

2025

2026

**Early Years**

Handbook

*Imagining and  
designing a  
better world  
together.*

# Core Values



We value diversity, inclusivity, and individual perspective, promoting acceptance and appreciation.



We try our best to be honest and to do what is right.



We foster passion, perseverance and a growth mindset to overcome challenges and meet our goals.



We promote empathy, compassion, and respect to foster a caring community.



Empowering learners to lead through compassion, collaboration, creativity and critical thinking.

Imagining and designing a better world together.

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## GUIDING STATEMENTS & INTRODUCTION

### Welcome from the Head of Early Years view

Dear Families,

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the Early Years at the International School of London, Qatar. Whether your child is stepping into their very first day of school in EC1 or continuing their journey in kindergarten, you are now part of a community that believes childhood is a time of wonder, discovery and limitless possibility.

Everything we do is anchored in our mission: “Empowering learners to lead through compassion, collaboration, creativity and critical thinking” and lived daily through our core values of Belonging, Integrity, Grit and Kindness. In practical terms this means:

- **Belonging:** Every child is known, heard and celebrated for who they are. Our diverse classrooms honour home languages and cultures while weaving a shared sense of community.
- **Integrity:** We model honesty, responsibility and respect, cultivating safe spaces where even our youngest learners feel confident to express ideas, ask questions and take thoughtful risks.
- **Grit:** We view mistakes as opportunities for growth and encourage children to persevere through challenges, nurturing resilience that will serve them far beyond the Early Years.
- **Kindness:** Empathy underpins our behaviour policy and daily interactions; we intentionally teach and practise caring routines that help children look after themselves, each other, and the environment.

As an IB World School, our Early Years programme (EC1 – Kindergarten) blends the inquiry-driven Primary Years Programme (PYP) with the renowned Reggio Emilia approach. This powerful synergy creates learning environments that are:

- **Dynamic:** Classroom layouts evolve in response to children’s questions, ensuring learning spaces act as a “third teacher.”
- **Inquiry-Rich:** Carefully crafted provocations invite children to investigate real-world concepts such as tracking water flow in the sandpit, retelling stories through loose parts, or exploring mathematical relationships in the construction corner.
- **Playful:** We believe play is serious work. Extended blocks of uninterrupted play allow children to test hypotheses, negotiate roles and consolidate understanding in authentic contexts.
- **Purposeful:** Documentation and reflection fuel rich, project-based learning. Children co-design inquiries, build prototypes, and share their discoveries and creations with their friends, families, and greater community.

Our highly qualified educators collaborate closely with specialists in languages, the arts, physical education, and learning support, ensuring each child receives personalised attention across cognitive, social-emotional, and physical domains. Regular communication via Toddle, weekly bulletins, and face-to-face conversations keeps you informed and invites your voice into our planning because families are our most important partners.



I invite you to walk alongside us: share your stories, participate in class inquiries, and celebrate milestones big and small. Together we will nurture curious, confident, and compassionate learners ready to imagine and design a better world.

Thank you for entrusting us with this joyous responsibility. I look forward to an inspiring year of learning together.

Warm regards,  
**Marwa Nsouli**  
 Head of Early Years

## ISL Qatar Senior Leadership Team

ISL Qatar is a vibrant, inclusive international school committed to high-quality learning and the development of the whole child. Our diverse and experienced Senior Leadership Team plays a key role in shaping the school's direction and ensuring a supportive, engaging environment for all students. Their leadership is guided by our core values and a strong commitment to building a connected and caring school community.

Position	Summary of Responsibilities
<b>Dr. Sean Areias</b> Head of School sareias@islqatar.org	All academic and non-academic matters. Implementation of school policy, learning and teaching, strategic thinking, financial planning, fund-raising, accreditation, international organizations, human resources, marketing and PR, admissions, student and staff welfare, parental liaison, student support services, professional learning, non-academic and support services, school publications, technology, library, health, and safety.
<b>Joanne Gillan</b> Director of Learning, Analytics & Innovation jgillan@islqatar.org	Design and development of the whole school professional learning program. Leadership to support whole school operations for the continuous development of our identities as learners and best practices in the classroom. Leads the collection, analysis, and planning with learning data. Provides motivation, inspiration, and support to staff to innovate, pilot and incubate new methods and projects with potential meaningful learning impact within the scope of the school's mission and strategic directions.
<b>Scott Schaffner</b> Head of High School sschaffner@islqatar.org	Student welfare and discipline, curriculum development, staffing and timetable, staff duties and cover, professional learning and staff evaluation, policies and procedures, assessment and reporting, external examinations procedures, admissions, parental liaison, budget planning and implementation, strategic thinking, extra- curricular activities and school trips.
Position	Summary of Responsibilities
<b>Leigh Anne Toller</b> Head of Middle School ltoller@islqatar.org	Student welfare and discipline, curriculum development, staffing and timetable, staff duties and cover, professional learning and staff evaluation, policies and procedures, assessment and reporting, external examinations procedures, admissions, parental liaison, budget planning and implementation, strategic thinking, extra- curricular activities and school trips
<b>Roula H. Ismail</b> Head of Primary rismail@islqatar.org	Student welfare and discipline, curriculum development, staffing and timetable, staff duties and cover, professional learning and staff evaluation, policies and procedures, assessment and reporting, admissions, parental liaison, budget planning and implementation, strategic thinking, extra-curricular activities and school trips.
<b>Marwa Nsouli</b> Head of Early Years mnsouli@islqatar.org	Student welfare and discipline, curriculum development, staffing and timetable, staff duties and cover, professional learning and staff evaluation, policies and procedures, assessment and reporting, admissions, parental liaison, budget planning and implementation, strategic thinking, extra-curricular activities and school trips. Extended Wh



Position	Summary of Responsibilities	
<b>Dounia Slaoui</b> Head of Operations dslooui@islqatar.org	All matters related to operations, overseeing the evaluation and professional learning of the non-academic staff, participating in the budgeting projection, maintaining cost effective running of the non-academic operations to create a conducive work environment.	
<b>Extended Whole School Leadership: WLT</b>		
<b>Joris Deckers</b> Leader of Tech Hub jdeckers@islschools.org	All matters related to the school's technology infrastructure, covering hardware, software, and network systems, while also guaranteeing the current upkeep of all technology equipment and software in accordance with the international school's standards, while ensuring that all stakeholders can readily access technical support for any technology-related issues.	
<b>Joe Toler</b> Director of Athletics and Sports jtoler@islqatar.org	All matters related to the development and maintenance of a comprehensive athletics and activities program, including interschool events and broad extra-curricular program across the school that allows each student and staff to participate in a variety of challenging and meaningful activities	
<b>Reinette Evert</b> Head of Inclusion & Student Wellbeing & Inclusion revert@islqatar.org	All matters related to the development and implementation of student support strategies, fostering an inclusive environment, and ensuring student well-being, while collaborating with various stakeholders and maintaining alignment with educational standards.	
<b>Early Years Key Contacts</b>		
Role	Name	Email
Head of School	Dr Sean Areias	sareias@islqatar.org
Head of Early Years	Marwa Nsouli	mnsouli@islqatar.org
PYP Coordinator	Erika Vargas	evargas@islqatar.org
Head of Inclusion & Student Wellbeing	Reinette Evert	revert@islqatar.org

### Contact Details

- **Campus address:** PO Box 18511, North Duhail, Doha, State of Qatar
- **Telephone:** +974 4433 8600
- **Email:** [mail@islqatar.org](mailto:mail@islqatar.org).
- **Website:** <https://www.islqatar.org>.
- **Front Office:** +974 4433 8600
- **Admissions:** [admissions@islqatar.org](mailto:admissions@islqatar.org) | +974 4433 8600
- **School Nurse (Clinic):** [nurse@islqatar.org](mailto:nurse@islqatar.org) | +974 4433 8600
- **Transport Office:** [transport@islqatar.org](mailto:transport@islqatar.org) | +974 4433 8600

### 3. Early Years Philosophy

Our programme is a Reggio Emilia-inspired IB PYP environment where children learn best through play. They inquire, create and take action in thoughtfully designed environments that act as a “third teacher.”



We view children as capable, curious, and full of potential. Teachers act as co-researchers and co-learners, listening deeply and guiding children's explorations. Learning spaces evolve with the children's questions and thinking, featuring open-ended materials, light, texture, and natural elements.

Documentation is central to our approach, making learning visible through photographs, transcripts, displays and portfolios, and inviting ongoing reflection by educators, children, and families.

### Age Levels

ISL Qatar Grade	Age Group
Early Childhood 1 (EC1)	3 to 4 years
Early Childhood 2 (EC2)	4 to 5 years
Kindergarten (KG)	5 to 6 years

### 4. Daily Routine & Timings

Time	Activity
07:20 - 07:35	Drop-off
07:35 - 08:10	Welcome & Morning Meeting
08:10 - 09:55	Homeroom Time or Specialists
10:00 - 10:30	Snack & Outdoor/Indoor Play
10:30 - 12:05	Homeroom Time or Specialists
12:10 - 12:40	Lunch & Outdoor/Indoor Play
12:45 - 14:20	Homeroom Time or Specialists

Children should not arrive before 07:20 and must be collected by 14:25 unless enrolled in ECAs (available starting in KG). Tuesday are Professional Learning Days for teachers and so the school day ends at 12:40 for students.



## 5. Curriculum Overview

**Primary Years Programme (PYP)** The PYP is organised around six transdisciplinary themes and five essential elements: knowledge, concepts, skills, attitudes, and action. In Early Years, children inquire into four age-appropriate Units of Inquiry per year, integrating literacy, numeracy, sciences, social studies, arts, and physical education.

### Specialist Learning

- **Physical Education (PHE):** Movement exploration and perceptual motor skills
- **Home Languages:** Arabic or mother tongue development
- **Music & Performing Arts:** Atelierista (resident artist) who collaborates with children and teachers to nurture artistic languages
- **Library:** Literacy development through research, storytelling and book exploration

**Languages of Expression** Children communicate their thinking in many ways: through drawing, building, sculpture, music, dance, and storytelling. These "hundred languages" are honored and integrated daily.

**Inquiry Cycle** Children follow a cycle of tuning in, finding out, sorting out, making connections, and taking action. This flexible model encourages deep thinking, collaboration, and reflection.

**Project Work** Long-term projects evolve from children's interests and questions. These integrate multiple disciplines and are shared with the wider community through documentation and exhibitions.

**Assessment & Reporting** Teachers document learning through observation, student work, and portfolios in Toddle. Formal reports are issued twice a year. Family engagement includes Student-Led Conversations, Three-Way Conferences, and the Early Years Exhibition.

## 6. Food & Nutrition

We promote healthy habits and independent self-care in our Early Years program. Children bring a nutritious, nut-free snack and lunch daily along with a refillable water bottle. Families are encouraged to pack fresh fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and proteins. Sugary snacks and drinks are discouraged; products with sugar as the first, second, or third ingredient are not permitted.

A hot lunch option is available via our campus café, or families may send food from home in an insulated container. Please note that heating food is not possible at school. We also encourage sustainable practices: reusable containers and minimal packaging support our environmental values.

Mealtimes are seen as social learning opportunities. Educators model table manners, encourage healthy choices, and engage children in conversations to build language and community.

ISL Qatar is a nut-free campus. Products containing peanuts or tree nuts are not permitted under any circumstances for the safety of all children.



## 7. Uniform Guidelines

In Early Years, children do not wear a standard uniform. We encourage families to dress their children in comfortable, weather-appropriate clothing that supports movement, play, and independence. Clothing should be easy for children to manage on their own, particularly for toileting and water play.

We ask that each child brings:

- A full change of clothes (including underwear and socks)
- A labelled sun hat
- Closed-toe shoes with secure fastenings (no flip-flops or sandals)

Please label all items clearly with your child's name. This includes clothing, shoes, water bottles, and lunch containers to avoid mix-ups. We appreciate your support in dressing your child for active, hands-on exploration.

### PHE Kit:

- ISL Qatar PHE shirt
- ISL Qatar PHE shorts
- ISL Qatar PHE jacket
- ISL Qatar PHE trousers (to be worn as needed, especially during winter)
- Appropriate footwear

### Swimming Kit:

- Modest swimwear with sleeves and coverage extending to the knees (for both boys and girls)
- Swimming cap – two silicone caps are recommended
- Towel
- Swim bag
- Tinted swim goggles

## 8. Communication & Parent Partnership

We believe that a strong home-school partnership is essential for your child's success. Our communication channels include:

Platform	Purpose
Toddle	Digital portfolio and documentation of learning
SchoolsBuddy	Sign-ups for ECAs, trips, and permission forms
Weekly Bulletin	School-wide highlights and reminders
Conferences	Three-Way, Student-Led, and Parent-Teacher Conversations
Email & Phone	Direct contact with teachers and school leadership

We invite families to engage in their child's learning journey by:

- Participating in classroom inquiries
- Attending workshops and open days
- Sharing stories, skills, and cultural traditions with the class
- Enrolling in the PSA



Should any concerns arise, we encourage families to speak first with their child's teacher. If additional support is needed, the Early Years Leadership Team is always available to listen and collaborate on solutions.

## 9. Health, Safety & Wellbeing

Children's wellbeing is our highest priority. We strive to create safe, nurturing, and inclusive environments where children feel seen, heard, and supported.

- **Clinic Hours:** 07:30 – 15:30. Children must be fever-free for 24 hours and symptom-free for 48 hours following gastrointestinal issues before returning to school.
- **Sun Safety:** Please apply SPF 50+ sunscreen at home each morning. Hats are required during outdoor play.
- **Hydration:** Children have access to filtered water stations throughout the day.
- **Rest & Toileting:** We respect individual needs and support children in managing toileting and rest transitions. Let us know if your child has specific routines.
- **Child Protection:** ISL Qatar adheres to robust safeguarding policies. All staff are trained in child protection protocols, reviewed annually.
- **Restorative Practices:** We use positive guidance, restorative conversations, and co-regulation strategies to support behaviour and emotional development.

Children learn to recognize their emotions, name them, and choose healthy strategies to self-regulate, with the support of trusted adults and safe classroom routines.

## 10. Transportation

A door-to-door, seat-belted bus service is available through our approved provider. Early Years children are seated at the front and supervised by a dedicated bus monitor. To register, contact the Transport Office at [transport@islqatar.org](mailto:transport@islqatar.org).

Morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up happen at the following times:

- **Morning drop-off:** 07:20 – 07:40
- **Afternoon pick-up:** 14:25 (12:40 on Tuesdays)

Please ensure timely pick-up to support smooth transitions and child wellbeing. If someone else will collect your child, inform the teacher in advance.

## 11. Celebrations & Events

Celebrations in Early Years are joyful, inclusive, and aligned with our educational values. We honour cultural diversity and support simple, child-focused events.

**Annual highlights include:**

- **Qatar National Day & International Mother Tongue Day**
- **Early Years Exhibition & Student-Led Conferences**
- **Class birthdays:** Families may send cupcakes or fruit. Please avoid gifts, candy, and items with nuts.
- **International Family Food Fair:** A community-wide celebration of culture and cuisine
- **Souk Fest:** A Ramadan event honouring shared values and traditions
- **Learning Showcases:** Families are invited into the classroom to view project documentation and learning stories



We aim to keep celebrations manageable and meaningful, emphasizing belonging, creativity, and shared experiences.

## 12. Attendance & Absence

Consistent attendance helps children feel secure and connected. Families should notify the class teacher via email before 07:00 if their child will be absent.

- Medical absences longer than three days require a doctor's note.
- Family travel should align with the ISL Qatar academic calendar.
- Frequent late arrivals or early pickups may disrupt your child's experience and should be minimized.

## 13. Withdrawal & Transfers

To initiate withdrawal or transfer procedures:

- Submit written notice to both your child's teacher and the Admissions Office at [admissions@islqatar.org](mailto:admissions@islqatar.org).
- Return all borrowed school resources, including books, devices, and library items
- Complete the clearance process to facilitate documentation and record transfer

## 14. Transition & Settling In

We recognize that starting or changing schools is a significant milestone, and we are committed to supporting each child and family with care and sensitivity.

### Settling In Process

- Gradual entry schedules may be offered to support emotional adjustment
- Children are welcome to bring a comfort item during their initial weeks
- Educators maintain regular contact with families to provide reassurance and updates

### Transitions Between Year Levels

- Teachers collaborate to ensure continuity of care, including shared documentation, routines, and learning styles
- Families are invited to orientation sessions and classroom visits to ease transitions between EC1, EC2, and Kindergarten

## 15. Administrative Procedures

### 1. Communication

Communication is one of the most important aspects of a successful school. The top things that parents want to know from school are:

- Updates on their child's progress and insight on how their child can improve
- Information about how their child is assessed and what grades they have obtained
- Information on what their child is expected to learn during this year
- Curriculum descriptions and information on the programs their child is following
- Timely notice if their child's performance is slipping
- A calendar of events and meetings
- Timely reminders and clear descriptions about events and meetings
- Information about how their child gets along with others
- Information on graduation and university course requirements



We are continually striving to ensure parents receive information, and are able to communicate with us, in ways that suit them. We communicate regularly through:

- E-mails to parents and students
- Monthly newsletters (sent by e-mail)
- Social Media platforms
- iSAMS
- Toddle

However, we understand that sending an e-mail or a weekly newsletter or posting information on social media does not always ensure that the message we want to convey is fully received and understood.

The best channel of two-way communication for parents are:

- Toddle
- Email

These are valuable communication tools and enables us to get feedback from parents and helps us understand if our message is being understood.

The receiver of a communication is much more important than the sender: it is essential that the receiver obtains information in a way that is understandable and applicable to them. We regularly survey parents about ways to improve our communications.

## **2. Face-to-Face Communications**

Other channels of communication that are perhaps more important than those mentioned above are the face-to-face 'live' communication opportunities we offer. They include:

- Celebrations of Learning and Class Assemblies – parents get to see the result of their children's learning in action
- School Reports and Parent/Teacher/Student Conversations Consultations – parents learn how their child is progressing and are able to establish a relationship with their teacher
- Student-led Conferences – parents get to see their child's work and discuss, with their child, what he/she has learned
- Presentations/Workshops for Parents – parents learn about the programs and services we offer and establish contact with key staff
- Parent Coffee Mornings, Parent School Association, Parent Advisory Group and other Parent Support Groups – parents meet other parents and/or senior staff and have the chance to ask questions and discuss matters of interest and form relationships in an informal setting.
- Ad-Hoc appointments – these can be made at any time when your child's teacher is available either to establish a relationship and/or discuss your child's progress.

## **3. Communicating with the school/teachers**

Open and timely communication between parents and teachers can help to clarify misunderstandings, permit staff to put a stop to undesirable behaviours or counter-productive arrangements and improve a teacher's understanding of a student's needs.



The teachers and administrators of ISL Qatar welcome contact with you and would stress that most concerns or issues are easily addressed if the person responsible is made aware of the situation. Only when a teacher or administrator is informed can they take steps to deal appropriately with an issue.

When the school and parents work together, students will always benefit. Therefore, when you are concerned about something that has happened at school, you should follow the steps outlined below:

**Step 1:** If there is an issue or concern, communicate directly with the staff member involved. If you are unsure who to approach, the following should serve as a guideline:

- Class or Subject Teacher – if you have concerns directly related to your child’s learning.
  - Homeroom Teacher or Counsellor – if you have concerns regarding the behaviour of your child, or that of another student, that is impacting upon your child’s progress at school.
  - IB PYP, MYP or Diploma Coordinator – if you have general questions about the curriculum or program your child is following.
- **Step 2:** If concerns still exist after this then you are invited to contact the Head of Early Years, Primary or Middle and High School, after informing the staff member that you intend to do so.
  - **Step 3:** If a parental concern is not addressed sufficiently at the Early Years, Primary or Middle and High School administration level, parents are invited to discuss their concerns with the Head of School.

If you are unsure how to deal with a particular issue then please do feel free to contact the Head of Early years, Primary or Middle and High School for advice at any time.

### **How to make contact...**

It is possible to make direct contact with teachers by email. Alternatively, you can leave a message with the School Office staff:

**Email:** [mail@islqatar.org](mailto:mail@islqatar.org)

**Tel:** +974 4433 8650

Your message will be passed on to the teacher who will then contact you at their earliest convenience. Discussion can then take place via a phone call, email or by setting up an appointment at a mutually agreeable time. Teachers will make every effort to get back to you as quickly as possible but as a teacher’s day is very busy with students, it may take a day or two. However, it should not take longer than two working days for a teacher to reply to you.

It is important that parents do not make unannounced visits, as teachers or school leaders might not have the time to meet with you and give you the attention that you respectfully deserve. If you make an appointment with your child’s teacher, he/she will be able to provide you with more time to adequately address any issues you may have.



All communication should be conducted in a mutually respectful manner in order to ensure the child's well-being continues to be the priority. By working together, we can strengthen our commitment to excellence.

#### 4. Active and proactive communication skills

A key aspect of successful communication is active and proactive communication skills. Here are some tips for active and proactive communication:

- Check your child's Communication Book, and/or Toddle (Early years and Primary parents, only) regularly and give feedback or send messages regularly through these channels.
- Proactively look for regular communications from the school e.g., weekly newsletter or daily Instagram posts.
- Check frequently for communications to parents and students via e-mail.
- Immediately highlight important dates and events and add them to your calendar.
- Highlight important and relevant sections of an email or newsletter (this can be done electronically or by printing them out)
- Have a message board in a prominent place in your home and stick important messages on it.
- Have a calendar of school events in a prominent place in your home and highlight important dates on it.
- Provide feedback to messages you receive to help the school understand if our messages are being interpreted correctly.
- Respond to requests as soon as possible.
- Mark messages as important or requiring attention (this can be done electronically or by printing out)

Most importantly, get involved in school, and try to attend the face-to-face sessions listed above whenever possible.

Parents are requested to keep the school informed of any changes with regards to their contact details, particularly email addresses, to ensure the smooth flow of communication. It is essential that the school always has a number where a parent or designated guardian can be contacted in case of emergencies. Changes in contact details must be communicated to the front office in a timely manner.

## 16. Resolving Parent Concerns

### 1. Introduction

At some time in your child's schooling, you may find that there is an issue that causes you concern. The school realizes that this may happen and encourages parents to come forward as early as possible if they would like to discuss any issue affecting their child's education. It is in everyone's interest that concerns be resolved at the earliest possible stage, and our policy is to take them seriously to resolve them before they develop into problems.

Most issues are resolved very quickly, as parents may simply require more information, or there may be a misunderstanding, or the matter may be resolved with a simple acknowledgment of a mistake and an apology.



## **2.What to do first**

Experience shows that most parental concerns can be sorted out quickly by speaking with the child's class teacher, homeroom teacher, leader of learning, or leader of student development. Staff will make every effort to resolve the problem informally within one week. They will make sure that they understand the concern and explain their actions to parents. The school understands that sometimes it may be difficult to discuss a concern with a particular member of staff. In these cases, the matter can be referred to another more senior member of staff. Where the concern is related to the Head of School, it can be referred directly to the Managing Director.

## **3.What to do next**

If parents are not satisfied with the response of the teacher, homeroom teacher, leader of learning and no solution has been found, the concern should be passed on to the leader of student development. This could be in writing or through making an appointment to discuss the problem.

If parents are not satisfied with the response of the pastoral leader and no solution has been found the concern should be passed on to the Head of Early Years, Primary, Middle or High School. This could be in writing or through making an appointment to discuss the problem. At this point, the parent may also be dissatisfied with the way the concern was initially handled. The Head of Early Years, Primary, Middle or High School will meet with the parent to discuss the problem within one week.

A friend or someone else may accompany the parent if they so wish. The Head of Early Years, Primary, Middle or High school will conduct a full investigation and may interview any members of staff or pupils involved. The parent will then receive a response to their concern within one week of the meeting.

## **4.Further Steps**

If parents are still unsatisfied with the response of the Head of Early Years, Primary, Middle or High School, and no satisfactory solution has been found, they can take the concern to the Head of School, either in writing or by making an appointment to discuss the problem. At this point, they may also be dissatisfied with how the concern has been handled so far. The Head of School will meet with the parent to discuss the problem within one week.

A friend or someone else may accompany the parent if they so wish. The Head of School will conduct a further investigation and may conduct further interviews with members of staff or pupils involved. The parent will then receive a response to their concern within one week of the meeting with the Head of School. The Head of School may choose to be involved earlier in the process to enable the concern to be resolved more quickly.

## **5.If the matter is still not resolved**

If parents are not satisfied with the response from the Head of School, they may contact the Managing Director. This referral will be to review whether the initial investigation is fair and reliable and to ensure there is no miscarriage of justice. The Managing Director will either confirm the decision or ask for a further review of evidence and then make a final decision. Parents are informed in writing of the decision.



## 17. Responding to Behaviour Incidents and Concerns

Pastoral Leader: Marwa Nsouli, Head of Early Years

### Introduction

The Early Years Behaviour Expectations and Guidance serve as an extension of the ISL Qatar Behaviour Policy, ensuring alignment with child development principles, the Early Years Framework, and best practices in early childhood education. This section outlines age-appropriate expectations, strategies for supporting positive behaviour, and procedures for addressing behavioural concerns within the Early Years (EY) setting.

### Core Principles

In the Early Years, fostering a nurturing and inclusive environment is paramount. We believe that every child should feel respected, valued, and safe. Our approach prioritises:

- Supporting self-regulation and emotional development.
- Encouraging cooperative play and social skills.
- Providing a structured, predictable environment with clear expectations.
- Developing empathy, understanding consequences, and resolving conflicts constructively.

### Behaviour Guidance Strategies

The following strategies help promote a positive learning environment and ensure that children develop essential behavioural and social skills:

#### 1. Proactive Approaches:

- Clear and consistent ground rules reinforced through visual prompts, circle time discussions, and storytelling.
- Positive reinforcement through explicit praise and encouragement.
- Structured environments that support exploration and autonomy.

#### 2. Six Steps to Conflict Resolution (HighScope):

- Approach calmly and acknowledge feelings.
- Gather information from all involved parties.
- Restate the problem to confirm understanding.
- Encourage children to generate solutions.
- Agree on a resolution and implement it.
- Follow up to reinforce learning and accountability.

#### 3. Supportive Techniques:

- Visual schedules and cues to support transitions.
- Modelling appropriate behaviour and self-regulation strategies.
- Providing a quiet, calming space for self-regulation when needed.
- Encouraging problem-solving discussions to build social-emotional learning.

### Managing Challenging Behaviour

We recognise that young children are learning to navigate emotions and social interactions. To address behavioural concerns effectively, we categorize behaviours into minor, moderate, and major concerns, with corresponding interventions:



- Minor concerns (e.g., interrupting, difficulty sharing, struggling with transitions): Addressed through gentle redirection, positive reinforcement, and structured routines.
- Moderate concerns (e.g., frequent defiance, rough play causing distress, recurring meltdowns): Supported through social stories, structured calming spaces, behaviour tracking, and parent collaboration.
- Major concerns (e.g., physical aggression, severe tantrums, running out of the classroom): Managed through immediate safety measures, crisis intervention strategies, and individualised behaviour support plans.

When a community member shows concerning behaviour we utilise the following steps to address that behaviour:

1. Speaking to the children involved.
2. Meeting with parents, teachers, and team leaders.
3. Planning and delivering circle time sessions.
4. Identifying and agreeing on steps to prevent the behaviour.
5. Observing and recording incidents (Toddle).
6. Follow-up meetings with involved children.
7. Providing feedback to parents.

Furthermore, there are consequences to repetitive challenging behaviour, including:

- Time spent in another room with an adult.
- Creating a card/letter for reconciliation.
- Time with the Homeroom Teacher, Teaching Assistant or GLL.
- Informing parents.

**\*When a child causes a serious injury (as determined by the nurse or a doctor), breaks the skin, or causes a hit/injury above the shoulders, the following procedure is implemented: the child who inflicted the harm may not return to the classroom until school leadership has met with the parents. A restorative process is then put in place to ensure the wellbeing of the child who was hurt.**

### **Use of Physical Restraint (Reasonable Force)**

Physical intervention is only used as a last resort when a child poses an immediate risk to themselves or others. If restraint is necessary, the incident is documented, parents are informed, and a follow-up plan is developed to prevent recurrence.

### **Parental Involvement and Collaboration**

A strong home-school partnership is essential in reinforcing positive behaviour. Regular communication with parents includes:

- Meetings to discuss concerns and agree on strategies.
- Behaviour plans with shared goals and expectations. A behaviour plan includes:
  - One-page profile with agreed targets
  - Daily communication books for positive behaviour tracking
  - Designated safe spaces for reflection and calming with an adult
- Parent workshops on behaviour management strategies at home.



## Maintaining High Behaviour Standards in EY

To ensure a consistent approach to behaviour expectations:

- The curriculum incorporates play-based learning that fosters social and emotional skills.
- Staff undergo continuous professional development in positive behaviour management.
- Well-being and engagement are monitored to identify areas for support.

## 18. Health, Safety & Safeguarding

### Hot Weather

ISL Qatar is diligent in monitoring weather and air quality to ensure the safety of our children during the school year. Should the weather become unhealthy per our guidelines, we do not go outside. However, due to the limitations of our climate, we do go outside for play and activities whenever safe. **During our outdoor play months, children must have a water bottle and hat or cap with them at all times.**

During the hot weather months where outdoor play is prohibited, students must remain in designated classrooms and hallways. When available, PS students will be able to use the gym, atrium or MPH for indoor play during break times.

## 19. Visitor Policy

## 20. Health Services

## 21. Facilities

## 22. Extra-Curricular Sports & Activities, Week Without Walls, Service

## 23. Service Programs, Events, Performances & Excursions

## 24. Admissions Policy

## 25. Fee Regulations

## 26. Helpful Links

- [ISL Qatar Website](#)
- [Academic Calendar](#)



International  
School of London  
Qatar

We hope this handbook has provided valuable insight into our school's programs and expectations across all divisions. At ISL Qatar, we value our partnership with families and are committed to supporting every student's growth as an internationally minded, lifelong learner.

Warm regards,

Marwa Nsouli  
Head of Early Years