

International School of Paris

PYP

Curriculum Guide

2026-27



Contents - PDF updated as of 12:00 on 15/06/26

The IB Primary Years Programme at ISP	2
IB Mission Statement	3
The ISP High Quality Learning Definition	3
The Primary Years Framework	4
The International School of Paris Primary School	5
Our Understanding	6
Agency	6
Self-Efficacy	7
The International Baccalaureate Learner Profile	8
Early Years (Nursery, Pre-K & Kindergarten)	9
Elements of the PYP Framework	9
A Transdisciplinary Curriculum Framework	10
Learning through the Transdisciplinary Themes	11
Transdisciplinary Themes	12
Conceptual Understandings	13
Concepts	13
Approaches to Learning (ATLs)	15
Action: How Do We Want the Students to Act?	16
Assessment	17
Conferences and Reports	18
Parent Workshops and Curriculum Newsletters	19
Learning Support	19
Academic Integrity	19
Home Learning	21
The Grade 5 Exhibition	21
Language and Technology	21
English Language	21
French Language	22
English as an Additional Language (EAL)	22
Home Languages	23
Digital Learning in the PYP	23
Library	24
ISP 2026-27 Programme of Inquiry	25
International School of Paris Programme of Inquiry (Example)	25
Descriptions of Subject Areas and their Strands	26
English Language	26
Mathematics	28
Science	29
Social Studies	30
Arts	31
Physical Education	31
Personal and Social Education (PSE)	32
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)	34
Glossary of IB Terms (Primary Years Programme)	35

The IB Primary Years Programme at ISP

IB Mission Statement

The International Baccalaureate® aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end, the organisation works with schools, governments and international organisations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

(IB mission statement)

The International School of Paris (ISP) is committed to delivering the International Baccalaureate (IB) Programmes. In the Primary School, the [Primary Years Programme \(PYP\)](#) is followed from Nursery to Grade 5.

The ISP High Quality Learning Definition

High quality learning is a social and experiential practice. It sparks students' curiosity and stimulates their natural creativity. It inspires them to strive for excellence, and to take ownership of their own inquiry and research. It shapes the learner and the learning community, nurturing growth and new understandings.

A SOCIAL AND
EXPERIENTIAL
PRACTICE (SEP)



SPARKING
CURIOSITY AND
CREATIVITY (ICC)



TAKING OWNERSHIP
OF INQUIRY AND
RESEARCH (TOI)



STRIVING FOR
EXCELLENCE
(EXC)



SHAPING THE LEARNER
AND THE LEARNING
COMMUNITY (SLC)



NURTURING GROWTH
AND NEW
UNDERSTANDINGS (NGU)



The Primary Years Framework

The PYP curriculum is built around the idea of *agency*—the belief that everyone in the school community can take part in learning. This idea connects the three main parts of the curriculum: the learner, learning and teaching, and the learning community. Instead of just focusing on what is written, taught, and assessed, the PYP also values the people involved. Students, teachers, and others in the school community are given voice, choice, and ownership in learning. These parts work together to create a strong and connected learning experience.



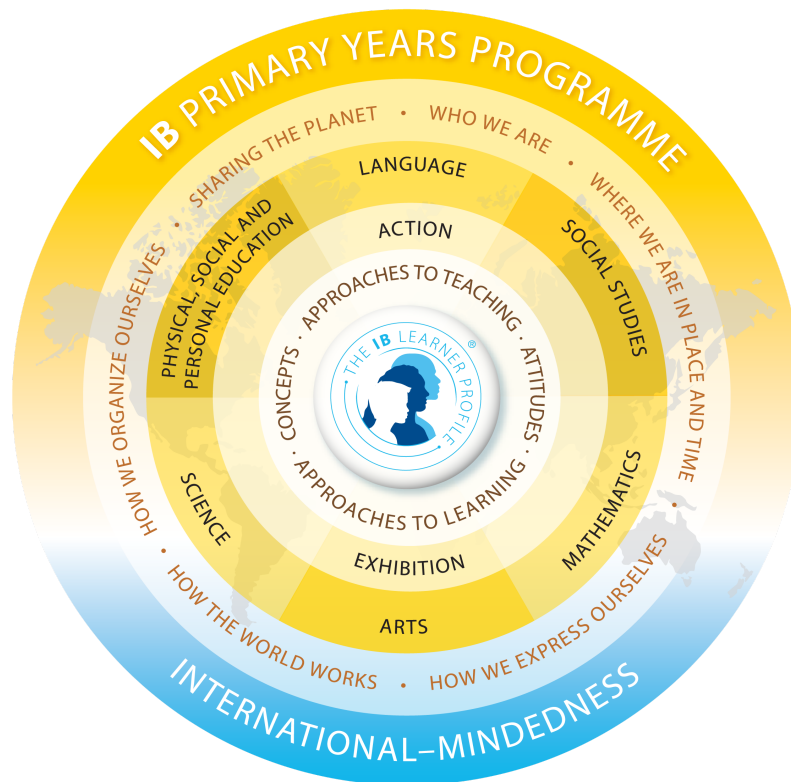
The learner focuses on what each student is learning and what they hope to achieve.

Learning and teaching looks at how we can best support students in their learning.

The learning community highlights the importance of working together and the role everyone plays in helping students learn and grow.

The International School of Paris Primary School

The Primary School meets the diverse needs of students through the Primary Years Programme (PYP). Learning is designed to be engaging, relevant, challenging, and meaningful. The PYP uses a transdisciplinary approach, where themes of global significance guide learning from early childhood onwards. Students are encouraged to make connections across subject areas, using traditional disciplines to explore big ideas.



A strong partnership between students, parents, and teachers supports learning and builds a sense of international mindedness. This begins with each student developing a sense of personal and community identity. We invite all community members to share their personal stories and cultural backgrounds. As students learn to value themselves, they also begin to appreciate the cultures of others. To celebrate our diversity, we host cultural events throughout the year. Families are encouraged to take part—by reading stories, sharing food, or leading festival activities. We also host an annual international celebration, a highlight of the school year that brings our community together.

The PYP encourages students to be independent learners and helps them connect learning at school with life at home and in the world. This builds a strong foundation for lifelong learning. As both a curriculum framework and a philosophy, the PYP supports structured inquiry. Through inquiry, students ask questions, wonder, and explore. This helps them make sense of the world. They are encouraged to examine local and global issues and to think critically from different perspectives.

Our Understanding

Our understanding of the learner shapes how we teach and support learning. Children are naturally curious—they ask questions, explore, and try to make sense of themselves, others, and the world. They learn by observing and interacting with their surroundings, building complex ideas over time.

In the PYP, students play an active role in their own learning and support others too. This is called *learner agency*. It's closely linked to *self-efficacy*—a student's belief that they can succeed.

Personal and Social Education (PSE) plays a key role in helping students develop emotional well-being, identity, and positive relationships throughout the curriculum.

Agency

Albert Bandura, in his social cognitive theory, explained *agency* as the ability people have to shape their own growth, adapt, and keep learning as things change.

In the PYP, students with agency take the lead in their learning. They show initiative, make choices, and take responsibility. They are confident in who they are and believe in themselves. They also learn with and from others, building a strong sense of community and respect for different views, values, and needs. PYP students actively contribute to the design of learning experiences, including decisions about how they learn and how they demonstrate their understanding.



When learners have agency, the role of the teacher and student changes; the relationship between a teacher and student is viewed as a partnership.

Self-Efficacy

When teachers value student voice and believe in their ability to succeed (*self-efficacy*), students become partners in the learning process. Teachers work alongside them—meeting in small groups or one-on-one, supporting learning, and giving feedback.

Students show agency when they:

- take charge of their own learning,
- make choices,
- share their thoughts and opinions,
- ask questions and explore,
- explain what they've learned,
- build new ideas, and
- take part in the learning community.

How Teachers at ISP Support Agency

Students learn best by doing. At ISP, teachers create chances for students to take ownership of their learning through activities like:

- **Building a respectful classroom culture**
Students help create agreements about how to treat each other so that everyone feels safe, respected, and valued.
- **Creating routines together**
Students help shape daily routines like arrival, transitions, or clean-up so they feel part of the classroom community.
- **Designing learning spaces**
Students help arrange the classroom to feel safe and organised, with access to materials and chances to take risks.
- **Making learning decisions**
Teachers involve students in deciding what, why, and how they learn. Students are seen as partners in the learning process.
- **Understanding expectations**
Teachers clearly explain what students are learning—knowledge, concepts, skills, and attitudes—and why it matters.

The International Baccalaureate Learner Profile



IB learner profile

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

As IB learners we 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 action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions. COMMUNICATORS We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many 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. We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live. REFLECTIVE We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.
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The IB learner profile represents 10 attributes valued by IB World Schools. We believe these attributes, and others like them, can help individuals and groups become responsible members of local, national and global communities.

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The IB learner profile includes ten personal qualities that IB World Schools believe are important. These qualities help students become caring and responsible members of their local, national, and global communities.

At ISP, the learner profile supports our mission: *Educating for Complexity*. These attributes are part of everything we do and guide our teaching, learning, and values.

Early Years (Nursery, Pre-K & Kindergarten)

At ISP, we recognize that young children learn in ways that are unique, natural, and deeply connected to play, relationships, and exploration. The PYP embraces this by providing a developmentally appropriate learning environment where wonder, agency, and belonging are at the heart of early learning.

In the Early Years, learning is guided by:

- **Play-based inquiry**, where children learn by investigating, experimenting, creating, and imagining
- **Strong relationships** between students, teachers, and families that support emotional safety and identity
- **Responsive environments** that invite curiosity and self-directed exploration
- **Integrated learning**, where language, mathematics, arts, and personal and social education are experienced holistically rather than in isolation

Learning experiences are designed around what children are ready for—not just their age, but their interests, questions, and personal development. Teachers and assistants observe and document learning closely and use this to design meaningful provocations and next steps.

Early learners are supported in developing:

- Confidence and communication
- A sense of self and positive relationships with others
- Thinking and problem-solving through active exploration
- Emerging skills in language, literacy, and numeracy in real-life contexts

At ISP, our Early Years team creates a nurturing and inclusive foundation where young children feel valued, capable, and connected as they begin their lifelong journey as learners.

Elements of the PYP Framework

Exploring the elements

Albright (2016) believes that good teaching is naturally *transdisciplinary*—it connects learning across different subjects. The PYP is designed this way. Its different parts work together to support transdisciplinary learning and teaching.

These elements help students think across subject areas, explore real-world problems, and take action. They also help students grow into internationally minded people who understand our shared humanity and our responsibility to care for the planet (IBO 2017: 2).



A Transdisciplinary Curriculum Framework

The PYP curriculum is built around *transdisciplinary learning*. This means students learn across and beyond traditional school subjects. Learning connects between and beyond subject areas to reflect real-world complexity. It encourages meaningful learning through inquiry. Learning in the PYP is designed to be engaging, important, challenging, and connected to the real world.

To strengthen transdisciplinary learning, PYP schools follow important principles found in the *Programme Standards and Practices* (PSP). These principles help ensure that IB programmes are high quality and true to their goals.

The PYP curriculum framework and the PSP work together. The curriculum framework guides what and how students learn. The PSP helps schools create the right environment, culture, and systems to support learning. Together, they help schools reach high standards and grow in ways that suit their unique communities and goals.

A transformative programme:

What makes the PYP transformative is its strong focus on student learning through *transdisciplinary* approaches. This type of learning is built into the curriculum and connects all parts of the programme.

The PYP believes that young learners understand the world best when they connect what they already know with new experiences. This ongoing connection helps them build deeper understanding.

As Beane (1995) said, when learning goes *across*, *between*, and *beyond* subjects—and when students take part actively—it respects their curiosity, questions, and voice.

In the PYP, transdisciplinary learning means that learning is not limited to separate subjects. Instead, subjects support and strengthen the bigger ideas students explore.

Learning through the Transdisciplinary Themes

In the PYP, transdisciplinary themes are the starting point for learning. Each theme provides a meaningful context for students to explore big ideas, ask questions, and build understanding across different subjects.

These themes are shared by all IB World Schools and are designed to be relevant and engaging for learners everywhere, regardless of where they live or who they are. They help bring students, teachers, and families into ongoing conversations about what it means to be human and how we live in the world.

The transdisciplinary themes:

- Help students explore what people across cultures and communities have in common
- Show how life is connected, complex, and constantly changing
- Invite inquiry into real-world issues that matter to children and adults
- Encourage learning that connects different subjects in natural, meaningful ways
- Make the PYP distinct from traditional subject-based programmes

Together, these six themes shape a rich and responsive curriculum that supports students in becoming thoughtful, capable, and caring global citizens.

Transdisciplinary Themes

Transdisciplinary themes	Description
Who we are	This theme explores what it means to be human. Students inquire into personal identity, beliefs, values, and well-being—physical, mental, social, and spiritual. They also examine relationships with others, including family, friends, and communities, and consider rights, responsibilities, and what shapes human behavior.
Where we are in place and time	Through this theme, students explore their personal and collective histories. They look at how people live and move, how we understand time and place, and how human journeys, discoveries, and migrations have shaped civilizations—both locally and globally.
How we express ourselves	This theme focuses on how people express thoughts, feelings, beliefs, and culture. Students explore creative expression through language, art, music, movement, and other forms. They also reflect on how creativity helps us understand ourselves and connect with others.
How the world works	In this theme, students investigate the natural world and the laws of science. They explore how people interact with the world, use scientific understanding, and develop technology. They also consider how these discoveries affect our lives and the environment.
How we organise ourselves	Students explore human-made systems and how people work together in communities. They look into the roles of organizations, how decisions are made, and how economies function. This theme helps learners understand how human choices shape society and the environment.
Sharing the planet	This theme focuses on how we live together and share limited resources. Students explore issues of fairness, conflict, and cooperation. They inquire into relationships within communities and ecosystems, and reflect on equal opportunities, peace, and our shared responsibility for the planet.

Conceptual Understandings

In the PYP, learning is not just about remembering facts—it is about understanding big ideas that help students make sense of the world.

This is called a concept-based curriculum. It encourages students to think deeply, ask meaningful questions, and make connections between different subjects and real-life situations. As educators Wiggins and McTighe explain, “Purposeful inquiry is supported by a concept-driven curriculum.”

By exploring important concepts, students:

- Use what they already know as a foundation
- Build new knowledge through inquiry
- Connect different ideas to see the bigger picture
- Recognize patterns and relationships
- Apply their learning to new and unfamiliar situations

This way of learning helps children grow as flexible thinkers who can understand complex issues, communicate their ideas clearly, and take thoughtful action in the world.

Concepts

In the PYP, learning is guided by big ideas called concepts. As Lynn Erickson (2008) explains, a concept is something broad, important, and timeless—it is not limited to one subject or culture. Concepts help students understand the world at a deeper level, beyond memorizing facts or skills.

By using concepts, students learn to:

- Understand the big ideas behind a subject
- See how different areas of learning are connected
- Explore important issues in depth
- Think critically about complex questions
- Make connections across subjects
- Use their learning in new situations and real-life contexts

Concepts are usually one or two powerful words—like change, connection, or responsibility—that help shape the direction of student inquiry. They can be explored in many ways, in many subjects, and across different cultures or perspectives.

Specified Concepts in the PYP

The PYP includes seven specified concepts. These are central to student learning and help guide both transdisciplinary inquiries (across subjects) and subject-specific learning. Each concept comes with a guiding question that encourages students to think more deeply.

Specified concepts	Key questions	Definition
Form	What is it like?	Everything has a form—features we can observe, describe, and categorize.
Function	How does it work?	Everything has a purpose or role. We can investigate how something works or behaves.
Causation	Why is it as it is?	Things do not just happen—there are reasons and consequences.
Change	How is it transforming?	Change is always happening. It involves movement from one state to another and is part of life.
Connection	How is it linked to other things?	Everything is connected. One action or idea can affect others, often in complex ways.
Perspective	What are the points of view?	People see things differently. Our ideas and understandings depend on our experiences, cultures, and beliefs.
Responsibility	What are our obligations?	We make choices based on what we believe, and those choices have an impact. We all have a role to play in making a difference.

How Concepts Support Learning

These specified concepts help shape each unit of inquiry and guide the development of learning experiences. They are often explored through broad, open-ended questions, which invite students to investigate deeply and think critically.

When framed as questions, concepts give learning more focus and purpose. Teachers and students use these questions flexibly, choosing the most relevant ones for each inquiry. A single unit may explore multiple concepts at once.

While the PYP identifies seven core concepts, schools are encouraged to include additional concepts that support deeper understanding and reflect the needs and interests of their community.

These concepts support meaningful learning and help students become curious thinkers, critical questioners, and responsible global citizens.

Approaches to Learning (ATLs)

In the PYP, learning is not only about what we know—but also how we learn. The Approaches to Learning (ATLs) are sets of interconnected skills that help students become independent, capable, and reflective learners. These skills work alongside the learner profile, concepts, knowledge, and inquiry to support meaningful learning.

The ATLs are grounded in the belief that learning how to learn is essential for success—both in school and in life.

Students use ATL skills to:

- Ask thoughtful questions
- Set goals and reflect on their progress
- Stay curious and motivated
- Work effectively with others
- Take increasing responsibility for their own learning

These skills also support student agency by helping students become active participants in shaping their own learning journey.

While the ATL framework applies to all IB learners (ages 3 to 19), PYP teachers focus on making these skills developmentally appropriate and purposeful for younger learners. ATLs are not taught in isolation—they are embedded in everyday experiences and reflected in all areas of the curriculum.



Category	Sub-skills
Thinking skills 	- Critical thinking: analysing, evaluating ideas and issues - Creative thinking: generating new ideas, seeing from different perspectives - Transfer: using what is learned in new situations - Reflection: thinking about how we learn and improve
Research skills 	- Information literacy: asking questions, gathering, organizing, and evaluating data - Media literacy: using and creating information through media - Ethical use: understanding responsible and safe use of information
Communication skills 	- Exchanging information: speaking, listening, interpreting - Literacy: reading and writing to gather and share ideas - Using digital tools to explore and express ideas
Social skills 	- Collaboration: working well with others, managing conflict, supporting peers - Social-emotional intelligence: recognising emotions, building relationships
Self-management skills 	- Organisation: managing time, tasks, and materials - States of mind: perseverance, mindfulness, emotional regulation, resilience, motivation

Action: How Do We Want the Students to Act?

At ISP, we believe that learning should lead to action—not because students are told to act, but because they feel inspired to do so.

Action in the PYP means students apply their learning in meaningful ways to:

- Make choices that show respect and responsibility
- Improve their own well-being or learning
- Help others in their community or beyond
- Contribute to a better, more sustainable world

Action may be big or small, visible or quiet, and can happen inside or outside the classroom. What matters most is that it comes from student voice, choice, and care.

Teachers at ISP celebrate student action and create space for reflection. Whether it is a question, a change in behaviour, a personal goal, or a community project—every action matters.

Assessment

All IB programmes use assessment to support learning, and each one does it in a way that fits its purpose. At ISP, our assessment practices follow the IB approach and align with our Assessment Policy.

In the PYP, assessment helps students build knowledge, understand big ideas (concepts), and develop learning skills. It plays a key role in supporting thoughtful and effective learning.

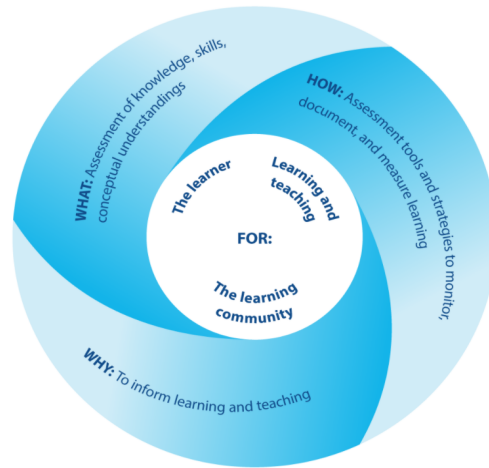
Both teachers and students need to develop *assessment capability*—the ability to use assessment to support growth. Students are supported to become assessment-capable learners who monitor, reflect on and adjust their learning.

What Makes Assessment Effective?

(Adapted from Clarke, 2012)

Good assessment has these features:

- **Authentic** – It connects learning to real life, keeping students engaged.
- **Clear and specific** – It includes learning goals, success criteria, and clear steps for learning.
- **Varied** – It uses different tools and methods to show a full picture of student learning.
- **Developmental** – It focuses on a student’s individual progress, not just how they compare to others.
- **Collaborative** – Teachers and students work together to plan and review assessment.
- **Interactive** – It involves ongoing conversations about learning.
- **Feedback to feedforward** – Feedback helps students understand what they have learned and what they need to do next. This boosts motivation and supports future learning (Hattie & Timperley, 2007).



At ISP, we use a variety of assessment tools and strategies to understand what students already know and how they are progressing. These tools include anecdotal records, checklists, portfolios, continuums, and rubrics.

Both homeroom and specialist teachers assess student learning. Students are also encouraged to self-assess and track their own progress.

Conferences and Reports

Parents, teachers and students are all viewed as partners in learning. Progress in learning is reported in a variety of ways: parent-teacher conferences, three-way conferences, student-led conferences, and semester reports. Parents are expected to attend all of the conferences. Parents are always welcome to arrange conferences at school and, likewise, the school may initiate a conference with parents at any time during the year.

Written reports are published online two times a year to inform parents of their child's progress in all subjects. Parents are always encouraged to reach out to the homeroom teacher with any questions or concerns. Unit of Inquiry progress reports are sent via our Seesaw platform.

Primary School Reporting Timeline 2026-2027



Parent Workshops and Curriculum Newsletters

The PYP may be different from what many families are used to. That is why ISP believes it is important to explain both the ideas behind the PYP and how it works in practice.

In September, we host a Meet the Teachers Evening, where teachers share their plans for the year and answer any questions about the grade level and curriculum.

Throughout the year, we also offer parent workshops to help families learn more about the PYP. We encourage you to join these sessions and to read the Parent Curriculum Newsletters, available on the [Parent Portal](#), to stay up to date.

Learning Support

At ISP, we are committed to supporting the diverse learning needs of all students. Our goal is to provide targeted support that helps students build confidence, strengthen foundational skills, and participate fully in the learning community.

Learning support specialists work in close collaboration with homeroom teachers to plan and deliver differentiated instruction for students who require additional support. For some students with identified learning needs, this may include:

- In-class support, where the learning support teacher works alongside the student during lessons
- Pull-out sessions, where the student receives focused instruction in a small-group or one-on-one setting

Students receiving this type of support will receive regular written reports to inform parents of their progress.

In some cases, students may also work with the learning support specialist for short-term skill development, depending on need and availability. These arrangements are reviewed regularly to ensure they remain effective and appropriate.

We value open communication and collaboration with families. Learning support staff are always happy to meet with parents to discuss individual needs. When appropriate, we may recommend external assessments to gain further insight into a student's learning profile and how best to support their growth.

Academic Integrity

At ISP, academic integrity means learning and inquiring in a respectful, honest, and responsible way. We encourage students to be principled learners who take ownership of their work, value original thinking, and show respect for the ideas of others.

Academic integrity is not only about avoiding plagiarism—it is about building the habits and attitudes that support ethical research, responsible action, and self-respect as a learner.

Students learn what academic honesty means, why it matters, and how to practise it. These understandings develop gradually, with expectations adapted to the child's age and learning stage.

What Students Learn

Students are supported in developing the skills, behaviours, and understandings needed to act with academic integrity. These include:

Research and Thinking Skills

- Using keywords to search efficiently
- Identifying and comparing primary and secondary sources
- Exploring different perspectives and recognizing bias
- Distinguishing between fact and opinion
- Thinking critically about the validity and reliability of sources

Note-Taking and Source Use

- Highlighting, paraphrasing, and summarising appropriately
- Giving credit to where ideas come from, including texts, people, media, and inspirations
- Understanding what constitutes plagiarism
- Writing a simple bibliography using agreed conventions (e.g., title, author, publication date, publisher, and source link if relevant)

Reflection and Ownership

- Reflecting on the learning process and the influence of different sources
- Taking pride in independent thinking
- Recognising academic honesty as a way to show self-respect and respect for others

What We Model and Promote

As educators, we model and foster:

- Appreciation for students' own work and the contributions of others
- Respect for different ideas and viewpoints
- Integrity through honesty and transparency

- Self-discipline and responsibility for learning
- Independence in thinking and expression

Our Aim

Ultimately, we want students to understand that academic integrity is not a rule to follow, but a value to live by. As they grow, we guide them to:

- Take initiative in being academically honest
- Use what they know to make ethical choices
- Feel proud of their own learning and accomplishments

Academic integrity helps students become capable, caring, and principled learners—now and for the future.

Home Learning

At ISP, we believe home learning should be connected to what students are learning in class and based on their interests.

We offer inquiry-based and play-based home learning experiences that are age-appropriate and meaningful.

Some students may also receive targeted tasks at home to help them practise and strengthen specific skills or concepts.

The Grade 5 Exhibition

At ISP, students in Grade 5, the final year of the PYP, take part in the Exhibition—a major event that brings together everything they have learned during their time in the programme.

It is a chance for students to show the IB learner profile attributes they have developed and to share their learning with the whole school community.

All ISP families are invited to attend, and we expect at least one parent or guardian to be present for each Grade 5 student.

Language and Technology

English Language

Language is at the heart of learning, thinking, and communicating. In the PYP, inquiry is the main way we teach language, but we also use other teaching strategies when needed.

Language is part of all learning, so every teacher at ISP is a language teacher. They help students learn and use language by modelling it and creating chances to practise it across all subjects. Literature also plays an important role in language learning.

Students learn best when they use language in real situations—speaking, listening, reading, and writing to understand and share ideas. Teachers create a safe and engaging space so students feel confident to take risks and grow.

Our goal is to help students use language fluently, confidently, and accurately in speaking, writing, and visual communication.

Language strands

- Oral communication: listening and speaking.
- Written communication: reading and writing.
- Visual communication: viewing and presenting.

French Language

All students from Nursery to Grade 5 learn French at ISP.

In Nursery and Pre-K, French is taught through an inclusion model, meaning students learn it as part of their daily routines in the homeroom.

From Kindergarten to Grade 5, students are placed in different French groups based on their prior experience and level of understanding. These groups are differentiated and include learners ranging from complete beginners to home language speakers of French, depending on the needs and number of students in each grade.

English as an Additional Language (EAL)

At the International School of Paris, we welcome students from around the world. Our learners bring a rich mix of cultures and language backgrounds. The English as an Additional Language (EAL) department supports students as they adjust to an English-speaking environment, helping them feel confident, included, and ready to participate fully in school life.

EAL teachers work closely with homeroom teachers to plan, teach, and assess learning as students develop their English language skills. Lessons are differentiated to meet students' individual needs. Students who are new to English take part in a six-week "Initiation to English" programme, taught in small groups, to build a strong foundation.

We recognize that all students bring valuable knowledge and experience to the classroom. We encourage them to use their home language(s) as a tool to support English learning. EAL teachers use a range of strategies to help students understand and engage with the curriculum.

In the early stages, some learners may experience a "silent period"—a phase where they are listening and observing before speaking in English. This is a natural part of language learning, and we celebrate students' progress when they begin to speak. Making mistakes is part of learning, and we view them as important steps on the path to growth.

EAL instruction is closely linked to current units of inquiry, using a variety of media, literature, and texts to support language development. We also include stories and materials from many cultures to reflect and affirm the diversity of our school community.

EAL Reporting

EAL teachers formally report on the progress of our multilingual students using the Primary School English as an Additional Language (EAL) Continuum. This continuum describes students' development across four key language strands: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Each report includes observations and describes the student's abilities within levels one to four for each strand. These reports provide a clear picture of how students are building their English language skills over time.

EAL teachers also participate in parent/teacher/student conferences where they share insights and collaborate with families to support each student's language learning journey.

Home Languages

At ISP, we recognize and celebrate the rich linguistic diversity of our community. Maintaining and developing students' home languages is essential—not only while they are learning English, but throughout their education. Continuing to learn their home language helps students grow academically, socially, and emotionally.

Research shows that strong home language skills support additional language learning, strengthen cognitive development, and foster positive identity. The PYP encourages all students to continue developing their home languages alongside the languages of instruction.

At ISP Primary School, we actively support home language learning by:

- Collaborating with families and home language teachers
- Providing appropriate spaces and resources for home language classes
- Promoting the value of multilingualism as part of international-mindedness

Digital Learning in the PYP

In today's world, digital tools are part of how we think, communicate, create, and connect. The PYP recognizes the important role of digital literacies in supporting meaningful inquiry and nurturing learner agency.

At ISP, we integrate technology into learning across the curriculum. Digital tools are used purposefully and thoughtfully, helping students investigate, collaborate, create, and share ideas. Technology is not treated as a separate subject—it is part of how students learn in all areas, and how they express their thinking in ways that are relevant to their lives.

Digital Capabilities That Support Learning

We support students in developing six transdisciplinary capabilities for digital learning. These are used across the Programme of Inquiry and within subject-specific learning.

Investigating	Inquire, research, and test ideas by critically exploring different sources. Make connections and apply new knowledge in real-world contexts.
Creating	Develop original ideas, solve problems, and express thinking through digital tools. Innovation and reflection are key parts of this process.
Communicating	Share ideas clearly with different audiences using a range of media and formats. Make thoughtful choices about how to express meaning.
Collaborating	Work together using digital platforms to co-construct knowledge, value different perspectives, and contribute actively to group learning
Organising	Manage and structure digital information and tools. Use systems to support planning, thinking, and problem-solving across disciplines.
Becoming a responsible digital citizen	Make ethical, informed choices in the digital world. Show integrity, protect privacy, respect others, and use technology safely and legally.

Digital learning at ISP helps students engage responsibly and creatively in an interconnected world, with an increasing focus on using and navigating AI. It supports inclusion, critical thinking, and global participation—essential capabilities for life in and beyond the classroom.

Library

The library is a central part of learning at ISP. In the PYP, the library is more than just a place for books—it is a hub for inquiry, where students build essential information and literacy skills by exploring a wide range of texts, media, and ideas.

Students visit the library once a week with their class. During this time, they:

- Borrow books to take home
- Explore texts that support their units of inquiry
- Develop a love of reading and research

An ISP Book Bag is provided at the start of the year to protect borrowed books. This bag should be returned at the end of the school year.

Families are welcome to visit the library during open hours, when the librarian is available. We encourage you to enjoy this shared space for reading and discovery.

Please support your child by helping them return books on time—ideally by their next scheduled library visit.

ISP 2026-27 Programme of Inquiry

At ISP, the Programme of Inquiry is a living document. It is reviewed regularly to ensure that the learning is relevant, meaningful, and responsive to our students' needs and interests. This review process may lead to updates in the order, focus, or content of units across the year.

Below is an example of how the Programme of Inquiry was structured during the 2025-26 school year. Please note that updates may be made by the teaching team following collaborative reflection and planning at the start of the 2026-27 school year.

Families will be kept informed of any changes through our regular curriculum information letters, which are shared before each new unit begins. These updates help you stay connected to your child's learning and the inquiries happening in class.

International School of Paris Programme of Inquiry (Example)

	Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4	Unit 5	Unit 6
G5	How the world works Forces are part of systems that help us understand patterns in the world	Who we are As we grow, we experience changes.	Sharing the planet Understanding the Earth's Spheres allows us to recognise the impacts of human activity.	Where we are in place and time People migrate for different reasons	How we express ourselves We share ideas and perspectives in different ways, shaping how people understand the world.	How we organise ourselves Understanding organisational systems empowers individuals to navigate change and contribute meaningfully to communities.
G4	Who we are Recognising similarities and differences impacts how we participate in communities.	How we express ourselves Through a creative process, we can generate and communicate ideas that express our unique perspective	How the world works The majesty of natural phenomena affects all living things.	How we organise ourselves Understanding sustainability systems helps communities make environmental decisions	Sharing the planet Our choices in how we deal with a difference of opinion can help or obstruct. (Part 1)	Where we are in place and time Our choices in how we deal with a difference of opinion can help or obstruct. (Part 2)
G3	How the world works Body systems work together to help us function.	Who we are Conscious actions can help us maintain our overall health.	How we express ourselves The power of words and images evokes thoughts and feelings.	Sharing the planet People's choices and actions shape fairness in our world.	How we organise ourselves Organisation allows people to come together to share a message.	Where we are in place and time Evidence helps us document the difference between then and now.
G2	Who we are Understanding how we learn helps us to grow and change as learners.	How the world works Observing and experimenting with materials helps us discover how the world works.	Sharing the planet Our choices affect the sustainability of the Earth's resources.	Where we are in place and time Personal histories help us understand who we are and how we change over time.	How we express ourselves Ideas, emotions and experiences inspire artistic expression.	How we organise ourselves An effective organisation involves collaboration and regular reflection.
G1	Who we are Interacting with others helps me to build relationships and know more about myself.	How we express ourselves Interacting with the arts allows us to express ourselves creatively.	Where we are in place and time Exploring the places around us influences feelings and actions.	How we organise ourselves People rely on each other for systems to work.	Sharing the planet The balance of an ecosystem is essential for living things to survive.	How the world works Scientists investigate different forces and how they work.
KG	Who we are Play and curiosity help us to learn more about ourselves, others and the world around us.	How the world works The choices we make in the design process affect the structures we build.	How we express ourselves Our intentions help us choose how to express ourselves.	Sharing the planet Paying close attention to nature helps us to understand the impact of our actions.		
EL YR B	Who we are Fostering a sense of belonging helps us to develop our own identities and form relationships	How we express ourselves Through sound and movement, we can be inspired to express ourselves.	How the world works Playing with materials helps us to discover and be innovative.	Sharing the planet We all have responsibilities in our community that help us be together.		

Descriptions of Subject Areas and their Strands

English Language

Language is more than a subject—it is the foundation of all learning. In the PYP, students learn language to communicate, about language to understand how it works, and through language to make sense of the world. Language helps students think critically, express ideas, and connect with others.

We value students' home languages and encourage them to use all their languages to support learning and personal growth.

What do we want students to know?

The PYP organizes language learning into three strands, each with receptive (understanding) and expressive (sharing) aspects. Students experience these across all subjects and grade levels.

1. Oral Language – Listening and Speaking

Listening and speaking are at the heart of communication. Students use oral language to share ideas, ask questions, collaborate, and reflect.

We support learners in:

- Building confidence as speakers
- Listening actively and respectfully
- Using language in different contexts and for different purposes

We also recognize that children may speak less as they adjust to new environments or languages—this “silent period” is a natural part of learning.

2. Visual Language – Viewing and Presenting

Students learn to interpret and create meaning through visual media such as images, signs, maps, posters, presentations, videos, and digital tools. Visual communication includes both understanding and producing visual messages—and involves using media to convey ideas, information, values, and emotions.

They learn to:

- Understand how visuals communicate messages and values
- Use multimedia to share ideas with different audiences
- Reflect on how visuals are shaped by culture and context

This helps learners become critical viewers and creative communicators in a media-rich world.

3. Written Language – Reading and Writing

Reading

Reading helps students explore new ideas, build empathy, and inquire into the world.

We nurture reading by:

- Providing engaging and diverse texts (fiction and nonfiction)
- Encouraging independent reading for enjoyment and learning
- Supporting comprehension and critical thinking

Reading helps students become thoughtful inquirers and lifelong learners.

Writing

Writing is a personal and powerful form of expression. Students write to share their thoughts, tell stories, solve problems, and present arguments.

We support writers by:

- Encouraging voice and creativity
- Focusing first on meaning and communication
- Building writing skills over time through practice and feedback

Children learn to write by writing. As they develop, they apply structure, grammar, spelling, and punctuation to make their writing clearer and more effective.

A Balanced and Inclusive Language Programme

Each child's language development is unique. At ISP, we create a balanced language programme by:

- Providing opportunities for students to both understand and express ideas
- Supporting learners at different stages of development
- Valuing multilingualism as part of identity and international-mindedness
- Integrating language into all areas of learning through meaningful inquiry

Language empowers students to think, reflect, take action, and connect with others across the curriculum and beyond the classroom.

Mathematics

Mathematics helps students make sense of the world around them. It supports problem-solving, logical thinking, and decision-making in everyday life. In the PYP, mathematics is more than numbers—it is about understanding patterns, solving real-world problems, and exploring shapes, data, and measurement in meaningful contexts.

Mathematics is both a language and a way of thinking. It allows students to investigate, describe, and represent ideas clearly and precisely. Rather than memorizing content, students build conceptual understanding and transferable skills that they can apply across subjects and in life beyond school.

How We Organize Mathematics Learning

At ISP, mathematics is taught through **five strands** that are connected to each other and used across the curriculum:

1. **Number**
2. **Pattern and Function**
3. **Measurement**
4. **Shape and Space**
5. **Data Handling**

Each strand supports students in exploring mathematical ideas and building both skills and understanding through hands-on experiences, inquiry, and reflection.

What Do We Want Students to Understand?

Here is what students explore in each strand of mathematics:

Number	Students explore how numbers work and how they can be used to describe and compare quantities. They learn to use the operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division to solve problems and make decisions.
Pattern and function	By identifying patterns, students begin to understand how mathematics explains the world. They describe repeating elements and relationships, which lays the foundation for algebraic thinking.
Measurement	Students learn how to measure and compare different quantities using appropriate units. They consider how accurate measurements need to be and how we deal with values between whole numbers.
Shape and space	Students explore two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes and their properties. They learn how shapes relate to the environment and how space can be described, navigated, and represented.
Data Handling	Students learn how to collect, organize, and represent data in ways that highlight trends and patterns. They explore probability using everyday language (e.g., “likely” or “impossible”) and numerical scales.

Science

Science helps students make sense of the natural world and their place within it. In the PYP, science learning is driven by concepts and skills, not just content. Students build their understanding through investigation, observation, reasoning, and application—always within real and meaningful contexts.

Science in the PYP is organised into four interconnected strands:

Living things	Students explore the systems, characteristics, and behaviours of humans, animals, and plants. They also investigate how living things interact with each other and their environments. <i>Related concepts:</i> ecosystems, biodiversity, adaptation, genetics, growth, conservation
Earth and space	This strand includes the study of planet Earth, its systems, and its place in the universe. Students inquire into natural phenomena, finite and renewable resources, and the impact of human activity. <i>Related concepts:</i> climate, geology, sustainability, solar system, weather, tectonic plates
Materials and matter	Students learn about the properties and behaviours of materials—both natural and human-made. They explore how materials can change, be classified, and used for specific purposes. <i>Related concepts:</i> solids, liquids, gases, changes of state, chemical and physical change
Forces and energy	This strand focuses on the origins, storage, and transfer of energy, and the forces that affect motion and matter. Students explore how scientific knowledge leads to innovation and invention. <i>Related concepts:</i> forms of energy, magnetism, machines, power, efficiency, transformation

Social Studies

Social studies is the study of people and how they live—past, present, and future. Students explore how individuals and groups interact, make decisions, shape communities, and connect across time and place. Social studies in the PYP promotes global understanding, critical thinking, and action.

Social studies is organised into five interdisciplinary strands:

Human systems and economic activities	How and why people create systems and structures, such as governments, organisations, and economies. <i>Related concepts:</i> communication, employment, justice, production, transportation
Social organisation and culture	How people live together in communities, including traditions, identity, and belief systems. <i>Related concepts:</i> family, culture, citizenship, diversity, religion, roles, values
Continuity and change through time	Understanding the past and its influence on the present and future. <i>Related concepts:</i> history, innovation, migration, exploration, revolution
Human and natural environments	How people adapt to and shape the natural world, and how places shape identity and experience. <i>Related concepts:</i> geography, natural disasters, settlements, impact, landscape
Resources and the environment	How people use and manage natural resources, and the consequences of those choices. <i>Related concepts:</i> sustainability, conservation, energy, consumption, pollution

Arts

The arts are essential for personal expression, cultural understanding, and creative exploration. In the PYP, students engage in a range of visual and performing arts experiences, including music, drama, dance, and visual arts. These experiences support emotional, cognitive, and social development.

Arts learning in the PYP is organised around two key concept-driven strands:

Art strands:

Creating	Students explore materials, techniques, and ideas to express themselves. They take risks, solve problems, and reflect on the process of making art.
Responding	Students learn to interpret, reflect on, and respond to art. They develop an awareness of how the arts are used across cultures, time periods, and social contexts.

Together, these strands help students build skills, explore big ideas, and make connections across subjects. The arts are integrated into transdisciplinary learning and help students understand themselves and the world more deeply.

Physical Education

At ISP we focus on three strands within physical education: active living, interactions and movement skills.

Active living:

In the PYP, Physical Education is about more than physical activity—it is about developing the whole child through movement, cooperation, and healthy living. At ISP, our PE programme focuses on three key strands:

1. Active Living

Students learn what it means to live a healthy, balanced life. They explore how regular physical activity, nutrition, safety, rest, and personal choices all contribute to well-being. They learn to:

- Understand how the body responds to exercise
- Make informed decisions about health
- Recognize the importance of safety and self-care
- Take responsibility for their well-being and that of others

2. Movement Skills

Students develop coordination, control, strength, and flexibility through a wide range of physical experiences. They explore:

- Locomotor and manipulative skills (e.g., running, jumping, throwing)
- Techniques, strategies, and rules for games and activities
- How to improve performance over time

3. Interactions

Through physical education, students build teamwork, communication, and resilience. They solve problems, set goals, and reflect on group and individual challenges.

Types of Experiences in PE

Our PE curriculum includes a variety of learning experiences that support both physical competence and social-emotional growth:

- **Individual Pursuits** – Athletics, swimming, and other individual activities that build motor skills and personal achievement
- **Movement Composition** – Dance, gymnastics, and martial arts that express emotion and creativity through movement
- **Games** – Team and strategy-based activities that develop skills, cooperation, and understanding of rules
- **Adventure Challenges** – Group problem-solving activities that require collaboration and critical thinking
- **Health-Related Fitness** – Activities that help students understand how to maintain a healthy body through exercise and lifestyle choices

Physical Education empowers students to make healthy choices, take action for well-being, and develop confidence in their physical abilities—now and in the future.

Personal and Social Education (PSE)

Personal and Social Education is integrated throughout the Primary Years Programme (PYP) at ISP. It supports students in developing a strong sense of identity, belonging, and emotional well-being, while also helping them build positive relationships with others and the world around them.

PSE is not a separate subject. Instead, it is woven into all areas of the curriculum, with opportunities for students to explore who they are, how they relate to others, and how they care for themselves and their environment.

Identity

In this strand, students explore:

- Who they are and what they value

- How their culture, beliefs, and experiences shape their thinking and actions
- How to reflect on their feelings, strengths, and challenges
- How to cope with change and adversity
- How self-awareness influences learning and relationships

By developing their sense of identity, students grow in confidence and learn how to contribute to a respectful, inclusive community.

Interactions

In this strand, students learn about:

- Their responsibilities in relationships—with other people, communities, and the natural world
- Similarities and differences between people and cultures
- The importance of empathy, cooperation, and communication
- Our shared responsibility to care for the Earth for future generations

Through these learning experiences, students come to understand how their actions affect others and the world around them.

Personal and Social Growth in Action

Across the curriculum—including physical education, the arts, science, and inquiry units—students have opportunities to:

- Reflect on their personal, social, and physical well-being
- Develop and apply strategies to manage change and challenges
- Set and work toward personal goals
- Build and refine skills in individual and group activities
- Practice cooperative behaviours in teams and communities
- Understand the factors that contribute to a healthy lifestyle
- Recognize their connection to and impact on the environment

Through PSE, students learn how to make thoughtful choices, respond to challenges with resilience, and build respectful, caring relationships with others—preparing them to thrive as individuals and as members of a global community.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. What is the PYP and how is it different from other primary programmes?

The Primary Years Programme (PYP) is an international curriculum framework that focuses on inquiry-based, transdisciplinary learning. It helps children develop knowledge, skills, and personal qualities (like curiosity and responsibility) that they can use in real life—not just in the classroom.

2. What does “inquiry-based learning” mean?

Inquiry is a way of learning through questions, exploration, and reflection. Instead of just receiving facts, students are encouraged to ask questions, investigate ideas, and make connections to their own experiences and the world around them.

3. Do children still learn reading, writing, and maths in the PYP?

Yes! Language and mathematics are taught and integrated into all areas of learning. Students practise foundational skills while also applying them in real-world contexts.

4. How are students assessed in the PYP?

Assessment in the PYP focuses on supporting growth. Teachers observe learning, collect work samples, give feedback, and help students reflect on their progress. Students are also involved in self-assessment and goal setting.

5. What is the PYP Exhibition?

In the final year of the PYP, students carry out a student-led inquiry project called the Exhibition. They explore a topic they care about, take action, and present their learning to the school community. It’s a celebration of their skills, knowledge, and growth.

6. What does “transdisciplinary” mean?

Transdisciplinary learning connects subjects around big ideas and real-world issues. Instead of studying subjects in isolation, students explore themes that link science, social studies, the arts, and more.

7. What are the “learner profile” and “ATLs”?

The IB learner profile describes 10 qualities we aim to nurture in all students—like being caring, open-minded, and reflective. The Approaches to Learning (ATLs) are skills like thinking, communication, and self-management that help students become effective, independent learners.

8. How does the PYP support multilingual learners?

We value and support all languages. Students are encouraged to use their home language(s) to support their learning. English as an Additional Language (EAL) and home language programmes help students build confidence, identity, and communication.

9. How can parents support PYP learning at home?

Stay curious with your child! Ask questions, encourage them to explore their interests, talk about global issues, and celebrate their efforts. Reading together, discussing ideas, and showing interest in their learning makes a big difference.

10. Is the PYP only for international schools?

No. The PYP is designed to be flexible and meaningful in all school contexts. It is taught in schools around the world, and its focus on global citizenship, inquiry, and lifelong learning benefits all students.

Glossary of IB Terms (Primary Years Programme)

Academic Integrity- Acting honestly and responsibly in all learning and research—giving credit for others’ ideas, avoiding plagiarism, and taking ownership of one’s work.

Action- What students do as a result of their learning—this can include making choices, helping others, changing behaviour, or creating something meaningful.

Agency- The voice, choice, and ownership students have in their learning. Students with agency set goals, reflect on their progress, and make decisions about how they learn.

Approaches to Learning (ATLs)- Five sets of skills that help students become effective learners: thinking, research, communication, social, and self-management skills.

Assessment Capability- A student’s ability to understand what they’re learning, how well they’re doing, and what they need to do next to grow.

Central Idea- A big conceptual idea that guides each unit of inquiry and helps students make connections across learning.

Conceptual Understanding- Deep understanding built through exploring big ideas (called *concepts*) that apply across subjects, cultures, and contexts.

Concepts- Big, transferable ideas that help students make sense of the world. The PYP includes seven specified concepts (form, function, causation, change, connection, perspective, responsibility).

Essential Agreement- A shared understanding between students and teachers about expectations for behaviour, learning, and community life.

Exhibition (PYP Exhibition)- A student-led inquiry in the final year of the PYP, where learners explore a topic of personal and global significance and take action based on their learning.

Formative Assessment- Ongoing assessment used during learning to give feedback, adjust teaching, and help students improve.

Inquiry- A way of learning through questioning, exploring, and reflecting. Inquiry is central to all PYP teaching and learning.

International-Mindedness- An openness to the world and to other people. It involves understanding other cultures, respecting different perspectives, and acting to make a positive difference.

Learner Profile- Ten qualities valued by the IB that support students in becoming internationally minded. These include being caring, principled, open-minded, balanced, reflective, and more.

Lines of Inquiry- Specific questions or ideas that help guide exploration of the central idea in each unit of inquiry.

Pedagogical Leadership- The leadership of teaching and learning across the school, ensuring that the curriculum is coherent, inclusive, and aligned with IB principles.

Programme of Inquiry (PoI)- The school's overview of all units of inquiry across all year levels, showing how transdisciplinary themes are explored over time.

Reflection- Thinking carefully about learning—what was learned, how it was learned, and what could be improved.

Summative Assessment- Assessment that takes place at the end of a learning period to evaluate student understanding of key ideas and skills.

Transdisciplinary Learning- Learning that connects different subject areas through big ideas and real-world contexts, so students see learning as connected and relevant.

Transdisciplinary Themes- Six broad themes used in the PYP to explore real-life, globally relevant topics across subjects (e.g., Who We Are, How the World Works).



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