

# Primary Years Programme Handbook

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The logo consists of a dark green circle with a white border. Inside the circle, the letters 'ICS' are written in a bold, white, sans-serif font.

**ICS**

The Inter-Community School is committed to providing a supportive and enabling learning environment in which all members of the community are challenged to achieve their individual potential, encouraged to pursue their passions, and expected to fulfil their responsibilities.





# **inter-community school zurich**

EST. 1960

# Preface

This handbook is intended to help parents and students learn more about the Primary Years Programme. It gives insight into the requirements of the programme and to the core of the programme. In addition, it offers a guide to the different subjects available as part of the curriculum. The information in this booklet relies on the information provided by the International Baccalaureate and specifically on the following document [www.ibo.org/programmes/primary-years-programme/curriculum/](http://www.ibo.org/programmes/primary-years-programme/curriculum/).

# Contents

<b>4</b>	<b>Introduction</b>
4	ICS Educational Philosophy
4	ICS Pedagogical Identity
4	ICS and the IB
5	The IB Learner Profile
<b>8</b>	<b>The Primary School</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>The PYP and ICS</b>
8	Philosophy – What does a successful PYP student look like?
<b>9</b>	<b>The PYP Curriculum</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>What do we want the students to learn? The Written Curriculum</b>
10	Knowledge - What do we want the students to know about?
11	Concepts - What do we want the students to understand?
12	Skills - What do we want the students to be able to do?
12	Attitudes - What do we want the students to feel, value and demonstrate in relation to their learning, each other and the environment?
13	Action - How do we want the students to act?
14	Our Curriculum (Scope and Sequence) documents.
14	Inquiry
14	ICS Programme of Inquiry
<b>15</b>	<b>How best will we learn? The Taught Curriculum</b>
15	Language Arts
16	German
17	Mathematics
18	Science
18	Social Studies
19	Information and Communications Technology (ICT)
19	Personal, Social and Physical Education (PSPE)
20	Physical Education (PE)
21	Visual Art, Music, Dance and Drama
22	Library
<b>24</b>	<b>How will we know what we have learnt? The Assessed Curriculum</b>
24	Reporting in the PYP
<b>25</b>	<b>Home Learning</b>
<b>26</b>	<b>Student Leadership</b>
26	Primary Student Council
26	Round Square
26	Student Ambassadors

# Introduction

Since 1960, the Inter-Community School Zurich (ICS) has been providing a high quality, rigorous academic and co-curricular programme for the international and local community of Zurich. ICS is an Early Years to Grade 12 school that offers the Primary Years, Middle Years and Diploma Programmes to over 850 students from over 55 nationalities.

## ICS Educational Philosophy

The educational programme at ICS is based on our educational philosophy:

ICS aspires to enable all students to mature holistically into flexible and creative thinkers who have the confidence to make a difference. The school promotes a warm, inclusive and caring culture. ICS provides a challenging and engaging approach to learning that is collaborative and experiential and builds strong partnerships between students, their families and the school. The school aspires to be at the leading edge of educational practices.

The core values of the school are to provide a rigorous and relevant international education where students achieve their potential, pursue their passion and fulfil their responsibility. We believe strongly in an individualised student centred approach to teaching and learning and share a passionate belief that everyone can learn; and everyone can learn how to learn. To achieve this we maintain a low student-teacher ratio that helps to ensure a personalised pathway to a rich and rigorous programme.

## ICS Pedagogical Identity

The following features all define our pedagogical identity and demonstrate not just the quality of our programme but also where we are pushing boundaries to create an extraordinary educational experience for all our students.

A key feature of the school's pedagogical identity is the unique culture of ICS – a culture of learning and high expectations underpinned by our culture of care and community engagement.

The second feature is who we are as a school. ICS is an inclusive, international school with students from many different backgrounds, educational experiences and learning profiles. We offer an education that reflects our rich diversity where students have a “voice” and opportunities to co-lead to ensure an inspirational learning experience.

Another feature is the influence of technology and scientific progress on the world. We offer an education that is relevant to students' future lives and allows them opportunities to develop the skills, tools and character virtues necessary for them to adapt and thrive.

## ICS and the IB

The mission statements of ICS and IB are in close harmony with each other.

### ICS Mission Statement

The Inter-Community School is committed to providing a supportive and enabling learning environment in which all members of the community are challenged to achieve their individual potential, encouraged to pursue their passions and expected to fulfil their responsibilities.

### IBO Mission Statement

The IBO aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. To this end the IBO 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.

At ICS, the IB programmes help to create a safe and supportive environment in which students are able to maximise their academic potential. In both the Primary Years Programme (PYP) and Middle Years Programme (MYP), every student is an IB student and engages in a process of guided inquiry and conceptual understanding that is a feature of these frameworks. As students complete the MYP in Grade 10, they identify the most rigorous and relevant pathway

that aligns with their personal goals and choose subjects from the IB Diploma Programme that will help them obtain these goals. In addition, from Grades 9 to 12, students concurrently achieve the credits needed to satisfy the ICS High School Diploma requirements.

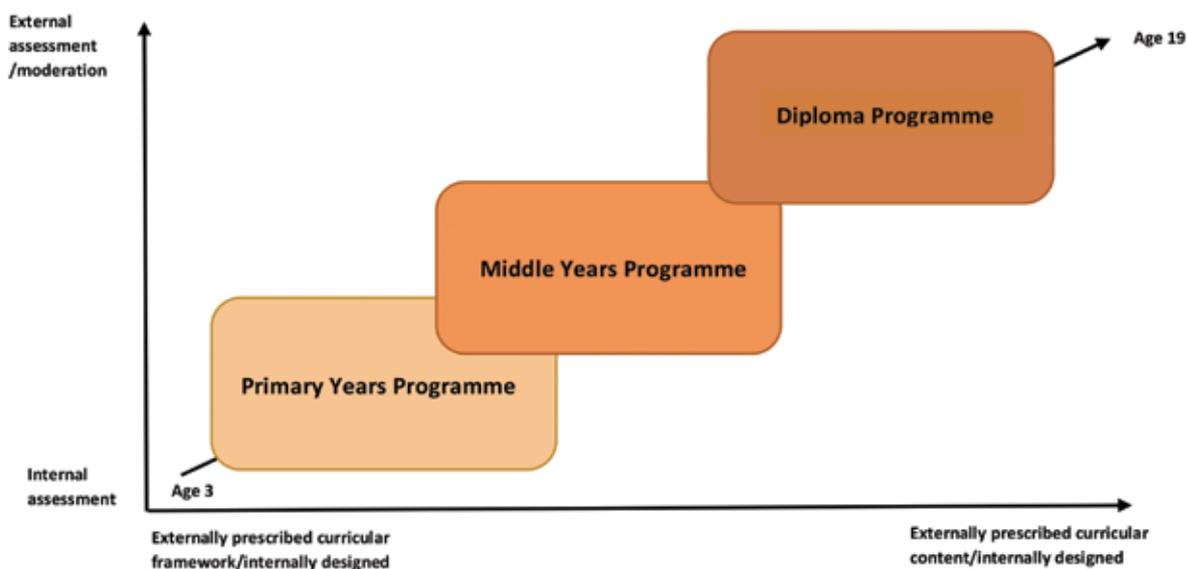


Figure 1 The Three Programmes: An Academic and Development Continuum

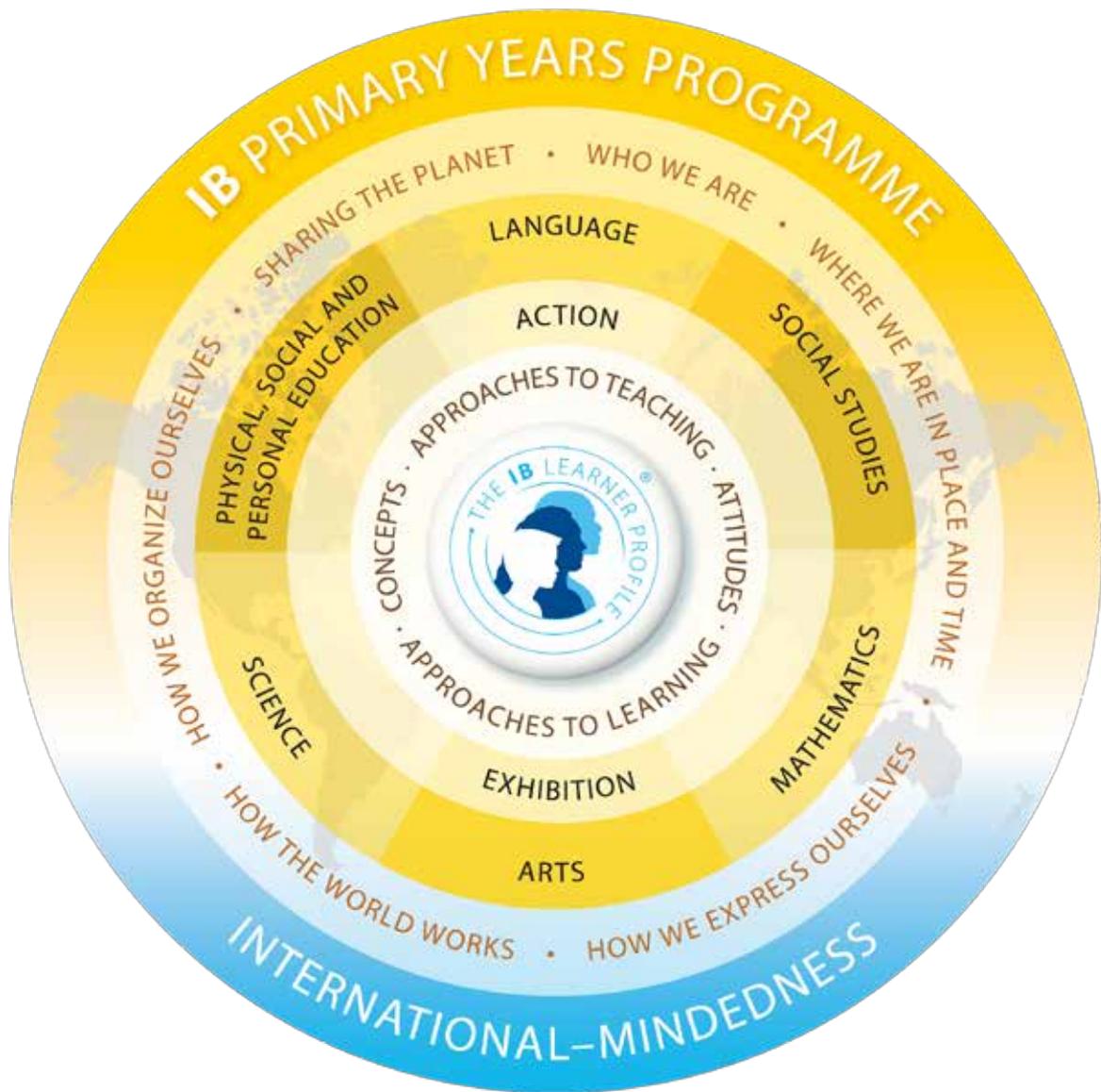
The IB offers three programmes that complement and develop students from Primary through Secondary. At the end of the continuum, students are ready to take their place in the world outside of school.

### The IB Learner Profile

The IB learner profile is developed throughout the three programmes and describes a broad range of aptitudes and responsibilities that are not always related to academic success. The development of these qualities is instrumental in readying students with the skills they require for engagement within a complex global society.

The learner profile aims to develop students who are:

- Inquirers
- Knowledgeable
- Thinkers
- Communicators
- Principled
- Open-minded
- Caring
- Risk-takers
- Balanced
- Reflective





# The Primary School

The Primary School programme encourages children to become independent learners. To meet the needs of the fast paced and ever-changing world that our students will enter, we want our children to have a strong set of problem-solving strategies, the ability to think critically, and the knowledge and skills to apply themselves to new and unfamiliar tasks. We expect our students to continue to question throughout their lives and have a strong sense of fairness towards all people. As a result of their learning, we want children to take socially responsible action that has an impact on themselves, their friends, the school and the community in which they live. Through their work in the Primary School, we want all students to develop a positive self concept that includes an understanding of their profile as a learner. Understanding their strengths, preferred styles of learning, and areas in which they need support are considered important attributes of successful learners. We strive to build on the students' natural curiosity for the world around them and provide a well-balanced curriculum framework that incorporates the most recent research on how children learn. We want students from the Inter-Community School (ICS)

to be appreciative of their opportunities and become lifelong learners.

In the Primary School environment, students will:

- learn through inquiry, make personal connections to their learning and build from their prior knowledge
- work individually, with a partner and in small groups
- accept a variety of roles within a group
- make personal connections to their learning and build from their prior knowledge
- reflect regularly on new learning, their decisions and their strengths as learners
- receive regular feedback on their learning
- appreciate different learning styles and recognise the strengths of their peers
- develop a positive self concept
- work in a supportive environment
- show tolerance and respect for other cultures as they develop an international perspective
- learn skills that will support them to become self-directed learners.

## The PYP and ICS

The ICS is committed to the development of the International Baccalaureate (IB) Primary Years Programme (PYP) from Early Years 1 to Grade 5. ICS was officially authorised by the IB in December 1999 and since then has received four highly successful IB Evaluation visits in 2003, 2008, 2013 and 2017.

### Philosophy – What does a successful PYP student look like?

The IB's definition of an internationally minded student is embodied in the Learner Profile, the attributes of which direct our school's focus on learning. The attributes of the learner profile are relevant to and achievable by all PYP students, regardless of their stage of development or previous experience.

# The PYP Curriculum

The aim of the PYP is to develop internationally minded students through a transdisciplinary curriculum that is engaging, relevant, challenging and significant for all learners from Early Years 1 to Grade 5. This is achieved through structured inquiry, the development of conceptual understanding, and the acquisition and application of essential knowledge and skills. Students are given opportunities to demonstrate positive attitudes and the ability to take socially responsible action.

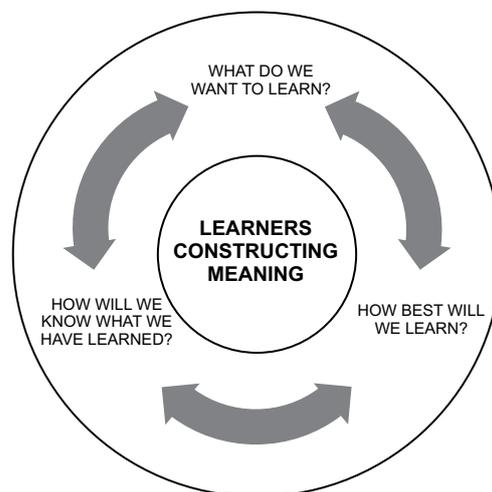
Three aspects that need to be considered when developing the PYP curriculum are:

- What do we want the children to learn? (the written curriculum)
- How best will we learn? (the taught curriculum)
- How will we know what we have learnt? (the assessed curriculum)

Within the PYP curriculum all three are interrelated and equally valued. Each aspect influences the development of the others to

allow the construction and development of meaning based on prior knowledge.

## Learners constructing meaning: the PYP definition of curriculum



*(Making the PYP Happen, IBO 2009)*



# What do we want the students to learn? The Written Curriculum

To ensure a balanced curriculum there are five essential elements that need to be considered within the written curriculum: Knowledge, Concepts, Skills, Attitudes and Action. These five elements are integrated throughout the whole of the PYP curriculum.

## Knowledge – What do we want the students to know about?

In recognition of the importance of traditional subject areas, the application of knowledge, concepts and skills that apply to language, mathematics, science, social studies, personal, social and physical education, and the arts are taught through the framework of the PYP. However, these subjects alone do not constitute

a complete education. Knowledge, skills and concepts need to be applied and explored in context across disciplines through inquiry as well as stand alone units. In order to achieve this, the PYP programme has six transdisciplinary themes that provide the framework for learning and inquiry.

These themes are globally significant, support the acquisition of knowledge, concepts and skills of the traditional subjects, and are revisited in each grade of the students' years in the Primary School, ensuring that they receive a broad ranging, in-depth and articulate curriculum.

The six transdisciplinary themes are:

<b>Who we are</b>	An inquiry into the nature of the self; beliefs and values; personal, physical, mental, social and spiritual health; human relationships including families, friends, communities, and cultures; rights and responsibilities; what it means to be human.
<b>Where we are in place and time</b>	An inquiry into orientation in place and time; personal histories; homes and journeys; the discoveries, explorations and migrations of humankind; the relationships between and the interconnectedness of individuals and civilizations, from local and global perspectives.
<b>How we express ourselves</b>	An inquiry into the ways in which we discover and express ideas, feelings, nature, culture, beliefs and values; the ways in which we reflect on, extend and enjoy our creativity; our appreciation of the aesthetic.
<b>How the world works</b>	An inquiry into the natural world and its laws; the interaction between the natural world (physical and biological) and human societies; how humans use their understanding of scientific principles; the impact of scientific and technological advances on society and on the environment.
<b>How we organise ourselves</b>	An inquiry into the interconnectedness of human-made systems and communities; the structure and function of organizations; societal decision-making; economic activities and their impact on humankind and the environment.
<b>Sharing the planet</b>	An inquiry into rights and responsibilities in the struggle to share finite resources with other people and with other living things; communities and the relationships within and between them; access to equal opportunities; peace and conflict resolution.

*(Making the PYP Happen, IBO 2009)*

## Concepts – What do we want the students to understand?

Through the Units of Inquiry the students explore eight key concepts which support the inquiry process. The exploration of concepts leads to a deeper understanding and allows students to easily transfer knowledge learnt in one area of the curriculum to another. Concepts are revisited throughout the year and across the grades ensuring a deepening of conceptual understanding.

There are 8 key concepts, and many related concepts, that are explored through the PYP programme:

<b>Form</b>	What is it like? – The understanding that everything has a form with recognisable features that can be observed, identified, described and categorised.
<b>Function</b>	How does it work? – The understanding that everything has a purpose, a role or a way of behaving that can be investigated.
<b>Causation</b>	Why is it like it is? – The understanding that things do not just happen, that there are causal relationships at work, and that actions have consequences.
<b>Change</b>	How is it changing? – The understanding that change is the process of movement from one state to another. It is universal and inevitable.
<b>Connection</b>	How is it connected to other things? – The understanding that we live in a world of interconnecting systems in which the actions of any individual element affect others.
<b>Perspective</b>	What are the points of view? – The understanding that knowledge is moderated by perspectives; different perspectives lead to different interpretations, understandings and findings; perspectives may be individual, group, cultural or disciplinary.
<b>Responsibility</b>	What is our responsibility? – The understanding that people make choices based on their understandings, and the actions they take as a result do make a difference.
<b>Reflection</b>	How do we know? – The understanding that there are different ways of knowing and that it is important to reflect on our conclusions, to consider our methods of reasoning, and the quality and reliability of the evidence we have considered.

*(Making the PYP Happen, IBO 2009)*

### Skills – What do we want the students to be able to do?

Alongside the development of conceptual understanding, students need to acquire and apply a range of skills that are valuable not only as tools for inquiry but also for life outside the classroom. These skills are best acquired in the context of authentic situations offered through the Units of Inquiry.

There are five transdisciplinary skills identified within the PYP:

<b>Thinking Skills</b>	Acquisition of knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation, dialectical thought, metacognition.
<b>Social Skills</b>	Accepting responsibility, respecting others, cooperating, resolving conflict, group decision making, adopting a variety of group roles.
<b>Communication Skills</b>	Listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing, presenting, non-verbal communication.
<b>Self-management Skills</b>	Gross motor skills, fine motor skills, spatial awareness, organisation, time management, safety, healthy lifestyle, codes of behaviour, informed choices.
<b>Research Skills</b>	Formulating questions, observing, planning, collecting data, recording data, organising data, interpreting data, presenting research findings.

*(Making the PYP Happen, IBO 2009)*

### Attitudes – What do we want the students to feel, value and demonstrate in relation to their learning, each other and the environment?

Alongside knowledge, concepts and skills, the development of personal attitudes are important for a person to be internationally minded.

<b>Appreciation</b>	Appreciating the wonder and beauty of the world and its people.
<b>Commitment</b>	Being committed to their own learning, persevering and showing self-discipline and responsibility.
<b>Confidence</b>	Feeling confident in their ability as learners, having the courage to take risks, applying what they have learned and making appropriate decisions and choices.
<b>Cooperation</b>	Cooperating, collaborating, and leading or following as the situation demands.
<b>Creativity</b>	Being creative and imaginative in their thinking and in their approach to problems and dilemmas.
<b>Curiosity</b>	Being curious about the nature of learning, about the world, its people and cultures.
<b>Empathy</b>	Imagining themselves in another's situation in order to understand his or her reasoning and emotions, so as to be open-minded and reflective about the perspectives of others.

<b>Enthusiasm</b>	Enjoying learning and willingly putting the effort into the process.
<b>Independence</b>	Thinking and acting independently, making their own judgements based on reasoned argument, and being able to defend their judgements.
<b>Integrity</b>	Being honest and demonstrating a considered sense of fairness.
<b>Respect</b>	Respecting themselves, others and the world around them.
<b>Tolerance</b>	Being sensitive about differences and diversity in the world and being responsive to the needs of others.

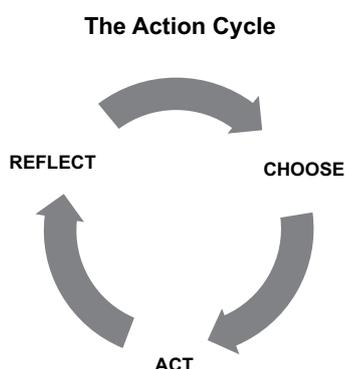
*(Making the PYP Happen, IBO 2009)*

### Action – How do we want the students to act?

Action is the result of a successful inquiry that leads to students reflecting on their learning, making informed choices and taking socially responsible action in order to affect a change in themselves, their peers, the school or the wider community.

development and the ways in which they build connections between what they already know and new knowledge they are acquiring.

This understanding of children’s learning and development is reflected in the IB PYP curriculum documents.



In this approach, what is most important in children’s learning is not their age or the grade they are in, but their “construction of meaning, leading to a deep understanding of concepts” (IB). The Primary Years curriculum is therefore organised in continuums – continuous sequences of steps – and the children progress through a number of phases (or stages) as they move along the continuum for each subject. This provides a structure for developing their learning and understanding, while at the same time giving us the flexibility to cater for individual students’ learning needs.

### Our Curriculum (Scope and Sequence) documents.

At ICS, we recognise that a child’s learning is linked to their development and that the pace of learning varies between students. As the International Baccalaureate says, “Learning is a developmental process... the learner does not always progress through age-related stages in a strictly linear fashion.” (Making the PYP Happen, IB, 2009).

For each phase, there are overall expectations for students’ learning, including their understanding of particular concepts and their application of skills and knowledge. There are specific learning outcomes for each phase, which, through the use of relevant assessments, guide our planning for the teaching and learning.

Our Primary School scope and sequence documents can be found on the *myICS* section of our website [www.icsz.ch](http://www.icsz.ch)

We know that children’s learning is influenced by their previous experiences and by how well they understand the language of instruction. Their learning is also affected by their stage of

## Inquiry

Students learn through asking questions and making sense of their environment. Through inquiry they build upon their prior knowledge, challenging previous ideas and developing new understandings. This may involve:

- exploring, wondering and questioning
- experimenting and playing with possibilities
- making connections between previous learning and current learning
- making predictions and acting purposefully to see what happens
- collecting data and reporting findings
- clarifying existing ideas and reappraising perceptions of events
- deepening understanding through the application of a concepts
- making and testing theories
- researching and seeking information
- taking and defending apposition
- solving problems in a variety of ways.

*(Making the PYP Happen, IBO 2009)*

Inquiry is an integral part of the PYP. The Units of Inquiry are designed to stimulate students' questions and provide them with opportunities to learn about and utilise the transdisciplinary skills.

Where possible, inquiry is used in Language and Maths in order to develop a strong understanding of the concepts being taught.

At ICS we stimulate the students' interest in the units in several ways, including: field trips, visiting experts, artefacts, books, videos and recent research. We also use Philosophy, Waldkinder and Visible Thinking routines to extend their thinking.

## ICS Programme of Inquiry

During the year the students in EY3/Kindergarten to Grade 5 inquire into six globally significant issues connected to the six transdisciplinary themes through their units of inquiry. EY1 and EY2 complete four units of inquiry. The 'significant issue' for each unit is expressed through a conceptually based central idea that is relevant, engaging and challenging to students of all abilities.

The Programme of Inquiry for each grade level can be found on our website [www.icsz.ch](http://www.icsz.ch)



# How best will we learn?

## The Taught Curriculum

### Language Arts

Language is developed across the whole PYP curriculum, enabling children to communicate, use and learn about language in a variety of ways. As a result, all teachers at ICS are teachers of language, modelling and teaching the use of language through their lessons.

Language is taught through building on prior knowledge and purposeful inquiry in the context of the Units of Inquiry whilst also being supported with developmentally appropriate structured lessons. These opportunities provide the students with the skills and strategies necessary to challenge and develop their understanding of concepts in authentic and meaningful situations.

At ICS, the students learn language, learn *about* language, and learn *through* language.

#### **Learning Language**

Students learn language by speaking, listening, reading and writing in order to understand and express ideas. This is modelled and supported by the teachers through creating an environment that encourages risk taking and learning. The students are given opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills through a variety of authentic activities. They are given the chance to read and write daily in a stimulating environment.

Activities may include:

- ‘read-alouds’, which can create a positive classroom community, help to build a shared repertoire of stories, poems, chants and songs, and build a sense of story
- shared and guided reading and writing that can engage all students’ participation at their current level of ability
- independent reading and writing, allowing students to read texts independently and to select, browse, and read texts of interest.

#### **Learning about Language**

Students learn *about* language when exploring language functions and conventions in order to develop their understanding of how language works. Through assessments and observations, teachers identify the relevant reading and writing skills and strategies necessary to be taught to ensure that the students can apply their knowledge independently to a variety of language forms. These skills and strategies are taught building directly upon the student’s prior knowledge. This enables the teacher to scaffold the learning, exposing the student to the language form, modelling and developing the required skills and strategies before the student is expected to use them independently.

Activities may include:

- strategy instruction, demonstrations and focused lessons that enable the children to focus on the processes, elements, and strategies of reading, writing, spelling and punctuation
- language problem-solving strategies
- the use of reference texts
- phonemic awareness
- comprehension strategies
- reading and writing fluency
- spelling patterns and word studies
- editing and publishing
- critical text analysis
- exploring, using and creating digital texts.

#### **Learning through Language**

Children learn *through* language by using it to listen, think, discuss and reflect on their personal experiences, deepening their understanding of texts and helping them make connections with what they know and their previous experiences. They are using reading and writing as tools for exploration or for the purpose of learning about the world.

Activities may include:

- literature study that encourages children to read and write texts as a way of making sense of life
- partner, whole-class and small-group discussions resulting from literacy studies, inquiry, research and other language experiences. For example, the creation of texts to inform or persuade others about an issue arising from a unit of inquiry.

## German

The IB requires that all students in schools offering the PYP programme receive instruction in a language other than the language of instruction of the school. One of the goals of exposing children to languages other than their mother tongue is to provide an insight, understanding and appreciation of other cultures and build an awareness of other perspectives.

German is one of the languages of our host country. At ICS, we begin German in EY1 and students continue to study the language to Grade 12.

### **Early Years Bilingual Strand: English/German**

Children in the Early Years Centre have a dedicated German teacher to support their acquisition of German through the bilingual strand. Each grade level in the Early Years has a German-speaking Teaching Assistant to support children's German language acquisition in all of the learning environments. Both languages are then used throughout the day to support learning. Excursions into our local community, and further afield, provide children with opportunities to use the German language connected to their learning at school.

### **German in Grade 1 to Grade 5**

Beginning in Grade 1, ICS offers two different German programmes:

1. German as an Additional Language for those students who do not speak German at home.

In this programme, the children of each grade level are divided into three ability groups: beginners, intermediate and advanced. Students learn everyday vocabulary to help them interact with the local community. Aspects of the Units of Inquiry are incorporated in the German

programme when there is a relevant connection to be made. In the higher ability groups written assignments and grammar become increasingly more important. Any additional exposure to German language activities outside school is beneficial.

2. German as a Mother Tongue

In this programme, the students follow a curriculum for native speakers. In addition to cross-curricular links to some Units of Inquiry, formal aspects of spoken and written German are taught.

The children in Grades 1–5 receive instruction of four classes a week for 45 minutes each.

### **Integration of German into Units of Inquiry**

German field trips are organised by the German department to complement the Units of Inquiry and provide students with an authentic purpose to use their German.

In Grade 1, the German department connects the integration trip with the class inquiry into public space. Students explore public spaces around the school, describe their uses and inquire into their rights and responsibilities when using those spaces.

The Grade 2 integration trip links to the class unit of exploration. During the trip, the second grade students plan a trip by choosing and organising their travel on public transport, manage their class's food budget for the day, and discuss their food choices when shopping. This trip supports the line of inquiry 'Explorers document and communicate their discoveries in different ways.'

Grade 3 goes on an overnight trip to a mountain hostel in Mettmenalp. This overnight trip is conducted in German and the students are involved in learning experiences that encourage them to speak German, work collaboratively with each other, and learn about the local environment. The activities involve environmental studies, songs, games and outdoor activities.

Grade 4: The focus of this integration trip lies on people's responsibility to support the sustainability of earth's resources. Students are inquiring into which measurements Switzerland has put into place in order to support the sustainable use of resources. These learning activities are conducted at the banks of Greifensee.

The Grade 5 integration trip is closely connected to the PYP exhibition for which the students inquire into a local issue. Following on from this and in preparation for the Community and Service Programme in the secondary school, the German Department organises an afternoon of 'Dienst an der Gemeinschaft', where students

provide volunteer work to support organisations and events in their local community.

## Mathematics

In the PYP programme, Mathematics is recognised as a means of constructing meaning of the world around us. It is viewed as a tool to support inquiry as well as a way of thinking. Children acquire mathematical understanding by constructing meaning based on previous experience, transferring their understanding into symbols, and then applying this new understanding to authentic, purposeful situations. This is an interactive process with children inquiring into Mathematics, explaining their actions, communicating ideas and reflecting on the process. Through this dialogue they continue to build upon and expand their prior knowledge.

Within the PYP the knowledge component of Maths is organised into five strands:

<b>Number</b>	Our number system is a language for describing quantities and the relationships between quantities. For example, the value attributed to a digit depends on its place within a base system. Numbers are used to interpret information, make decisions and solve problems. For example, the operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division are related to one another and are used to process information in order to solve problems. The degree of precision needed in calculating depends on how the result will be used.
<b>Pattern and function</b>	To identify pattern is to begin to understand how mathematics applies to the world in which we live. The repetitive features of patterns can be identified and described as generalized rules called 'functions'. This builds a foundation for the later study of algebra.
<b>Data handling</b>	Data handling allows us to summarise what we know about the world and to make inferences about what we do not know.  Data can be collected, organised, represented and summarised in a variety of ways to highlight similarities, differences and trends; the chosen format should illustrate the information without bias or distortion.  Probability can be expressed qualitatively by using terms such as 'unlikely', 'certain', or 'impossible'. It can be expressed quantitatively on a numerical scale.
<b>Measurement</b>	To measure is to attach a number to a quantity using a chosen unit. Since the attributes being measured are continuous, ways must be found to deal with quantities that fall between numbers. It is important to know how accurate a measurement needs to be or can ever be.
<b>Shape and space</b>	The regions, paths and boundaries of natural space can be described by shape. An understanding of the interrelationships of shape allows us to interpret, understand and appreciate our two-dimensional (2D) and three-dimensional (3D) world.

(Mathematics Scope and Sequence, IB, 2009)

Many of the goals of our curriculum are to enable the children to inquire through Maths and where there are authentic connections Mathematics is explored during the Unit of Inquiry.

In Mathematics they:

- spend time exploring problems in depth
- find more than one solution to many of the problems they work on

- explore and understand strategies and approaches rather than relying on memorisation procedures
- work in a variety of groups – whole class, individually, in pairs and in small groups
- express their mathematical thinking through drawing, writing and talking
- apply relevant knowledge and strategies to solve a variety of problems.

## Science

*'Science ... is viewed as the exploration of the biological, chemical and physical aspects of the natural world, and the relationship between them.'* (IB PYP Science Scope and Sequence).

Science involves people investigating the living, physical, material, and technological components of their environment and making sense of them in logical and creative ways.

Learning in Science is fundamental to understanding the world in which we live and work. It helps people to clarify ideas, to ask questions, to test explanations through measurement and observation, and to use their findings to establish the worth of an idea.

Within the PYP the knowledge component of Science is organised into four strands:

<b>Living things</b>	The study of the characteristics, systems and behaviours of humans and other animals, and of plants; the interactions and relationships between and among them, and with their environment.
<b>Earth and space</b>	The study of planet Earth and its position in the universe, particularly its relationship with the sun; the systems, distinctive features and natural phenomena that shape and identify the planet; the infinite and finite resources of the planet.
<b>Material and matter</b>	The study of the properties, behaviours and uses of materials, both natural and human-made; the origins of human-made materials and how they are manipulated to suit a purpose.
<b>Forces and energy</b>	The study of energy, its origins, storage and transfer, and the work it can do; the study of forces; the application of scientific understanding through inventions and machines.

*(Making the PYP Happen, IBO 2009)*



## Social Studies

Social Studies is viewed by the PYP as the study of people and their place in a global society. Social Studies helps students develop their personal, family, ethnic and cultural identities to make informed and reasoned decisions about their environment and the society in which they live, and to understand themselves and the action of others in relation to the past.

Within the PYP the knowledge component of Social Studies is organised into five strands:

<b>Human systems and economic activities</b>	The study of how and why people construct organisations and systems; the ways in which people connect locally and globally; the distribution of power and authority.
<b>Social organisation and culture</b>	The study of people, communities, cultures and societies; the ways in which individuals, groups and societies interact with each other.
<b>Continuity and change through time</b>	The study of relationships between people and events through time; the past, its influences on the present and its implications for the future; people who have shaped the future through their actions.
<b>Human and natural environments</b>	The study of the distinctive features that give a place its identity; how people adapt to and alter their environment; how people experience and represent place; the impact of natural disasters on people and the built environment.
<b>Resources and the environment</b>	The interaction between people and the environment; the study of how humans allocate and manage resources; the positive and negative effects of this management; the impact of scientific and technological developments on the environment.

*(Making the PYP Happen, IBO 2009)*

These strands are interrelated and taught through the development of concepts across the transdisciplinary themes and within the units of inquiry.

## Information and Communications Technology (ICT)

At ICS, Information and Communications Technology is a tool that is integrated into teaching and learning to enhance inquiry through relevant, authentic experiences within the Units of Inquiry, as well as through stand-alone learning experiences in the content areas. ICT supports inquiry and enables students to build the skills and understandings that enable collaboration, critical thought, self-directed learning, communication, and organization. Furthermore, the effective use of ICT enables greater customization of the learning experience, and provides opportunities for learning to transcend the classroom. It also gives students transferable skills that will apply to many devices, such as laptops, tablets, and desktops. By equipping students with skills that enable them to become technologically literate, we prepare them for their future in an increasingly digital world.

The Primary Digital Coach works with the students and teachers to integrate IT into the Units of Inquiry and other areas of the curriculum. Throughout the curriculum, digital literacy and digital citizenship is taught, both in the classroom and through collaboration with the librarian and school counsellor.

The lower grades have one or two computers in the rooms and regular access to iPads, and the upper grades have laptops, Chromebooks, and a computer per classroom enabling the students to have access to technology and resources throughout the day. All classrooms have access to the school network and all Primary classrooms have been fitted with beamers or interactive whiteboards, which complement the growing use of ICT in lessons. ICT at ICS is developing fast, with student and teacher enthusiasm driving the school forward.

**Personal, Social and Physical Education (PSPE)**

*others, and to participation in an active, healthy lifestyle.’ (Making the PYP Happen, IBO 2009)*

Personal, Social and Physical Education (PSPE) in the PYP programme provides a curriculum that is concerned with *‘the individual’s well-being through the promotion and development of concepts, knowledge, attitudes and skill that contribute to this well-being. Well-being is intrinsically linked to all aspects of a student’s experience at school and beyond. It encompasses physical, emotional, cognitive, spiritual and social health and development, and contributes to an understanding of self, to developing and maintaining relationships with*

The development of a student’s well-being is a fundamental aspect of the whole curriculum. The teaching of PSPE is integrated into the whole curriculum and is taught through all standalone subjects as well as through the units of inquiry, enabling the students to become lifelong learners and internationally minded students.

The knowledge components of PSPE can be separated into three strands:

<b>Identity</b>	An understanding of one’s own beliefs, values, attitudes and feelings and how they shape us; the impact of cultural influences; the recognition of strengths, limitations and challenges as well as the ability to cope successfully with situation of change and adversity; how the learner’s concept of self and feelings of self-worth affect his or her approach to learning and how he or she interacts with others.
<b>Active Living</b>	An understanding of the factors that contribute to developing and maintaining a balanced, healthy lifestyle; the importance of regular physical activity; the body’s response to exercise; the importance of developing basic motor skills; understanding and developing the body’s potential for movement and expressions; the importance of nutrition; understanding the causes and possible prevention of ill health; the promotion of safety; rights and the responsibility we have to ourselves and others to promote well-being; making informed choices and evaluating consequences, and taking action for healthy living now and in the future.
<b>Interactions</b>	An understanding of how an individual interacts with other people, other living things and the wider world; behaviours, rights and responsibility of individuals in their relationship with others, communities, society and the world around them; the awareness and understanding of similarities and differences; an appreciation of the environment and an understanding of, and commitment to, humankind’s responsibility as custodians of the Earth for future generations.

*(Making the PYP Happen, IBO 2009)*



## Physical Education (PE)

During PE at ICS, students learn about kinaesthetic movement through physical activity and learn to understand and appreciate their own physical strengths and weaknesses. PE offers students the opportunity to discover ways to solve problems, address physical challenges, work as a group, use various types of equipment

and express themselves with and without the support of music. Physical Education helps students develop their personal, physical, social and emotional well-being while they grow. Wherever possible, connections are made with the Programme of Inquiry.

Within the PYP, a balanced PE curriculum is organised into five strands:

<b>Individual pursuits</b>	The development of basic motor skills and the body's capacity for movement through locomotor and manipulative skills and/or experiences; the techniques, rules and purpose of a range of athletic activities (e.g. track and field, swimming, skating, skiing); recognizing a high level of achievement and how to improve a performance.
<b>Games</b>	Recognizing the challenges presented by games; the importance of manipulating space; the categorizing of games; identifying and developing appropriate skills and strategies; recognizing the importance of rules and how they define the nature of a game; modifying existing games and creating new games; teamwork.
<b>Health-related activities</b>	Recognizing and appreciating the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle; the body's response to exercise including the interaction of body systems and the development of physical fitness.
<b>Movement composition</b>	Recognizing that movements can be linked together and refined to create a sequence of aesthetic movements. Movements can be in response to stimuli or performance elements and/or criteria and can communicate feelings, emotions and ideas (e.g. dance, gymnastics, martial arts).
<b>Adventure challenge</b>	A variety of tasks requiring the use of physical and critical-thinking skills by individuals and/or groups; challenges that require groups to work together collaboratively in order to solve problems and accomplish a common goal; recognizing the role of the individual in group problem solving.

*(Making the PYP Happen, IBO 2009)*

## Visual Art, Music, Dance and Drama

The PYP considers Art as a form of expression, promoting imagination, creativity, and original thinking. It is a means to discover and understand the world, and to communicate and share ideas.

Visual Art, Music, Dance and Drama are identified as 'the Arts' within the PYP. All are recognised as subjects in their own right but their transdisciplinary nature allows them to

be integrated into the Programme of Inquiry. Through the Arts students can inquire into different cultures and find out more about themselves and others, becoming more confident in expressing their ideas through a variety of medium. The Arts can be explored by the individual or within a group promoting collaboration and cooperation.

The Arts have two concept driven strands that are connected to all four disciplines:

<b>Responding</b>	<p>The process of responding provides students with opportunities to respond to their own and other artists' works and processes, and in so doing develop the skills of critical analysis, interpretation, evaluation, reflection and communication. Students will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the concepts, methods and elements of Dance, Drama, Music and Visual Arts, including using specialized language. Students consider their own and other artists' works in context and from different perspectives in order to construct meaning and inform their own future works and processes. The responding strand is not simply about reflecting; responding may include creative acts and encompasses presenting, sharing and communicating one's own understanding. By responding to their own artwork and that of others students become more mindful of their own artistic development and the role that arts play in the world around them.</p>
<b>Creating</b>	<p>The process of creating provides students with opportunities to communicate distinctive forms of meaning, develop their technical skills, take creative risks, solve problems and visualize consequences. Students are encouraged to draw on their imagination, experiences and knowledge of materials and processes as starting points for creative exploration. They can make connections between their work and that of other artists to inform their thinking and to provide inspiration. Both independently and collaboratively, students participate in creative processes through which they can communicate ideas and express feelings. The creating strand provides opportunities for students to explore their personal interests, beliefs and values and to engage in a personal artistic journey.</p>

*(Making the PYP Happen, IBO 2009)*

## Library

The library plays an integral part of the life of the school. With more than 30,000 books (both non-fiction and fiction), reference materials, online encyclopaedias and subscription databases, the library is a major resource for the entire school community. It is a place for the students to share great literature, find information for their inquiries, and to learn research skills that can be applied in the classroom and the world at large. Our goal is to promote a love of literature and help our students acquire the information, research, and digital literacy skills necessary for our students to become successful life-long learners.

The librarian empowers students to be critical thinkers, enthusiastic readers, skilful researchers and ethical users of information (AASL 2009).

All grade levels in Primary have weekly scheduled lessons in the library with the librarian, in addition to flexible opportunities in which to access the library (and librarian) throughout the school day that support both class units and

personal inquiries. When appropriate, library lessons are closely linked with and support each grade level's units of Inquiry.

In addition to providing great resources that support learning and love of reading, the Primary library offers opportunities for students to connect with each other and create via our Makerspace area.

The Primary library welcomes all members of the ICS community throughout the day.



# How will we know what we have learned? The Assessed Curriculum

Assessment is an integral part of the PYP programme as it provides feedback on the learning process which in turn helps direct the teaching by providing information to enable more effective differentiation. Assessments at ICS are designed to give feedback on students' prior knowledge, their enduring understanding of concepts, acquisition of knowledge, development of skills and attitudes, and the ability to take appropriate action.

Assessments are anchored in authentic tasks and are sensitive to cultural, linguistic, learning, and physical and gender differences. Students, teachers, parents and administrators should have a clear understanding of the reason for the assessment, what is being assessed, the criteria, and the strategy used for the assessment.

A variety of assessment strategies and tools are used for assessing students' work, taking into account the diverse, complicated and sophisticated ways that individual children use to understand experiences. Assessment strategies – including anecdotal records, checklists, portfolios of work, continuums, rubrics and many more – provide an effective means of recording a student's responses and performances in real-life situations. These authentic strategies may be used in conjunction with other forms of assessment, such as standardised tests, in order to assess student performance. The PYP also stresses the importance of student self-assessment and reflection.

the year students and teachers gather examples of work that show progression of learning from all subject areas. These are shared through the student's e-Portfolios. As a result, our portfolios are process portfolios, containing a combination of drafts, reflections and finished products.

## **PYP Exhibition**

The Grade 5 PYP exhibition, held each year, enables the students to demonstrate and celebrate their proficiencies in all areas of the curriculum.

## **Parent/Teacher Conferences**

Parent/Teacher conferences are held twice a year, giving parents and teachers the opportunity to meet to discuss each student's progress.

## **Student Led Conferences**

Student-led conferences happen once a year. This is an opportunity for students to share their learning with their parents within the school environment. Students reflect on and demonstrate their understanding through sharing learning experiences with their parents and family.

## **Reports**

ICS reports are issued in December and June and provide a summary of each child's progress in the Primary school. They are written to provide feedback on the child's progress in all areas of the curriculum and learning.

## Reporting in the PYP

In the Primary School, we record student progress in several ways:

### **E-Portfolios**

The PYP requires that individual portfolios of student achievement are kept throughout the student's time in the Primary School. Throughout

# Home Learning

Home learning in the Primary School provides opportunities for students to see themselves as learners everywhere by extending their learning in a meaningful way outside of school. It provides a link between school and home, supporting the student in the pursuit of their own interests and passions, whilst encouraging them to become independent, self-directed learners, taking greater responsibility for their learning.

At ICS we believe that Home Learning involves the whole community and encompasses all areas of a student's development. Home Learning focuses on physical, community and

family engagements that are not provided within the school day.

At ICS...

1. Students are required to read (and/or be read to) daily in English and/or in their home languages.
2. Students are encouraged to pursue their passions and fulfil their responsibilities inside and outside of school.



# Student Leadership

In the Primary School we aim to develop the attributes needed for our students to become active compassionate and lifelong learners. One aspect of this is to encourage, support and celebrate authentic student action through leadership.

Through providing and exploring opportunities for student leadership, either initiated by the student or by the school, students develop an understanding of how groups function whilst developing their leadership capacity. By taking on a leadership role, students will develop social and emotional intelligence, learn to work collaboratively, build resilience, become flexible and adaptable, and have opportunities to take risks and develop a growth mindset.

Within the Primary School there are many opportunities for students to show leadership skills both inside and outside the classroom. There are three main extracurricular groups providing the chance to take on a leadership role that influences the lives of our students and others.

## Primary Student Council

The Primary Student Council at ICS has an active role within the Primary School environment. The overall role of the Student Council is to provide 'student voice' and support 'student spirit'. Student Council members develop their leadership skills in areas beyond the classroom by bringing students' questions and proposals for change to the Primary Leadership. They develop an action plan and put this into effect. The Primary Student Council also raises money through Spirit days to support the education of students in developing countries.

## Round Square

The Round Square approach is built around six IDEALS of learning: Internationalism, Democracy, Environmentalism, Adventure, Leadership and Service. Our young people are encouraged to discover and embrace the similarities and differences between cultures and nationalities in ways that promote meaningful and lasting understanding, tolerance and respect. At ICS, we help the next generation of student leaders understand, prepare for and

respond to the world. We promote the sharing of ideas, experiences and opportunities within the Primary School.

## Student Ambassadors

The Primary School Student Ambassadors work towards enhancing our Culture of Care by helping all children feel safe, happy and included. This is achieved by developing and implementing social and emotional initiatives in the playground/school that include looking after new students at ICS, implementing the "friendship bench" and being playground peer mentors. The Student Ambassador programme is an inherent part of student leadership at ICS. Through the projects undertaken, opportunities are provided for students to increase their knowledge about leadership and develop their leadership skills. This in turn leads to the development of student agency and social belonging.





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ICS is fully accredited by the Council of International Schools (CIS) as well as the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC).

