International School of London

Curriculum Policy

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Mission statement
Since 1972, we have established a welcoming and inclusive community. Our diverse cultures and languages drive all our learning experiences.

We nurture creativity and curiosity to stimulate deep thinking. We foster insight, compassion and resilience to enable us to play a meaningful part in a changing world.

Vision statement
We celebrate our stories, our worth and our purpose to make a difference in a shared world.

At the International School of London, we believe in:

- Empowering students to maximise their learning opportunities and to fulfil their
- potential.
- Actively integrating cultural diversity in the curriculum.
- Creating inclusive, vibrant and innovative learning communities.
- Offering a diverse and extensive international programme that supports personal,

The International School of London is committed that the curriculum is broad and balanced and meets the needs of internationally minded students in the spirit of the IB learner profile.

Organisation
The curriculum is organised into three sections according to the International Baccalaureate (IB):

IB Primary Years Programme (PYP):	EC1 to Grade 5
IB Middle Years Programme (MYP):	Grade 6 to Grade 10
IB Diploma Programme (DP):	Grade 11 and Grade 12

The curriculum
ISL students engage in a personalised curriculum that meets their needs, aspirations, and individual goals. Through the IB learner profile, we aim to develop citizens of the world with attributes drawn from the IB learner profile. We aim to form individuals who are: Communicators, Open-minded, Principled, Balanced, Caring, Reflective, Thinkers, Risk-takers, Inquirers and Knowledgeable. Our curriculum provides opportunities to develop international mindedness and critical thinking in settings that are linked to real-world problems.

At ISL London, Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all practitioners should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.

IB Primary Years Programme

Child-centred learning and inquiry-based teaching should underpin the organization of the programme of studies which must focus in developing concepts, knowledge, skills, attitudes and action. Starting in EC1 and running through to Grade 5, our goal with the Primary curriculum is to create happy learners engaged in every aspect of their school life, from the academic, arts and sports, through to the social and after-school activities. In addition to the rigorous academic programme, the values and understandings our students gain allow them to transition easily, whether into our programme mid-year or returning home at the end of their time at ISL. We aim to support students in becoming confident, caring, internationally minded communicators and lifelong learners. The International Baccalaureate (IB) Primary Years Programme (PYP) is designed to provide students with the opportunity to engage with the world in a 'hands-on' and interactive manner, encouraging an active learning approach, as they construct meaning from experiences through the social and physical world that surrounds them. There are six Units of Inquiry at each grade level. The Units of Inquiry are organised under the transdisciplinary themes: Who we are; Where we are in place and time; How we express ourselves; How the world works; How we organise ourselves and Sharing the planet. Science is also embedded into each of these units. The units provide opportunities to develop an understanding of our host country and emphasis is also given to the students' home countries, the cultures of individual students and the culture of others.

Social-Emotional Learning

Our social and emotional curriculum is at the core of everything we do. In our social and emotional learning curriculum we help students build social-emotional skills, such as nurturing positive relationships, managing emotions, and setting goals so each student can thrive in school and in life. Social-emotional learning (SEL) curricula teach children techniques to gain confidence, set goals, make better decisions, collaborate with others in work and play and navigate the world more effectively. We also thoughtfully plan and teach about families, friendships, and safety so that our students feel confident in our school community and beyond. We begin each day with a Morning Meeting where students participate in a greeting, a share, an activity, and a message to prepare our children for what is ahead in the school day. We use this time to foster belonging, joy, and safety for our learners Naturally, this builds a stronger community where students immediately feel safe and secure as we prioritise wellbeing at the beginning of each school day. Our Primary staff look to incorporate outdoor learning into the curriculum frequently and we visit Gunnersbury Park daily for children to have access to green space with room to run, have fun and be a child. Forest School is also in the weekly schedule for each of our PYP classes. Our Forest School leader develops lessons that foster resilient, confident, independent and creative learners.

Literacy

We believe that helping students to become skilled readers and writers is a tool that will allow them to succeed within school and beyond. Confident, skilled readers and writers are able to use their skills to follow their passions, uncover new learning and curiosities, and connect to the world. We value our multilingual community, and celebrate the full linguistic repertoire that students bring to our literacy community. At ISL, we know that learning to read and write is a complex skill, so we provide strategic, student-centred reading and writing instruction for all learners. We use a systematic and explicit phonics approach to support students in identifying the phonemes, or the smallest units of sound and the correspondence between letters and the sounds they make. This way, they can

develop the solid foundation to read and spell words fluently and automatically. We believe that vocabulary and comprehension are key components of reading instruction, so we support this development through all aspects of our day- science, unit of inquiry, math etc. Our writing instruction helps students to develop the broad range of writing skills that are needed for communication in school and in life. We support basic writing skills development such as punctuation, handwriting and sentence structure. We also help to strengthen text generation, planning, revision, and editing processes, as well as understanding genre organisation, structure and audience. Our reading and writing instruction are aligned with our Units of Inquiry so our learners can participate in authentic and knowledge-based learning experiences.

Mathematics

In math we deliver a conceptual, problem-based curriculum that fosters the development of mathematics learning communities in classrooms and gives students access to math through a coherent progression. We believe all students are capable learners of mathematics. Our math curriculum emphasises problem-solving, critical thinking, and real-world applications of math. The curriculum is designed to help students build a deep understanding of mathematical concepts. It emphasises hands-on activities, collaborative learning and real-world problem-solving, helping students see the relevance and practical applications of math in their lives.

Students learn mathematics by doing mathematics, rather than by watching someone else do mathematics or being told what needs to be done. By engaging in the mathematical practices with their peers, students have the opportunity to see themselves as mathematical thinkers with worthwhile ideas and perspectives. Teachers guide students in understanding the problems they are being asked to solve, ask questions to advance students' thinking in productive ways, provide structure for students to share their work, orchestrate discussions so students have the opportunity to understand and take a position on the ideas of others, and synthesize the learning with the whole class at the end of activities and lessons.

Home Learning

In Primary, we believe that home learning should support, extend, and consolidate the learning that is covered in the classroom. We see home learning as a way of supporting children in developing self-discipline, independence, and the ability to take responsibility for their own learning. With this in mind, we recognise that home learning is most effective for our young learners when tasks maintain a healthy balance between school and home. The amount of home learning tasks will be tailored according to the child's age and ability. Also, the subject for weekly home learning tasks will be organised to suit the learning that is taking place in the classroom.

IB Middle Years Programme

ISL is proud of providing a safe and engaging learning environment where students in Grades 6-10 actively learn and challenge themselves. The driving purpose of the MYP program in curriculum education is to foster the development of internationally minded young people who are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to succeed in a rapidly changing global society.

Within the MYP ISL London aims to achieve this purpose through the following key elements:

- Holistic education
- International Mindeness
- Conceptual Understanding
- Inquiry Based Learning
- Approaches to Learning (ATL)
- Global Context
- Service learning

These aspects of the MYP are embedded within the curriculum by subject specialists and is communicated through unit plans. Further to these aspects of the MYP the unit plans of teachers and the curriculum are driven by the implementation of the schools strategy lines. The Heads of Department and the MYP coordinator work to scaffold units vertically to align to transition from and to the PYP and DP sections.

Subjects:
ISL MYP offers a broad range of subjects to implement a holistic education. Within ISL we provide opportunities for students to learn between 6-8 subjects areas and their mother tongue language where possible. The MYP coordinator, facilitates interdisciplinary units and cross curricular connections for each grade group to allow deeper exploration of this holistic approach.

Science:
Science is part of the STEM group in its delivery in grade 6. We then take an interdisciplinary approach to science education from grade 7-8. At grade 9 students split into learning Biology, Chemistry and Physics as separate subjects. At grade 10 we model the DP subjects offered to assist with transition. The subjects offered are Biology, chemistry, Physics, Environmental Science and an Intergraded science course.

Individuals and Societies:
I&S is taught within the Human experience group in grade 6 and then all grade groups from 7-10.

Maths:
Maths is part of the STEM group in its delivery in grade 6 and then is taught in all grade integrated until grade 8. At grade 9 and 10 diagnostic tests and student academic achievement is used to move students into either standard, or extended maths.

Physical Education:
P.E. is taught in all grade groups from 6-10 and takes place in the Gunnersbury Park Sports Hub.

Languages:
Language A (Mother tongue) is delivered by language specialists in all grade groups where possible. In some cases, students with specific Mother Tongue that we cannot provide are given specific English acquisition provision or are taught a bespoke subject titled Communications.
Language B and Additional English is taught to all students dependent upon language need and all students are taught English as the language of instruction of the school.

Creative Arts:
In grade 6 Design is integrated into the STEM class and Visual Arts is integrated into Human experience, and Performing Arts has specific lessons. In grade 7-8 all three subjects are delivered as separate subjects. In grade 9 and 10 the subject of Performing Art, Visual Arts and Design become an optional choice with students picking one option from the three to take forward.

Core:
With MYP there are two aspects of core that are partially implemented as part of the overall curriculum. These are Service as Action and Personal Project.
Both aspects of the program have coordinators for its implementation and are guided by the MYP coordinator who oversees these aspects of the whole school curriculum. Personal project is externally assessed and is an exploration of the ATL skills. It is intended as an opportunity of students to showcase their ATL development throughout the MYP through a project of their choosing.

Grade 6 curriculum:
The grade 6 curriculum is a transdisciplinary, project-based curriculum delivered within the MYP framework where achievable. It is intended as a transitionary phase from PYP to MYP by combining aspects of both teaching and learning a styles with a self-assessment approach through “I can” statements and key competencies.

The curriculum is designed by members of the schools the WSLT and in collaboration with subject specific teachers. The units are delivered over a term and focus on exhibition of learning and collaboration with student focussed inquiry. The specific subjects involved are integrated into two subjects, STEM and Human Experience. The subjects in each area are described in the Subjects section above.

IB Diploma Programme

ISL has offered the IB Diploma since 1976. As one of the first schools in the world to pioneer the Diploma Programme, ISL has extensive experience in guiding IB students to continue their education in colleges and universities worldwide. The IB Diploma Programme is a rigorous pre-university two-year course designed for post 16 education. It is a broad-based two-year course that aims to encourage students to be knowledgeable and inquiring, but also caring and compassionate. There is a strong emphasis on encouraging students to develop intercultural understanding, open-mindedness, and the attitudes necessary for them to respect and evaluate a range of points of view. Awarding the IB diploma is a culmination of a series of externally examined oral and written assessments. The syllabus of the IB Diploma is prescribed externally and the examination results are recognised and accepted by over 150 Universities around the world. *(IBO, 2023)*

Subject courses

The course is presented as six academic areas enclosing a central core. Students study two modern languages (or a modern language and a classical language), a humanities or social science subject, an experimental science, mathematics and one of the creative arts. Instead of an arts subject, students can choose two subjects from another area. It is this comprehensive range of subjects that makes the Diploma Programme a demanding course of study designed to prepare students effectively for university entrance. In each of the academic areas students have flexibility in making their choices, which means they can choose subjects that particularly interest them and that they may wish to study further at university. Normally, three subjects (and not more than four) are taken at higher level (HL), and the others are taken at standard level (SL). The IB recommends 240 teaching hours (over the two years) for HL subjects (at ISL we offer 260 minutes/ week) and 150 hours for SL (at ISL we offer 160 minutes/ week). Subjects at HL are studied in greater depth and breadth than at SL. In addition, three core elements; the extended essay, theory of knowledge and creativity, activity, service; are compulsory and central to the philosophy of the programme. *(IBO 2023)*

To achieve the Diploma, students must study six subjects, three at a higher level and three at a standard level, and complete compulsory core requirements. HL and SL courses differ in scope but are measured according to the same grade descriptors, with students expected to demonstrate a greater body of knowledge, understanding and skills at the higher level. Student work is regularly assessed and any grades awarded are used to provide ongoing feedback on learning.

Each subject is graded from 1 (minimum) to 7 (maximum). A minimum point score of 24, with a minimum overall score in Higher Level subjects and completion of all core requirements is needed to earn the IB Diploma. A maximum of 45 points can be achieved, which includes up to 3 points that are awarded for successfully completing the core components of the DP (Extended Essay and Theory of knowledge).

Core: Theory of Knowledge (TOK)

The holistic aspect of the education at post-16 is ensured through compulsory attendance to the core element of Theory of Knowledge (TOK) which fosters critical thinking. TOK is intended to generate links with subject groups and encourage reflections upon the different forms of knowledge and the process of knowing. The main focus of

TOK is not acquiring new subject knowledge, but rather to look at the knowledge they acquire from their subject courses through different perspectives. TOK engages students in explicit critical thinking activities and reflection on how knowledge is acquired in different disciplines.

At ISL, TOK is taught by subject specialists throughout the two-year programme, culminating in the externally assessed TOK exhibition and TOK essay.

Core: Extended Essay (EE)
The second core element of the IB Diploma programme is the Extended Essay (EE). Students write an academic research paper of up to 4000 words in a topic of their choice. The EE experience provides a unique opportunity to prepare students for undergraduate research, while investigating a topic of personal interest to them, which relates to one of their six DP subjects. They may also wish to use more than one subject if they choose to take an interdisciplinary approach to answer their research question. This project allows students to develop many transferable skills including their critical thinking skills, communication skills, research and evaluation skills.

Students' grades in TOK and EE contribute to the 3 additional core points which, added to the maximum of 42 points awarded from subject courses, add up to the total of 45 possible points in the IB Diploma.

Core: Creativity, Activity, Service (CAS)
Diploma students are required to participate in the wider community through a structured programme: CAS. This is another core element of the Diploma programme and a central element in the lives of the students at ISL. CAS requires students to take part in a range of experiences and one long-term project. Typically, CAS experiences are designed around real life activities and must show personal engagement and thoughtful planning. Students are required to reflect on their experiences and review their progress throughout the two years of their IB Diploma programme.

Tutor programme
The RSE curriculum for post 16 aims to tackle many topics that interest students at this age. The aim of this weekly one-hour contact time, is to prepare the students to real-life through debates, discussions and sessions delivered by external specialised speakers. In addition to this well-rounded programme, students also benefit from sessions to support their learning. These are designed around Higher Education Guidance sessions, study skills, reflection and approaches to learning sessions.

At ISL London, Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all practitioners should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.