeroom teacher at the beginning of the school year.

## **Field Trips/Community Walks**

On a designated day every week, each class will go on a community walk around the neighbourhood. Some examples of places they visit include the forest, the supermarket, nearby playgrounds, and the lake.

From time to time, classes may go on field trips to places related to their current unit of inquiry. Examples of these trips include rides on the lightrail train (Bybane) to places like the aquarium, Vilvite, a local farm, or the art museum.

## **Classroom Environment**

### **Settling In**

Starting at a new preschool can be hard for some children and families, while others make the transition easily. We know that children need to feel safe and comfortable in order to settle in, and they can only do so when they are with adults they know, trust, and have a positive relationship with. We adapt the settling in period to meet the needs of the individual child, knowing that some will settle quickly and others might need some more time. We will work in close collaboration with parents and caregivers in order to determine the best possible transition in our ECC. We recommend that all children have a relaxed start to their time in the Early Childhood Center, with shorter days for the first weeks.

### **Indoors and outdoors**

The Early Childhood Center places a strong emphasis on the importance of having a positive learning and play environment that is nurturing, warm, and inclusive. Through various learning and play activities, children develop skills to promote social competence, focusing on the core areas of empathy, self-regulation (impulse control and emotional regulation), and social problem-solving.

We are highly focused 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.

## **Clothing, Footwear, and Food**

It is important that children have the necessary clothing and footwear so that they can participate in all activities, both indoors and outside. These are things that we highly recommend your child has on a daily basis at the ECC. We strongly recommend labelling all your child's gear with their name in order to avoid losing or misplacing your child's clothing, footwear, lunch boxes and water bottles. There are several companies that specialise in printing such labels. Feel free to ask a staff member if you are unsure, but a quick search for "navnelapper" will point you in the right direction.

# Early Childhood Centre Supply List 2024 – 2025

Please label all clothing and personal items

## Indoor

- Lunch box with reusable child-friendly containers for food (preferably separate containers for morning snack, lunch and afternoon snack)
- Water bottle
- Indoor shoes (velcro fastening recommended)
- Two full sets of clothes to be kept at ECC

Part of ECC's daily routine is outdoor playtime in all types of weather

## Summer

- Light rain gear (jacket & pants) and lighter rain boots
- Fleece jacket/jumper or wool jumper
- Sun screen
- Hat/Cap
- Light footwear

## Mid-season

- Rain gear (jacket & pants) and rain boots
- Fleece or wool jacket/jumper
- Snow suit, warm boots, lightweight hat or headband that covers the ears and mittens

## Winter

- Snow suit, warm boots, hat and mittens
- Lined rain gear (jacket & pants) or rain gear (jacket & pants) + a full mid-layer set and lined rain boots
- Two sets of gloves
- Buff or high collar
- Hat

Preschool 1 & 2 (in addition to the items above):

- Diapers and wet wipes
- Two extra bodies/sets of underwear
- Stroller, sleeping bag (warm), blanket
- Stuffed animal for naptime if needed



Please pay attention to the condition of outdoor clothing at the end of each week, as they might need to be taken home to be cleaned and dried.

For hygiene purposes, all outdoor clothing and accessories should be taken home for school closures.

## Meals

Breakfast (if eating in the ECC before 08:20), 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 do not send chocolate or any chocolate items/cakes/sugary snacks in lunch boxes. You can read more about the importance of healthy and nutritious meals for preschool children [here](#).

It can be challenging to think of different food items for your child's snacks/lunches especially if you have arrived from another country. A good tip is to aim to eat a rainbow! Provide a variety of colours, textures, and flavours for your child as often as possible. If your child needs items cut, please try to send them ready to eat. A small food thermos is a great way to send a warm lunch with your child.

Here is a list of suggestions that may be of use to you. It is by no means complete, but meant to provide inspiration for your family, whatever dietary needs you may have.

-  Fruits: apple (sliced or whole), banana, pear, kiwi, berries, melon, seasonal fruit, grapes
-  Dried fruits: raisins, apricots
-  Vegetables: carrots, cucumbers, tomatoes, bell peppers
-  Cheese: string cheese (skrella mozzarella), Babybel, cheese sticks
-  Yogurt
-  Egg (e.g., boiled, fried, scrambled, omelette)
-  Sandwiches or wraps with varied toppings (e.g., turkey, ham, chicken, fish, cheese, peanut butter, jam, brunost, leverpostei, egg)
-  Pasta (e.g., with butter, pesto, cheese, spaghetti)
-  Rice (e.g., with vegetables, beans, legumes)
-  Pancakes, waffles
-  Rice cakes, crisp bread (knekkebrød), crackers
-  Porridge/cereal (e.g. oatmeal or rice porridge)
-  Fish cakes, sausages
-  Leftovers from dinner the night before (e.g., pizza, rice/grains, soup, noodles, fish)

## Birthday Treat

When it is your child's birthday then we allow you to bring a small treat (fruit, ice cream, biscuit) for your child to share with the other students in their class. We will celebrate your child's birthday with a special birthday crown and song.

## Sickness

Sickness is a natural part of childhood, and a regular occurrence in an early childhood care setting. In the ECC, we have good hand washing routines in place. The children wash their hands before and after every meal, and of course after using the toilet. This prevents a lot of sickness among the children, but it certainly does not prevent everything.

When your child gets sick, their general condition determines whether or not they should stay at home. As a rule, your child should be fever free and well enough to participate in an entire day of activities - including outdoor playtime.

Children with diarrhoea and/or vomiting will be sent home immediately. **They can return to the ECC after being symptom free for 2 days and fever free for 1 entire day.**

The Early Childhood Center follows the Norwegian Institute of Public Health Guidelines for sick children. You can read more information about various illnesses and find advice on [whether or not to send your child to preschool](#) on the NIPH website.

## Administration of Medicines

Ideally, medicine should be administered outside of ECC hours whenever possible. If medication must be given during the ECC day, parents must complete the [medicine authorization form](#) and an explanation to the homeroom teacher of how it should be administered.

## Iodine tablets in the event of a nuclear accident

Iodine tablets are stored on the school premises. In the event of a Nuclear accident that exposes children to radioactive iodine, it may be important that the children receive iodine tablets immediately.

The ECC will give the children iodine tablets only if [the Crisis Committee for Nuclear Preparedness](#) recommends that iodine tablets should be administered. Parents must notify the ECC Principal/homeroom teacher if you DO NOT want your child to receive an iodine tablet.

## **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.

In the Early Childhood Center, we aim to ensure that students with individual needs achieve their potential through differentiation by 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.

## **Child Protection**

Our students' welfare and safety are at the heart of our school's ethos and in everything we do. In line with our policy, we have a dedicated Child Protection Officer.

For the school year 2024-2025, ISB's Child Protection Officer is Paula Blom-Andersen. In collaboration with the Child Protection team (Director, Principals, school nurse and counsellors) she coordinates measures and has an overview of child protection in the school.

Parents, school employees and students are encouraged to talk to the Child Protection Officer or any other member of the Child Protection Team if they have any concerns.

## **GDPR**

The ECC has a duty to ensure that personal data is satisfactorily secure to avoid violations of the privacy of employees, children, and parents. Personal data will not be stored any longer than necessary.

## **Student Records**

Only authorised 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.

## **Photographs of Children**

We require consent from parents to use photographs of children. The consent form is part of the "Student Data Form" on Open Apply, and is completed during the enrollment process.

## Parent-Teacher Communication

Communication between parents and the ECC takes place in several different ways. Below is a breakdown of our communication channels, but you will see that we also value daily face-to-face interactions during drop off and pick up time when the situation allows for it.

You can also find information on the notice boards in the ECC where your child's work is displayed, information about daily routines is posted, and a visual update of the current staffing situation (including substitutes and interns).

If there are any changes in your child's family relationship, living situation or health, parents are obliged to notify the class teacher or ECC principal. For more pressing or serious situations, please let us know if you need a meeting and we will set off time for you.

### Toddle

Toddle is the main avenue of communication with our families in the ECC. Toddle is the application where you can message staff members, record absences, and follow your child's learning journey. 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. For new families, please follow this [link](#) for parent information from the Toddle administrators. Access to Toddle will be provided when your child starts the ECC.

### ISB's Weekly Newsletter Orca Splash

The Orca Splash is the school's weekly newsletter and it's an important piece of communication to stay current with. It will be sent out every Friday and will convey information on whole school events, as well as give insight to the other areas of our school.

### Open Apply & Vigilo

Open Apply is our student data platform where parents provide all personal data and contact information for their child(ren). Parents will have a login for this platform prior to enrollment when they applied for a place in the ECC. Information on this platform about children's health and data is confidential. There are restrictions on access to the information.

Vigilo is the administrative platform used in Bergen Kommune. It is used for preschool applications and placements, and the ECC uses it side-by-side with Open Apply as part of our enrollment process.

### **Parent-Teacher Conferences**

The parent-teacher conferences play an important role in providing information to parents regarding their child's development, strengths and goals. The parent-teacher conferences are scheduled in October - November and April - 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.

### **Parent Information Meeting**

All parents are invited to a parent information meeting at the beginning of a new school year. The first part of this meeting you will have the opportunity to meet the whole teaching team of the ECC, learn about the curriculum and receive general information.

The second part will take place with your child's homeroom teacher and other parents in the class. Here, the homeroom teacher will explain the daily routine for the class as well as a clarification of expectations. They will also set aside time to answer any questions parents may have.

In addition, a class contact will be chosen for the school year. The class contact will take part in the Coordinating Environment Committee and is an important link between parents and the school.

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

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.

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.

## Planning and Curriculum

All educational work is based on the Norwegian Kindergarten Act, associated with the International Baccalaureate (IB) and the Norwegian Framework Plan for Kindergartens. The ECC provides educational activity which is planned, documented, and assessed.

The ECC has an annual plan and programme of inquiry which are working tools for all staff, information for parents, Bergen Kommune, owner and stakeholders.

### ECC Staff Collaboration

To ensure that we provide a high quality learning and play programme, we operate within a highly collaborative environment. Classroom teachers will meet once a week to align pedagogical goals and ensure participation in the larger school community. In addition, classroom team meetings are held once a week to address individual classroom needs and plan for the week ahead. In this way, we all work towards common curriculum goals within the Norwegian Framework Plan and the PYP, while still meeting the needs of the individual child and classroom environment.

### 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. [Read more here.](#)

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 organise 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.

## **UDIR: 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 programme 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.

## **Calendar**

The ECC follows the ISB calendar. It is important to note school closures (holidays and staff in-service days) and what that means for ECC students. Holiday camps are offered at an additional cost during some school closures, but are entirely dependent on the amount of children that sign up from ECC and Grades 1-4. In order to be financially sustainable, we cannot run the camps if there are not enough children signed up.

August 2024						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

1 – 14 Summer camp.  
 8 – 14 Staff planning & in-service days.  
 15 First day for students. Full day.

September 2024						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

October 2024						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

7 – 11 Autumn holiday week.  
 7 – 11 Holiday camp.  
 31 Staff in-service day. No school.

November 2024						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

1 Staff in-service day. No school.

December 2024						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

18 Last day before Christmas. Noon dismissal.  
 Dec 19 – Jan 8 Christmas holiday.

January 2025						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

Dec 19 – Jan 9 Christmas holiday.  
 Jan 6 – 10 Holiday camp.  
 10 Staff in-service days. No school.  
 13 First day back after holiday. Full day.

February 2025						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28		

24 – 28 Winter holiday week.  
 24 – 28 Holiday camp.

March 2025						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

3-4 Staff in-service days. No school.

April 2025						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

14 – 21 Easter holiday.

May 2025						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

1&2 Labour Day Holiday.  
 17 Constitution Day holiday.  
 29&30 Ascension Day holiday.

June 2025						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

9 Whitsun holiday.  
 20 Last day. Noon dismissal.  
 23 – 27 Holiday camp.

1<sup>st</sup> trimester: Aug 15 – Nov 17.  
 2<sup>nd</sup> trimester: Nov 18 – Feb 16.  
 3<sup>rd</sup> trimester: Feb 17 – June 20.

- Holidays. No school.
- Staff-in service days. No school.
- First/Last day of school.
- Holiday camp (# permitting).

**Total School Days: 180**