# Early Years – 12 Family Handbook

COMPASSION. COURAGE. CURIOSITY.

# Content


**04** Welcome and Guiding Statements

**09** OSC Learning Model

**12** OSC School Structure

**15** **Section 1:** General (Whole-School)

- Admissions
- Attendance
- Behaviour of Students
- Bell Schedules
- Calendar of School Dates
- Canteen Services
- Child Safeguarding
- Class Sizes
- Contract and Communication
- Counselling Programmes
- Curriculum
- Dress Code
- Extracurricular Activities
- Event Rules
- Facilities
- Field Trips
- Financial Assistance Programme
- Grading and Assessment
- Harassment, Threats, and Bullying
- Health and Safety
- House System
- Languages at OSC
- Learning Support Services (LSS)
- Lockers
- Lost and Found
- Parent Supervision/Guardianship
- Gecko Community Network (GCN)
- Pets on Campus
- Political and Religious Neutrality Statement
- Security and ID Cards
- School Supplies
- Student Records
- Sustainability Initiatives
- Technology Use
- Tuition Fee Schedule
- Transportation and Bussing
- Uniform (PE)
- Visitors Procedures
- Well-being Team
- Withdrawals

**54** **Section 2: Our Primary School**

- Introduction to the Primary
- IB Primary Years Programme (PYP)
- Approaches to Learning (ATL) in the PYP
- PYP Curriculum
- Assemblies and Productions
- Assessing Learning in the Primary
- The PYP Exhibition
- Attendance in the Primary
- Awards in the Primary
- Counselling Programme at the Primary Level
- Homework in the Primary School
- Learning Management Systems and Software in the Primary
- Parent Involvement in the Primary School
- Student Leadership – Primary School Ambassadors – PSA
- Student Responsibilities
- Trips in the Primary School

**77** **Section 3: Our Secondary School**

- Introduction to the Secondary
- IB MYP (MYP) Programme
- MYP Curriculum
- The IB MYP Personal Project
- IB Diploma Programme (DP)
- IBDP Overview
- Courses offered at the DP Level at The Overseas School of Colombo
- The IBDP Core at OSC
- Comprehensive Sexuality Education in the IB DP at OSC
- OSC High School Diploma Programme
- OSC Diploma Programme
- Approaches to Learning (ATLs) in the MYP and DP
- Assemblies and Productions
- Assessing Learning in the Secondary
- Malpractice and Academic Integrity in the Secondary
- Assignment Deadline Policies
- Attendance in the Secondary
- Awards in the Secondary
- Counselling Programme at the Secondary Level
- Graduation Requirements
- Homework Expectations in the Secondary School
- Learning Management Systems and Software in Secondary Education
- Parent Involvement in the Secondary School
- Student Leadership – Secondary Student Government (SGA)
- Trips in the Secondary School
- Week Without Walls Programme

# Welcome and Guiding Statements

## Principal's Welcome

### Dear Parents,

A Warm Welcome to The Overseas School of Colombo!

We are delighted to welcome you and your child to The Overseas School of Colombo (OSC). OSC offers a comprehensive educational experience, from our nurturing Early Years Programme for 3-year-olds to Grade 12. The OSC Family Handbook will help you learn how primary and secondary schools operate. Your two main guides to OSC are 1) The School Policy Manual, written by the Board of Directors, and 2) The OSC Family Handbook, which describes how many policies are operationalised and helps you navigate our School.

### Student-centred Learning at Its Core

At OSC, our philosophy centres around the student. We believe in fostering a learning environment where **every conversation, action, and decision** prioritises your child's development. We believe that "Schools are for children... it just happens that adults work in them".

### International Baccalaureate and Tailored Support

As an authorised three-programme International Baccalaureate (IB) school, OSC offers a rigorous and engaging curriculum that encourages students to take ownership of their learning. The IB is an inclusive Programme. Our full-time English as an Additional Language (EAL) teachers provide dedicated support for students still developing their English proficiency. For students who need additional support in accessing the curriculum due to their diverse learning needs, our Learning Support (LS) Department will work closely with you.

### Partnership for Success

OSC strongly believes in the power of parental involvement. We view the relationship between student, parent, and teacher as vital in maximising your child's educational journey. Unlike traditional schools, OSC welcomes open communication and collaboration. We value your input and participation throughout the learning process.

## Open Communication is Key

Clear communication between parents and the school is essential for creating your child's best learning environment. Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or want to discuss the Programme further.

We look forward to a successful and enriching school year of collaboration and learning.

Kind Regards,

**Jason Grandbois**
Principal
principal@osc.lk

## 1.1 School Guiding Statements

### MISSION

Compassion, Courage, and Curiosity

### VALUES

We value community and relationships.
We value process and growth.
We value integrity and dignity.
We value empowerment and taking action.
We value sustainability.
We value creativity and expression.

### VISION

At OSC, we live our mission by creating space and time for learners to engage in mutually respectful and enriching connections; teaching intercultural understanding, development, and competencies; fostering a culture of learning that sparks joy, thinking, and inquiry; nurturing personal identity so every learner feels a sense of belonging; and inviting all learners to persevere in their learning journey.

**MOTTO** UNITY IN DIVERSITY

## Diversity Statement at OSC

OSC is a place where multiple perspectives are valued, and our differences strengthen our community. This school provides a space where everyone receives support and resources that will best meet their needs. We use inclusive language in our classroom, curriculum, and community spaces to celebrate the variety of cultures, identities, and values our school represents. Students at OSC can access learning experiences regardless of their cultural background, gender identity, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, or racial identity.

At OSC, social justice is evident on our campus when students feel safe to identify when physical or emotional harm happens to them and know that they will be believed and a resolution will be found. We believe in restorative justice. Growth creates a community where we learn from our mistakes, and empathy is the focus of our disciplinary actions. Students should feel safe to express their identity, culture, or beliefs without risk of harm or judgement.

With a diverse student population and faculty, our international school has much to cherish and celebrate, and we accept the challenge of acknowledging and confronting injustices, hurtful words, and actions and work towards a more equitable and inclusive school for our students. Like many international schools worldwide, we recognise the historic legacies we have inherited, and we are committed to modelling new patterns of behaviour and policies that support what it means to live our core concept of “Unity in Diversity” truly. We are a diverse community organised around a pledge to learn. As such, we call for open-mindedness, compassion, respect, collaboration, and honesty in our teachers, parents, students, and learning partners.

Our guiding beliefs will inspire sincere problem-solving, community reflection, and efforts towards correcting past harms, learning new practices and approaches, continuing to embrace cooperation, and a growth mindset going forward.

At OSC, we use culturally responsive teaching practices in our learning experiences, assessment policies, and classroom environments. We use the philosophy of restorative justice as outlined in our behaviour policy, which guides classroom management and, where needed, disciplinary responses from principals. At OSC, we provide a multi-tiered system of academic and social-emotional support and the right to participate regardless of students’ neurodiversity, gender, racial or cultural identity, or other diverse ways of existing. All members of the OSC community are expected to adhere to a standard set of definitions of diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice and model pedagogical and behavioural practices that create a space where all learners feel included and safe. We will be aware of our biases and reflect on how they impact teaching and learning on our campus and community. Accountability from the Board of Directors, the Head of the School and her School Leadership Team, and all stakeholders will lead to actions that decolonise our curriculum, resources, school policies, and teaching practices. Faculty and students are encouraged to report when harm, such as microaggressions or other injustices, happens on our campus.

We are fully committed to implementing our mission, Compassion, Courage, and Curiosity, across all aspects of our school community. Born from our mission, we pledge to prioritise and systematise DEIJB across all aspects of policy, practice, curriculum, and school culture.

## Global Citizenship and Interculturalism at OSC

As a community, OSC recognises and values the ways in which internationalism and interculturalism define our identity and the actions that arise from that identity. We are a community of diverse beliefs, experiences and perspectives, and yet we see our role in international education within the context of global citizenship. We recognise that actions guided by principles of self-determination, humanitarianism and lifelong learning are engendered by these concepts. Together, internationalism and interculturalism prepare students to positively participate in and contribute to a world where citizenship and its responsibilities are no longer confined to national and regional boundaries.

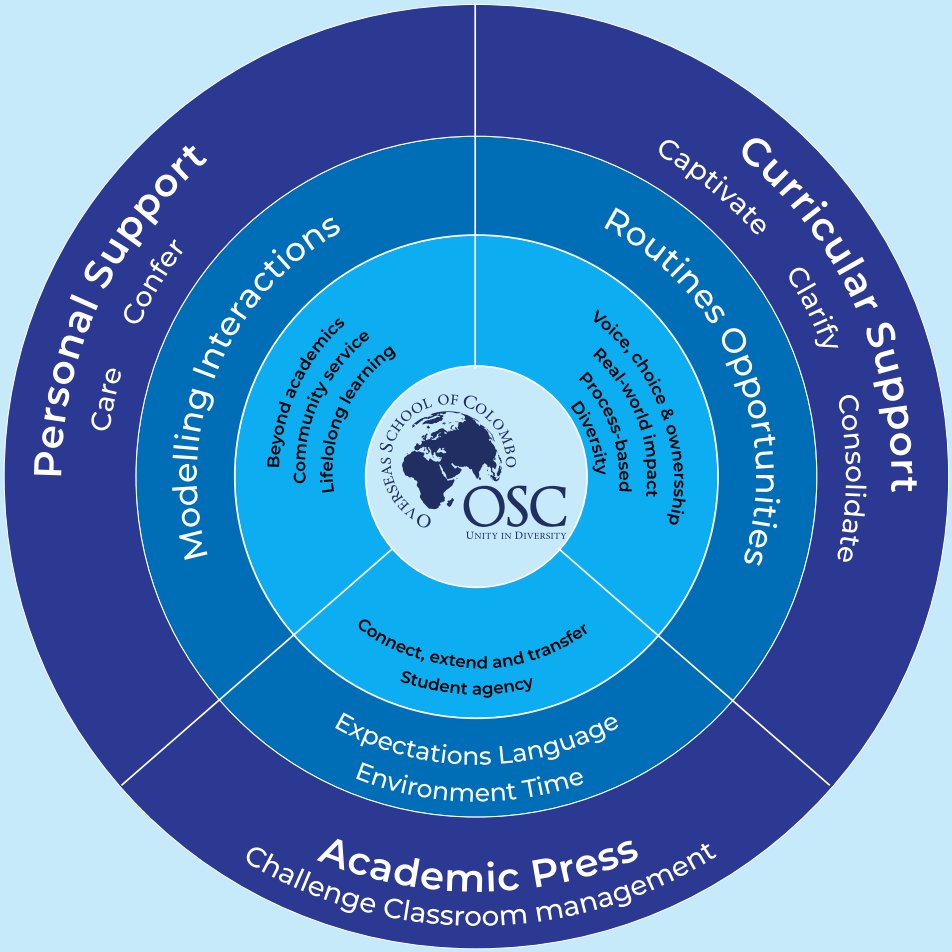
**Internationalism:**
Empowering our learners to be open-minded and take action to contribute positively in a complex world.

- → Local, national, and global perspectives
- → Human rights, development and cooperation and governance
- → Environmental awareness and sustainability
- → The role of peace education and conflict resolution in our world
- → The interdependence of natural and human systems on our planet

**Interculturalism:**
Incorporating cultural perspectives to create a shared understanding which guides our actions.

- → Culture through language and literature
- → Communication and langauge learning
- → The role of culture in our lives and the lives of others
- → Citizenship and service as an expression of individual responsibility
- → Authentic learning through service with the community
- → Mutual respect for the diversity of beliefs and values, and in ways of being as well as ways of knowing
- → Debate and free inquiry within the bounds of courtesy, sensitivity, confidentiality and respect both in and out of the classroom setting

# OSC Learning Model




Teaching Standards: Tripod 7 Cs Framework

Cultures of Thinking: Project Zero's Eight Cultural Forces

OSC Definition of Learning

## Teacher Growth and Improvement Framework

The Overseas School of Colombo (OSC) is a dedicated learning community committed to reflective and impactful practices. We all strive towards getting better each and every day to support learning for all students. The OSC Teacher Growth and Improvement Framework aims to support an ethos for continuous improvement for all teaching staff and is intended to ensure our students have access to high quality education aligned to our Guiding Statements.

OSC's Teacher Growth and Improvement Framework stems from **The OSC Learning Model**, which integrates three key layers:

- OSC's Definition of Learning
- OSC's implementation of Project Zero's Cultures of Thinking Eight Cultural Forces
- OSC's commitment to the Tripod 7Cs Teaching Standards

The OSC Teacher Growth and Improvement Framework is designed to support all teachers equally. The process is centred on instructional supervision which includes observation-based feedback, goal setting, a healthy culture of care and trust, instructional coaching and support, strong collaborative structures, sharing of practices, positive collegial relationships, and opportunities for self-reflection.

Observation-based feedback provides data, identifying strengths and areas for development and growth. Tracking this data helps with goal setting and leads to better student outcomes. Regular feedback creates a culture of care and trust, reflecting on whether all students (regardless of their background or abilities) are accessing all aspects of their education, and identifying and addressing any biases or discrimination that may be present in the curriculum or the classroom.

OSC believes that a school is at its best when teachers believe that all learners can grow and flourish, have the collective capacity to bring this about, and are fully engaged in that effort. It is a professional expectation that every teacher and staff member at OSC actively engages in improving her/his professional practice as part of the collective whole. As a priority, the school provides support and resources in alignment with the goals of the School.

# IB Learner Profile

The aim of all IB programmes is to develop internationally minded people who, recognise their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, make it their purpose to create a better and more peaceful world.

| IB LEARNERS STRIVE TO BE: | |
|---|---|
| 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 analyse and take responsible actions to solve 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 ways. 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. |
| Reflective | We recognise our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live. We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experiences. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development. |

## Well-being at OSC

At OSC, we are committed to developing learners that embrace learning their whole life. For learners to learn well, they need to be well. Well-being at The Overseas School of Colombo is a positive state experienced by individuals and the community, encompassing quality of life and developing our students as civilisation builders.

# OSC School Structure

The Overseas School of Colombo (OSC) is an English medium international school serving Colombo's internationally mobile expatriate and Sri Lankan communities. It was founded during the 1957-58 academic year as the Overseas Children's School with 25 children and today has about 340 students from over 40 different countries. The School is registered as a non-profit limited company in Sri Lanka under its revised name, "The Overseas School of Colombo".

The parents of all students attending the School are members of the Company. Full-fee-paying parents are entitled to attend and vote at the Annual General Meeting, which is held in January of each year. The Company's Memorandum and Articles of Association were revised in March 1998, and copies are available on the school website.

The Company is managed by a Board of Directors of up to nine members, including all parents of children in the School. Board members are elected at the Annual General Meeting. The School's Articles of Association do not allow more than two members of any one nationality to serve on the Board at the same time. The full Board meets at regular intervals throughout the year. Two working Board committees are Governance and Nominations and Finance and Facilities.

The Primary School spans early years to Grade 5, and the Secondary School comprises Grade 6 students through Grade 12, with typically two teaching sections per grade level.

## The Principal

If more information is required or if a situation is not resolved with a teacher or Programme coordinator, parents are encouraged to contact the Principal with the knowledge of the teacher concerned. In addition to the above, you may wish to consult the Principal directly on matters related to:

- Timetable or room issues
- Broad issues involving the School
- Behaviour or morale, communication, and information related to the operation of the School
- School communication
- Discipline
- Curriculum and Programme coordination
- Reporting on student performance
- School trips or events
- School facilities

## The Head of Administrative Operations

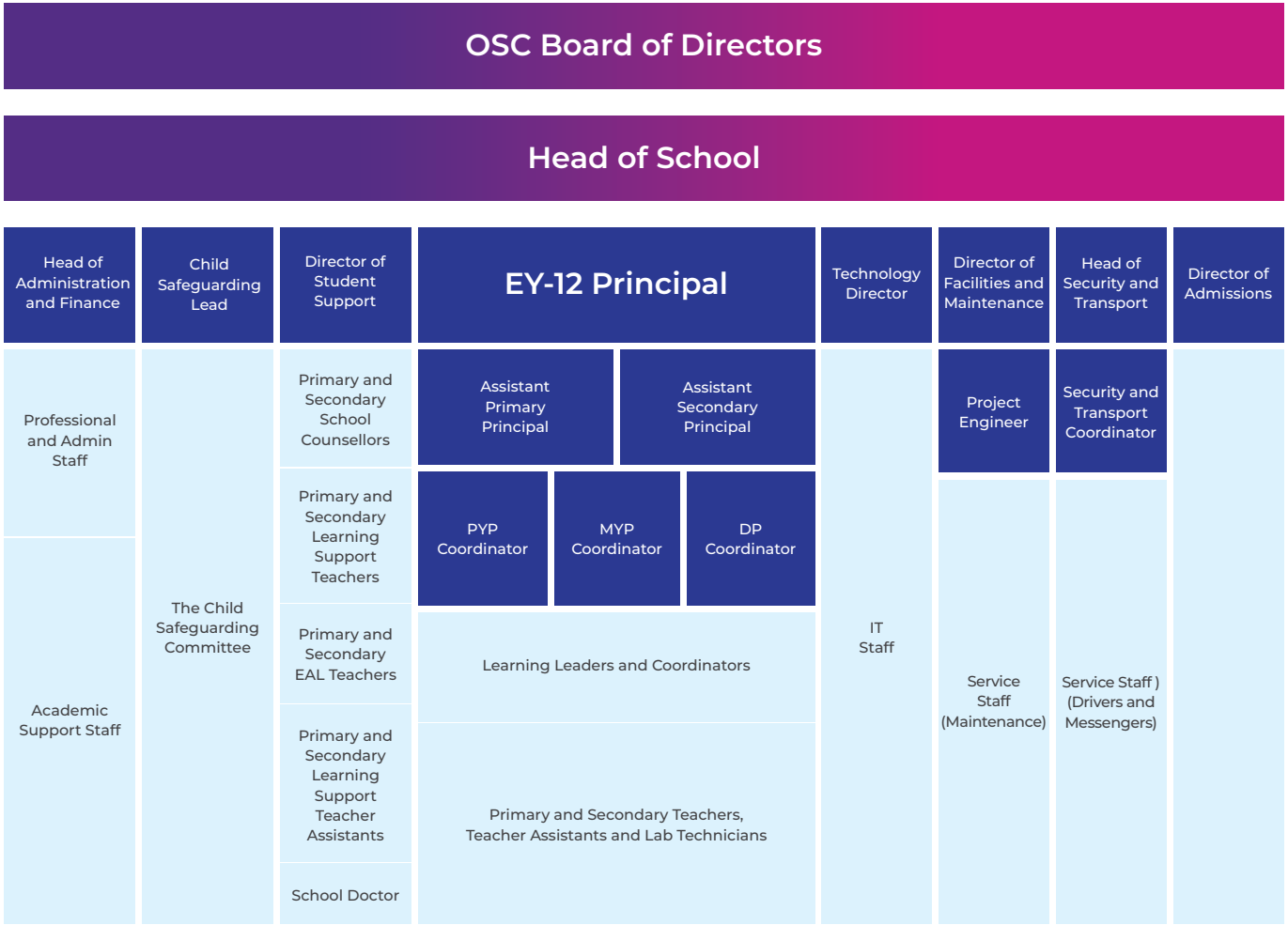
If parents have questions about accounts and finances – school fee issues, payments, refunds, etc. – they may contact the Head of Administrative Operations.

## The Head of School

If more information is required or the concern remains unresolved, parents may wish to contact the Head of School, with the knowledge of the Principal. In addition to the above, parents may wish to consult the Head of School directly on matters related to:

- Community/school communication and relations
- School-wide issues such as security and application of school policies
- Strategic planning
- Financial policy and oversight
- Long-term planning, including the development of facilities and the school environment

# OSC Organisational Chart



# Section 1: General (Whole-School)

## Admissions

The OSC Admissions Policy is open and inclusive. We welcome students from diverse backgrounds with various talents and abilities. Please read through our Admissions Policy for more detailed infromation.

## Attendance

Students who attend regularly are more likely to succeed. Daily class attendance is a condition for fulfilling credit requirements, completing coursework, and general academic progress. To qualify for course credit, students must attend school for at least 85% of the instructional days designated in the school calendar. Parents are asked to contact the relevant office by 8:00am if a student will be absent for any reason. Parents who wish to withdraw a student for an extended period of time need to consult with the Principal. Students who arrive late must report to the Primary or Secondary Office to ensure our records are accurate. Parents are responsible for informing the School when travelling and leaving their children with a guardian. The School requires advance notice, full contact details of the guardian, and parent contact details while away.

## Behaviour of Students

Creating a safe and inclusive learning environment is crucial for every child's holistic growth and development. Our OSC behaviour policy is based on Positive Discipline, which includes restorative practices and evidence-based approaches to social-emotional learning. We recognise that children's behaviour is a form of communication and respond in a culturally responsive, equitable manner that promotes a sense of belonging for all students.

**What is positive discipline?**
Positive Discipline is the theoretical underpinning of our approach at OSC. It encourages healthy and constructive behaviour. It is a nonpunitive, relationship-based approach emphasising mutual respect, effective communication, and logical consequences. Rather than relying on punishment or rewards, it teaches children valuable life skills, such as problem-solving, empathy, and self-regulation, to promote a sense of belonging and purpose for all children in our community.

**What are restorative approaches?**
Within Positive Discipline, OSC uses restorative approaches that are culturally responsive and equitable to address misbehaviours. Restorative approaches prioritise repairing harm and restoring relationships when conflicts or misbehaviours occur. They involve all parties affected by an incident, facilitate open communication, and promote accountability, understanding, and healing.

**How do we train our staff?**

OSC is committed to providing ongoing professional development and training for all staff members in Positive Discipline. We foster collaboration among teachers, administrators, parents, and external experts to continually improve our approaches and ensure alignment with current research and best practices.

In addition to Positive Discipline and restorative approaches and practices, staff professional development includes training on equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-bias principles to ensure that our approaches and interactions with students and each other are culturally responsive and equitable.

**How do we train and communicate this policy to our parents?**

OSC maintains open communication and partnership with families to ensure that our parents understand our programme and can reinforce the same positive and restorative approaches with their children at home. Parents are provided access to all policies during enrolment through the Family Handbook and access to the OSC Parent Portal. OSC offers various opportunities yearly to ensure our parents partner effectively with us, such as Positive Discipline parenting workshops, open discussion forums, and consultations with school counsellors.

### At OSC, each student has the right to:

- Experience a secure, welcoming, and accepting atmosphere, free from prejudice or unjust conduct.
- Thrive and acquire knowledge without any adverse influence from peers or others.
- Express themselves and participate in matters that impact them.
- Receive respectful, courteous, and thoughtful treatment from all faculty and fellow students.
- See staff members modelling and providing guidance on expected behaviours in our School.
- Receive positive feedback, acknowledgment, and appreciation for growth, positive behaviours, and achievements.
- Have the option to contest any decisions made by educators and administrators through a formal process.

*(Reference: OSC School Policy: 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 5.2, 5.43, 5.6, 5.8, 6.5, 7.34, 8.2, 8.21, 8.22 and 8.31)*

### At OSC, every student is expected to:

- Show respect for people and property in and out of the School.
- Participate actively in their learning and the learning of others.
- Be compassionate, responsible, honest, courageous, and curious.
- Use appropriate, inclusive, and respectful communication and language.
- Promote school spirit and unity in diversity.

### At OSC, every staff member is expected to:

### Implement Positive Discipline:

- Establish clear expectations within their teaching environment.
- Teach and model positive behaviours and skills.
- Encourage all students.
- Use restorative practices when challenges arise.

### Implement Restorative Practices with Students:

- Engage with students in discussing misbehaviour and work towards repairing harm.
- Build community and have open discussions to address conflict.
- Teach students the tools to resolve conflict.
- Support student reintegration after an incident.

### Implement Cultural Responsiveness:

- Be self-reflective and aware to recognise and challenge one's own biases.
- Learn about everyone's backgrounds.
- Use culturally appropriate methods and materials in the classroom and address cultural bias in lessons.
- Build relationships with students, staff, and families.
- Celebrate diversity in the school.

### At OSC, every parent is expected to:

Demonstrate behaviours outlined in the Parent Code of Conduct found in our OSC School Policy Manual.

## Addressing Misbehaviours and Serious Offenses

OSC implements proactive measures to promote positive behaviour and prevent misbehaviours, such as clear expectations, consistent routines, and student voice and agency opportunities.

Teachers use classroom management strategies for minor misbehaviours, such as reminders, redirections, and logical consequences. Administrators become involved in more severe or recurring incidents, and interventions may include restorative circles, student conferences, behaviour contracts, or referrals to outside professionals when necessary.

In cases of severe or unlawful offenses (e.g. violence, substance abuse, harassment), OSC follows a clear protocol that prioritises safety, involves appropriate authorities, and provides support for all parties involved. OSC aims to implement restorative practices to repair harm and facilitate the reintegration of students when and as appropriate.

We may temporarily remove students from the environment if their behaviour is severely disruptive or unsafe. In the most severe cases, we may use natural consequential actions such as expulsion and legal actions as the last resort.

The primary goal is to create a safe, positive school climate while providing support to address the function of misbehaviour and teach appropriate replacement behaviours using Positive Discipline practices. Students learn best in the classroom, and we want to keep them there.

Below are the levels and types of behaviours that guide OSC in decision-making and approach. When determining appropriate consequences or restorative actions, OSC considers culturally relevant options that align with the student's cultural values and traditions while addressing the harm caused and promoting accountability.

| Levels | Examples of Types of Behaviours | Examples of Possible School Responses Using a Positive Discipline Approach |
|---|---|---|
| Level 1 | Distracting behaviour<br>Minor teasing that is not welcomed<br>Incomplete homework<br>Unprepared for class<br>Dress code violations | → Redirection and a verbal reminder of expectations.<br>→ Teacher-student conversation to better understand the root cause (Example, Mistaken Goals Chart).<br>→ Collaborative problem-solving between community members to improve student behaviour.<br>→ Teaching appropriate replacement behaviours. |
| Level 2 | Repeated Level 1 behaviours<br>Disruptive behaviour<br>Inappropriate language<br>Defiance and disrespect<br>Put down others<br>Classroom disruptions | → Parent notification and involvement.<br>→ A teacher/student conference will be held to resolve the issue.<br>→ Support from and collaboration with the school counsellor.<br>→ Reflective activity related to the behaviour.<br>→ A staff member leads restorative circles with all parties so there is an attempt to resolve, close, and restore relationships. |
| Level 3 | Repeated Level 2 behaviours<br>Aggressive/targeted language<br>Minor property damage<br>Disruptive classroom behaviour where others cannot learn<br>Bullying | → Parents are notified, and a conference is held.<br>→ Support from and collaboration with the school counsellor.<br>→ A comprehensive behaviour intervention plan that is developmentally appropriate may be created.<br>→ A staff member leads restorative circles with all parties so there is an attempt to resolve, close, and restore relationships.<br>→ If necessary, temporary removal from the classroom. environment, intending to return as soon as possible. |

| Levels | Examples of Types of Behaviours | Examples of Possible School Responses Using a Positive Discipline Approach |
|---|---|---|
| Level 4 | Repeated Level 3 behaviours<br>Harassment<br>Fighting<br>Aggressive behaviour<br>Theft<br>Vandalism<br>Substance abuse/possession | → Parents are notified, and a conference is held.<br>→ Suspension (in or out of school); long-term suspensions; or expulsion.<br>→ Re-entry meeting with students, parents, and support team.<br>→ Behaviour contract implementation as necessary<br>→ Ongoing counselling and intervention from outside professionals may be a condition for enrolment.<br>→ Restorative practices are applied for the re-engagement plan.<br>→ Child safeguarding protocols are implemented. |
| Level 5 | Repeated Level 4 behaviours<br>Serious threat to own safety and the safety of others<br>Weapon possession<br>Hate crimes<br>Severe property damage<br>Illegal activities | → Parents are notified, and a conference is held.<br>→ Long-term suspension or expulsion.<br>→ Re-engagement plan for possible reinstatement.<br>→ Alternative educational placement may be recommended.<br>→ Legal actions, as appropriate.<br>→ Child safeguarding protocols are implemented. |

**In Levels 4 and 5:**

1. Parents may be asked to take their child home until further investigation and a final decision regarding the consequences of the behaviour are made.
2. Parents are invited to the School to speak with the Head of School and appropriate members of the Leadership Team.
3. The student may request for a particular teacher advocate to be present.
4. The school team meets to decide on the consequence, which will be communicated to the relevant parties as soon as possible.
5. Parents can appeal an expulsion decision to the School Board through the Head of School.
6. Parents and students should be aware that some universities require reporting disciplinary actions as part of the application process, and we may be required to report such violations.

## Suspension

A student who commits a serious infraction of school rules and policies, as judged by the administration, can be suspended for up to five days. The Board will be informed if a student is suspended for a longer period.

Students may be suspended “in school” or “out of school (home)”.

A student may be suspended in school, i.e. suspended from a class or classes and assigned special school work. Students suspended “in school” may not attend regular classes, may be given a special schedule, and will be expected to make up all missed class work and homework.

Students may also be suspended “out of school” (home). A student suspended from school may not attend classes and school events. The student must make up all missed classwork and homework on returning to school.

A suspended student cannot return to school and must follow the regular school schedule until a conference is held between the administration, student, parent(s), or guardian.

## Expulsion

The administration must inform the Board when a student is expelled. Normally, this would be in a situation where, following counselling and conferences with the student and parents, the student continues to behave in a manner that is detrimental to the School, is unable to profit from the academic programme, or either interrupts the learning of others or endangers their safety. However, in severe cases, expulsion may be recommended without the benefit of prior counselling or conferences. In the event of expulsion, all fees for that billing period are forfeited.

## Appeal to the Board

In the event of a five-day suspension or an expulsion, parents may appeal to the Board if they feel due process has not been followed. During the period leading up to the appeal, the actual decision taken by the administration will stand.

# Bell Schedules

### PRIMARY SCHOOL SCHEDULE

| Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday | | Wednesday |
|---|---|---|
| Morning Bell | 8 : 15 | 8 : 15 |
| Homeroom | 8 : 15 - 8 : 25 | 8 : 15 - 8 : 25 |
| 1 | 8 : 30 - 9 : 40 | 8 : 30 - 9 : 40 |
| 2 | 9 : 45 - 10 : 30 | 9 : 45 - 10 : 20 |
| **Snack and Break** | **10 : 30 - 11 : 00 End of Break Bell** | **10 : 20 - 10 : 50 End of Break Bell** |
| 3 | 11 : 05 - 11 : 50 | 10 : 55 - 11 : 30 |
| 4 | 11 : 55 - 12 : 40 | 11 : 35 - 12 : 10 |
| 5 | 12 : 45 - 1 : 30 | 12 : 15 - 12 : 50 |
| **6 Lunch** | **1 : 30 - 2 : 15 End of Lunch Bell** | **12 : 50 - 1 : 35 End of Lunch Bell** |
| 7 | 2 : 20 - 3 : 05 | 1 : 40 - 2 : 15 |
| 8 | 3 : 10 - 3 : 30 | 2 : 20 - 2 : 30<br>2 :45 - 4 : 30 Staff PD |
| ASA's | 3 : 30 - 4 : 30 | 2 : 30 - 3 : 30 |

### SECONDARY SCHOOL SCHEDULE

| Day 1 - 6 | |
|---|---|
| Period | Times |
| HR | 8 : 15 - 8 : 25 |
| Block 1 | 8 : 30 - 9 : 45 |
| **Break** | **9 : 45 - 10 : 00 (15 minute)** |
| Block 2 | 10 : 00 - 11 : 15 |
| Block 3 | 11 : 20 - 12 : 30 |
| **Lunch** | **12 : 30 - 1 : 20 (50 minute)** |
| Block 4 | 1 : 20 - 2 : 35 |
| Block X | 2 : 40 - 3 : 30 |
| No X Block on Wedensday : 2 : 30 dismissal for students. | |

Students are issued a class timetable on arrival that will detail their learning journey for the week. This will enable them to plan when to bring their PE and swimming kit in addition to indicating when other specialist classes will occur. We operate using a six-day system at OSC. This system will ensure that no particular day's timetable is missed more than any other. Students will be provided with an OSC "book-bag" that they will be able to use to transport their homework, diary and reading books, and other materials safely.

- Primary dismisses at 2:15 on a Wednesday allow for staff professional development and collaborative planning.
- Morning drop-off should be between 8:00 - 8:10. School starts promptly at 8:15.

## Calendar of School Dates

The School emails home a one-page PDF calendar and prints a month-by-month calendar for all families. The Digital Portal Calendar of the OSC website is the most up-to-date calendar, and you may digitally subscribe to it once you have used your credentials to enter the Parent Portal Site.

Key dates include:

| Term Activities | Dates |
|---|---|
| First day of school | 7 August 2024 |
| Mid semester break | 12 – 20 October 2024 |
| Return to school after the mid-semester break | 21 October 2024 |
| Last day of semester 1 | 13 December 2024 |
| Winter vacation | 14 December 2023 – 5 January 2025 |
| First day of semester 2 | 6 January 2025 |
| Mid-semester break | 12 – 20 April 2025 |
| Return to school after mid-semester break | 21 April 2025 |
| Last day of school | 6 June 2025 |

# Canteen Services

## The Canteen

**Hours:** 7:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. – all day menus updated frequently.

OSC subcontracts its food services to a local company called *Skinny Suddha* to run its canteen and the courtyard coffee shop. "*Skinny Suddha* strives for quality in all regards, but we are particularly fussy about additives and food that does good rather than harm, to that end we shy away from the use of MSG, trans-fats, and chemicals of all sorts. Most items are hand-made which we sell with love and care and recycle wherever possible with paper glass and recyclable pots. We work closely with OSC's Eco School Committee to ensure our choices are in line with an eco-school philosophy."

## The Courtyard Coffee Shop

Hours: 7:30am to 4:30pm

The Courtyard Coffee Shop offers a variety of items such as Italian coffees, juices, smoothies, icecream, overnight oats, yogurts, hummus and salads, homemade kombucha and cakes made the *Skinny Suddha* healthy-way. Coffee is made on site in an Italian Nuova Simonelli Aurelia II machine. The Coffee shop has a great seating area for parents waiting for their children. Look out for the menu, specials and more information about what schemes may be in place for the Gecko Community in the Gecko Times.

**Primary School Students** may use the Gecko Courtyard Coffee Shop with their parents present.
**MYP1, MYP2, and MYP3 Students** may use the Gecko Courtyard Coffee Shop after school hours ONLY.
**MYP4 – MYP5 Students** may use during breaks but cannot purchase caffeinated drinks.

**DP Students** may use it at any time to purchase any items.

## Orders and Payment

We offer a cashless system in the form of a personalised QR code for each student. A link to our self service payment gateways is below. Once parents register their child on our system, and load money onto the child's account (credit cards accepted), students can order directly from the canteen without bringing money into the School.

The cashless system also generates a personalised QR code for each child. Parents of young children cut out the QR code, laminate it and paste it on the back of their child's security lanyards for easy scanning. Older children just have it in their phone galleries, and show it to us throughout the day. You can talk to your child's classroom teacher or to us, if you need advice on how to manage the QR code for your child's food orders.

# Child Safeguarding

OSC has a comprehensive Child Safeguarding Policy, and staff and parents must sign it annually upon enrolling their child and in the re-enrolment process. All parents must read through the Child Safeguarding Policy to understand how OSC defines and operationalises its policy. You can find the Child Safeguarding Policy on our Website at www.osc.lk

## Class Sizes

The teacher/student ratio for instruction is governed by considerations of academics, physical space, cost, and the diversity of the student population. To underscore the concern for children as individuals inherent in the School's philosophy, the School will do everything possible to ensure a student/teacher ratio that is in the best interest of all concerned, taking into account educational as well as financial considerations.

The minimum number of students for an instructional class will be five full-fee-paying students. In special cases where it is to the School's advantage to run a particular course for reasons of continuity of our programme or other special circumstances, a class of fewer than five full-fee paying students may be allowed to run at the discretion of the Head of School, provided the Head of School notifies the Board of the reasons for running such classes.

The maximum teacher/student ratio for instruction in Grades 1-12 will be 1:20. The Head of School is authorised to increase this to 1:24 when the situation warrants it. No class may run with a teacher/student ratio over 1:24.

In our Early Years Programmes, the maximum number of students is 16. In kindergarten, the maximum number of students is 18. In both cases, each classroom has a full-time classroom teacher and an assistant teacher. The Head of School can increase this to 1:18 in Early Years and 1:20 for kindergarten if necessary.

In Grades 1-5 and single classes in Grades 6-10, when numbers exceed the stated class size policy, students will be placed on a priority waiting list and notified when a place becomes available.

## Contract and Communication

We expect all families to keep the School updated with home, mobile, and emergency contact numbers. In an emergency, we need to reach the parent or designated guardian as quickly as possible.

If parent contact information changes, including a change of home telephone number, home address, parents' email addresses, office, and mobile numbers, please contact the Relevant Office at once, where our family contact database is maintained.

Parents are expected to notify the School if their child is absent, late to school, or needs to be dismissed early. Please contact the School Office after 8.00am. Parents may also email primaryoffice@osc.lk or secondaryoffice@osc.lk

## Method of Contact

The most effective communication method is face-to-face; however, we realise this is not always possible. As an alternative, the most efficient method of contacting a teacher, a specialist, and/or an administrator is through email at first initial of first name, followed by last name @osc.lk.

## Class Teachers

If parents have a question or concern about their child's general well-being, friendships, or adjustment to change, they should first contact their child's class teacher. The following issues should be addressed directly to the class teacher:

- Academic concerns
- Student behaviour
- Questions about general day-to-day routines and expectations
- Classroom and school relationships
- Field trips
- Missing items

## Guidelines for Healthy Communication

Healthy school communication is essential for a constructive and student-centred school culture. It nurtures empathic and positive assumptions about all stakeholders. This document aims to clarify what healthy communication looks like at OSC and how it helps to build a positive school culture for all of us so that we remain focused on our students.

## Our Communication Principles

***We Are All Builders of Trust***. Trust is fundamental to a school. Once trust is built, we can master the healthy, respectful conflict that moves a school forward. Trust at its core means we respect everyone's roles in our community and act and communicate promptly, with honesty and integrity. The following principles will help to build trust across all constituents in our School:

***We Assume Positive Intent.*** We believe everyone's intent is in the best interest of the children, the School, and the community. Therefore, diverse points of view are welcome and assumed positively, even if they are not necessarily adopted.

***We Are Open About Tackling Issues Where They Start.*** It is always better to talk directly and openly to the teacher you may be having difficulty with before going on to the next level. In the event you are unable to find a solution, only then should you transparently say it is not working and you will need to consult with another member of administration to seek support.

***We Prioritise What's Most Important.*** We determine what's most important, and we are prepared to let less salient issues go.

***We Start with What is Going Right.*** It is always better to start with something positive. We are all better prepared to hear concerns if we can be recognised and appreciated for what is going well.

***We Engage in Active Listening, Listening for a Deeper Understanding.*** Our engagement in the discussion signals a deep respect for others' ideas and concerns.

***We Avoid Negative Criticism in Front of Our Students.*** Children find it confusing when their parents criticise their teachers in front of them; teacher criticisms of parents are equally unhealthy. After all, we are all on the same team, and it does nothing to address the problem. In older children, a pattern of negative criticism may foster arrogance, defiance, and rudeness towards teachers. Instead, we can explore solutions and always assume honourable and positive intentions from everyone involved. Even when both parties believe they are correct, this doesn't stop us from creating win-win solutions for the child's sake.

***We Believe Grace and Composure Matters.*** Constructive communication respects the dignity of all, includes grace and composure, and always precipitates solutions.

***We Use Discretion.*** Many times, parents like to talk to other parents about teachers, and teachers can do the same about parents. This isn't always healthy. We consider whether our conversation is going to be constructive in solving the problem – otherwise, we don't have it.

## Parent Portal

OSC has created a Parent Portal for parents to gain important information about how the School works, including access to important contacts, phone numbers, curriculum overviews, Board information (including minutes of open session meetings), School Policies, Handbooks, and most importantly a digital calendar you can subscribe to. Every new parent receives their credentials before the start of the school year begins. If at any time you support, or need those credentials sent to you again, please reach out to techdirector@osc.lk

## Parent Code of Conduct

The OSC Board of Directors has written a Parent Code of Conduct, which is the School's Policy and can be found in the OSC School Policy Manual. It is a document that all parents must acknowledge upon new and re-enrolment. To download a copy of the Parent Code of Conduct, please access the School Policy Manual or Parent Portal on our website.

## Gecko Times Friday Newsletter

OSC publishes a weekly newsletter on Fridays. The newsletter is sent electronically, and its articles are posted on the OSC website. The newsletter also publishes important school events and dates.

## Call Out System

Should a civil disturbance or any other emergency occur, do not send your child to school. The School's SMS system will inform you if the School is to be closed. If you are not contacted and cannot contact a reliable source, err on the side of safety and keep your child at home. Should an emergency occur during school hours, the students will be kept on campus until parents can collect them.

# Counselling Programmes

Our school counselling programme offers comprehensive support to all students. Our counselling programme reflect the ideas of the internationally recognised and evidence-based Social Emotional Learning (SEL) competencies developed by the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) and the International School Counsellor Association's (ISCA) Student Standards, and is aligned with best practices against the American School Counselor Association's (ASCA) Professional Standards and Competencies.

Counsellors provide guidance and support in academic planning, career exploration, and personal and social development. Students can seek assistance with a range of issues, including time management, study skills, college applications, and emotional well-being. Our counsellors collaborate closely with students, parents, and teachers to create supportive learning environments. In cases where additional support is needed, we can connect students with external mental health professionals or specialised services.

# Curriculum

The OSC curriculum is carefully designed and planned in accordance with our IB programmes.

## Curriculum Overviews

The OSC's Curriculum Standards are set in place to ensure the highest of educational standards and care are met by all members of the school community. We invite you to read through each grade level's curriculum and standards overview to learn about each year's curriculum framework, units of inquiry, and what we teach in Language Arts (Writing, Spelling, Reading) and Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Languages, Art, Music, Performance, Physical and Health Education, Comprehensive Sexual Education, Library and Technology. We have a robust curriculum that is transdisciplinary, well organised and informed by regular assessment. Learning is our number one priority. At OSC, we are very intentional about our learning programme.

Click here to read our Primary Grade Level Overviews and our Secondary Course Descriptions.

## Standards

Our Primary and Secondary School curriculum is grounded by the overarching framework of the PYP and consolidated by the Aero standards. This comprehensive approach ensures a well-rounded, vertically aligned education that fosters critical thinking, inquiry, and global citizenship. To develop strong literacy skills, our language programme incorporates the PYP framework and the proven structure of Readers and Writers Workshop. These standards provide a clear path for students to become confident communicators and lifelong learners. As students progress through the Secondary School, the IB framework guides our learning via specific MYP and DP aims and objectives. We use AERO standards to review our curriculum and ensure coherent alignment of key skills and understanding.

## Experiential Education

OSC's Experiential Education programme fulfils key goals of our mission and vision by providing students with learning opportunities beyond the classroom context. Students are challenged physically, socially, emotionally, and intellectually as they face new challenges, broaden their experiences, engage with issues of global importance, and develop greater self-awareness.

## Holistic Learning

A holistic education programme aims to encompass all aspects of personal learning and growth. It emphasises the development of active relationships at all levels, whether among the subject domains, individuals and their peer groups and communities or between the individual and the world around them.

Holistic education nurtures students' broad development and focuses on their intellectual, emotional, social, physical, creative or intuitive, aesthetic, and spiritual potentials. It promotes the importance of relationships at all levels within a learning community where educators and students

work together in an open and collaborative relationship. There is an emphasis on life experience and learning beyond the confines of the classroom and the formal educational environment towards education as growth, discovery, and a broadening of horizons. It encourages a desire to elicit meaning and understanding and to engage with the world. The approach empowers learners to examine critically the cultural, moral, and political contexts of their lives. It leads learners towards actively challenging and changing cultural values to meet human needs.

## Academic Freedom

OSC believes that academic freedom benefits both teacher and student and is a necessary condition for the fulfilment of the OSC mission. Teachers are granted academic freedom to exercise their right and responsibility to encourage freedom of discussion in the classroom and to develop students' critical thinking skills and a discerning intellect.

Application of the principle of academic freedom should take into account both relevant cultural mores and local laws as well as the relative maturity of students and the need for guidance and help in studying issues and respecting balanced viewpoints. Controversial issues will be presented in a fair and unbiased manner. Accordingly, censorship or undue restraint that impedes instruction consistent, as determined by the Head of School, with the School's Educational Philosophy shall not be practiced.

The Head of School shall ensure that academic freedom is understood and honoured throughout the School.

## Distance Learning Programme (DLP)

The Distance Learning Plan (DLP) has been designed to describe the actions and approaches that OSC will take in the event the campus has to close, and learning has to switch to an online or distance method for a period of time. This could happen as a result of a variety of circumstances such as a crisis or specific emergency, political situation, health and safety reasons, or local government decisions. At all times, the Head of School will consult with the Board and The Integrated Leadership Team, and together a decision will be made in the best interest of the students and community.

If the Head of School takes the decision to move to the DLP, a communication will be sent out to all community members delineating a timeline for implementation. If this happens in the middle of a school year, the faculty may need up to two full days from the time of the announcement to organise itself into the DLP Framework. On the first day, students and parents may use this time to organise their home environments and make their common agreements and plans as a family based on the guidelines and expectations outlined in this document. During the second day, teachers will be in touch with the parents of their students. On the third day, the DLP will begin. Students may not attend school physically, nor be required to start their DLP until the date designated by the Head of School.

The purpose of the DLP is to maintain the planned curriculum content and skills development for students in all grade levels, ensuring a smooth transition back to classroom learning, and completion of grade-level expectations. We also aim to help students remain connected to one another and supported in a novel learning environment.

# Dress Code

The OSC Dress Code ensures that community members of all cultural backgrounds feel comfortable, respected, and safe while enabling students to express their identities and values. The OSC Dress Code treats everyone equitably, regardless of race, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, cultural observance, or body type/size.

The OSC Dress Code is grounded in Comfort, Safety, and Respect principles. The following specific guidelines fall within these principles:

## Comfort

Clothing should be comfortable and practical for learning, depending on the specific activity and setting.

## Safety

- When playing outside and under the sun, a hat must be worn.
- Footwear must be worn at all times.
- Additional safety requirements may be necessary depending on the specific activity and setting (e.g. in science labs).

## Respect

- Clothing may not display text or images of violence, drugs or alcohol, profanity, pornography, or hate speech.
- Clothing must always cover the body in a way consistent with legal interpretations of decency.
- Undergarments should not be visible except for waistbands and straps.
- To adhere to specific cultural regulations or expectations, further requirements may be necessary during specific activities (e.g. school trips).

Responses to Contravention of the Dress Code by Students:

- The primary responsibility for a student's attire rests with the student and their parent(s) or guardians. If communication with parent(s) or guardians becomes necessary, this will be undertaken by the Principal or Head of School.
- If intervention is deemed necessary, it will be done discreetly, individually, without bias, and in a way that minimises embarrassment and limits interference with learning.

The School operates on a "No Hat, Seek Shade" policy. Students who play outside during break, lunch, PE lessons, and after-school activities must wear a hat. Otherwise, they will be directed to the shade and may miss their favorite activity.

## Physical Education

On days when students have PE, they are expected to wear the OSC PE uniform. House T-shirts and selected items of OSC clothing can be obtained from the school shop. These include the OSC PE shirt, PE shorts, and OSC caps.

**Dress Code for the Swimming Pool:** For Girls, one-piece, full-fitting bathing suits with shoulder straps that allow for physical activity should be worn. For Boys, bathing shorts designed for swimming and above-knee length should be worn. Swimming caps are required to be worn in the swimming pool.

# Extracurricular Activities

## Gecko Athletics programme

The Gecko Athletics programme at OSC is linked closely with the OSC vision and mission.

***Curiosity***

We encourage all of our student-athletes to explore different sporting opportunities and to find enjoyment in sports in general as part of their holistic development as well-rounded and responsible learners. We develop student self-reflection and an understanding of how sport can impact their physical, mental and emotional well-being.

***Courage***

Gecko Athletes should endeavour to develop their fitness, skills, technique, and knowledge of concepts in a variety of activities, and to build an understanding that these can be used in, and transferred across different sporting situations. This, we hope, enables them to discover their gifts and explore and extend their talents, striving for excellence in all that they do.

***Compassion***

We strive to provide our student-athletes with opportunities to come together with like-minded student-athletes in Sri Lanka and within the South Asia region giving them experiences that will help them develop and explore their sportspersonship, learning to be humble in victory and gracious in defeat, and become role models for our younger students and throughout the community.

OSC is a member of two international school organisations that help to provide students at OSC with competitive sporting opportunities. Click on the headings below to find out more about TISSL and SAISA.

## The SAISA League

OSC participates in competitions with international schools in the region belonging to the South Asian Inter-Scholastic Association (SAISA). We regularly prepare teams for Swimming, Basketball, Volleyball, Soccer/ Football, and Athletics. SAISA aims to promote and coordinate regional professional activities, fine arts festivals, athletic tournaments, and other events.

## The TISSL League

There are 26 affiliated TISSL schools. The OSC Athletic Director works in collaboration with the TISSL groups to engage in sporting fixtures during the academic year. TISSL runs a comprehensive calendar of events throughout the year. OSC participates in as many competitions as possible depending on how they fit with our calendar and team availability. OSC does its best to organise sports fixtures with some of these schools and to enter competitive tournaments with other TISSL Schools.

TISSL Sports Events that OSC regularly participates in include: Swimming (IISSC), Football, Track and Field (ISAC)

## After School Activities

Students are encouraged to participate in sporting, aesthetic, recreational, and cultural activities. These occur throughout the week, after regular school hours, and are organised by teachers, some outside instructors, and parent volunteers. Each year, a variety of different activities are offered to students. These are determined by interest and by the availability of sponsors to organise particular activities. At the beginning of each quarter, information on the activities is emailed. All sign-up selections are done online.

Creative activities include programmes such as Drama productions, Music ensembles, and other leadership opportunities such as Model United Nations. Every year, OSC hosts the Colombo Model United Nations (COMUN) with schools from within Sri Lanka.

After School Activity times are as follows:

**Grade 1 – 5:** Monday, Tuesday, Thursday (Wednesday swim activities)
**Timing:** 15:30 – 16:15

**Grade 6 – 12:** Monday through Friday
**Timing:** 15:30 – 16:30

## Service Learning

The Service programme at OSC is ultimately driven by a desire to facilitate change through propagating sustainable action in the local community and towards the environment. The emphasis of the Service programme is on students making their world a better and more peaceful place. The service groups at OSC promote action and service through character formation based on respect, compassion and empathy and in this way, the Service programme fosters the necessary attributes of the future "global citizen". Student leaders drive the programme and all students at OSC have the opportunity to be involved in 15 service groups that focus on service to the environment, local communities and human rights. Students are also encouraged to design service projects and classes are challenged to consider ways to take action as extension of their classroom learning experiences.

For Grade 11 and Grade 12 students at OSC, service is formed at the programme's core through Creativity Action and Service (CAS). The emphasis is on learning and the expectation that students will be involved in a balanced range of activities reflecting creativity, action, and service within this programme. DP students are also expected to take on leadership roles and are encouraged to initiate their activities.

## Weekend Supplementary Programmes

From time to time, OSC allows external sports organisations to use its facilities over the weekends, and sometimes during the week. These groups are vetted by our Sports Department, and open to students with their parent's permissions.

## Private Music Lessons on Campus

OSC has a private lesson music coordinator who establishes a schedule of private music lessons for students. The lessons include a variety of instruments and are held during the week after school. Parents pay for these lessons directly to the Music Coordinator. If you wish to enquire further please contact our Coordinator, Mr Marlon Perera at mperera@osc.lk

# Event Rules

Rules and Regulations for School Events:

- No student should have access to the campus without supervision. Events are restricted to the prescribed locations only.
- Swimming may not take place without lifeguards on duty.
- School rules for behaviour, drug and alcohol use, and dress code apply to all school events.
- For some events, especially in the auditorium, a bag check process may be implemented, and a storage place for backpacks will be provided at the entrance.
- Any non-OSC guests need to be pre-approved and on a guest list. They must be clear on school rules, especially those related to the use of drugs, alcohol, and tobacco. Guests not complying with OSC expectations will be asked to leave.

# Facilities

The Overseas School of Colombo is located on its self-contained campus in Battaramulla, eight kilometres from the centre of Colombo. OSC occupied this new, purpose-built six-acre campus in 1985. Attractively laid out, the School consists of six main buildings, which are fully air-conditioned. It includes 48 general classrooms, four science labs, and specialist art, drama, and music rooms. In addition, the School has two libraries with over 25,000 volumes and computer facilities.

## Medical Facilities

OSC has a school doctor on campus, and the office is equipped to handle minor injuries or illnesses. Teachers and assistants receive regular first-aid training. In the case of serious illness or injury, every effort is made to contact parents immediately. In an emergency, the students will be taken to the nearest hospital. We also house three defibrillators: one at the Pool, one in the Auditorium and one in the Primary School. The Medical Facility has and an isolation room for students with contagious diseases.

A medical form must be completed prior to enrolment. Please notify the school doctor if this form requires updating. Students who contract infectious diseases must be kept at home until the illness has passed the infectious stage, as will students with any other form of sickness, such as fever.

The School must be notified if a student has any food allergies so that we can accommodate any specific procedures.

## Food and Filtered Water Facilities

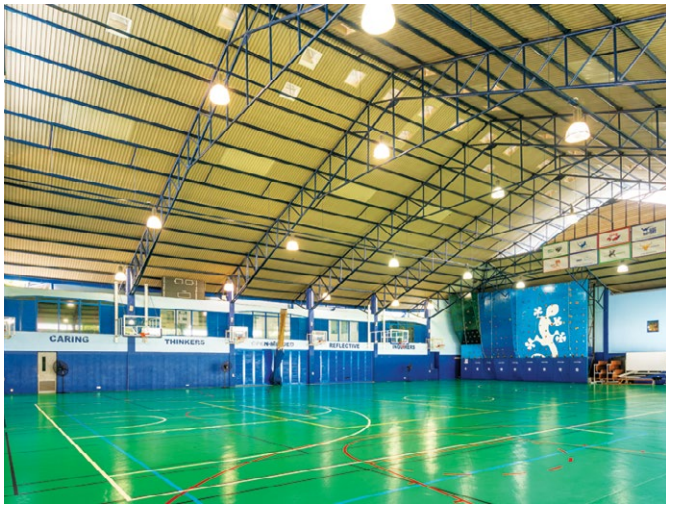
Students can either bring a packed lunch or purchase lunch through our canteen. All students (apart from those in their early years) eat their lunch together in the canteen under the supervision of staff. Early Years students eat lunch in their classrooms with their teachers. The canteen menu is published in the Friday Gecko Times newsletter and on the school website. Students are encouraged to bring a healthy snack each day for their morning break in addition to a drink or water bottle. Water fountains are situated around the campus and have fully filtered water. Students are actively encouraged to drink water throughout the school day, including during lessons.

## Bathroom Facilities

All bathrooms are clearly labelled around the School. Students and adults do not share bathroom facilities. OSC has gender neutral bathrooms on the School grounds, and they are clearly marked.

## Sports Facilities

Our Sports Centre has a rock-climbing wall, basketball, badminton, and volleyball courts, a movement room, and ample indoor and outdoor viewing areas. Other sports facilities include an outdoor FIBA-approved basketball court, a spacious playing field, and a 25-metre swimming pool. High school students and staff may use the exercise weight room.



## Arts Facilities

The School has a purpose-built, state-of-the-art auditorium complex with a theatre that can seat over 450 people.

OSC has a black box theatre and soundproof music practice rooms for rehearsing.

There are two classrooms professionally outfitted for visual arts.

## Media Facilities

Libraries are an important resource for Primary and Secondary School students. They offer a variety of printed and digital resources such as books, databases, subject-related materials, reference sources, works of fiction, home language resources, and periodicals, as well as computer facilities and audiovisual facilities. All other resources except reference books and current periodicals are available for check-out. Borrowers are responsible for maintaining materials in good condition and will be required to pay for any loss or damage. Students and parents are encouraged to make full use of these facilities.

## Design Lab Facilities

The MYP programme integrates a product design lab with a cross-section of product tools and materials and a digital design lab with robotics, 3D printers, and other gadgets to teach and inspire creative design principles. A primary maker space with a green screen is available for PYP students.

### Mobility Limitations of Our Facilities

At this stage, the OSC campus does not have an elevator for anyone with mobility conditions. The campus is widespread and contains many stairs and levels. A mobility plan is in the works as part of the campus redevelopment plan.

### Campus Use During the Day and on Weekends and After School Hours

All students and families will be given an identity card to be brought to school daily as access is restricted. Families are welcome to use the campus on weekends between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., provided the facilities are available. Security is a priority at the School, and the safety of students and personnel is assessed carefully at all times.

The OSC Campus is available for families on the weekends. The pool is open on the weekends when the lifeguards are present. Lifeguards work most weekends, and when they are not, we inform the security and the families through the portal calendar, newsletter, or upon entering the premises.

## Field Trips

The School organises many field trips for its students. Depending on the ages and grades of the students, some are day trips in Colombo, some are overnight trips and once students enter the Secondary School there will be international trip opportunities as well. Many trip are connected to our SAISA Atheltics programme, and to the arts, theatre, music, robotics, and academics.

OSC offers experiential learning trips within Sri Lanka through its Duke of Edinburgh programme, and in the IBDP Environmental System and Geography classes, and Week Without Walls, students explore the biodiversity and regions of Sri Lanka.

The School will communicate all the field trip opportunities to students during the school year, and all the trips are posted on the Digital Portal Calendar.

All day, overnight, local and international trips include a risk assessment and clear guidelines about the roles and responsibilities of chaperones. All safeguarding procedures are strongly adhered to.

Chaperoning costs for all international trips (this includes all expenses for teacher chaperones) will be distributed equally among parents and divided by the number of students who travel. For SAISA events, all the chaperoning costs will be divided among all the athletes who travel each season. As per SAISA rules, the school must have at least three chaperones for each sporting event. For OSC international trips that are non-SAISA-related, our policies regarding chaperones will be followed based on the number of students attending the trip.

## Financial Assistance Programme

The Board of Directors have decided to offer a funding programme to assist parent(s)/Guardian(s) of OSC students in settling tuition fees with the objective of supporting the parent(s)/Guardian(s) in need of financial assistance due to change of financial

circumstances for a limited period of time, whilst maintaining the diversity of the student population as well as sustaining the operations aligned to the values of the organisation.

OSC is committed to support the school community regardless of nationality, race or religion. The financial assistance offered will solely be guided by the extent of financial need of each family and will not be influenced by the academic capabilities and extracurricular activities of the OSC Student.

The Financial Assistance Programme includes:

- The parent eligibility criteria for the financial assistance programme.
- The basis for determining the priority under this programme.
- The journey of the application process for the programme.

Details for this programme can be found here on our website.

# Grading and Assessment

## Reporting Periods

Report cards are sent home four (4) times per year. In the middle of a semester, the Primary and Secondary schools send home progress reports. At the end of each semester, the final report card is communicated through ManageBac. The dates for reporting are on the Parent Portal Calendar.

## Academic Integrity

OSC's mission statement encourages all students to act responsibly. A student must acknowledge and appropriately credit sources of information when that information is used in a student's work. To have an authentic piece of work, a student must base their work on their original ideas with the work of others fully acknowledged. Therefore, all written or oral assignments must use a student's language and expression. Where sources are used or referred to, whether in direct quotation or paraphrase, such sources must be appropriately acknowledged.

At OSC, one of our core values is being "principled," which extends to work submitted by students for assessment. The values that lead to personal integrity and how learners should behave in the assessment process are part of the Approaches to Learning. Academic integrity is a serious matter; all School community members need to know the school's expectations.

Although it is important to be aware of the negative consequences of not adhering to this policy, it is also important to emphasise the positive reasons for accurate attribution of sources. Proper documentation empowers students to:

- Join the "great conversation," in which ideas throughout the world and time are invented, discussed, or refuted.
- Honor the thinking and intellectual property of other authors by crediting their work.
- Lend authority to their contributions.
- Help other researchers find the sources that inspired their work.
- Avoid infringing an author's legal copyright.

**How will the School help?**
Good practices of academic honesty are introduced, taught, modelled, and used throughout the School. Students are expected to transfer the skills of appropriate referencing from one class to another. If a student is unsure of the expectations outlined below, they should ask a teacher for advice.

A student demonstrating academic integrity:

- Acknowledges the source of facts, figures, images, and ideas from other's work.
- Uses quotations when another person's exact words are used.
- Knows how to construct a list of works cited using the MLA format.
- Abides by the rules of tests and external exams by not communicating in any way with, seeking assistance from, or assisting any other student while the examination or test is in progress.
- Only use allowed materials in an assessment when instructed by a teacher.
- Submits their work and does not copy from another student.
- Does not do homework for another student.

# Harassment, Threats and Bullying

OSC will not tolerate harassment, threats or bullying by any member of the community, student, teacher, administrator, parent, school or contractual staff, or visitor on the premises or at events sponsored by the School. Bullying or harassment is especially harmful when students are bullied due to actual or perceived characteristics such as race or ethnicity, ancestry, colour, ethnic group identification, gender expression, gender identity, gender, disability, nationality, religion, sexual orientation, age, or a person's association with a person or group.

The School will follow up on any accusations by way of its 1) Student Behaviour Policy, 2) Staff Code of Conduct, 3) Parent Code of Conduct and 4) Visitor/ Adult Code of Conduct.

## Harrassment

is when the speech or actions are so severe, pervasive, or targeted at particular people that it hinders the student's ability to get an education, significantly harms their well-being, substantially interferes with their rights, or intimidates the student because of their identity.

## Threat

Threat is a communication or behaviour that indicates an individual poses a danger to the safety of school staff or students through acts of violence or other behaviour that would cause harm to self or others.

## Bullying

is when a student causes another student to feel less safe, fearful, or like they are unable to participate in school. Bullying, often involves an imbalance of power, and can include physical, verbal, or psychological actions against a student. Bullying can also happen through communications, including social media.

# Health and Safety

The School considers the health and safety of its students to be of prime importance. Accordingly, the School has a full-time qualified doctor on the staff and maintains a health office on the ground floor of the Primary Office. If a student becomes ill, the doctor will determine whether the student should remain at school or be sent home. If there is a problem, the school will contact the parents and make appropriate arrangements with the principal's consent.

The doctor should be informed if a child is on medication or has special health problems requiring regular attention. Parents should report a prolonged illness, especially a contagious one, to the doctor. Parents should list such information on the student medical form, which should be updated annually. The doctor will remind parents of this.

If a child needs urgent medical attention and the School cannot contact the parents/guardians immediately, the Principal will arrange for the child to be taken to an appropriate hospital.

## Emergency Procedures

The School maintains a comprehensive and appropriate emergency procedures manual to ensure appropriate responses. Regular practice drills are held at intervals during the school year to ensure all students are familiar with the procedures. These include provisions for both evacuation of the buildings and the campus. Details are available in the classrooms, and the teachers explain the directions.

The School has fitted a sophisticated intercom system with funding from the US State Department. Speakers in every room and corridor allow communication with the Head of School, Primary Office, Secondary Office, and Head of Security if an emergency requires special measures.

## Food Allergies

All families are required to fill out medical forms upon enrolment. The School has a Medical Manager Software it uses to keep track of any food allergies, or other types of allergies. If you know that your child has an allergy, we ask that you inform our Doctor. We are not a NUT FREE school, but we are Nut Aware.

## Communicable Diseases

Fever is a common symptom of many diseases, the most common being viral flu. If your child experiences flu-like symptoms, please keep them at home until they are fever-free for 24 hours. If your child develops pink eye, please do not send them to school, as it can be contagious conjunctivitis.

## Head Lice

Head lice do not carry disease but can spread quickly and must be treated immediately. At OSC, we take a preventative approach and schedule monthly checks with the primary students with our school doctor. All primary students need to have their hairbrush or comb at school to allow for these monthly checks. Parents will be notified and asked to collect their child immediately if a student is identified as having head lice at school. The student should not return to school until the lice have been treated. The school doctor will recheck the student and confirm effective treatment before the student is allowed to return to class. Parents will be notified if there is still evidence of head lice, and the student will be sent back home.

## Insurance for Accidents at School

The School carries personal accident cover and a basic legal liability policy. Students may obtain an insurance policy for personal accidents over and above the limit provided by the School. The school cannot accept liability for students on or off the school premises. If students are travelling away on an extended or overseas field trip, such as a SAISA commitment, parents are expected to make travel insurance provisions.

## Slap on a Hat or Seek Shade

The sun is hot, and we are so close to the equator that we must take this seriously. Our current policy states that if students do not wear a hat, they cannot play. We are adjusting this to heighten awareness and education about sun damage and the importance of caring for ourselves outside under the sun. We are following the guidelines from the Australian Government Cancer Council, which can be found here.

- Slip on a T-shirt
- Slop on sunscreen
- Slap on a hat (wide-brimmed, preferably)
- Seek shade
- Slide on sunglasses

All students must wear hats during recess, breaks, PE, athletics, and after-school activities. If they are not wearing a hat, they will be moved to a shaded space to ensure their safety and well-being. Please ensure your child comes to school with a properly labelled hat. Please send sunscreen with your child and follow the above advice to avoid the negative effects of sun exposure while at school. Hats are available at the School Gecko Shop, and our Gecko Gear Service Group will design wider-brimmed hats for students to purchase soon! Thank you for your cooperation in keeping our students safe.

## Tobacco/Nicotine/Alcohol

Student smoking and use of other tobacco products or possession of drugs or alcohol is forbidden at all times and on all occasions on school grounds and school-sponsored activities.

## Air Pollution

Outdoor air quality is linked with a large array of different medical problems and our exposure to particulates must be monitored and reduced where possible. In some cases, exposure can cause lung damage and respiratory problems, particularly with members of sensitive groups.

OSC will respond to poor outdoor air quality when this is detected to ensure the safety of our community. OSC follows the USA AQI EPA's index for reporting outdoor air quality. OSC has installed outdoor air quality monitors on campus and uses this data to help inform decision-making. OSC is also using the Air Now - Air Quality Index Resource and Guidance shared below:

https://www.airnow.gov/aqi-and-health/
https://www.airnow.gov/about-airnow/

Read our Policy on Outdoor Air Quality and view our responses when air quality deteriorates.

# House System

OSC organises all of its students into four house colours: Blue, Green, Red, and Yellow. All the siblings in a family are organised in the same colour. The House System is used for various ways to organise our students, for sports and festival competitions, and events. Upon enrolment you will assigned a House Colour-Tshirts of that color, are bought from the Gecko Store in the reception building.

# Languages at OSC

The Overseas School of Colombo (OSC) student body comprises over 40 different nationalities, with a target maximum of 25% of the school population consisting of any one nationality. Our student population consists of native speakers of various languages, many of whom have more than one Home Language. OSC aims to employ individuals from a variety of national and cultural backgrounds. Thus, a range of languages are used amongst our staff.

**Definitions:**

- OSC defines a Home Language as a language that may include one or more of the following: the language first learned by our students, what they use to communicate with family, and the language they connect with their home country's culture.
- The principal language of instruction at OSC is English.
- All students from Grade 1 onwards must take a course in at least one language besides the language of instruction, whether it is their home language or an acquisition language.
- The national languages of Sri Lanka are Sinhala and Tamil, with English being the link language.

Language Philosophy:

At OSC, we believe that language is fundamental to all learning, thinking, and communicating. Languages are essential for understanding culture and building an international outlook. Language must be learned in context, and all OSC teachers are teachers of language regardless of their discipline.

The Overseas School of Colombo aims:

- To support students in developing their home language by coordinating qualified teachers to continue developing our students' home language skills. This is sometimes done in person; other times, it is done using digital means, and parents pay for it.
- To support students in the acquisition of host nation languages.
- To support students in achieving personal excellence in the principal language of instruction, English.
- Ensure all students acquire at least one language besides their Home Language.
- To take full advantage of the variety of languages spoken in our school community, we use language as a resource to explore the richness of culture from local, national, and global perspectives.

Language instruction at the OSC aims to support:

- Learning language: as students learn, listen, and use language with others.
- Learning through language: students use language to think about or reflect on a theme, concept, culture, or issue.
- Learning about language: as students understand how language works.
- Oral, written, and visual communication is to be learned across and through all subject areas.

# Learning Support Services (LSS)

A Director of Student Support supervises all Learning Support Services. Student records and assessment reports are requested and reviewed through the admissions process. Students are assessed before acceptance for requiring English Additional Language and/or Learning Support services. When a newly admitted student comes with a current Educational Evaluation and/or history of Learning Support from their previous school, they may receive Learning Support services immediately upon enrolment.

## Learning Support Programme (LS)

The LS Programme is designed to support students who experience academic difficulties. If not identified during the admissions process, students are referred to the Student Study Team, which meets regularly to discuss the academic concerns of individual students. The initial steps include record review and teacher/student/parent input. A student may then be recommended for further internal assessment. If the evidence supports that the student may benefit from learning support, the LS Teacher meets with parents to seek permission. A Student Learning Plan is developed and signed in consultation with teachers, parents, and the student.

## English as an Additional Language (EAL)

OSC welcomes all students whose English is not their first language and has specialised teachers to support multilingual learners' access to the English curriculum. The Learning Support Department has instructional specialists for this purpose.

The EAL Programme is designed to provide support as proficiency in English develops. Individualised instruction will focus on developing listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. As proficiency increases, confidence and independence will further develop. A Student Learning Plan is developed and signed in consultation with teachers, parents, and the student.

In Early Years – Grade 5, students new to English can be supported. In Grades 6–8, students are accepted to the EAL Programme with some exposure to English or with limited English proficiency. In Grades 9–10, students are accepted to the EAL Programme with English proficiency or near proficiency with the expectation that they will be able to participate fully in the IB Diploma Programme in Grade 11.

EAL and LS services can take several forms and may include a combination of the following:

- Co-teaching: A support teacher or assistant teacher works collaboratively within the classroom, assisting identified students with a specific subject
- Pull-out Lessons: These are offered in lieu of a whole class lesson on a particular concept or skill to offer individualized instruction and support..
- Consultation: The EAL/LS teacher consults with classroom teachers and assists with differentiation. After assessment and progress review in consultation with the Director of Student Support and teachers, the Student Study Team recommends a change in the LS Programme or exit from the EAL Programme. The EAL/LS teacher then meets with the parent/student to finalise the process. The Student Learning Plan is updated, and if there is a change, the student's progress is monitored closely.

# Lockers

Students in Grades 6–12 are provided with individual lockers and locks for their use in School. This facility offers a place to leave books or possessions not required in a given class. Bags and books not in use must be carefully locked away and not left around. It

is expected that once a student has been allocated a locker, they will keep it in good order and ensure it is always secure. Each student will receive a lock from school at the start of the school year. Students must pay Rs 2,000 for a replacement if the lock is lost or damaged.

## Lost and Found

Lost items are kept outside the canteen and the Secondary Office. Parents and students are asked to ensure all possessions are marked with names. Great care should be taken with possessions, and respect should be shown to items belonging to others. Students are expected to ensure that valuables, personal electronics, and laptops are kept securely on their person or in their assigned locker with the lock engaged.

## Parent Supervision/ Guardianship

In normal circumstances, a student will be residing with their parents. A guardian will be accepted Only if there is full agreement with the Head of School. If the School is not satisfied with the efficacy of the guardian, continued enrolment and/or re-enrolment will not be offered by the School.

## Gecko Community Network (GCN)

The Gecko Community Network plays an active role in the OSC community and is an invaluable supporter of all aspects of school life at OSC. There are a variety of voluntary roles open each year, including grade-level and national representatives.

## Pets on Campus

Regulation to Permit Pets on Campus

OSC is a friendly place for all living things. OSC will allow pets to visit a classroom or activity during school hours so long as it is pre-approved and safe to do
so, with the expressed permissions of the classroom teacher and Principal and insofar as the visit is related to the School Programme. Otherwise, parents, staff and children may not generally bring pets on campus during the school day.

After school hours 4:30 p.m. and on the weekends, the only type of pet that may come on campus is a dog. This pet must be accompanied by the legal owner at all times. OSC will only allow five (05) dogs at any one time on the campus. Note this is on a first come first serve basis, and pet owners will have to work it out between themselves who stays and who must go if more than five dogs and their owners wish to access the campus grounds.

OSC recognises that there may be risks in bringing a dog on campus. OSC is adopting this policy having considered the requests made by the numerous members of the OSC community for permission to entertain pets on the campus premises, and other factors including that in any school environment there exists inherent risks of injuries or incidents, and the conditions set out in this regulation are designed to remove or minimise, to the extent reasonably possible, any additional risks which may be caused by the presence of managed pets.

## Political and Religious Neutrality Statement

OSC maintains the posture of neutrality on all matters relating to religion and politics. The School will not proselytise a specific religious belief or political ideology, but will incorporate into the curriculum knowledge and appreciation of the role that religion and politics play in the social, cultural, and historical development of civilisation.

School facilities may not be used by any individual or group for religious or political purposes unless special permission is given by the Head of School.

## Security and ID Cards

Only OSC students wearing their ID cards will be admitted onto campus. Students with a friend or relative staying with them may request permission from the Principal to bring the person on campus. The Principal will inform the gate guard of the guest's name to be admitted. While we enjoy the visits of friends or alumni, we can only offer a maximum of one school day for a visit of any individual within an academic year.

Parents wishing to speak with teachers should make a prior appointment so that the guards may be informed. Parents must wear their ID cards for admission onto the school premises. Please note that the security guards at the front gate have complete authority to determine who is admitted to the school grounds outside of school hours. Those who demand entry but do not have their ID cards will be refused entry. Any person who behaves suspiciously, aggressively, or rudely at the gate, even though he or she may have a school ID card, will also be refused entry. Your cooperation is kindly requested to ensure the safety and security of everyone in our community and to respect the authority of security personnel.

## School Supplies

All school supplies, such as books, pencils, and pens, are supplied by the School.

## Student Records

An academic file or record is maintained on each student in the School. Student files contain information that is pertinent to a child's functioning at school, including notes on academic, social, and behavioural progress. Files are available for parents to read, but may not be removed from the School. The student file is best interpreted to parents by the Principal or Counsellor.

## Sustainability Initiatives

OSC is a Green Flag School accredited by the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE). OSC takes the following iniatives to ensure we take good care of our environment and our planet.

- We reduce our ecological footprint by separating, recycling and composting solid waste. This is a big Programme that includes the biogas plant and composting initiatives.
- We monitor energy consumption with IOT devices to inform action on using energy wisely and implementing solar photovoltaic systems. This has potentially broad positive impacts on addressing climate change through a reduction in Carbon Dioxide ($CO_2$) from the campus.
- We monitor air quality and other environmental variables using IQ and Purple Air sensors. This is principally for health alerts but the devices are also used in classroom teaching.
- We teach and learn about organic farming and food production through garden beds.
- We monitor biodiversity on the campus and helping to create a virtual sanctuary through our gardens and green spaces. This extended with learning about urban wetlands and rainforests in Sri Lanka.
- We work in our neighbourhood, through the service programme, to clean up and raise awareness about plastic pollution and burning.

## Technology Use

The Technology Department at The Overseas School of Colombo is well-resourced, offering seamless connectivity throughout the campus. Here's how technology is integrated into student learning:

- **Pre-School to Kindergarten:** Students use iPads.
- **Grade 1 to Grade 4:** Students are provided with individual Chromebooks.
- **Grade 5-12:** Students participate in the Bring Your Own Laptop (BYOL) Programme, using Windows or Mac laptops.

Students are expected to use all technology equipment carefully, following the Student Acceptable Use Policy.

The technology programme at OSC fosters an environment aligned with 21st-century life, aiming to develop discerning, compassionate, and responsible users and creators of media and information. All students sign a promise to adhere to responsible technology use.

OSC believes technology should enhance learning, creativity, and communication within both the school and global communities. We follow the *ISTE NETS* standards, focusing on:

- Creativity
- Communication and Collaboration
- Research and Information Fluency
- Critical Thinking, Problem-Solving, and Decision-Making
- Digital Citizenship
- Technology Operations and Concepts

## *Bring Your Own* Laptop, Grades 5-12

All OSC students in Grades 5 to 12 must bring a laptop to school. Parents or sponsors of student school fees are responsible for purchasing the laptop device, maintenance, and insurance. To learn what specs the School recommends, please contact the admissions director at admissions@osc.lk or the techdirector@osc.lk

## Data Protection

All users of personal data within the OSC must ensure that personal data are always held secure and are not disclosed to any unauthorised third party. This policy will be considered violated if data is shared through accidental, negligent, or intentional means. The Student tech use guidelines, Staff Acceptable Use, Audio and Video Surveillance, Data Consent, Marketing Consent, and the Administrative Operational Handbook. Any queries regarding data protection and data retention can be directed towards our data protection lead at techdirector@osc.lk

Social Media Policy

Student Tech Use Guidelines

Staff Acceptable Use Policy

Audio/Video Surveillance Policy

## Mobile Phone Use in Schools

Primary School (EY – Grade 5) students cannot bring mobile phones to school, so please do not send a phone with your child to school.

*Although students can bring* phones to school and keep them in their possession throughout the day, upon entering their classes, they will be asked to switch off their phones and place them in a centrally located area until the class is over or until the teacher asks them to use their phones for an academic purpose. Students can then pick up their phones, take them to their next class, and store them in the central area again.

Students may freely use their phones during breaks. This routine is discussed with our students during the first week of school.

### Student Information Systems and Learning Management Systems

This Handbook details the systems used in our School's primary and secondary sections. Across both divisions, the following systems are used:

**OpenApply:** Admissions management and re-enrolment.

**ManageBac:** Learning management system for Secondary.

**SeeSaw:** Learning management system for Primary.

**School's Buddy:** Three-way conference booking and ASA attendance booking for the whole school.

## Tuition Fee Schedule

The annual Tuition Fee Schedule is set by the Board of Directors and communicated to the parents after the Annual General Meeting by spring. The Fee Schedule and policies are published on our school website found here: https://www.osc.lk/admissions/tuition-fees

## Transportation and Bussing

The School provides a user-pay bus service. Alternative routes are available, details of which can be obtained from our Transportation Office and Transport Coordinators. The bus company provides supervision with paid adult bus monitors.

## Uniform (PE)

OSC does not require a school uniform except for PE classes. The uniform for PE can be purchased at the Gecko Shop in the reception of the School.

## Visitors Procedures

Parents wishing to have a student visit OSC from another school must obtain prior permission from the classroom teacher and the Principal.

Permission will normally be granted for one school day. During this time, the visitor will accompany the host student to classes and be subject to OSC regulations. The host family must accept full responsibility for the visitor.

# Well-being Team

Student well-being starts with morning check-ins and classroom meetings facilitated by the homeroom and advisory teachers. As your child's daily point of contact, they can monitor your child's social, emotional, and personal development. We believe every student has the right to feel a sense of belonging and significance in a safe environment, allowing learning to occur.

The Student Well-being Team is an important element in student well-being. The team consists of the principal, assistant principal, members of the learning support team, and counsellors. It meets regularly to discuss student progress.

# Withdrawals

If parents plan to withdraw their child(ren) from OSC, please contact the Primary School Secretary.
The office will arrange:

- An official transcript
- An official OSC leaving certificate
- Copies of OSC reports
- Withdrawal forms

Students must follow the procedure below to acquire the documentation mentioned above. At least two weeks before withdrawal, parents should inform the School Office that their son/daughter is withdrawing from school, specifying the last day of school.

→ Parents will be emailed an electronic Withdrawal Form that should be filled out and submitted.

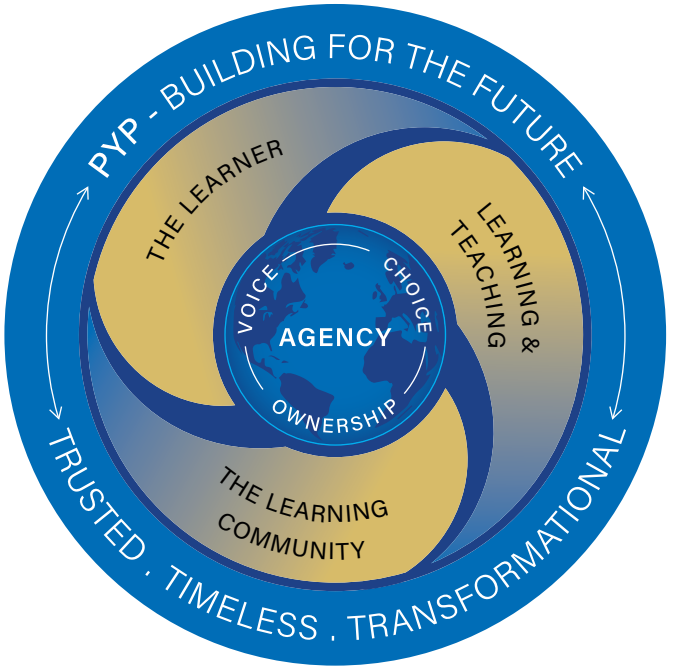
→ All outstanding library books need to be returned to the library.

→ The Withdrawal Form will be approved by the class teacher and the librarian and then approved by the Principal. The Form automatically goes to the Business Office for the refundable deposit to be released.

Parents may contact the Principal to make arrangements if a student requires assistance with admissions testing for another school. If a student requires references/recommendations for a new school, please contact the Office, and the Secretary will facilitate this with the class teacher and Principal. Please allow for **ten working days** for these to be completed.

# Section 2: Our Primary School

## Introduction to the Primary




OSC is committed to developing the whole person. Integral to this is a curriculum that provides our students with the opportunities for this development. In the Primary we offer the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (PYP) for students aged 3-11 (Early Years-Grade 5). This is a transdisciplinary programme of inquiry that supports student's development of key knowledge, skills, concepts, attitudes, and action. This then feeds into the Middle Years Programme (MYP, Grades 6-10) and the Diploma Programme (DP, Grades 11-12).

At the heart of our educational philosophy, the IB Primary Years Programme is dedicated to cultivating a comprehensive learning journey for students, embracing student-centred inquiry-based units that embody the essence of holistic education. In the PYP it is recognised that development and learning are interrelated, and the PYP curriculum framework allows for concept development that applies across and beyond subject-specific areas. This integrated approach allows students to explore concepts, acquire skills, develop positive attitudes, and demonstrate understanding through action.

# IB Primary Years Programme (PYP)

## Programme of Inquiry

The programme of inquiry at OSC comprises the units of inquiry taught at each Grade level from Early Years to Grade 5. In the Early Years and Kindergarten, there are four or five units of inquiry for the year; all other grades focus on six. These units are defined in terms of six transdisciplinary themes – these themes connect learning across a number of curriculum areas, most notably, Science, Social Studies, Personal, Social, and Physical Education and the Arts (visual and performing).

The six transdisciplinary themes are:

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

This programme is reviewed and refined on an annual basis by all primary teachers. Each unit of inquiry will include a central idea (deep conceptual understanding or big idea) and several lines of inquiry, which indicate the direction the learning will take and the areas to be researched. There will also be a number of teacher and

student questions that will help focus the learning. Concepts, knowledge, skills, attitudes, and action are all taught through our programme of inquiry.

Please refer to the curriculum in the Primary Section of our school website to view the programme of inquiry.

This programme is reviewed and refined on an annual basis by all primary teachers. Each unit of inquiry will include a central idea (deep conceptual understanding or big idea) and several lines of inquiry, which indicate the direction the learning will take and the areas to be researched. There will also be a number of teacher and student questions that will help focus the learning. Concepts, knowledge, skills, attitudes, and action are all taught through our programme of inquiry.

Please refer to the curriculum in the Primary Section of our school website to view the programme of inquiry.

## Approaches to Learning (ATL) in the PYP

As part of the International Baccalaureate's Primary Years Programme (PYP), there are a set of strategies and attitudes that teachers are encouraged to help their students develop. These are known as the Approaches to Learning (ATL). The approaches to learning are designed so students can learn how to learn. This is an important part of the PYP process, as learning how to learn with enthusiasm and an inquisitive, interdisciplinary nature is a key part of the IB. The approaches are designed to apply to all topics across the curriculum, so students can develop and work on a range of transferable skills applicable to all their topics at school and life beyond it. This is the overarching aim of the IB – to help children develop as learners and people who can effectively function in society with a range of admirable qualities.

| Approaches to Learning | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Thinking Skills | Critical thinking | Analysing | I look closely at new information and make connections to what I already know. |
| | | | Evaluating | I see things in different ways to solve problems. |
| | | | Forming decisions | I am flexible and open-minded when making a choice or learning something new. |
| | | Creative thinking | Generating novel ideas | I show other people new ideas and questions I have in different ways. |
| | | | Considering new perspectives | I consider different ways of thinking with an open mind. |
| | | Information transfer | | I take information I have learned and use it in different places. |
| | | Reflection and metacognition | | I answer. "What did I learn today and why did I learn it?" |
| | Research Skills | Information literacy | Formulating and planning | I ask questions and figure out how to answer them. |
| | | | Data gathering and recording | I find information and show it using words or pictures. |
| | | | Synthesising and interpreting | I sort information into groups to understand and organise what I am learning. |
| | | | Evaluating and communicating | I communicate what I have learned and where I learned it from, in lots of ways. |
| | | Media literacy | | I use media resources to connect. create, and communicate. |
| | | Ethical use of media/ information | | I am responsible, respectful, and safe when using media to learn and share. |
| | Communication Skills | Exchanging Information | Listening | I listen respectfully and responsibly to others so I can understand. |
| | | | Interpreting | I understand what I see and hear. |
| | | | Speaking | I speak clearly to share and explain my ideas in many ways. |
| | | Literacy | Reading | I read, understand and talk about what is written. |
| | | | Writing | I use writing to share my thoughts and sort information. |
| | | ICT | | I decide on different ways to share what I know or wonder about, including the use of technology. |
| | Social Skills | Interpersonal relationships | | I get along with and care for others as we learn. |
| | | Social and emotional intelligence | | I name my feelings and control my actions so that everyone can learn. |
| | Self-management Skills | Organization | | I choose a learning goal and make a plan to complete a task. |
| | | States of mind | Mindfulness | I am aware of my feelings and my body to stay focused. |
| | | | Perseverance | I complete challenging tasks by never giving up. |
| | | | Emotional management | I know and manage my emotions. I stand up for myself and others. |
| | | | Self-motivation | I always tell myself. "I CAN DO IT!" |
| | | | Resilience | I keep trying when things are new or difficult. |

Developed at Kaposia Education Center, an IB World School (South St. Paul, Minnasota, USA) – @MrRyanHigbea – 2019

# PYP Curriculum

## Language in the PYP

**Reading** OSC focuses on the development of reading and writing skills through a balanced literacy approach, based on the IB PYP Language Scope and Sequence Guide.

"Reading is constructing meaning from text by making inferences and interpretations. The process of reading is interactive and involves the reader's purpose for reading, the reader's prior knowledge and experience, and the text itself (Making the PYP Happen, 2009)".

OSC uses the Lucy Calkins Units of Study as a resource and a wide variety of texts to teach reading. Wherever possible, reading will be taught through the relevant and authentic context of the units of inquiry.

**Word Study** Kindergarten uses Jolly Phonics as a resource to teach children to read and write. Students are taught the main 42 sounds of English. With this knowledge students are taken through the stages of blending sounds to form words and then to reading. The Jolly Phonics assessment, administered three times a year, provides for differentiated instruction.

The developmental resource, Words Their Way is our approach to teach phonics, vocabulary and spelling. The spelling inventory, a common assessment at OSC provides for differentiation to form word study groups. Learners actively engage in word sorts each week, to learn spelling patterns ( vowel patterns, prefixes and suffixes) and the conventional rules of spelling.

**Writing** OSC follows the writers workshop model to teach writing. The Lucy Calkins units of study is our main resource to teach the genres: Narrative, information and opinion writing. Wherever possible, writing will be taught through the relevant and authentic context of the units of inquiry.

## Math in the PYP

The mathematics programme at OSC has been developed to provide all our students with a strong grounding in core areas of mathematical skills in addition to the ability to problem solve using these skills. We also intend for our students to become comfortable with the language of mathematics and see it as a "way of thinking", as opposed to a series of facts that need to be memorised. Wherever possible, we place mathematical learning in a real-world context, with hands-on materials to support all concepts. This is especially the case with our younger learners, where imaginative, differentiated, and practical activities help facilitate a love of mathematics as well as an ability to recognise its importance.

At all grade levels, mathematics will involve working with concrete materials, pictorial representations, discussing and recording, collaboration, investigations, problem solving, practice and consolidation, and mental mathematics. We have a variety of materials and resources to support our mathematics programme.

The mathematics programme is broken down into five mathematical strands:

- Data handling
- Measurement
- Shape and space
- Pattern and function
- Number

A number of “big conceptual ideas” are scaffolded within these stands and spiral throughout the curriculum. Students review and build upon prior knowledge to deepen their understanding as they mature as mathematical learners throughout the year. For each new concept a child will move through three stages of mathematical development before achieving mastery:

- Constructing meaning
- Transferring meaning
- Applying understanding

Programme continuity is established through a Mathematics Scope and Sequence Document. The Scope and Sequence identifies specific grade-level indicators of what our students need to be able to accomplish in every area. A complete list of grade-level indicators can be found on the school website, under curriculum in the Primary Section.

## Social Studies and Sciences

The transdisciplinary nature of the PYP Programme of Inquiry allows for all subjects (including language arts, mathematics, social studies, art, and even physical education) to be integrated into each Unit of Inquiry. This integration teaches children to connect ideas and experiences, and offers a meaningful context for learning.

In the PYP, social studies is viewed as the study of people in relation to their past, their present, and their future, their environment and their society. Social studies encourages curiosity and develops an understanding of a rapidly changing world.

In the PYP, science is viewed as the exploration of the biological, chemical, and physical aspects of the natural world, and the relationships between them. The science knowledge and the application of that knowledge will enhance inquiries into the central ideas defined by the transdisciplinary themes.

## The Arts

At OSC, our educational philosophy is deeply rooted in the concept of holistic learning, reflecting our commitment to nurturing each individual's comprehensive growth and development. The Arts are not merely supporting disciplines but are integral to the Primary Years Programme. Wherever possible, learning in the Arts is linked closely to what is taking place in the regular classroom environment.

We believe that both Visual and Performing arts are powerful modes of communication through which our students can explore and construct a sense of self and develop an understanding of the world around them.

## The Visual Arts

The Visual Arts programme is aimed at providing students with a wide range of opportunities and means to respond to their experiences and engage with cultural, social, and historical perspectives. Students are encouraged to think and communicate their thoughts in new ways, and through a variety of media and techniques. Key elements from art and design are incorporated into the programme.

Learning specifically falls under two common strands across grade levels:

**Responding –** where students are given opportunities to respond to their own and other artists' work or processes, and in doing so develop the skills of critical analysis, interpretation, evaluation, reflection, and understanding.

**Creating –** where students are given opportunities to communicate distinctive forms of meaning, develop their technical skills, take creative risks, solve problems, and visualise consequences.

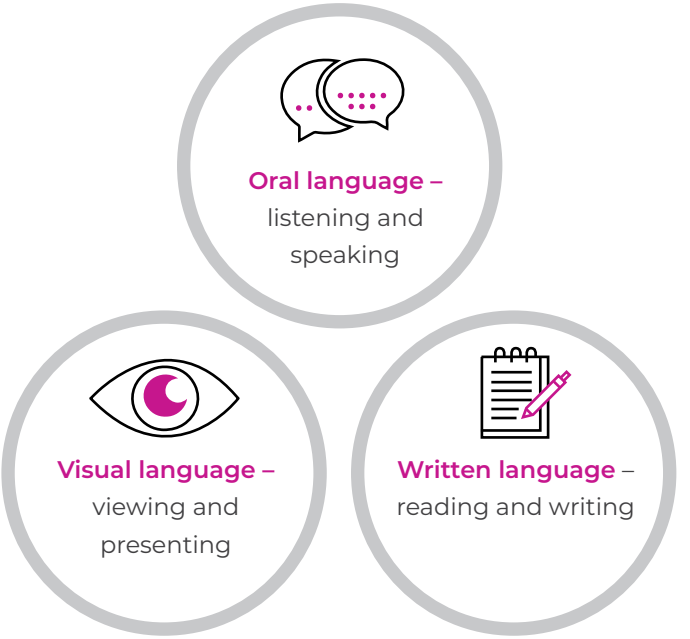
## Performing Arts

Our Performing Arts programme is a combination of dance, drama, and music. Aspects of the curriculum are linked to the local context and Sri Lankan experiences are highlighted. As in Visual Arts, there are two overarching strands – responding and creating. Students are encouraged to take risks with the skills they are learning in Performing Arts and showcase these at every opportunity – within their class, grade level, or in assemblies or public performances. Each year, a Primary School production is a highlight for all our budding performers on stage.

## Languages

We believe that language is at the centre of all learning. All our teachers are language teachers, as it plays such a vital role in the construction of meaning for our students. It is the major connecting element across our curriculum and provides a vehicle for all forms of inquiry. In particular, the integration of literature into our student inquiries helps to deepen a life-long love of reading and language. At OSC we see language as three critical aspects – learning language, learning about language, and learning through language.

Our students will be exposed to three areas of language development:




We have a wide variety of resources to support these areas within our classrooms, our Primary Learning Resource Centre, and our Book Room.

## Sinhala and French

We believe the acquisition of more than one language enriches personal development and helps facilitate international-mindedness. In the Primary School, Sinhala cultural is taught from Early Years through to Grade 5, however, starting in Grade 1 students have the option to study either Sinhala or French as their additional language.

These programmes are not designed as mother tongue classes. Support will be provided for both Sinhala and French mother tongue speakers during these lessons; however, a degree of independent learning will be expected from these students. After school mother tongue language classes may be available upon demand.

In Early Years and Kindergarten, the Sinhala programme is taught by the assistant teacher through immersion and is integrated into the Units of Inquiry. Grade 1 through Grade 5 classes are taught by a qualified Sinhala and French teacher. The French programme is taught by a qualified native speaker.

## Home Languages

Acquisition of Home Language is crucial for cognitive development and in maintaining cultural identity. It also has the potential to increase intercultural awareness and understanding, and enables students to remain in touch with, and maintain esteem for, the language, literature, and culture of their home country. Wherever appropriate, students are encouraged to share Home language experiences, with key words and phrases related to the current concepts being taught translated.

Our Primary Library has a variety of Home Language reading resources, which we expand each year. A variety of Home Language clubs take place after-school, with resources and support provided by the School. Please contact the Primary or Secondary Office for more information about our existing Home Language Programme opportunities.

## Physical Education

Embedded within our commitment to holistic education is an emphasis on physical well-being and empowering students to make informed choices regarding their lifestyles and physical engagement. All our students participate in at least one swimming lesson per week, where a PE teacher and two trained swimming instructors are present. Early Years, Kindergarten, and Grade 1 have two lessons per week to help build water confidence. This allows for appropriate differentiation within the programme. Our PE programme has a combination of the following experiences:

- Individual pursuits: development of basic motor skills and the body's capacity for movement
- Movement composition: involving the linking of movements aesthetically
- Games: development of skills and strategies
- Adventure challenges: tasks that require physical and critical-thinking skills by individuals and groups
- Health related fitness: recognising and appreciating the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle

## Comprehensive Sexual Education

The primary school teaches the Rights, Respect, Responsibility, a K-12th Grade Comprehensive Sexuality Education Curriculum. This K-12 comprehensive sex education curriculum is fully mapped to the National Sexuality Education Standards, covers all 16 topics deemed essential by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, is LGBTQ-inclusive, trauma informed and culturally responsive.

## Social and Emotional Learning

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) is deeply integrated into the IB PYP. It's not a separate subject but is woven into the fabric of the curriculum, helping students develop the skills they need to understand and manage their emotions, build positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.

### Key Components of SEL in PYP

- Learner Profile: This core element of the PYP outlines the qualities of the ideal IB student, including attributes like caring, respectful, and balanced. These qualities are directly linked to SEL competencies.
- Approaches to Learning (ATL): These skills, such as communication, collaboration, and self-management, are essential for SEL development.
- Inquirers: The PYP fosters curiosity and critical thinking, which are fundamental to emotional intelligence and understanding the world around them.
- Knowledgeable Thinkers: Students develop the ability to gather, evaluate, and use information effectively, which is crucial for problem-solving and decision-making.
- Communicators: Effective communication is essential for building relationships and expressing emotions.

### How SEL is Implemented in PYP

- Through Units of Inquiry: SEL is integrated into thematic units, allowing students to explore emotions, relationships, and social issues in real-world contexts.
- Classroom Culture: Creating a supportive and inclusive classroom environment where students feel safe to express themselves is essential for SEL development.
- Collaborative Learning: Group work and projects encourage students to develop empathy, cooperation, and conflict resolution skills.
- Reflective Practices: Journals, discussions, and self-assessment opportunities help students understand their emotions and develop self-regulation strategies.
- Service Learning: Engaging in community service helps students develop empathy, compassion, and a sense of responsibility towards others.

In essence, the PYP provides a holistic framework for students to develop social and emotional competencies alongside academic knowledge. By focusing on the whole child, the Programme aims to equip students with the skills they need to thrive in an ever-changing world.

## Technology

Wherever possible, we try integrate technology into our everyday teaching and learning. All students have immediate access to technology within the classroom, using either iPads or Chromebooks. With our wireless campus, this allows students to seamlessly access a range of research facilities depending on the particular learning that is taking place.

Please refer to our Technology Standard found on the OSC website under the section "Technology".

### Service Learning

In the PYP students are involved with a choice on which of the 15 OSC service groups they support. This is done through the PSA ambassador Programme where they act as representatives for their classes. It's also achieved through the "action" piece where students decide how they are going to implement their learning which usually involves supporting one of the OSC service groups.

## Assemblies and Productions

At the end of each week at 8:15 a.m., the Primary School holds a short, informal assembly on the basketball court. This is an opportunity to recognise student achievements, share short student performances, and to pass on notices and reminders to students. Occasionally, a more formal assembly is held either in the Primary Multi-Purpose Room (PMPR) or the auditorium. This is an opportunity to share literature and for students to share their learning in a variety of areas. Our community is welcomed and encouraged to attend these events.

The Primary School puts on one major production each year. Students from KG-Grade 5 are involved. We also host assemblies each week to highlight events and learning experiences, and we often have impromptu jam sessions hosted by individual grade levels.

## Assessing Learning in the Primary

Assessment is seen as an integral element of the teaching/learning process. Our assessment procedures are based on current educational philosophy and are directly related to the school curriculum.

### Types of Assessment Practices

**Assessment for learning** is learner-centred, forward thinking and involves the entire learning community. It is a collaborative effort that starts with assessment of prior knowledge to determine what students already know and what they are able to do with further guidance (Griffin 2014). Using pre-assessment data, teachers design opportunities for students to test and revise their models, and support them in making connections between their previous and current perceptions. Assessment produces evidence of student learning. Continuously monitoring, documenting and measuring learning, and then analysing assessment data, provides insights into students' understanding, knowledge, skills and dispositions. Assessment is a means for teachers to personalise learning and for students to self-adjust based on emerging data and feedback from teachers and peers.

**Assessment as learning** promotes learning by helping students to take responsibility, while developing enthusiasm and motivation for their learning. By encouraging students to actively design, manage and measure their own learning, they develop the skills to use assessments to self-assess, to reflect on and to make adjustments in future learning.

**Assessment of learning** is an integral part of learning. At appropriate points of the inquiry, it provides students with the opportunity to gauge their acquisition of knowledge, development of conceptual understandings and skills during the inquiry (Teaching and Learning, PYP Enhanced Resources).

## Figure AS07: The Three Assessment Practices

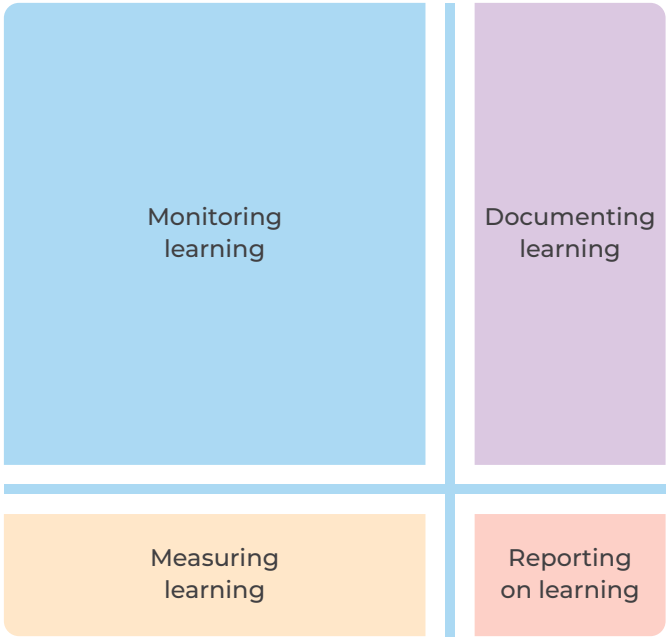
| | Assessment for learning | Assessment of learning | Assessment as learning (Clark 2012; Earl 2012) |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Purpose** | Also known as formative assessment. Its goal is to inform teaching and promote learning. | Also known as summative assessment. Its goal is to certify and to report on learning progress. | As part of the formative process, its goal is to support students in learning how to become a self-regulated lifelong learner. |
| **Timing** | It is conducted throughout the learning process. It is iterative and interactive. | It is typically conducted at the end of a unit, year level or developmental stage, or programme. | It is conducted throughout the learning process. It is iterative and interactive. |
| **Features** | Student involvement<br>Quantitative and qualitative data<br>Written and oral artifacts<br>Observations and feedback<br>Questionnaires<br>Teacher/student dialogues/ conferences<br>Context-based<br>Informal<br>Indication of process<br>Indication of knowledge/skill application | Limited student involvement<br>Quantitative data<br>Tests, exams, standardised tests<br>Indication of skills and knowledge acquisition or mastery<br>Based on teacher judgement<br>Norm- or criteria-referenced | Students are active agents in their own learning by developing and using meta-cognitive strategies to:<br>→ Plan learning goals<br>→ Monitor goals<br>→ Reflect in order to modify learning and to adjust learning |

**(Learning and Teaching, PYP Enhanced Documents)**

Student learning is evaluated through a combination of these practices.

## Dimensions of Assessment

Assessment has four dimensions: monitoring, documenting, measuring, and reporting on learning. Each of these aspects has its own function, but all aim to provide evidence to inform learning and teaching. Although the four dimensions of assessment are not weighted the same, each dimension has its own importance and value.




"In the PYP inquiry learning environment, the learning process is valued as much as the learning outcomes. Designing assessments that are both backward by design and forward by design will ensure that knowledge, conceptual understanding, skills and attributes of the IB Learner profile are monitored, supported and valued." (Teaching and Learning, 2020)

## When, What, and How We Assess

Within the PYP, continuous assessment is an integral part of teaching. The use of assessment to judge the effectiveness of both teaching and learning processes is essential to allow teachers and children to identify their strengths and weaknesses and the effectiveness of the programme. The purpose and means of assessment should be clearly explained to the children.

The Primary reporting schedule for the school year is as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| **October:** | Three (3)-way conferences |
| **December:** | Semester 1 report |
| **March:** | Three (3)-way conferences |
| **May:** | Student-led conferences |
| **June:** | Semester 2 report |

## Three-Way Conferences

These conferences are usually formal and designed for students to be the centre of discussion involving their progress with their parents. Students focus on what they have achieved and the goal setting process.

Teachers and parents are then given the opportunity to highlight the student's achievements and to determine how they can best help the student to meet goals at school and at home

## Student-Led Conferences

These conferences are formal ones where children are involved in discussing their work and their progress with their parents. The children will, with the support and guidance of the teacher, select the work (based on

predetermined criteria) to be discussed. The format of these conferences will depend on the age of the child, and all of the participants must understand the format and their roles prior to the conference. The value of student-led conferences is that children reflect on and consolidate their progress and share the responsibility of informing their parents.

### Portfolios

Portfolios are collections of student work designed to demonstrate successes, growth, higher order thinking skills, creativity and reflection over time. Teachers and students collect evidence to show development and reflection in SeeSaw, our main learning management system.

### Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) – External

Students in Grades 2-5 at OSC participate in the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) testing in September and again in April. MAP tests are unique in that they are administered online and are adapted to each child's level of learning. As a result, each student has the same opportunity to succeed and maintain a positive attitude towards testing. With MAP tests, we can administer shorter tests and use less class time while still receiving detailed and accurate information about your child's growth. During the month of September, your child will take one reading and one mathematics test, and spend a total of about one and a half to two hours completing these tests. The MAP testing will run again in April so that student progress can be tracked.

### International School Assessment (ISA) – External

In February, all students in Grades 3, 4, and 5 undergo an online writing assessment. The assessment is completed in two testing sessions – Writing Task A (Narrative/Reflective) and Writing Task B (Exposition/Argument). Students are given approximately 40 minutes to respond to a writing prompt and results are assessed by an external body, then shared with parents.

### Development Reading Assessment (DRA) – Internal

The DRA is an individually administered assessment of student reading proficiency. The DRA allows teachers to determine each student's instructional level for reading and provides a method for evaluating their individual reading growth over time.

## The PYP Exhibition

All our students in Grade 5 engage in one unit of inquiry entitled "The Exhibition" as part of their six units of inquiry throughout the year. The PYP Exhibition provides the culminating experience of the learner's engagement with the PYP. It unites the teachers, learners, and parents of the class in an activity that captures the essence of the PYP transdisciplinary inquiry conducted in a spirit of personal and shared responsibility. It marks a rite of passage, both symbolic and actual, from the PYP to the Middle Years Programme (MYP). Most importantly, it is a celebration, an event that synthesises all that is best in the PYP, and shares it with the whole community.

The PYP Exhibition is an extended, collaborative inquiry, undertaken by students in their final year of the PYP. The subject of the exhibition inquiry comes under the six transdisciplinary themes and is a real-world issue or problem, local or global, of sufficient scope and significance to warrant an extended investigation. The class will generate relevant and realistic proposals for solutions to the selected issue and in doing so, apply their accumulated knowledge. The Exhibition represents a significant event in the life of the School, encapsulating the essence of the PYP and encouraging younger students to look forward to their final year in the programme.

# Attendance in the Primary

Regular attendance at school is an expectation at OSC in order to set every student up for success and enable them to maximise their learning. If a child is to be on a sustained absence, this needs to be communicated to the Principal, indicating the rationale.

If your child is absent, parents are asked to phone the Primary Office (+94 11 278 4920) to inform the Primary School Secretary. Should the school not have had notification of an absence, a phone call to the child's home will be made to ensure that the whereabouts of a student is known. If a child needs to leave the campus during the school day, parents or guardians are required to obtain a "Gate Pass" from the Primary Office.

Parents wishing to remove students from class due to personal circumstances are expected to seek permission prior to their departure. Permission for leave will be granted by the Principal.

In a situation of sustained lateness, parents will be notified and an action plan to resolve the situation will be drawn up and agreed upon. Students are required to be present for at least 85% of the instructional time. Students who are absent from school, excused or unexcused, for more than 15% of the instructional time may jeopardise their promotion.

# Awards in the Primary

## Gold Award for Excellence

The President's Award for Educational Excellence recognises academic success in the classroom. This category of the award enables school personnel to use new assessment and evaluation tools in developing award criteria at their school and apply the criteria fairly to all students.

The primary indicators of excellence must be based on academic achievement. School personnel may also consider, as part of the criteria, activities in which a student demonstrates high motivation, initiative, integrity, intellectual depth, leadership qualities and/or exceptional judgement. They may also require student essays and outstanding attendance, but these activities must bear some relationship to the academic performance of a student.

## Silver Award for Achievement

The President's Award for Educational Achievement recognises students that show outstanding educational growth, improvement, commitment to or intellectual development in their academic subjects – but do not meet the criteria for the President's Award for Educational Excellence.

This award should not be compared to the President's Award for Educational Excellence or be seen as a second tier award; it recognises a very different type of academic achievement. It is meant to encourage and reward students who work hard and give their best effort in school, often in the face of special obstacles to learning.

This award is given at the Principal's discretion based on the criteria developed at the school.

The criteria should reflect the purpose of the award and must be applied fairly to all students.

Following are examples of criteria for which the President's Award for Educational Achievement may be presented:

- Show tremendous growth but not meet all the criteria for the President's Award for Educational Excellence
- Demonstrate unusual commitment to learning in academics despite various obstacles
- Maintain a school record that would have met the School's selection criteria for the President's Award for Educational Excellence but illness, personal crisis, or special needs prevented the student from maintaining such high standards despite hard work
- Achieve high scores or show outstanding growth, improvement, commitment to or intellectual development in particular subjects, such as English, math, science, etc.
- Demonstrate achievement in the arts such as music or theatre

## Head of School's Award for Critical Thinking

Awarded to a primary student who has demonstrated they can imagine different solutions to a problem, seeks out and understands different points of view, does not accept ideas at face value, is intellectually curious, does not give up when solutions are not readily apparent, challenges self and others in solving problems, makes use of symbolic expressions through language, art, music, dance or drama, uses humour in the thinking process and is not afraid to have an opinion that is different to others.

# Counselling Programme at the Primary Level

The counsellor plays a pivotal role in fostering the holistic development of students in the IB PYP. Their responsibilities extend beyond traditional academic counselling to encompass the social, emotional, and personal growth of young learners.

**Key Roles of a Counsellor in PYP**

- **Social and Emotional Development:**
  - Supporting students in understanding and managing their emotions.
  - Building strong relationships with peers and adults.
  - Developing empathy and compassion.
  - Teaching conflict resolution and problem-solving skills.
- **Academic Support:**
  - Helping students develop effective learning strategies.
  - Providing academic guidance and support.
  - Facilitating transitions within the School.
- **Parent and Teacher Collaboration:**
  - Building strong partnerships with parents and teachers.
  - Providing support and guidance to parents on child development.
  - Collaborating with teachers to create a supportive learning environment.
- **Programme Implementation:**
  - Understanding the PYP philosophy and curriculum.
  - Integrating SEL (Social Emotional Learning) into the Programme.
  - Supporting the development of the Learner Profile in students.
- **School Culture:**
  - Promoting a positive and inclusive school climate.
  - Addressing bullying and other social issues.
  - Supporting the well-being of the entire school community.

In essence, the counselor is a key player in creating a nurturing environment where students can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. They work collaboratively with teachers, parents, and administrators to ensure that the PYP's holistic approach to education is fully realised.

## Homework in the Primary School

Learning at home should be authentic, connected and meaningful. At OSC, we have moved away from traditional homework tasks, instead, we encourage families to follow their child's curiosity and passion to guide their learning. Science experiments, outside play, cooking and reading books together are an equally important part of your child's development, along with the curriculum they learn at school. Current research suggests that for Primary School students, homework has a negligible effect on academic achievement and worse, it can lead to stress, family conflict, and a lack of time for other important activities such as play and rest.

However, developing a love for reading is important for all primary students and should be part of a daily routine. Below are a few ideas to help guide reading at home:

- **Interactive family reading:** Build in time for daily family reading, whether that's library books, classroom levelled readers, or books from home. This creates a shared experience, sparks discussions, and exposes children to new vocabulary and concepts in a natural way.
- **Choice and personalisation:** Allow children some choice in their reading materials, whether it's choosing books based on their interests or selecting different formats like audiobooks or eBooks. This fosters engagement and ownership over their learning.

- **Connecting reading to the real world:** Encourage students to draw connections between what they read and their own lives and experiences. This could involve creating projects, participating in discussions, or making real-world applications of what they learned.
- **Incorporating technology thoughtfully:** Utilise technology tools like educational apps or online games that supplement learning in a fun and interactive way, but ensure they are not solely focused on drill and practice.

Remember, the goal of home learning in primary grades is not to overburden young learners but to nurture a love for reading and learning that will serve them throughout their lives. By focusing on authentic connections and meaningful learning experiences, you can create a more engaging and effective learning environment at home.

## Learning Management Systems and Software in the Primary

1. SeeSaw
2. ManageBac

The Tech Team vets other software

## Parent Involvement in the Primary School

Parents are an integral part of the learning process at OSC. We know that when parents are actively involved in their child's education, it is highly beneficial to the child's learning. As a parent in the OSC community, you may help your child's learning in a multitude of ways:

- Listening to students read during the day
- Reading with your child at night
- Discussing your child's learning with them at night
- Supporting them with homework tasks
- Going on field trips
- As a guest speaker in a particular area of expertise
- Sharing your talents with your child's class
- Helping to facilitate responsible "action"
- Being enthusiastic about learning
- Modelling "lifelong" learning
- Helping them problem solve
- Promoting independence and responsibility
- Encouraging and supporting them in whatever areas they are passionate about

Each class has two appointed support parents who work in collaboration with the class teacher and the Support Parent Coordinator. Their role is primarily to act as a link between the School and class community. The role will take on differing aspects depending on the level; however, support parents are an excellent contact point and source of information. Please refer to the School Community Network (SCN) section

of the weekly newsletter for more specific details. Parent workshops are provided throughout the year on a variety topics from our Programmes, to positive discipline, to parenting strategies.

# Student Leadership – Primary School Ambassadors (PSA)

The Primary School Ambassadors are group of students from Grade 1 to Grade 5 who represent students in decision-making affecting their lives at school.

They provide a link between staff and students and present a student perspective. The association is made up of two students who are elected from each class. Skills and attributes necessary to be a class representative are discussed and their nominations called for, with students then voting.

## How are Student Decisions Made?

The PSA meets weekly at lunchtime to discuss issues brought to them from class meetings. These issues are then directed back to all classes, via PSA minutes, for further discussion. When necessary, a proposal is then made that goes to classes and a vote is conducted. The class that brought the idea to the PSA is then responsible for taking any action necessary, for example meeting with the Primary Principal, organising fundraisers, etc.

This process ensures that all students are actively involved in decision-making at the school. We believe that the PSA gives our students an active role in the running of their school and helps all involved further develop key attributes of the learner profile.

# Student Responsibilities

At OSC we strive to allow our students to be self-directed wherever possible. We hope that ultimately, through the reinforcement of positive behaviours, our students display intrinsic motivation to “do the right thing”, both individually and collectively. Our Primary Student Government Association, through class meetings, has developed a set of responsibilities and expectations that all Primary students at OSC follow. These are:

- care for and respect each other
- speak nicely to each other
- share
- keep our school clean and tidy
- recycle
- learn and play as a team
- are creative
- ask questions
- always try our best

# Trips in the Primary School

Field trips are an integral component of the PYP. They provide students with opportunities to explore, investigate, and understand the world around them in a hands-on and engaging way. By incorporating field trips into the PYP curriculum, we create rich and authentic learning experiences that empower students to become lifelong learners and engaged citizens. Grades 3 and 4 go on one overnight trip each year and in Grade 5 students go away for two nights.

# Section 3: Our Secondary School

## Introduction to the Secondary

The Secondary School is a time where students become more independent and develop their interests and strengths. OSC remains committed to developing the whole child. Integral to this is a curriculum that provides our students with opportunities to develop their approaches to learning, their voice and their collaboration skills.

The Secondary School includes both the Middle Years Programme (MYP) and the Diploma Programme (DP). While there are individual subjects there are many interdisciplinary projects, and opportunities for students to transfer their learning conceptually.

As a secondary team we are all about the journey, believing that paying attention to the journey will help every child achieve success.

The academic year runs from mid-August to mid-June and is divided into two semesters for assessment purposes. This provides 180 days of instructional time with three main vacation periods.

The school day begins at 8:15 a.m. and concludes at 3:30 p.m. apart from Wednesdays when there is an early finish at 2:35 p.m. The Secondary School runs on an 6-day cycle. The rotating schedule allows for an equal distribution of time for the various subjects. The school calendar has these numbers for each date.

### Advisory and Homeroom

All students have a Homeroom Teacher/Advisor, who is responsible for the general welfare of the students and for sharing information in the homeroom group. The Advisor is the first point of contact for students and parents. This teacher will likely also be a classroom teacher for one of the academic courses in the grade level. Parents can reach out to the Advisor or any subject teacher at any time. Please contact secondaryoffice@osc.lk if you need support. Advisory takes place during the “X Block” at the end of each day.

## IB MYP (MYP) Programme

The IB Middle Years Programme (IB MYP) is an internationally recognised Programme designed for students aged between 11 and 16 years. It recognises that students in this age group are developing their social, emotional, academic, and metacognitive skills.

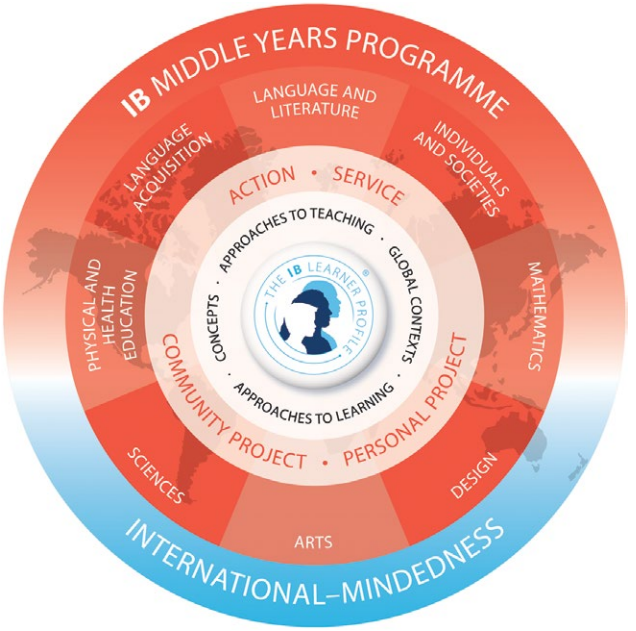
Therefore, the MYP is designed to provide academic progress while also acknowledging the need to build social skills and develop connections in and outside of the classroom. While developing the skills students need for success, the MYP also allows for flexibility and creativity to meet the diverse needs of young adolescents. Through the MYP Programme, students prepare for future challenges in both academics and beyond.

The MYP is designed to provide students with the values and opportunities that will enable them to develop sound judgment and critical thinking skills. The MYP embraces the IB Learner Profile which promotes the development and expression of character traits. The program also emphasises the importance of “Approaches to Learning” (ATLs), the transferrable skills which enable students to learn new information in any context. These ATLs are necessary for students to be independent, life-long learners.

## The IB MYP Curriculum Model

The MYP spans Grades 6–10, also referred to as MYP Years 1–5. The curricular framework for the MYP is established by the International Bachelorette (IB) but is flexible enough to allow schools to determine the specific curriculum and content taught. Through the MYP, the Overseas School of Colombo is able to support students in their academic, social, and emotional development as students transition from early puberty to mid-adolescence.

The diagram represents the Middle Years Programme Model. The Programme model of the IB MYP places the learner at its centre, educating the whole person, placing importance on conceptual learning through contexts. The student interacts with their eight subject groups through the development of skills, known as Approaches to Learning, and the transfer of content, skills, and knowledge into action.




# MYP Curriculum

The IB MYP curriculum includes eight subject groups. Our learning activities are designed through the lens of the six Global Contexts to nurture curiosity and creativity. The MYP encourages the same intellectual risk-taking that drives the IB Primary Years Programme (PYP), and develops critical and independent thinking as we prepare students for the rigours of the IB Diploma Program (IB DP).

### Language and Literature

Study of literature and language of instruction.

### Math

Integrated Numerical Reasoning, Algebra, Modelling, Geometry, Trigonometry, and Statistics.

### Individuals and Societies
Integrated History, Geography, and Economics

### Sciences
Integrated Biology, Chemistry, Physics, and Earth Science

### The Arts
Visual Arts, Music, and Theatre

### Language Acquisition and Home Languages
OSC offers French, Spanish, Sinhala, and Mandarin languages for acquisition (B languages) If a student wishes to study their home language (A language), and not one of OSC provided languages, they need to consult with the Home Language Coordinator.

### Design
Digital and Product Design Technology

### Physical Education
Health, Sport, and Fitness

### Comprehensive Sexual Education
The secondary school teaches the Rights, Respect, Responsibility, a K-12$^{th}$ Grade Comprehensive Sexuality Education Curriculum. This K-12 comprehensive sex education curriculum is fully mapped to the National Sexuality Education Standards, covers all 16 topics deemed essential by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, is LGBTQ-inclusive, trauma informed and culturally responsive.

### X-Blocks
At the end of each day (except Wednesdays) students have a 50 minute block of time dedicated to non-assessed social-emotional learning and development. During this time, we schedule sessions intended to cover all aspects of the **CASEL framework** helping our students learn and grow in terms of their self-management, self-awareness, responsible decision-making, social awareness and relationship skills. We organise this through sessions focused, for example, on digital citizenship, comprehensive sexuality education (see above), PLEx time (Personalised Learning Experiences) or ATL skill development.

Please refer to the OSC website for subject specific outlines. Each subject group focuses on teaching and learning through the six Global Contexts or common themes, which connect students to the subject groups. This leads to teaching through an interdisciplinary approach and allows for transfer between subjects as well as the outside world. Through these contexts, students learn to investigate, plan, take action, and reflect.

## The IB MYP Personal Project

The MYP Personal Project is the capstone of the MYP. Over a period of nine months, from the end of year 4 to the middle of year 5, students undertake the creation of an individualised project. Through the completion of this project, students demonstrate the knowledge and skills they have developed over the five years of the IB MYP. Students are free to choose any topic of interest and create their project, which impacts their learning and community. To accompany the project, students write a report that explains the process of planning, applying skills, and reflecting. Students celebrate the completion of their projects through a Personal Project Exhibition where their work is displayed to the school community. Students receive a final 1–7 IB MYP grade for the Personal Project. This grade is awarded by the student's supervisor, an internal moderator, and an external IB moderator. All students attending the Overseas School of Colombo in MYP year 5 (Grade 10), complete the Personal Project.

## IB Diploma Programme (DP)

The Overseas School of Colombo is proud to have been offering the rigorous and internationally recognised International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme to its students in Grades 11 and 12 since 1983. At OSC, we support students in the Diploma Programme beginning in the second half of their MYP 5 year with individual course selection meetings with students, parents, the Diploma Coordinator and the College Counsellor to ensure students find the best pathway to success both in the Diploma Programme and with regard to their post-secondary goals. In addition to their course work, supported by our DP teaching faculty, we support students throughout the programme with regularly scheduled support sessions with the DIploma Coordinator, CAS Coordinator, and Extended Essay Coordinator in addition to student well-being and study skills sessions and regular contact with the College Counsellor. What follows are descriptions of the key elements and requirements of the two-year IBDP programme that we support OSC students to understand and we guide them to meet. For additional information about the specifics of the programme beyond what is provided below, please refer to the IB's Diploma Programme website **or contact OSC's Diploma Coordinator at** dpcoordinator@osc.lk**.**

# IBDP Overview

The International Baccalaureate describes the Diploma Programme's purpose and structure as follows:

*The Diploma Programme (DP) is a rigorous pre-university course of study designed for students in the 16 to 19 age range. It is a broad-based two-year course that aims to encourage students to be knowledgeable and inquiring, but also caring and compassionate. There is a strong emphasis on encouraging students to develop intercultural understanding, open-mindedness, and the attitudes necessary for them to respect and evaluate a range of points of view. The course is presented as six academic areas enclosing a central core. Students study two modern languages (or a modern language and a classical language), a humanities or social science subject, an experimental science, mathematics and one of the creative arts. Instead of an arts subject, students can choose two subjects from another area. It is this comprehensive range of subjects that makes the Diploma Programme a demanding course of study designed to prepare students effectively for university entrance. In each of the academic areas students have flexibility in making their choices, which means they can choose subjects that particularly interest them and that they may wish to study further at university. Normally, three subjects (and not more than four) are taken at higher level (HL), and the others are taken at standard level (SL). The IB recommends 240 teaching hours for HL subjects and 150 hours for SL. Subjects at HL are studied in greater depth and breadth than at SL. In addition, three core elements – the extended essay, theory of knowledge and creativity, activity, service – are compulsory and central to the philosophy of the programme. [(https://www.ibo.org/globalassets/new-structure/university-admission/pdfs/ee_subjectbrief_en.pdf)](https://www.ibo.org/globalassets/new-structure/university-admission/pdfs/ee_subjectbrief_en.pdf)*

# Courses offered at the DP Level at The Overseas School of Colombo

Students choose from the following 2-year courses at the start of Grade 11 to satisfy their IB DP requirements:

| GROUP | SUBJECT | LEVELS |
|---|---|---|
| Group 1<br>(Courses subject to change) | English A Language and Literature | HL or SL |
| | Other Language A Literature (School Supported Self Taught) | SL |
| Group 2<br>(Courses subject to change) | French B | HL or SL |
| | Spanish B | HL or SL |
| | French *ab initio* | SL |
| | Mandarin *ab initio* | SL |
| Group 3<br>(Courses subject to change) | Economics | HL or SL |
| | Global Politics | HL or SL |
| | Geography | HL or SL |
| | Psychology | HL or SL |
| Group 4 | Biology | HL or SL |
| | Environmental Systems and Societies | HL or SL |
| | Physics | HL or SL |
| | Chemistry | HL or SL |
| Group 5 | Mathematics Analysis and Approaches | HL or SL |
| Group 6 | Visual Arts | HL or SL |
| | Theatre | HL or SL |
| | Music | HL or SL |

For extensive syllabus outlines for each subject, please refer to the Parent Portal.

In rare cases, it may not be possible to meet the unique educational needs of specific students with the above course offerings. The option to take International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme courses at The Overseas School of Colombo (OSC) through Pamoja Education is by special arrangement only. Pamoja Education is an online school authorised by the IB to offer and meet the curricular requirements of a number of IB Diploma Programme courses.

# The IBDP Core at OSC

## The IB DP Core: Creativity, Activity, and Service (CAS)

The Creativity Activity and Service (CAS) component is a vital part of the educational experience for all DP 1 and 2 students at OSC. Our school recognises, as stated in the mission statement, that education neither begins nor ends in the classroom or the examination hall. In fact, the essential aspects of education may exist outside both and the CAS Programme highlights this. An international education must go well beyond the provision of information and is inevitably involved in the development of attitudes and values which transcend barriers of race, class, religion, gender or politics. As per the IB design, CAS encompasses a broad range of extracurricular activities including SAISA sports, creative pursuits, activities like COMUN and service to the community. The emphasis is on experiential learning and includes an expectation that students will be involved in a balanced range of activities reflecting creativity, action and service within this Programme.

Community service and service-learning have a special place in OSC's philosophy of education. At OSC students are encouraged to develop a positive and active approach towards service. In the Secondary School specific Programmes are offered to students which emphasise an awareness, concern and responsibility for service in the community. Some of these happen on a weekly basis (Thursday afternoons) after school while others are part of the Week Without Walls Programme (scheduled at the beginning of the 2nd term).

The Overseas School of Colombo (OSC) runs an innovative Programme in reflective learning that supports student engagement, authentic learning and a deep engagement in this Programme of experiential learning. All OSC DP students keep track of their goal-setting and progress in the Creativity Activity and Service (CAS) Programme using online blogs (digital portfolios). The management of their experiences, learning outcomes, supervisors and time commitments is accomplished on ManageBac.

The idea of the blog or digital portfolio reflective space is for students to chart their growth and progress in each of the three (Creativity-Activity-Service) CAS strands as they navigate the Diploma Programme. Students are encouraged to use pictures, videos and links to make these visually stimulating records of their CAS experience. The reflections connect back to the seven CAS learning outcomes (see attached OSC CAS Handbook for details) that are at the core of their CAS experience. The blogs are publicly available and are also used to share evidence of extracurricular participation for university applications.

https://www.osc.lk/learning/secondary-geckos/diploma-programme/cas

# The IB DP Core: Theory of Knowledge (TOK)

The IB describes the Theory of Knowledge course on their DP curriculum site as follows:

*Theory of Knowledge (TOK) plays a special role in the International Baccalaureate® (IB) Diploma Programme (DP), by providing an opportunity for students to reflect on the nature of knowledge, and on how we know what we claim to know.*

It is one of the components of the DP core and is mandatory for all students. The TOK requirement is central to the educational philosophy of the DP.

## How is TOK Structured?

As a thoughtful and purposeful inquiry into different ways of knowing, and into different kinds of knowledge, TOK is composed almost entirely of questions.

The most central of these is "How do we know?", while other questions include:

- What counts as evidence for X?
- How do we judge which is the best model of Y?
- What does theory Z mean in the real world?

Through discussions of these and other questions, students gain greater awareness of their personal and ideological assumptions, as well as developing an appreciation of the diversity and richness of cultural perspectives.

## Assessment of TOK

The TOK course is assessed through an exhibition and a 1,600 word essay.

The exhibition requires the students to create an exhibition of three objects that explores how TOK manifests in the world around us.

The essay focuses on a conceptual issue in TOK. For example, it may ask students to discuss the claim that the methodologies used to produce knowledge depend on the use to which that knowledge will be used.

## What is the Significance of TOK?

TOK aims to make students aware of the interpretative nature of knowledge, including personal ideological biases – whether these biases are retained, revised, or rejected.

It offers students and their teachers the opportunity to:

- reflect critically on diverse ways of knowing and on areas of knowledge
- consider the role and nature of knowledge in their own culture, in the cultures of others and in the wider world.

In addition, TOK prompts students to:

- be aware of themselves as thinkers, encouraging them to become more acquainted with the complexity of knowledge
- recognise the need to act responsibly in an increasingly interconnected but uncertain world.

TOK also provides coherence for the student, by linking academic subject areas as well as transcending them.

It therefore demonstrates the ways in which the student can apply their knowledge with greater awareness and credibility.

(https://www.ibo.org/programmes/diploma-programme/curriculum/dp-core/theory-of-knowledge/what-is-tok/)

## The IB DP Core: Extended Essay

The IB describes the Extended Essay on their subject brief publication as follows:

*The extended essay, a component of the DP core, is a compulsory, externally assessed piece of independent research, presented as a formal piece of academic writing. It is an in-depth study of a focused topic, undertaken either through a subject-focused approach, or an interdisciplinary approach combining two DP subjects. Students choose from the list of available Diploma Programme subjects for the examination session in question. For those taking the diploma this is normally one of the student's six selected subjects, or two in the case of the interdisciplinary pathway. Students can also choose a topic in which they have some background knowledge. The EE is intended to promote academic research and writing skills. It gives students the opportunity to engage in personal research on their own choice of topic, under the guidance of a supervisor (an appropriately qualified member of staff within the School). Students produce a significant piece of appropriately presented and structured writing, in which their ideas and findings are communicated in a coherent, reasoned manner that is suitable for the chosen subject(s)The extended essay, a component of the DP core, is a compulsory, externally assessed piece of independent research, presented as a formal piece of academic writing. It is an in-depth study of a focused topic, undertaken either through a subject-focused approach, or an interdisciplinary approach combining two DP subjects. Students choose from the list of available Diploma Programme subjects for the examination session in question. For those taking the diploma this is normally one of the student's six selected subjects, or two in the case of the interdisciplinary pathway. Students can also choose a topic in which they have some background knowledge. The EE is intended to promote academic research and writing skills. It gives students the opportunity to engage in personal research on their own choice of topic, under the guidance of a supervisor (an appropriately qualified member of staff within the school). Students produce a significant piece of appropriately presented and structured writing, in which their ideas and findings are communicated in a coherent, reasoned manner that is suitable for the chosen subject(s).*

(https://www.ibo.org/globalassets/new-structure/university-admission/pdfs/ee_subjectbrief_en.pdf)

## Comprehensive Sexuality Education in the IB DP at OSC

OSC teaches the Rights, Respect, Responsibility, a K-12th Grade Comprehensive Sexuality Education Curriculum. This K-12 comprehensive sexuality education curriculum is fully mapped to the National Sexuality Education Standards, covers all 16 topics deemed essential by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, is LGBTQ-inclusive, trauma informed and culturally responsive.

## OSC High School Diploma Programme

In addition to offering the IB diploma, OSC offers an accredited American high school diploma. The OSC diploma is a college preparatory diploma that allows students to pursue their interests after high school graduation without participating in the IB diploma. Students pursuing the OSC diploma are required to take Theory of Knowledge (TOK) as well as completing the Creativity, Activity, and Service (CAS) requirement.

## Approaches to Learning (ATLs) in the MYP and DP

The focus of the ATLs is “learning how to learn.” Students discover their strengths and needs as learners and develop skills that enable them to be independent, lifelong learners. ATLs are both general and subject-specific skills that students will apply during the programme and beyond. A focus on ATL skill development requires students to consider the questions “how do I learn best?” and “how do I communicate my understanding?”

ATL skill development enhances students’ abilities to:

- manage time
- analyse information
- develop, organise, and present ideas
- access information from the library, the internet, and other media
- collaborate with others
- reflect and problem solve
- communicate in a variety of modes
- think critically and creatively

| APPROACHES TO LEARNING | |
|---|---|
| COMMUNICATION | Exchange thoughts, messages, and information effectively through interaction, reading, writing, and using language to gather and communicate information |
| SOCIAL | Working effectively with others |
| SELF-MANAGEMENT | Managing time and tasks effectively managing state of mind<br>(Re-)considering the process of learning; choosing and using ATL skills |
| RESEARCH | Finding, interpreting, judging, and creating information; Interacting with media to use and create ideas and information |
| THINKING | Analysing and evaluating issues and ideas<br>Generating novel ideas and considering new perspectives<br>Utilising skills and knowledge in multiple contexts |

## Assemblies and Productions

Secondary students meet as a community on a periodic basis to share learning experiences and to celebrate achievements. Parents are often encouraged to join and will be informed in advance when there are events they can attend.

## Assessing Learning in the Secondary

At OSC, assessment is integral to the learning process and should complement and be connected to the written and taught curriculum. Assessment is the gathering of information about student performance and growth, and is used as a tool to identify what students know, understand, can do, and feel at different stages in their learning process.

## Assessment Principles

| We believe assessment is... | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **...comprehensive** | **...transparent** | **...empowering** | **...transformative** |
| Assessment is broad, using a balance of diagnostic, formative and summative approaches.<br><br>Assessment is an ongoing, continuous process, spread at reasonable intervals.<br><br>Assessment is holistic and flexible, allowing access to all learners.<br><br>Assessment is integral to planning, teaching and learning.<br><br>Assessment involves both competence and performance orientations. | Assessment strategies and learning expectations are made clear to students and parents.<br><br>Assessment is based upon criteria which are made clear to students in advance.<br><br>Assessment data is recorded and monitored to support student learning.<br><br>Assessment allows for meaningful reporting to parents about student progress. | Learning activities involve students in both peer and self-assessment.<br><br>Assessment provides students with regular and prompt feedback.<br><br>Assessment and feedback gives students a sense of ownership over their learning.<br><br>Assessment is both a measure *of* learning and a tool *for* learning. | Assessment provides meaningful opportunity for reflection on learning<br><br>Assessment data is analysed to provide information about the individual student needs.<br><br>Assessment data informs learning experiences. |

## Types of Assessment

Teachers use a wide variety of techniques and evidence gathering to assess student learning. This evidence ensures that the tasks set for students are matched to their individual needs and abilities.

Diagnostic, formative and summative assessments help us to understand, support and measure student learning and growth.

**Diagnostic** assessments are used at the start of the learning process to help us understand what students already know and can do in relation to a unit of learning. These assessments help us understand the students and may offer useful information about their prior learning, their preconceptions, their preferences, and their experiences that will impact their learning. The results of diagnostic assessments help teachers to make important decisions about the content and process of a unit of learning.

**Formative** *(assessment for learning)* and **summative** assessments *(assessment of learning)* are central to each unit of learning. They are the means by which we plan, monitor, support, direct, and evaluate learning.

| | Formative | Summative |
|---|---|---|
| Students aim to... | improve, grow | prove, demonstrate learning |
| Teachers aim to... | comment, help, explain | evaluate, judge, measure |
| by... | giving feedback | awarding levels and grades |
| using... | a rubric (optional) | a rubric |
| It occurs... | during the learning | at the end of period of leaning |

While formative and summative assessment are designed by teachers, we aim for students to understand and take control of their own learning. This kind of assessment as learning requires transparency and clarity of communication through tools such as task-specific rubrics and learning goals. When students understand the learning process, they are equipped to conduct **self and peer assessments** which both advance learning and develop a sense of efficacy and agency.

**Internal Assessment** refers to tasks and activities that are planned, delivered and evaluated internally by teachers at OSC. This occurs in the following ways:

- MYP summative assessment tasks within each unit of learning
- DP class tasks, practice papers and mock exams
- DP internal assessments (IAs)

**External Assessment** refers to tests and tasks designed and evaluated by organisations outside of OSC.

- NWEA's MAP tests for Grades 6-8
- PSATs tests for Grades 9-11
- MYP Personal Project
- DP Extended Essays, TOK Essays, Arts Assessments, Lang A HL Essays
- DP final exams

## Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)

MAP assessments are adaptive digital tests which help us to measure achievement and growth of students in Maths and Reading. We administer these externally set and assessed tests twice per year, usually in April and October, allowing us to monitor growth over a period of time. The data provided by these tests helps to identify common areas of need among students, but also to flag specific areas of need for individual students who may need intervention. We communicate the results of the tests to families and offer a workshop for parents interested in finding out more. Please visit the NWEA MAP website for further information.

## Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT)

The PSAT is a standardised test that is designed for American students in Grades 8, 9, 10, and 11. At OSC, we administer the PSAT in Grades 9 and 10, as one way we help determine academic growth. For American citizens, they can take the PSAT in Grade 11 as the National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test, which, if students perform well enough, can lead to a National Merit Scholarship. Again, only American citizens are eligible for the National Merit Scholarship. For more information about the PSAT please visit this website. For more information about the National Merit Scholarship, please visit this website.

## Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT)

The SAT is a standardised test that is designed for American Grade 11 students to determine potential for university. It contains an evidence-based reading and writing section, as well as a mathematics section and is scored out of 1,600. It is primarily used by American universities in their college admission decisions. Though it has decreased in popularity in recent years, it is still required for entrance into some universities in the United States. For more information about the SAT, please visit this website.

## Three-Way Conferences

Parent-Student-Teacher Conferences (face-to-face conferences involving the teacher, student, and parents) take place each semester immediately after the issuing of the interim reports. As part of these conferences, students will share their reflections and form action plans based on the advice of their teachers.

## End of Year Exams – Internal

At the end of each academic year, we provide opportunities for each MYP year group to celebrate or consolidate their learning. In Grades 6-9 (MYP 1-4) this might take the form of a public demonstration of learning or a more formal test to review understanding. In Grade 10 (MYP 5) students take a more formal and scheduled exam aimed at introducing the experience which they will face as they move forward into Grades 11 and 12 (the IB Diploma). While these exams offer a rigorous and complete exam experience, the results are used like any other assessment task throughout the year as a data point in the continuous monitoring of student growth.

In the diploma programme, students in Grade 11 (DP1) will take an end of year exam which mimics their final exams, providing both valuable experience for students and actionable data for teachers to help learners and inform their instructional strategies. In Grade 12 (DP2) students will sit both a "Mock Exam" in January before their final exams in May.

## Reporting on Assessment

Each semester (twice per year), teachers report on learning through a cycle of interim reports, three (3)-way conferences and semester reports. After each semester report we issue Honour Roll certificates. The table below identifies the purpose and differences between these ways of reporting.

| | Interim report | Three (3)-way conference | Semester report |
|---|---|---|---|
| Timeline | Semester mid-point<br>Oct./Nov. and Mar. | After interim feedback<br>Oct./Nov. and Mar./Apr. | Semester end<br>Jan. and Jun. |
| Purpose | Formative feedback<br>Student growth | Formative feedback<br>Student growth | Summative feedback<br>Student evaluation |
| Content | → Teacher comment<br>→ "On track for..." grade | → Discussions to clarify feedback and set goals | → Criterion levels<br>→ Criterion descriptors<br>→ Overall subject grade<br>→ ATL levels |
| Format | Written – published on MB | Oral – 10 minute time slots | Written – published on MB |
| Focus | Teacher comments based on Approaches to Learning (ATL) skills demonstrated in the reporting period. Areas of strength and areas for growth are identified.<br><br>Grade is given in a 2-band range and is based on formative and summative assessment completed at this point.<br><br>In the Diploma Programme, a level is also awarded for "Learning Engagement". | The interim reports act as a starting point for discussions based on the student's learning skills and academic achievement.<br><br>Discussion takes place between the teacher, student, and parent/guardians with the common interests of student learning. | Teacher uses summative assessment data to make a "best-fit" judgement on each student's achievement levels in each descriptor.<br><br>An ATL level is awarded based on the explicit teaching and learning of skills within the reporting period.<br><br>In the Diploma Programme, a level is also awarded for "Learning Engagement". |

| | Interim report | Three (3)-way conference | Semester report |
|---|---|---|---|
| Learning Support or EAL Students | Students receiving learning support receive a comment from their LS teacher.<br><br>Students who are not yet able to access the curriculum may not receive a grade in some/all subjects. | Parents are encouraged to make an appointment with the learning support or EAL teacher. | Students receiving learning support receive a comment from their LS teacher.<br><br>Students who are not yet able to access the curriculum may not receive a grade in some/all subjects. |

## Grade Descriptors

Achievement Grades Descriptors – Grade 6–10

| GRADE | BOUNDARY GUIDELINES | MYP DESCRIPTOR Grades 6-10 |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 1–5 | Produces work of very limited quality. Conveys many significant misunderstandings or lacks understanding of most concepts and contexts. Very rarely demonstrates critical or creative thinking. Very inflexible, rarely using knowledge or skills. |
| 2 | 6–9 | Produces work of limited quality. Expresses misunderstandings or significant gaps in understanding for many concepts and contexts. Infrequently demonstrates critical or creative thinking. Generally inflexible in the use of knowledge and skills, infrequently applying knowledge and skills. |
| 3 | 10–14 | Produces work of an acceptable quality. Communicates basic understanding of many concepts and contexts, with occasionally significant misunderstandings or gaps. Begins to demonstrate some basic critical and creative thinking. Is often inflexible in the use of knowledge and skills, requiring support even in familiar classroom situations. |
| 4 | 15–18 | Produces goodquality work. Communicates basic understanding of most concepts and contexts with few misunderstandings and minor gaps. Often demonstrates basic critical and creative thinking. Uses knowledge and skills with some flexibility in familiar classroom situations but requires support in unfamiliar situations. |
| 5 | 19–23 | Produces generally highquality work. Communicates secure understanding of concepts and contexts. Demonstrates critical and creative thinking, sometimes with sophistication. Uses knowledge and skills in familiar classroom and real-world situations, and, with support, some unfamiliar real-world situations. |

| GRADE | BOUNDARY GUIDELINES | MYP DESCRIPTOR Grades 6-10 |
|---|---|---|
| 6 | 24–27 | Produces highquality, occasionally innovative work. Communicates extensive understanding of concepts and contexts. Demonstrates critical and creative thinking, frequently with sophistication. Uses knowledge and skills in familiar and unfamiliar classroom and realworld situations, often with independence. |
| 7 | 28–32 | Produces highquality, frequently innovative work. Communicates comprehensive, nuanced understanding of concepts and contexts. Consistently demonstrates sophisticated critical and creative thinking. Frequently transfers knowledge and skills with independence and expertise in a variety of complex classroom and realworld situations. |

## Achievement Grade Descriptors – Grades 11-12

| | |
|---|---|
| 7 | A consistent and thorough understanding of the required knowledge and skills, and the ability to apply them almost faultlessly in a wide variety of situations. Consistent evidence of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation where appropriate. The student consistently demonstrates originality and insight and always produces work of high quality. |
| 6 | A consistent and thorough understanding of the required knowledge and skills, and the ability to apply them in a wide variety of situations. Consistent evidence of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation where appropriate. The student generally demonstrates originality and insight. |
| 5 | A consistent and thorough understanding of the required knowledge and skills, and the ability to apply them in a variety of situations. The student generally shows evidence of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation where appropriate and occasionally demonstrates originality and insight. |
| 4 | A good general understanding of the required knowledge and skills, and the ability to apply them effectively in normal situations. There is occasional evidence of the skills of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. |
| 3 | Limited achievement against most of the objectives, or clear difficulties in some areas. The student demonstrates a limited understanding of the required knowledge and skills and is only able to apply them fully in normal situations with support. |
| 2 | Very limited achievement against objectives. The student has difficulty in understanding the required knowledge and skills and is unable to apply them fully in normal situations, even with support. |
| 1 | None of the standards above has been reached. |

# Malpractice and Academic Integrity in the Secondary

**Malpractice:** is behaviour that results in, or may result in, a student gaining an unfair advantage in one or more assessments. OSC adopts the IB's definitions of malpractice.

**Plagiarism:** this is defined as the representation of the ideas or work of another person as the student's own.

**Collusion:** this is defined as supporting malpractice by another student, such as copying or allowing one's work to be copied or submitted for assessment by another student.

**Duplication of Work:** this is defined as the presentation of the same work for different assessment components and/or diploma requirements.

**Other Forms of Malpractice:** include any action that gains an unfair advantage for one student that affects the results of another student (for example, taking unauthorised material into an examination room, misconduct during an examination, falsifying a CAS record).

**Intellectual Property:** can take many forms such as patents, registered designs, trademarks, moral rights, and copyright. These should be respected and are normally protected by law.

## Malpractice in Internal and External Examinations

During an examination, and at other times specified by the invigilator, a candidate must not communicate with any other candidate. Failure to observe this regulation may constitute malpractice, resulting in appropriate action by the school and/or the examining board. All work completed during an examination and then submitted for assessment must be the authentic work of the candidate. Any copying, collusion, plagiarism, reference to unauthorised material, or communication between candidates may constitute malpractice, resulting in appropriate action by the school and/or the examining board. The impersonation of another candidate will be treated as malpractice. If a candidate finds that he or she has accidentally taken unauthorised material into an examination, this material must be given to the invigilator immediately. Failure to do so may lead to an allegation of malpractice against the candidate.

## Consequences of Malpractice Grades 6-8

In Grades 6-8, if a student is found to be in violation of the Academic Integrity Policy, the student may be asked to resubmit the work and the student's homeroom and subject teachers will be notified of the incident. A report will be sent to the student's parents and support will be provided, depending on the severity of the malpractice.

### Grades 9–12

If, after an investigation, it is determined that a student has violated the Academic Integrity Policy, his/her work will be subject to disqualification, and the student's homeroom and subject teachers will be notified of the incident. Students who are found to be academically dishonest will receive a written report which will be kept on their personal file and shared with parents. Students will be subject to consequences which may include:

- Disqualification of student work
- In-school suspension
- Exclusion from the honour roll for the semester
- Suspension by the Principal. If students continue to participate in malpractice, their enrolment will be reviewed.

If a student is found to be guilty of malpractice during external examinations (IB DP), the school is obliged to inform the examining board, which will take appropriate action. Consequences may include disqualification for a component, subject, or the IB Diploma.

## Assignment Deadline Policies

Academic work done outside of class time is essential to learning. It provides opportunities to practice skills, solidify understandings, demonstrate learning, and embark on new learning. Working independently and managing time are important competencies for all learners within the context of school as well as lifelong skills.

Work done outside of class is often a precursor for the next learning in class. As such, it is essential that students come to class prepared, with work completed. Adhering to set deadlines supports you so that you can balance your commitments.

**Projects:** Large projects are often assigned over the period of several weeks. Set small and achievable goals for yourself and make sure you make regular progress towards the final task.

**Reading:** Readings that are assigned for homework form the basis for class discussions, activities, and further learning. Not completing the reading prevents you from participating fully.

**Homework:** Homework, such as practice problems, short writing assignments or other small assignments, sets the stage for learning in the next class. You must come to class prepared in order to maximise your learning.

**Procedure for missed deadlines:** Students are expected to turn in assignments according to the deadline given so that feedback from teachers may be given within seven (7) school days of/from the due date. In unusual circumstances, if a student is struggling to meet a deadline, it is expected that they will communicate with their teacher prior to the submission date to discuss a solution.

Teachers may, at their discretion, provide an extension if appropriate. If a revised deadline is not met, the teacher should discuss with the relevant Learning Leader and provide an opportunity as soon as possible to complete the work in school, outside of lesson time.

We ask students to aim to turn assignments in on time and to be proactive in speaking with teachers if they find a deadline is unmanageable.

## Attendance in the Secondary

Regular attendance at school is an expectation at OSC in order to set every student up for success and enable them to maximise their learning. If a student is to be on a sustained absence, this needs to be communicated to the Principal, indicating the rationale.

If your child is absent, parents are asked to phone the Secondary Office to inform the Secondary School Secretary or email at secondaryoffice@osc.lk Should the School not have had notification of an absence, a phone call to the child's home will be made to ensure that the whereabouts of a student is known. If a child needs to leave the campus during the school day, parents or guardians are required to obtain a "Gate Pass" from the Secondary Office.

Parents wishing to remove students from class due to personal circumstances are expected to seek permission prior to their departure. Permission for leave will be granted by the Principal.

In a situation of sustained lateness, parents will be notified and an action plan to resolve the situation will be drawn up and agreed upon. Students are required to be present for at least 85% of the instructional time. Students who are absent from school, excused or unexcused, for more than 15% of the instructional time may jeopardise their credit.

# Awards in the Secondary

Awards given at OSC are summarised in the table below:

| AWARD | GRADE(S) | DESCRIPTOR |
|---|---|---|
| VALEDICTORIAN | 12 | Grade 12 student with the highest grade point average in years 11 and 12. |
| SALUTATORIAN | 12 | Grade 12 student with the second highest grade point average in years 11 and 12. |
| SUBJECT AWARDS | One award per subject per Grade 11 and 12 | This award is presented to one student in each subject per grade level who has exhibited the best Approaches to Learning and commitment throughout the school year. The student has shown an appreciation and interest in the subject, commitment to their studies, and contribution to the learning community. |
| HEAD OF SCHOOL'S AWARD FOR CRITICAL THINKING | 11-12 and 6-10 | This is awarded to a student who has demonstrated they can imagine different solutions to a problem, seeks out and understands different points of view, does not accept ideas at face value, is intellectually curious, does not give up when solutions are not readily apparent, challenges self and others in solving problems, makes use of symbolic expressions through language, art, music, dance or drama, uses humour in the thinking process, and is not afraid to have an opinion that is different to others. |
| US PRESIDENT'S GOLD AWARD | 9-12 and 6-8 | This Award is presented to a student who has demonstrated academic excellence based on academic achievement and also demonstrated high motivation, initiative, integrity, intellectual depth, leadership qualities, and/or exceptional judgement. |
| US PRESIDENT'S SILVER AWARD | 9-12 and 6-8 | This Award is presented to a student who has demonstrated outstanding educational growth, improvement, commitment, or intellectual development in their academic subjects. This award encourages and rewards students who work hard and give their best effort in school, often in the face of special obstacles in their learning. |
| EVI WESTMORE AWARDS | 12 | This Award is presented to a student in recognition of broad-based and exemplary participation in the School's programme outside of the classroom. This student is an active member of groups such as sports teams, community service, Student Government, Week-Without-Walls, and other activities. |
| COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD | 6-10 and 11 | This Award is presented to a student who has contributed most in time and enthusiasm to community service while in Sri Lanka. This student has taken risks with and for others, and his/her contributions have made a difference. Selected by the Service-Learning Coordinator. |

| AWARD | GRADE(S) | DESCRIPTOR |
|---|---|---|
| OUTSTANDING STUDENT | One award in each Grade 11–12 | This award is presented to one student at each grade level who exemplifies both personal and academic excellence. The student has also made extraordinary contributions to the school community while demonstrating the values of integrity, participation, responsibility, and respect. This student is active in all areas of school life, modelling the Learner Profile and exemplifying the school mission. Homeroom teachers select these students. |
| HONOUR ROLL | 6–12 | The Honour Roll is awarded twice per year following the release of report cards based on a minimum total points in the programme of study. MYP students make the honour roll when their total points in 8 subjects meet or exceed 46. DP students make the honour roll when the total points in 6 subjects and the core meet or exceed 36. Grades in the Core Programme must be a minimum of satisfactory(C) in TOK and EE and good (B) in CAS.<br><br>Students who are on special educational programmes or have reduced numbers of classes or non-graded classes may be eligible to earn the honour roll at a pro-rated basis depending on the terms of their individual programmes. |

## Counselling Programme at the Secondary Level

Our secondary counselling programme focuses on academic, career, and social-emotional development. Our counsellors provide a range of services, including individual and group counselling, whole-class lessons for social and emotional development, and consultations with parents and teachers. Social-emotional counselling addresses students' mental health, building resilience, and developing coping strategies. Our university counselling programme focuses on college and career readiness, offering guidance on course selection, standardised tests, and college applications. The ultimate goal of these programmes is to equip students with the skills and knowledge needed to succeed academically, personally, and professionally.

## Graduation Requirements

Credit requirements for Grades 9-12

The OSC high school diploma is based on the successful completion of the following requirements in Grades 9-12. The minimum passing level is a course grade of 3.

Each course unit length is one (1) year. Students are required to complete 24 credits to graduate.

| COURSE | UNITS |
|---|---|
| Language and Literature – English | 4 |
| Language Acquisition or Additional Literature | 2 |
| Individuals and Societies | 3 (recommended 4) |
| Science | 3 (recommended 4) |
| Mathematics | 3 (recommended 4) |
| Arts and Design | 2 |
| Physical Education | 2 |
| Theory of Knowledge | Satisfactory completion of course |
| Creativity, Activity and Service | Satisfactory completion of course |
| Electives | As needed to meet total credits |

**Diploma with Distinction**

At OSC, we expect students to reach for more than minimal requirements of graduation and recognise this in offering the potential to achieve the OSC high school Diploma with Distinction.

This includes the requirements above and in addition:

- An average grade of 5.0 or higher in Grades 11 and 12
- Submission of the Extended Essay
- Submission of the TOK Essay
- At least 2 of the courses listed above to be taken at Higher Level
- An additional 2 years of a language other than English

IB Diploma Programme courses are taught in Grades 11 and 12. However, a student not pursuing the IB Diploma may opt to take internal final exams rather than sit for IB certification.

Progression to the next grade level is contingent on the student meeting the above grade level requirements. The School's ability to support the students to be successful as either an IB Diploma Candidate or an OSC Diploma Candidate will also be considered. This may include, but is not limited to, an appropriate standard of English language proficiency, academic aptitude, and motivation to continue in a rigorous college preparatory programme of study.

## Homework Expectations in the Secondary School

Homework expectations increase as students move through the Secondary School.

Homework reinforces the learning covered during lessons. It is recommended that parents remain aware of their son or daughter's homework, course work, and assignments. Helping to ensure that time is set aside and that there is a quiet place to study is of particular assistance in establishing good study habits.

Since IB MYP and IB DP courses often demand larger assignments to be completed over a few weeks, it is suggested that students spend time each evening working towards completing them. Teachers may set deadlines for different stages to help students organise themselves. Students are expected to work each evening for an approximate amount of time:

- Grades 6-8: 1-2 hours
- Grades 9-10: 1-3 hours
- Grades 11-12: 2-3 hours

Since students often have a lot of assignments to manage at the same time, OSC has put in place various methods to help students fulfil these requirements.

In the Secondary School, ManageBac is our online communication tool for assignment deadlines, assessment submission, and feedback. Students and parents can check regularly to see what is coming up and plan accordingly.

## Learning Management Systems and Software in Secondary Education

**ManageBac** is our primary online communication tool for managing assignment deadlines, assessment submissions, feedback, and attendance. This student academic learning platform enhances communication between teachers, parents, and students. As key partners in the educational process, parents can assist their children by monitoring due dates and ensuring the timely submission of assignments on https://osc.managebac.com.

**Google Classroom and Google Apps for Education**
We also utilise Google Classroom alongside Google Apps for Education to augment our learning management system. Google Classroom provides a seamless platform for distributing assignments, sharing resources, and facilitating communication within the classroom. Google Apps for Education, including tools like Google Docs, Sheets, and Slides, enhances collaboration and productivity among students and teachers. Together, these tools streamline workflow, foster real-time collaboration, and support an interactive learning environment.

**Educational Technology Tools**
Our educational technology tools support various aspects of teaching and learning. These tools are carefully vetted by the Tech Director and the Learning Leaders to ensure they meet our educational standards. Some of the tools we use across the Secondary School include:

- **Kognity:** An interactive online textbook platform for the Diploma Programme (DP).
- **InThinking:** Provides subject-specific resources and support for IB teachers and students.
- **Various question banks:** Designed to assist DP students.
- **Quizlet:** For interactive flashcards and study games.
- **Padlet:** For collaborative boards and projects.
- **IXL Maths:** For comprehensive maths practice.
- **Gizmos:** For interactive maths and science simulations.
- **GIS:** Geographic Information System resources for mapping and spatial data analysis.

- **BrainPOP:** For engaging educational videos and activities, particularly beneficial for Middle School.
- **Raz-Kids:** For ELL (English Language Learners) to improve reading skills through interactive ebooks.

**Library Databases:** Our extensive library databases support the teaching and learning process with a wide range of academic materials. These databases provide access to high-quality resources across various subjects, including:

- **ABC-CLIO:** A comprehensive resource for history and social studies.
- **News Bank:** Provides access to current and archived news articles from around the world.
- **JSTOR:** A digital library of academic journals, books, and primary sources across many disciplines.
- **Artstor:** A collection of high-quality images and related data for use in education and scholarship.
- **Drama Online:** Offers access to play texts, audio, and video from the National Theatre and other sources.
- **Newsela:** Provides leveled news articles to enhance literacy and critical thinking skills.

By leveraging these tools, we aim to provide our students a comprehensive and supportive learning environment.

## Parent Involvement in the Secondary School

Parents are our partners. It is important that our parent community is involved in the life of the School. At the start of the academic year, we hold a “Meet the Teachers” evening where parents can find out more about our teachers, the academic programme, and other opportunities for students. At the midpoint of each semester, there is an opportunity to discuss student progress at Three (3)-Way Conferences. We feel it is important to include the student in these conversations about general progress in various subjects. We will also contact parents if we are concerned about a student’s progress at any point during the year. Information evenings are also held for parents to stay informed about our programmes.

## Student Leadership – Secondary Student Government (SGA)

The purposes of the Student Government Association (SGA) at OSC are to represent the student body, to improve the student experience at OSC, and to support the community outside of the campus walls. This includes listening to suggestions or complaints from the student body and advocating for relevant needs, making efforts to improve the social and emotional climate at OSC through school spirit events and community building, and providing support to

the School's established service groups in the form of fundraising, manpower at events, and otherwise meeting the requests of the service community at OSC. Members of the SGA at OSC are selected by election, and are led by an Executive Counsel that spearheads the SGA's efforts and handles the majority of communication between the students and the administration.

## Trips in the Secondary School

Field trips, overnight trips, international trips are an exciting part of the OSC secondary programme. Many trips are planned throughout the year and they can be found on our Portal and printed calendars.

## Week Without Walls programme

In the second term of the school year OSC's Secondary School runs its annual off-campus *Week Without Walls (WWW) programme. Experience Sri Lanka!* is a programme of experiential education designed to facilitate learning experiences outside of the traditional classrooms in our host nation Sri Lanka.

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# School Site Map

1. Entrance
2. Security Complex
3. Business Office
4. Courtyard/Coffee Shop
5. Library
6. Basketball Court
7. Primary Playground
8. Primary Block
9. Bus Park
10. Indoor Sport Complex/Gym
11. Secondary Field
12. C Block
13. S Block
14. M Block
15. Swimming Pool
16. Auditorium
17. Auditorium Entrance
18. Fire Assembly Points

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