

2026

2027

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.

Table of Content

1. [Welcome Message](#)
2. [ISL Qatar Senior Leadership Team](#)
3. [Learning in the Early Years](#)
4. [Assessment and Reporting](#)
5. [Wellbeing, Behaviour, and Inclusion](#)
6. [Everyday Life in the Early Years](#)
7. [Families as Partners](#)
8. [Community Life and Celebrations](#)
9. [Admissions, Policies, and Key Information](#)
10. [Health & Safety](#)
11. [Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy](#)
12. [Student Wellbeing through Pastoral Care, Inclusion, and Academic Support](#)
13. [Athletic & Activities Handbook](#)
14. [PHE Uniform Policy](#)
15. [Inclusion Policy](#)
16. [Behavior Policy](#)
17. [Visitors Policy](#)
18. [Health Services](#)
19. [Facilities](#)
20. [Extra-Curricular Sports & Activities, Week Without Walls, Service](#)
21. [Service Programs, Events, Performances & Excursions](#)
22. [Admissions Policy](#)
23. [Fee Regulations](#)



WELCOME

Welcome from the Head of Early Years and Primary

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. 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 guidance and our 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 blends the inquiry driven Primary Years Programme with the Reggio Emilia approach. Together these create learning environments that are dynamic, inquiry rich, playful and purposeful.

Our 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 through 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. Thank you for entrusting us with this joyous responsibility.

Warm regards,

Marwa Nsouli

Head of Early Years and Primary



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.

Senior Leadership Team: SLT		
Role	Name	Email
Head of School	Dr Sean Areias	sareias@islqatar.org
Director of Learning, Analytics & Innovation	Joanne Gillan	jgillan@islqatar.org
Head of Early Years and Primary	Marwa Nsouli	mnsouli@islqatar.org
Head of Middle School	Leigh Anne Toller	ltoller@islqatar.org
Head of High School	Scott Schaffner	sschaffner@islqatar.org
Director of Multilingual and Intercultural Learning	Roula H. Ismail	rismail@islqatar.org
Extended Whole School Leadership: WLT		
Role	Name	Email
Leader of Tech Hub	Joris Deckers	jdeckers@islschools.org
Director of Athletics and Sports	Joe Toler	jtoller@islqatar.org
Head of Inclusion & Student Wellbeing & Inclusion	Reinette Evert	revert@islqatar.org
Early Years Key Contacts		
Role	Name	Email
Head of School	Dr Sean Areias	sareias@islqatar.org
Head of Early Years and Primary	Marwa Nsouli	mnsouli@islqatar.org
PYP Coordinator	Erika Vargas	evargas@islqatar.org
Head of Inclusion & Student Wellbeing	Reinette Evert	revert@islqatar.org



How to Use This Handbook

This handbook introduces our educational philosophy, our programme and the everyday practicalities of Early Years life.

- **Parts One to Three** explain what and how your child will learn, and how we document and report on that learning.
- **Part Four** describes how we support wellbeing, behaviour, inclusion and belonging.
- **Part Five** covers the practical information you are most likely to need day to day, including the school day, what to wear, attendance and health.
- **Parts Six and Seven** describe our partnership with families and our community life.
- **Part Eight** sets out admissions, fees, policies and key contacts.

Full school policies are available through the Parent Portal and the school website. Where a policy is referenced in this handbook, the policy document itself is the authoritative source.

A companion handbook covers Grades 1 to 5. Families with children in both sections will find the two documents follow the same structure.

LEARNING IN THE EARLY YEARS

Our 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. It makes learning visible through photographs, transcripts, displays and portfolios, and invites ongoing reflection by educators, children and families.

Our learning environments are:

- **Dynamic.** Classroom layouts evolve in response to children's questions.
- **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 work. Children co design inquiries, build prototypes and share their discoveries with their friends, families and wider community.



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

The IB Primary Years Programme in the Early Years

The PYP is organised around six transdisciplinary themes and five essential elements: knowledge, concepts, skills, attitudes and action. In the Early Years, children inquire into four age appropriate Units of Inquiry each year, integrating literacy, numeracy, science, social studies, the arts and physical education.

The 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.

Languages of Expression

Children communicate their thinking in many ways: through drawing, building, sculpture, music, dance and storytelling. These hundred languages are honoured and integrated daily.

Project Work

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

Student Agency

Even our youngest learners are active participants in their learning. Agency in the Early Years looks like choosing where and how to work, asking questions that shape a class inquiry, revisiting an idea over several days and taking responsibility for classroom routines. It develops gradually and is visible in the classroom, in documentation and in the ways children contribute to their community.

International-Mindedness

As a diverse international community, we encourage children to appreciate multiple perspectives and develop respect for different cultures, languages and experiences. Home languages are honoured in our classrooms, and international-mindedness is woven through daily learning and community life.



Specialist Learning

Children participate in specialist programmes alongside their homeroom learning:

- **Physical and Health Education.** Movement exploration and perceptual motor skills.
- **Home Languages.** Arabic or mother tongue development starting from EC2.
- **Music and Performing Arts.** Our atelierista, a resident artist, collaborates with children and teachers to nurture artistic languages.
- **Library.** Literacy development through research, storytelling and book exploration.

A Typical Day in the Early Years

Time	Activity
07:20 – 07:35	Drop off
07:35 – 08:10	Welcome and morning meeting
08:10 – 09:55	Homeroom time or specialists
10:00 – 10:30	Snack and outdoor or indoor play
10:30 – 12:05	Homeroom time or specialists
12:10 – 12:40	Lunch and outdoor or 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 an extracurricular activity, which begins in KG. Tuesdays are Professional Learning Days for teachers, and the school day ends at 12:40 for children.

Each class receives its own timetable at the start of the year showing which days your child has Physical and Health Education, Home Language, Music and Performing Arts, and Library.



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Growing Through the Early Years

Early Childhood 1

For many children this is their first experience of school. The focus is on settling in, building trust with familiar adults, learning the rhythms of the day and beginning to play alongside and then with others. Learning is almost entirely play based, and independence begins with small routines: hanging up a bag, washing hands, choosing a material.

Early Childhood 2

Children build on that foundation with longer periods of sustained play, growing confidence in group learning and the beginnings of extended inquiry. Language, early literacy and early numeracy develop through purposeful play, storytelling and investigation.

Kindergarten

Children take on greater responsibility, contribute more deliberately to class inquiries and begin to reflect on their own learning. Kindergarten children may join extra curricular activities. Particular attention is given through the year to preparing children for the transition into Grade 1.

The Early Years Exhibition

The Early Years Exhibition is a celebration of how our youngest learners think, create and inquire. Children share their project work and documentation with families and the wider community, explaining their ideas in their own words and in their own languages of expression.

The Exhibition is not a performance to be rehearsed. It is an authentic opportunity for children to communicate their learning and for families to see the thinking behind it.

ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING

Our Approach to Assessment

In the Early Years, assessment is inseparable from everyday teaching. It happens through observation, conversation and documentation rather than through tests or tasks set apart from learning.

Teachers watch closely, listen carefully and record what children say, make and do. This evidence helps us understand each child's interests, thinking, language, social development and physical growth, and it shapes what we plan next.



Assessment in the Early Years is:

- Embedded within play and daily routines
- Based on observation and documentation
- Developmentally appropriate
- Focused on growth over time rather than comparison
- Inclusive of the many ways children express understanding

How We Document Learning

Documentation makes learning visible. Throughout the year, teachers and children collect evidence that shows how thinking develops, which may include:

- Photographs and short videos of children at work
- Transcripts of children's conversations and theories
- Learning stories and observation notes
- Project work, constructions and creative work
- Classroom displays that revisit an inquiry over time

Documentation is not a record kept only by adults. Children revisit photographs and transcripts, recognise their own growth and often decide where an inquiry should go next.

Toddle Portfolios

Toddle is our platform for documenting, sharing and celebrating learning. Each child develops a digital portfolio that captures key moments in their learning journey through the year.

Portfolio entries may include learning stories, photographs and videos, project work, creative work and evidence of growth over time.

Guidance on accessing Toddle is provided at the start of the school year. We encourage families to engage with Toddle regularly and to use it as a starting point for conversations at home. Asking a child about a photograph from their own day draws out far more than asking what they did at school.

How and When We Report to Families

Reporting communicates your child's growth, development and learning. It aims to celebrate progress, share understanding of your child, strengthen the partnership between home and school and support next steps.

Repor

Reporting at a Glance

Reporting opportunity	When	Who attends	Purpose
Ongoing Toddle documentation	Throughout the year	Viewed at home by families; posted by teachers and children	A continuous window into your child's learning as it happens, through learning stories, photographs and reflections
3-Way Conversations	Start of Term 1	Child, parents and homeroom teacher, together	To share what we each know about your child, agree goals for the year and set a shared direction from the outset



Reporting opportunity	When	Who attends	Purpose
Learning Showcases	Throughout the year, at the end of a Unit of Inquiry	Children, families and the class community	To invite families into the classroom to view project documentation and learning stories
Mid Year Report	End of Term 1	Written report, no meeting	A formal written overview of your child's development and learning at the halfway point
2-Way Conversations	Following the Mid Year Report	Parents and teachers	To discuss the written report in person, respond to questions and agree how home and school will support the next stage
Student Led Conversations	Term 2	Child leads; parents attend; teacher facilitates	For your child to walk you through their own portfolio and share what they have been learning
Early Years Exhibition	April	Children, families and the wider community	For children to share project work with an authentic audience
End of Year Report	Last day of the school year	Written report, no meeting	A summative overview of the year's growth and development, and a record for the year ahead

Exact dates for each reporting point are published in the school calendar.

Understanding the Different Conversations

Families new to ISL Qatar sometimes find the names of our conversations confusing. The difference is simply who is in the room and who leads.

3-Way Conversations bring your child, you and the homeroom teacher together at the start of the year. Your child takes part rather than waiting outside, because goals set with a child are far more likely to be goals a child owns.

2-Way Conversations are between parents and teachers. They follow the Mid Year Report and give you the opportunity to discuss it directly, ask questions and agree how we will work together for the remainder of the year.

Student Led Conversations put your child in charge. Even our youngest children can walk a parent to a photograph, a construction or a painting and explain what they were thinking. The teacher is present to facilitate rather than to lead.

Written Reports

Families receive two formal written reports each year: a Mid Year Report and an End of Year Report.

Reports provide a holistic picture of your child's development, including approaches to learning, Learner Profile development, communication and language, social and emotional growth, physical development, areas of strength and next steps.

Reports are published through Toddle and remain available to families thereafter.



WELLBEING, BEHAVIOUR AND INCLUSION

Our Commitment to Wellbeing and Belonging

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

In the Early Years, wellbeing is built through relationships and routines. Predictable rhythms, familiar adults and a calm environment give children the security they need to take risks, try again and grow in confidence.

Belonging is one of our core values. Every child should feel that they matter, that their voice is heard and that they are accepted for who they are. Our classrooms honour home languages, cultures and family stories.

Social and Emotional Learning

The Early Years are a critical period for social and emotional development. Children learn to recognise their emotions, name them and choose healthy strategies to self-regulate, with the support of trusted adults and safe classroom routines.

Children are supported to:

- Understand and manage their emotions
- Develop self awareness and confidence
- Demonstrate empathy
- Play cooperatively and build friendships
- Make responsible choices
- Resolve conflicts constructively
- Persevere when something is difficult

Pastoral Care and Restorative Practice

We use positive guidance, restorative conversations and co regulation strategies to support behaviour and emotional development.

When difficulties arise, we focus on understanding, reflection and repairing relationships rather than on punishment. Children are supported to reflect on what happened, understand how others felt, and work out together how to put things right.

Behaviour Expectations and Guidance

Our Early Years behaviour expectations extend the ISL Qatar Behaviour Policy, aligning it with child development principles and best practice in early childhood education.

Core Principles

We believe 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



How We Guide Behaviour

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

Six steps to conflict resolution

1. Approach calmly and acknowledge feelings
2. Gather information from everyone involved
3. Restate the problem to confirm understanding
4. Encourage children to generate solutions
5. Agree on a resolution and put it in place
6. Follow up to reinforce learning and accountability

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 that build social and emotional learning

When Behaviour Becomes a Concern

Young children are still learning to navigate emotions and social interactions. We respond according to the nature of the concern:

Level	Examples	How we respond
Minor	Interrupting, difficulty sharing, struggling with transitions	Gentle redirection, positive reinforcement and structured routines
Moderate	Frequent defiance, rough play causing distress, recurring meltdowns	Social stories, structured calming spaces, behaviour tracking and collaboration with families
Major	Physical aggression, severe distress, leaving the classroom	Immediate safety measures, crisis intervention strategies and an individualised behaviour support plan

Where a pattern of behaviour needs attention, we may:

- Speak with the children involved
- Meet with parents, teachers and the Grade Level Leader
- Plan and deliver circle time sessions on the theme
- Agree specific steps to prevent the behaviour recurring
- Observe and record incidents in Toddle
- Hold follow up conversations with the children
- Provide feedback to parents



Where challenging behaviour is repeated, agreed responses may include time in another room with an adult, creating a card or letter as part of reconciliation, time with the homeroom teacher, teaching assistant or Grade Level Leader, and informing parents.

Serious injury. Where a child causes a serious injury as determined by the school nurse or a doctor, breaks the skin, or causes an injury above the shoulders, the child who caused the harm may not return to the classroom until school leadership has met with their parents. A restorative process is then put in place, with the wellbeing of the child who was hurt at its centre.

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

Working Together on Behaviour

A strong home school partnership is essential in reinforcing positive behaviour. Regular communication with families may include meetings to discuss concerns and agree strategies, and behaviour plans with shared goals. A behaviour plan may include a one page profile with agreed targets, a daily communication book for positive behaviour tracking, and designated safe spaces for reflection and calming with an adult.

Parent workshops on supporting behaviour at home are offered through the year.

Inclusion and Learning Support

Inclusion is a fundamental part of our identity as an international school. We believe every child deserves equitable access to learning, participation and belonging, and that diversity strengthens our community.

Learning Support

Children develop at different rates and in different ways, and the Early Years are a period of wide natural variation. Learning Support specialists work alongside classroom teachers to remove barriers and build independence.

Support may include:

- Collaborative planning between teachers and specialists
- Classroom accommodations and adjustments
- Small group or targeted intervention
- Individual goals and support plans where appropriate
- Monitoring progress and reviewing support over time
- Consultation with external specialists when required

Movement between levels of support is not automatic or permanent. A child may need more support for a period and less later as confidence, independence or wellbeing develops. Families are important partners in this process, and we will involve you whenever additional support, external advice or further review is being considered.



Language Development

We celebrate multilingualism and recognise the role language plays in identity and belonging. Children developing English alongside their home language are supported through language rich environments, small group work, visual support and collaborative planning between teachers.

We encourage families to continue speaking, reading and singing in their home language. A strong home language supports, rather than competes with, the development of English.

Our Commitment and Capacity to Support

ISL Qatar is committed to supporting a diverse range of learning, language, wellbeing and behavioural needs. We believe children are most successful when support is provided early, barriers to participation are addressed, and families and school work together in partnership.

Decisions about support are guided by the individual needs of the child and the school's ability to provide an appropriate, safe and effective educational programme within the resources, expertise, staffing and facilities available.

In some circumstances, a child's needs may exceed the level of support, specialist provision or supervision that the school can reasonably provide. Where concerns arise regarding the suitability of the school's provision, we will work closely with families to review available information, consider additional strategies and explore appropriate next steps.

In exceptional circumstances, where the school determines that it cannot provide an appropriate, safe or effective programme for a child, an alternative educational setting may be recommended. Such decisions are made carefully, based on evidence, professional judgement and consultation with families, with the child's wellbeing and long term success at the centre of the process.

Safeguarding and Child Protection

The safety and wellbeing of children is our highest priority. ISL Qatar is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children, and to creating a culture where children feel safe, respected and protected.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All staff receive safeguarding training, reviewed annually, and are required to respond appropriately to any concern relating to a child's safety or wellbeing.

Safeguarding concerns are managed differently from academic, behavioural, attendance or pastoral concerns. Where there is concern that a child may be at risk of harm, abuse, neglect or any other significant wellbeing risk, staff follow the school's safeguarding procedures immediately.

Families and visitors with a safeguarding concern should contact a member of the safeguarding team immediately. **(handbook)**

For full details, please refer to the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Settling In and Transitions

Starting or changing schools is a significant milestone, and we support each child and family through it with care.



Settling In

- 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

Please tell us about your child's routines, comforts and worries before they start. The more we know, the smoother the first weeks will be.

Moving Between Year Levels

- Teachers collaborate to ensure continuity of care, sharing documentation, routines and knowledge of each child
- Families are invited to orientation sessions and classroom visits to ease transitions between EC1, EC2 and Kindergarten

Moving into Grade 1

Kindergarten children visit Grade 1 classrooms, meet teachers and become familiar with the routines of Primary School during the final term. Families are invited to an information session about the transition.

Technology in the Early Years

Screen use in the Early Years is limited and purposeful. Technology is used mainly by adults to document learning, and occasionally with children to research a question, record their own thinking or revisit documentation together.

Children do not bring personal devices to school. Mobile phones and smart watches are not permitted.

EVERYDAY LIFE IN THE EARLY YEARS

The School Day

Earliest arrival	07:20
Drop off window	07:20 – 07:35
The school day begins	07:35
Dismissal, Sunday, Monday, Wednesday and Thursday	14:20, collection by 14:25
Dismissal, Tuesday	12:40

Please note that Tuesday is an early finish, as Tuesdays are Professional Learning Days for teachers.

Children should not arrive before 07:20, as supervision begins at that time. Prompt collection matters a great deal to young children, who notice when the room empties around them.

Changes to collection. If your child is to be collected by someone else, or at a different time, please tell the class teacher as early as you can. After 11:00 am, please telephone the front office rather than emailing, so that we can be certain the teacher receives the message before dismissal.



What to Wear

In the 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.

Each child should bring:

- A full change of clothes, including underwear and socks
- A labelled sun hat
- Closed toe shoes with secure fastenings, not flip flops or sandals

Please label all items clearly with your child's name, including clothing, shoes, water bottles and lunch containers.

Physical and Health Education Kit

- ISL Qatar PHE shirt
- ISL Qatar PHE shorts
- ISL Qatar PHE jacket
- ISL Qatar PHE trousers, worn as needed and particularly in winter
- Appropriate footwear

Your child's PHE days are shown on the class timetable shared at the start of the year.

Attendance and Absence

Consistent attendance helps children feel secure and connected. Routine matters enormously to young children, and a child who attends regularly settles faster and forms stronger friendships.

Reporting an absence. Please notify the class teacher by email before 07:00 if your 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 collections disrupt your child's experience and should be kept to a minimum.

Health, Clinic and Medication

The school clinic is open from 07:30 to 15:30 and can be reached at nurse@islqatar.org or on +974 4433 8600.

When to keep your child at home. Children must be free of fever for 24 hours, and free of symptoms for 48 hours following any gastrointestinal illness, before returning to school. For chickenpox, conjunctivitis, hand, foot and mouth disease and other communicable illnesses, the clinic will advise on the period of absence and on any clearance required before your child returns.

If a child becomes unwell or is injured during the day. Children are seen by the school nurse. Where a child is unwell, injured or unable to continue the day comfortably, parents will be contacted and are expected to collect their child promptly. Please ensure the school holds current contact numbers and that someone is contactable throughout the school day.



Medication in school. All medication is stored in the clinic and administered by the nursing team. Medication must not be kept in bags or classrooms. Please provide it in its original packaging, clearly labelled with your child's name, together with written instructions from the prescribing doctor.

Simple pain and fever relief. With parental approval, the clinic will administer paracetamol or similar over the counter medication.

Allergies and our nut free campus. ISL Qatar is a nut free campus. Products containing peanuts or tree nuts are not permitted under any circumstances. If your child has an allergy or a medical condition requiring ongoing management, please ensure the clinic is informed and that any care plan or emergency medication is provided and kept up to date.

Sun safety. Please apply SPF 50+ sunscreen at home each morning. Hats are required for outdoor play.

Hydration. Children have access to filtered water stations throughout the day and should bring a refillable water bottle daily.

Rest and toileting. We respect individual needs and support children in managing toileting and rest transitions. Please let us know if your child has specific routines, is still developing independence with toileting, or uses particular words for these things at home.

Hot weather. ISL Qatar monitors weather and air quality throughout the year. Where conditions are unsafe, outdoor play does not take place and children use designated indoor spaces. Whenever conditions allow, children play and learn outdoors. During outdoor play months, children must have a water bottle and a hat or cap with them at all times.

Immunisation and medical records. Immunisation and medical record requirements form part of the admissions process. Families joining the school should follow the guidance provided by the Admissions Team, who can also advise on updating records for children already enrolled.

Snacks and Lunch

Children have two eating times during the school day: a morning snack and lunch. On Tuesdays, when the day finishes at 12:40, children have a morning snack only.

Please send a nutritious, nut free snack and lunch each day, along with a refillable water bottle. Fresh fruit and vegetables, whole grains and proteins are ideal.

What to send. A simple guide is to check the first three ingredients on the packet. Products with sugar as the first, second or third ingredient are not permitted. Please avoid sweets, chocolate, biscuits, cakes and sugary drinks.

Please note that we have no heating facilities for food brought from home. Anything sent from home should be ready to eat as it is, or packed in an insulated container if you would like it to stay warm.



Canteen. A hot lunch option is available through our campus café. Full details of the menu, pricing and how to order are shared with families at the start of the school year.

Sustainability. We encourage reusable containers and minimal packaging, in keeping with our environmental values.

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

Birthdays. The class teacher will share how birthdays are marked in their classroom. Families may send cupcakes or fruit. Please avoid gifts, sweets and anything containing nuts, and check with the teacher first, as other allergies may be present in the class.

Belongings and What to Bring

Every day. A named water bottle, a morning snack and lunch, a sun hat, and a full change of clothes.

Labelling. Please label everything with your child's full name, including clothing, shoes, hats, water bottles and lunch containers. Young children cannot identify their own belongings reliably, and unnamed items are very difficult to return.

Library books. Children borrow books from the library and are learning to take responsibility for returning them. Please help your child keep library books in their bag and in good condition.

Please leave at home. Toys, valuables and money. Mobile phones and smart watches are not permitted. A comfort item is welcome during the settling in period; please speak to the class teacher about this.

Extra Curricular Activities

Fox Athletics and Activities offer children the opportunity to pursue interests, develop new skills and build friendships beyond the classroom. Extra curricular activities are available from Kindergarten. Activities run in seasons across the year and are booked through SchoolsBuddy.

Details of each season, including the activities offered, timings, costs and collection arrangements, are shared with families before sign up opens.

Transport

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.

- Morning drop off: 07:20 – 07:40
- Afternoon pick up: 14:25, and 12:40 on Tuesdays

Please notify the Transport Office and the class teacher of any change to your child's travel arrangements.



Facilities

Children learn across a range of spaces, including their classrooms, the library, the gym, the multi purpose hall, the atrium, the swimming pool and dedicated Early Years outdoor play areas. Our environments are designed as a third teacher, with open ended materials, natural light and space to move.

Campus Access and Visitors

To ensure the safety and security of children and staff, all visitors must follow established campus procedures. Visitors may be required to sign in on arrival, wear visitor identification, adhere to safeguarding expectations, remain in designated areas and be accompanied by staff where appropriate.

Families are warmly welcomed into Early Years classrooms for Learning Showcases, class inquiries and volunteering. Please arrange visits in advance with your child's teacher, and sign in at reception on arrival. Volunteering in class is subject to the school's safeguarding requirements.

FAMILIES AS PARTNERS

A Shared Commitment

A strong home school partnership is essential to your child's success. In the Early Years, that partnership matters more than at any later stage, because so much of what we need to know about a young child comes from you.

Parents and caregivers remain a child's most influential teachers. We view families as valued partners whose understanding of their child enriches our ability to create meaningful learning experiences.

How We Communicate

Channel	What it is used for
Toddle	Digital portfolio, documentation of learning, direct messages with the class teacher
SchoolsBuddy	Sign up for extra curricular activities, trips and permission forms
Weekly Bulletin	School wide highlights and reminders
Email	Direct contact with teachers and school leadership
School website and calendar	Term dates, events and published policies

Toddle and email are the best channels for two way communication with the school.

Response times. Teachers spend their day with children and may not be able to reply immediately, but you should receive a response within two working days. If you leave a message with the front office, it will be passed to the teacher, who will contact you at the earliest opportunity.

Please make an appointment. We ask families not to make unannounced visits, as teachers and school leaders may not be able to give you their full attention. An appointment allows time for a proper conversation.



Keeping details current. Please inform the front office promptly of any change to your contact details, particularly email addresses and emergency telephone numbers.

Supporting Learning at Home

Learning does not begin and end at school. Families can support learning by talking with their child about their day, reading together daily, encouraging curiosity and questions, celebrating effort and persistence, and supporting independence with everyday routines.

There is no formal home learning in the Early Years. The most valuable things you can do at home are read together, talk together and play together, in whichever language is most comfortable for your family.

Building independence together. You can help by encouraging your child to carry their own bag, put on their own shoes, open their own lunch box and ask for what they need. These small independences make an enormous difference to a child's confidence at school.

Getting Involved

Parent School Association. The PSA builds community and fosters connections among families, students and staff, supporting many school events and initiatives. Families are encouraged to participate.

Sharing your expertise. Families bring knowledge, experience, cultures, languages and perspectives that enrich learning. Throughout the year there may be opportunities to participate in classroom inquiries, share stories, skills and cultural traditions with the class, and support community events.

Workshops, open days and coffee mornings. Regular sessions help families understand our programme and meet other parents and staff in an informal setting.

Raising a Question or Concern

At some point in your child's schooling you may have a concern. We would far rather hear about it early. Most issues are resolved quickly, because a parent simply needs more information or there has been a misunderstanding.

Step 1. Speak with your child's teacher. In most cases this is the right first point of contact, as they are closest to your child's daily experience. Staff will make every effort to resolve the matter informally within one week.

Step 2. If the concern remains unresolved, contact the Grade Level Leader or the Head of Early Years and Primary, having first let the staff member know you intend to do so. You will be offered a meeting within one week, and a response within one week of that meeting. You are welcome to bring someone with you.

Step 3. If the matter is still not resolved, you may take the concern to the Head of School, in writing or by appointment. The Head of School may also choose to become involved earlier if that would resolve matters more quickly.



If you remain dissatisfied following the Head of School's response, you may contact the Managing Director, who will review whether the investigation was fair and reliable, and will confirm the decision or ask for further review. Parents are informed of the decision in writing.

Parent Code of Conduct

Strong school communities are built on mutual respect, trust and collaboration. We ask all members of our community to engage with one another in ways that reflect our values of belonging, integrity, grit and kindness.

All communication should be conducted respectfully, so that the child's wellbeing remains the priority

COMMUNITY LIFE AND CELEBRATIONS

Celebrations in the Early Years are joyful, inclusive and aligned with our educational values. We honour cultural diversity and keep events simple and child focused, emphasising belonging, creativity and shared experience.

Dates for all community events are published in the school calendar.

Learning Showcases. Families are invited into the classroom to view project documentation and learning stories, and to hear children explain their thinking.

The Early Years Exhibition. Children share their project work with families and the wider community. See Part Two.

Qatar National Day. As a school located in Qatar, we celebrate and honour the culture, history and traditions of our host nation through age appropriate learning experiences.

International Mother Language Day. A celebration of the linguistic diversity of our community and of the importance of maintaining home languages. Children share their languages and hear those of their friends.

International Family Food Fair. A community wide celebration of culture and cuisine, and one of the highlights of the ISL Qatar calendar.

Souk Fest. A vibrant community celebration held during Ramadan, bringing together creativity, entrepreneurship and shared traditions. Children take part alongside families and the wider community.

Class birthdays. See Snacks and Lunch in Part Five.

Taking Action

Action is one of the essential elements of the PYP, and it begins in the Early Years. When children notice something that matters to them, a bird that needs shade or a bin that is always overflowing, we help them do something about it.



Action in the Early Years is small, genuine and child led. It might mean caring for a classroom plant, making posters about turning off taps, sorting recycling, or raising awareness about something the class has been inquiring into. What matters is that children learn early that their ideas can change something.

ADMISSIONS, POLICIES AND KEY INFORMATION

Alongside this handbook, the school maintains a range of policies and procedures that support children's wellbeing, learning, safety and community life. Families are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the full policies available through the Parent Portal and school website.

Admissions

ISL Qatar welcomes children and families from diverse cultural, linguistic and educational backgrounds.

Admissions decisions are guided by the school's admissions procedures and consider factors such as age requirements, previous educational experiences, individual learning needs and the school's ability to support each child's success.

For detailed admissions information, families should contact the Admissions Office at admissions@islqatar.org.

Class Placement

Class placement decisions are made thoughtfully and collaboratively, with the goal of creating balanced and supportive learning environments.

A range of factors is considered, including social and emotional development, peer relationships, language considerations, learning profiles, class balance and professional knowledge of individual children.

While families are welcome to share information they believe may support the placement process, requests for specific teachers or classmates cannot be accommodated.

Withdrawal and Transfer

To initiate withdrawal or transfer procedures:

- Submit written notice to both your child's teacher and the Admissions Office at admissions@islqatar.org
- Return all borrowed school resources, including books and library items
- Complete the clearance process so that documentation and records can be transferred

Providing as much notice as possible supports your child's transition and the preparation of records for the receiving school.

Fees

Current tuition and fee information, including the payment schedule, registration fee and refund terms, is published on the Tuition and Fees page at islqatar.org/admissions/fees. For questions about invoices or payment, please contact the Finance Office through reception.



Where to Find Our Policies

The following policies are available through the Parent Portal and school website:

- [Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy](#)
- [Behaviour Policy](#)
- [Language Policy](#)

Each policy is linked from the Parent Portal. Please contact the Early Years Office if you cannot locate a policy you need.

Helpful Links

- ISL Qatar website: www.islqatar.org
- Academic calendar: www.islqatar.org/school-life/calendar
- Toddle, for portfolios and classroom documentation
- SchoolsBuddy, for extra curricular activities

Key Contacts

Role	Name	Email
Head of Early Years and Primary	Marwa Nsouli	mnsouli@islqatar.org
PYP Coordinator	Erika Vargas	evargas@islqatar.org
EC1 and EC2 Grade Level Leader	Maryam Roda	mroda@islqatar.org
Kindergarten Grade Level Leader	Najwan Aayoun	naayoun@islqatar.org
Head of Inclusion and Student Wellbeing	Reinette Evert	revert@islqatar.org
Head of School	Dr Sean Areias	sareias@islqatar.org
Admissions Team	Admissions Office	admissions@islqatar.org
School Clinic	School Nurse	nurse@islqatar.org
Transport Office	Transport Office	transport@islqatar.org
Main School Reception	Reception	mail@islqatar.org

Campus address: PO Box 18511, North Duhail, Doha, State of Qatar Telephone: +974 4433 8600

Your child's teacher is your first point of contact for anything relating to your child's learning, wellbeing or daily school life. Please see [Raising a Question or Concern](#) in Part Six.

A Shared Commitment

We hope this handbook has provided a clear picture of the Early Years at ISL Qatar. The policies, procedures and expectations set out here exist to support a community where children feel safe, respected, included and confident to explore.



Through strong partnerships, shared expectations and a commitment to belonging, integrity, grit and kindness, we create an environment where every child can develop confidence, curiosity and a lifelong love of learning.

Together, we nurture compassionate, capable and internationally minded learners, ready to imagine and design a better world.

Health & Safety

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.

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Student Wellbeing through Pastoral Care, Inclusion, and Academic Support.

Athletic & Activities Handbook

PHE Uniform Policy

Inclusion Policy

Behavior Policy

Visitors Policy

Health Services

Facilities

Extra-Curricular Sports & Activities, Week Without Walls, Service

Service Programs, Events, Performances & Excursions

Admissions Policy

Fee Regulations



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 and Primary