

INSPIRE.

MOVE FORWARD.

GIVE BACK.



PRIMARY YEARS CURRICULUM INFORMATION

World Citizens Made in Dresden

DIS Vision

Inspire. Move forward. Give back.

DIS Mission Statement

We are a diverse community that empowers innovative and collaborative learning. As learners, we are prepared to be multifaceted, self-sufficient individuals who contribute to society.

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INTRODUCTION

The International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (PYP) at DIS combines best practice and research from several different national systems and from a range of international schools. It is a challenging, transdisciplinary curriculum designed to engage and make learning relevant for our students.

The curriculum at Dresden International School is guided by the philosophical framework of the PYP. The PYP supports a body of significant knowledge for all students in all cultures in six principal curriculum areas: *languages, social studies, mathematics, arts, science, and personal, social and physical education*. The PYP represents an internationally recognized curricular framework built on best-practice in education.



Wherever possible, learning takes place within the units of inquiry. When there are stand-alone elements to a particular discipline, inquiry is still the major pedagogical approach to teaching and learning. PYP students have regular classes with specialist teachers in German, sports, performing arts and music; these areas are linked to the units of inquiry authentically.

At the heart of the PYP is a commitment to inquiry as a method of teaching and learning. Students participate in problem-solving, ask questions, actively seek explanations, form hypotheses and generalizations within a constructivist framework.

IB Learner Profile Attributes

The aim of all IB programmes is to develop internationally-minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world. Every day, students engage in relevant, significant and age-appropriate learning experiences. The philosophy of the PYP supports this by ensuring that we meet the academic, social, emotional, cultural, linguistic and physical needs of each child's educational journey. The programme is anchored by the IB Learner Profile Attributes, which is a core set of values that define what it means to be internationally-minded, the students and the adults in our community strive to be:

Inquirers	We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.
Knowledgeable	We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.
Thinkers	We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyze and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.
Communicators	We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.
Principled	We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.
Open-minded	We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.
Caring	We show empathy, compassion and respect. We have a commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.
Risk-takers	We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.
Balanced	We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives—intellectual, physical, and emotional—to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.
Reflective	We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.

DIS Programme of Inquiry

Our Programme of Inquiry is built around six transdisciplinary themes:

Who We Are An inquiry into identity as individuals and as part of a collective through: • physical, emotional, social and spiritual health and well-being • relationships and belonging • learning and growing	How the World Works An inquiry into understandings of the world and phenomena through: • patterns, cycles, systems • diverse practices, methods and tools • discovery, design, innovation: possibilities and impacts
Where We Are In Place and Time An inquiry into histories and orientation in place, space and time through: • periods, events and artefacts • communities, heritage, culture and environment • natural and human drivers of movement, adaptation, and transformation	How We Organize Ourselves An inquiry into systems, structures and networks through: • interactions within and between social and ecological systems • approaches to livelihoods and trade practices: intended and unintended consequences • representation, collaboration and decision-making
How We Express Ourselves An inquiry into the diversity of voice, perspectives, and expression through: • inspiration, imagination, creativity • personal, social and cultural modes and practices of communication • intentions, perceptions, interpretations and responses	Sharing the Planet An inquiry into the interdependence of human and natural worlds through: • rights, responsibilities and dignity of all • pathways to just, peaceful and reimagined futures • nature, complexity, coexistence and wisdom

The transdisciplinary themes are the vehicles through which subject area disciplines are explored and developed. The programme is guided by a series of transdisciplinary themes that fit in with the different subject domains: *Who we are*, *Where we are in time and place*, *How we express ourselves*, *How the world works*, *How we organize ourselves*, and *Sharing the planet*. From Grade 1 through 5, students take part in six units of inquiry, one for each transdisciplinary theme. In the Early Years (ages 3-6), children inquire within four units throughout the year. This is done through the lens of the central idea of a unit, the lines of inquiry, and through key concepts.

Dresden International School Primary Years Programme of Inquiry

Units are consistently being reviewed and will be updated accordingly

Grade Level	Who We Are	Where We Are in Place and Time	How We Express Ourselves	How the World Works	How We Organize Ourselves	Sharing the Planet
3-4 Year PreK	Central Idea: Through play, we discover new ideas and understandings about ourselves, others, and the world around us. Lines of Inquiry & Key Concepts: We learn about ourselves through play (Connection) We discover new ideas and interests from others through play (Causation) Play helps us to make connections (Perspective)		Central Idea: People may express feelings and ideas in different ways. Lines of Inquiry & Key Concepts: How we use different colors, media, and techniques to express ourselves (Form) How we represent people, places, and emotions in visual and performing arts (Function) How artists use different colors, media, and techniques in their work to express ideas. (Reflection)	Central Idea: Water exists in different forms and has different uses. Lines of Inquiry & Key Concepts: Properties of water in its different forms (Form) How water changes from one state to another (Change) Different ways water is used and where we find water (Function)	Central Idea: People have roles to help communities function Lines of Inquiry & Key Concepts: Roles people have in different kinds of jobs (Form) Equipment workers use (Function) How people with jobs help other (Connection)	

Grade Level	Who We Are	Where We Are in Place and Time	How We Express Ourselves	How the World Works	How We Organize Ourselves	Sharing the Planet
Kinder-garten	Central Idea: The school environment offers opportunities to belong to a community, and it is our responsibility to contribute to it positively. Lines of Inquiry & Key Concepts: Who is in our school community (Form) How can i connect and interact with others in a positive and safe way (Connection) What can I do to support my class, grade level, and a wider school community (Responsibility)		Central Idea: People can show creativity in many different ways. Lines of Inquiry & Key Concepts: How people can express their ideas and feelings in different creative ways (Form and Causation) What is imagination and inspiration (Perspective) How our creativity flourishes the more we put it to work (Causation)	Central Idea: When spending time in nature, people make discoveries and develop a relation and appreciation for the natural world. Lines of Inquiry & Key Concepts: Where and what nature is (Form) What we discover through our exploration of nature (Causation) What happens in nature when seasons change (Form) How we are respectful of our natural environment (Responsibility)	Central Idea: Products go through a process before they are used. Lines of Inquiry & Key Concepts: The origins of products (Form) The process that products go through (Change) Developing a process to create a product (Function)	

Grade Level	Who We Are	Where We Are in Place and Time	How We Express Ourselves	How the World Works	How We Organize Ourselves	Sharing the Planet
Grade 1	Central Idea: Individuals learn and grow to use skills and strategies to form supportive relationships Lines of Inquiry & Key Concepts: Types of supportive relationships (Form) How communication and social skills support relationships (Function) Reasons and solutions for conflict (Causation)	Central Idea: People celebrate traditions showing culture and community. Lines of Inquiry & Key Concepts: Different traditions, celebrations and symbols in Germany and around the world. (Form) How traditions bring people together and help communities celebrate (Function) The connections between family traditions, culture and celebrations around the world (Connection)	Central Idea: Artists can create stories in a variety of ways. Lines of Inquiry & Key Concepts: How the body, the voice, and instruments can be used as tools to communicate a story (Function) Ways visual arts, music, drama and dance are skills to express your own ideas (Form) Our responsibilities as artists and/or performers (Responsibility)	Central Idea: Living things respond differently to natural cycles. Lines of Inquiry & Key Concepts: Different natural cycles. (Form) How natural cycles impact living things, including humans. (Causation) Changes in natural cycles. (Change)	Central Idea: Games work because of systems and rules that help people play together. Lines of Inquiry & Key Concepts: How people may understand, interpret, or experience the same game differently (Perspective) How the parts of a game such as players, actions, and tools work together as a system (Connection) How changing rules or systems in a game leads to different outcomes (Causation)	Central Idea: Animal features enable them to meet their needs for survival in an environment. Lines of Inquiry & Key Concepts: Features of animals and behaviors of animals (Form and Function) Habitats of animals (Form) The interconnectedness between animals and other living things (Connection)

Grade Level	Who We Are	Where We Are in Place and Time	How We Express Ourselves	How the World Works	How We Organize Ourselves	Sharing the Planet
Grade 2	Central Idea: Stories and art help us understand ourselves and others and inspire us to care for our communities. Lines of Inquiry & Key Concepts: Messages about identity and belonging in stories from families and cultures (Connection) The issues local and global communities can have. (Reflection) How diverse stories can inspire us to take action. (Responsibility)	Central Idea: Communities are shaped by their heritage, culture, and environment over time. Lines of Inquiry & Key Concepts: The traditions and culture or a community (Form) The role of language in shaping identity and preserving heritage in communities (Connection) How people take responsibility for preserving and sharing heritage (Connection)	Central Idea: The Arts can evoke an emotion in an audience. Lines of Inquiry & Key Concepts: Different emotions (Form) How emotions are influenced by the principles of art and design. (Function) Ways in which the artist connects to the audience (Connection)	Central Idea: Scientists use different methods like observing, predicting, and experimenting to understand the properties of matter. Lines of Inquiry & Key Concepts: Different properties of materials and how we describe them (Form) How scientists use observations and experiments to learn about materials (Function) How materials can change and why these changes happen (Change and Causation)	Central Idea: People create and use systems to collaborate and make decisions in a community. Lines of Inquiry & Key Concepts: How systems are organised in communities (Form) How systems impact people working together (Function) Why systems are important for making decisions (Causation)	Central Idea: Our choices have an impact on the balance between humans, animals, and the natural world. Lines of Inquiry & Key Concepts: The relationship between humans, living things, and their shared environments (Connection) How human actions impact the natural balance (Causation). Our responsibilities to protect the rights of all living things (Responsibility)

Grade Level	Who We Are	Where We Are in Place and Time	How We Express Ourselves	How the World Works	How We Organize Ourselves	Sharing the Planet
Grade 3	Central Idea: Personal habits can enable an individual to maintain a positive sense of well-being. Lines of Inquiry & Key Concepts: The different components of well-being (Form) The personal habits we develop impact our well-being (Causation) Creating healthy habits and sharing them with others promotes a sense of well-being (Responsibility) How goals allow us to maintain our health and well-being; How creating goals leads to feeling well and staying healthy (Responsibility - PE)	Central Idea: People can share culture in different places and times. Lines of Inquiry & Key Concepts: The vision and action of people from the past (Form) What we see and experience today as the legacy of people from the past (Causation) Different perspectives on the impact of people from the past. (Perspective)	Central Idea: Humans have developed different ways of communicating ideas over time using symbols, writing, and language. Lines of Inquiry & Key Concepts: The purposes of communication (Function). How communication has changed (Change) The reasons why communication changed (Causation)	Central Idea: Properties of light and sound depend on their source and the objects with which they interact. Lines of Inquiry & Key Concepts: How light and sound work and behave (Function) How materials affect the movement of light and sound (Causation) How light and sound waves interact with the world around them (Connection)	Central Idea: Digital technology creates opportunities and challenges. Lines of Inquiry & Key Concepts: How coding is used to make digital technology work (Function) How digital technology creates opportunities and challenges (Causation) The importance of being a responsible and safe digital citizen as we interact with hardware and software (Responsibility)	Central Idea: By understanding and responding to the Earth's evolving processes, individuals can improve their chances of survival. Lines of Inquiry & Key Concepts: How Earth's processes cause changes over time (Change) How we respond to and prepare for Earth's changing processes (Causation) Human responses to the earth's changes (Connection)

Grade Level	Who We Are	Where We Are in Place and Time	How We Express Ourselves	How the World Works	How We Organize Ourselves	Sharing the Planet
Grade 4	Central Idea: An individual's identity forms as the result of personal qualities, values and experiences. Lines of Inquiry & Key Concepts: How personal qualities, values and experiences create our self-identity (Causation) Challenges and benefits of having a diverse range of cultural identities in a community (Connection) How listening to others' stories helps us understand our own identity (Perspective)	Central Idea: Migration shapes communities and cultures around the world. Lines of Inquiry & Key Concepts: Reasons for migration (e.g., economic opportunities, seeking safety, cultural factors) (Form) The challenges and opportunities of migration (Causation) Ways people adapt to new environments as a result of migration (e.g., language, customs, traditions). (Change)	Central Idea: Businesses use persuasive communications strategies to attract customers. Lines of Inquiry & Key Concepts: Different forms of persuasive communication (Form) Using digital tools and platforms for storytelling (Connection) How businesses effectively and responsibly communicate in a positive manner (Responsibility)	Central Idea: Understanding forces, motion, and energy helps people to create and design simple machines. Lines of Inquiry & Key Concepts: The different forms of forces, motions, and energy (Form) How forces, motion, and energy can change (Change) How the different forces work together in designed systems (Connection)	Central Idea: Business owners employ a variety of strategies and skills which can advance their decision making and representation. Lines of Inquiry & Key Concepts: Different viewpoints on what makes a company fair, responsible and ethical (Perspective) How businesses engage in iterative processes of testing, feedback, and refinement to develop sustainable and responsible business plans. (Responsibility) How businesses validate their ideas through market research, prototype testing, and customer feedback to ensure alignment with market needs and preferences. (Causation)	Central Idea: Children worldwide encounter a range of challenges, risks and opportunities. Lines of Inquiry & Key Concepts: The types of challenges, risks, and opportunities that exist for children (Form) Factors which contribute to challenges and opportunities (Causation) What actions of society and people affect children's lives (Perspective)
Grade Level	Who We Are EXHIBITION	Where We Are in Place and Time	How We Express Ourselves EXHIBITION	How the World Works	How We Organize Ourselves	Sharing the Planet
Grade 5	Central Idea: Students create their own central idea based on their chosen PYPX topic. Lines of Inquiry & Key Concepts: How diverse human experiences and perspectives shape the issues people face locally and globally (Perspective & Connection) The root causes influencing human behaviour, wellbeing, and relationships related to our chosen issue (Causation & Corm)	Central Idea: Historical events play a crucial role in shaping both the lives and perspectives of individuals. Lines of Inquiry & Key Concepts: Evidence of historical events of the past and what caused them. (Causation, Change) The influence of significant events on people and places (Perspective) People's experiences shapes their perspectives (Causation)	Central Idea: Curating spaces develops an understanding of ourselves and the world around us. Lines of Inquiry & Key Concepts: How people consider their audience when curating a space. (Perspective & Responsibility) How the choices you make contribute to the aesthetic of your space. (Reflection) The different mediums in which we can share our	Central Idea: Scientific discoveries and advancements shape and transform societies and people's lives. Lines of Inquiry & Key Concepts: The features of scientific discoveries and advancements over time (Form) The ways scientific advancements lead to change in communities and individuals (Causation)	Central Idea: The interaction of systems, roles, and decision-making shapes how individuals respond to change. Lines of Inquiry & Key Concepts: Parts of a system function (Function) Responsibilities of people within a system (Responsibility) The ways decision-making can have positive and negative consequences	Central Idea: Global citizens have a responsibility to address world issues. Lines of Inquiry & Key Concepts: How the Sustainability Goals support communities to take action (Connection) How the SDG prompt people to be responsible global citizens (Causation, Responsibility)

	How we can design and carry out actions that support human wellbeing and positive change in our communities (Function, Responsibility & Change)		learning (Form)	The ethical responsibilities connected to scientific discoveries (Responsibility)	(Connection, Causation)	
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Learner Agency

Children are natural inquirers, they question, wonder and theorize about themselves, others and the world around them. Through their experiences and interactions, they naturally develop intricate, multi-layered perceptions and understandings. At DIS, students in the PYP are the agents for their own learning and show this through the concept of learner agency. They take responsibility and ownership of their learning by using their own initiative and will. The relationship between teacher and student is viewed as a partnership. Students have voice, choice and ownership for their own learning.



Approaches to Learning

Learning how to learn is fundamental to students' education. The approaches to learning have five categories of interrelated skills and associated subskills that support all students to be self-regulated learners as well as to support their sense of agency. Teachers collaboratively plan opportunities for students to develop these skills.

Categories	Subskills
Thinking Skills	• Critical-thinking skills (analyzing and evaluating issues and ideas) • Creative-thinking skills (generating novel ideas and considering new perspectives) • Transfer skills (using skills and knowledge in multiple contexts) • Reflection/metacognitive skills ((re)considering the process of learning)
Research Skills	• Information-literacy skills (formulating and planning, data gathering and recording, synthesizing) • Media - literacy skills (interacting with media to use and create ideas and information) • Ethical use of media/information (understanding and applying social and ethical technology)
Communication Skills	• Exchanging-information skills (listening, interpreting, speaking) • Literacy skills (reading, writing and using language to gather and communicate information) • ICT skills (using technology to gather, investigate and communicate information)
Social Skills	• Developing positive interpersonal relationships and collaboration skills (using self-control, managing setbacks, supporting peers) • Developing social-emotional intelligence
Self-Management Skills	• Organization skills (managing time and tasks effectively) • States of mind (mindfulness, perseverance, emotional management, self -motivation, resilience)

Key Concepts

Concept-based inquiry drives the learning as it promotes meaning and understanding and it challenges students to engage in significant ideas. The PYP is a concept-driven curriculum that promotes ideas, intellectual depth, the transfer of concepts between subject areas, and perhaps most importantly, develops the intellect and skills to think flexibly within an ever-changing world. Concepts are accessible to every student as there are no limits on the breadth of knowledge or on the depth of understanding.

Key concepts are identified and investigated through open-ended questions that allow students to think critically about big ideas and this is done through collaboration between students and teachers. In contrast to the key concepts, related concepts are more narrow in focus and they allow for students to explore the key concepts in greater detail and they add depth to the programme.

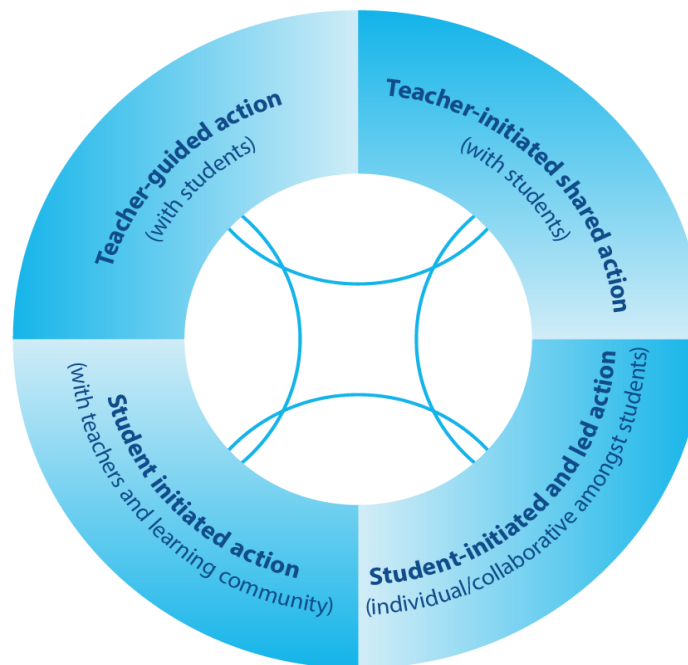
Key Concept	Key Question	Definition	Key Concept	Key Question	Definition
Form	What is it like?	The understanding that everything has a form with recognizable features that can be observed, identified, described and categorized. <i>Eg. properties, structure, similarities, differences, pattern</i>	Connection	How is it linked to other things?	The understanding that we live in a world of interacting systems in which the actions of any individual element affect others. <i>Eg. systems, relationships, networks, interdependence</i>
Function	How does it work?	The understanding that everything has a purpose, a role or a way of behaving that can be investigated. <i>Eg. behaviour, communication, pattern, role, systems</i>	Perspective	What are the points of view?	The understanding that knowledge is moderated by different points of view which leads to different interpretations, understandings and findings; perspectives may be individual, group, cultural or subject-specific. <i>Eg. truth, beliefs, opinion, prejudice</i>
Causation	Why is it as it is?	The understanding that things do not just happen; there are causal relationships at work, and that actions have consequences. <i>Eg. consequences, sequences, pattern, impact</i>	Responsibility	What are our obligations?	The understanding that people make choices based on their understandings, beliefs and values, and the actions they take as a result do make a difference. <i>Eg. rights, citizenship, values, justice</i>
Change	How is it transforming?	The understanding that change is the process of movement from one state to another. It is universal and inevitable. <i>Eg. adaptation, growth, cycles, sequences, transformation</i>			

Action

Action, the core of student agency, is integral to the PYP learning process and to the programmes overarching outcome of international-mindedness. Through actions, students develop a sense of belonging to local and global communities. In the PYP, action is initiated by the students and it is authentic, meaningful, mindful, responsible and responsive. Action could be:

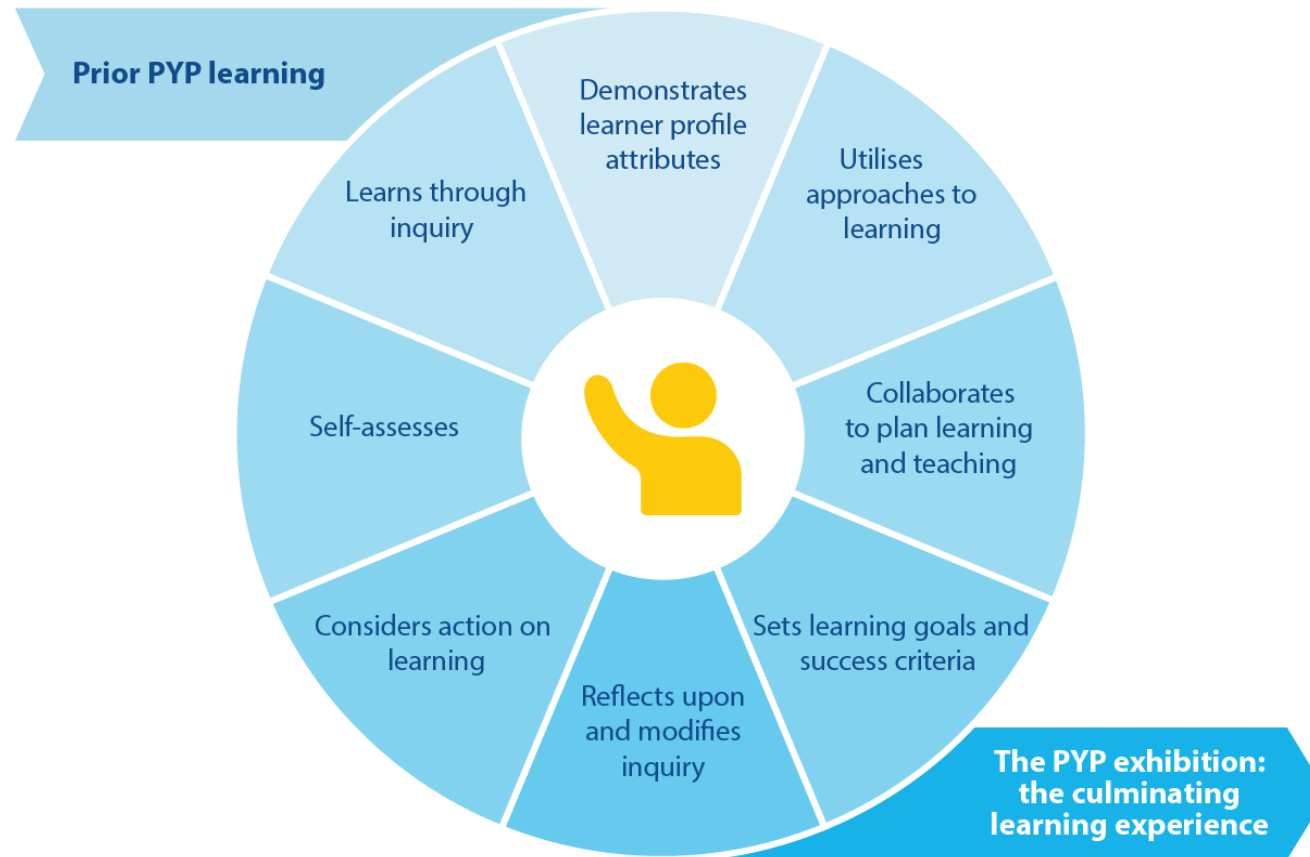
- a change in attitude
- a consideration or plan for action for the future
- a demonstration of responsibility, or respect for self, others and the environment
- a commitment to leading or participating in a youth advocacy group
- an engagement in school decision-making or an expression of support in community, local and global decision - making

As an integral part of the learning process, action can happen at any time and take many forms. It is dependent on individual development, learning and experiences and can be short term or long term, revisited or ongoing. It can be individual or collective, small or large scale and may take place at home, at school or in local or wider communities.



The Exhibition

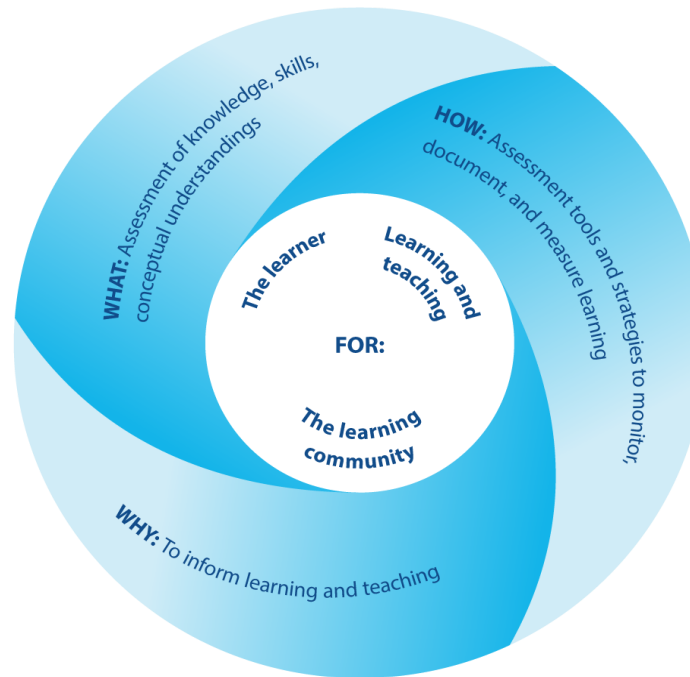
The exhibition is the culminating, collaborative experience in the final year of the PYP which is Grade 5 at DIS. It is an authentic process for students to explore, document and share their understanding of an issue or opportunity of personal significance. The students undertake investigations independently and collaboratively with their peers with the guidance of a mentor as well as their homeroom teachers. Through the exhibition, students demonstrate their ability for learning and their capacity to take action as they are actively engaged in planning, presenting and assessing learning.



GENERAL INFORMATION

Assessment

The purpose of assessment is to inform teaching and learning. It involves gathering and analyzing information about student learning to inform teaching practice. Effective assessment provides valuable information as it helps all members of the learning community to understand what learning is and how to support it. Students become self-regulated learners where they are actively engaged in assessment and they act upon constructive feedback. They are able to reflect on their learning, set goals and make decisions on how they will achieve these goals. Teachers learn about what students know and can do. They use these assessments to reflect upon their practice and offer feedback to support students in their learning. Parents and guardians become more informed as they understand the goals that their child is working on and the progress that they are making.



Assessment is varied and informs teaching and learning in order to help teachers understand how to differentiate learning engagements to meet the needs of their students. Teachers and students use a variety of assessment tools that may include but are not limited to observations, anecdotal notes, diagnostic assessments, rubrics, peer-assessment, self-assessments, checklists, quizzes, exit tickets, descriptive feedback, portfolio collections, and reflections. The components of our assessment program which we use to provide information about student learning are our report cards (issued mid-year and in June), parent conferences (in fall), student portfolios, and our student-led conferences (in spring).

Report Cards

Report cards are issued twice each year. Report cards reflect the elements of the PYP: knowledge, approaches to learning, conceptual understanding, and action. Each subject area, including the units of inquiry, contains an evaluation of a child's achievements and areas for growth, in addition to a rubric that outlines each child's progress according to grade-level expectations (Grade 1 - 5):

EMERGING - EM	DEVELOPING – D	APPROACHING – A	MEETING – M	EXCEEDING – EX
In the context of academic progress: - Student demonstrates minimal understanding of the concepts, knowledge and/or skills taught during the term. - Work is consistently below grade-level expectations. - Requires substantial support and improvement to meet expectations.	In the context of academic progress: - Student demonstrates some understanding of the concepts, knowledge and/or skills taught during the term. - Work is often inconsistent and may contain notable errors or gaps in understanding. - Progress is evident, but further development is needed.	In the context of academic progress: - Student demonstrates a basic understanding of most concepts, knowledge and/or skills taught during the term. - Work is generally accurate but may contain occasional errors. - Progress is consistent and further effort will lead to meeting expectations.	In the context of academic progress: - Student consistently demonstrates a solid understanding of all concepts, knowledge and/or skills taught during the term. - Work is consistently accurate and reflects a depth of understanding. - Meets grade-level expectations and is on track for continued success.	In the context of academic progress: - Student demonstrates an exceptional understanding of concepts, knowledge and/or skills taught during the term. - Work consistently exceeds grade-level expectations, showing creativity and advanced insights. - Consistently demonstrates a high level of independence, critical thinking, and a strong work ethic.
In the context of attitude and effort progress: Shows limited engagement in class activities.	In the context of attitude and effort progress: Participates in-class activities, but engagement varies.	In the context of attitude and effort progress: Actively participates in class activities and contributes to discussions	In the context of attitude and effort progress: Actively engages in-class activities, asks insightful questions, and contributes constructively.	In the context of attitude and effort progress: Actively leads class activities, fosters discussions, and mentors peers.

The progress of children in PK1 - K5 is not assessed on a rubric. PK1 and PK2 students receive a written report twice a year based on anecdotal comments reflective of their self-management and social skills. PK3/4 and K5 students also receive a report twice a year which includes a written report on each of the following areas:

Social, Emotional and Personal Development
 Literacy and Language Skills
 Cognition and Numeracy Skills
 Physical Education
 Performing Arts (K5)
 Units of Inquiry

CURRICULUM INFORMATION

English Language and Literacy

Language development is essential to communication and supports and enhances our ability to construct and make meaning of the world. Language is a fundamental element of our identity and culture and plays a pivotal role in providing students with the intellectual and academic framework to support critical thinking and conceptual development. Students engage in developmentally appropriate literacy experiences that support their love and growth in reading, writing, listening and speaking. Language experiences are built into the Programme of Inquiry and support the development of strong communication and academic language skills. We understand that language learning is a process of learning language, learning about language and learning through language. DIS recognizes that all teachers are language teachers who facilitate language acquisition and promote communication skills and literacy.

Mathematics

Integral to the philosophy of the PYP is that mathematics is used and learned in real-life contexts. Students construct, transfer and apply skills as they develop their understanding of mathematical concepts. Wherever possible, mathematics is taught within the unit of inquiry so that students can develop their skills in meaningful ways that connect mathematics to greater conceptual understanding and other subject areas. Mathematics is divided into six strands:

- Data handling and probability
- Measurement
- Pattern and function
- Geometry - shape and space
- Number
- Operations and computation

Science and Social Studies

All science and social studies are taught within the Programme of Inquiry, although elements of both areas may be explored and developed in specialist or other subject areas (i.e. German, performing arts, visual arts) in ways that support transdisciplinary learning. The six transdisciplinary themes of the PYP lend themselves to inquiries in both science and social studies. Science and social studies are an integral part of our units of inquiry.

Learning Support

Learning support is generally available for students with mild to moderate learning needs from Grade 1 - Grade 5; the level or type of support varies depending on student needs. Students may receive small group, targeted intervention, or may receive in-class support where a teacher works alongside the classroom teacher to deliver instruction. Learning Support specialists also assist teachers in differentiating instruction according to the needs of the individual learners in each class. Our Learning Support specialists and our classroom teachers support students by helping them identify their own learning strengths and needs, and by helping them develop strategies that support their particular learning profiles.

EAL Support (English as an Additional Language)

Our English as an Additional Language (EAL) support programme is available for students from Grade 1 - Grade 5 who come to DIS and may understand, speak or be literate in more than one language but have limited or no experience of English language proficiency. All teachers support these students' transition, their social and academic English to enable them to participate confidently and happily in all aspects of the life of the school, to access the curriculum and to achieve their full potential. Factors such as age, previous educational experience, knowledge of other languages and levels of literacy in their home language will all impact the development of student's language skills and their learning across the curriculum. The level of EAL support is tailored according to the individual language needs of the students. Our EAL specialists work closely together with the homeroom teachers to help differentiate instruction according to the needs of students. Parents are strongly encouraged to help their children maintain and develop their home language. We are committed to fostering a strong partnership between home and school in order to facilitate language learning.

German and German as an Additional Language (GAL)

At DIS, German is taught from Kindergarten to Grade 5 through two distinct pathways: German classes for highly proficient speakers and German as an Additional Language (GAL) classes for learners still developing their skills. In Grades 1–5, students receive three 45-minute lessons plus one 90-minute double block per week, while in K5 all children participate in play-based German sessions four times per week for 45 minutes. The German curriculum for proficient speakers follows the Saxon State Curriculum for Primary School German (effective August 2025), whereas the GAL curriculum is aligned with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), allowing students to progress at their own pace. Both strands are fully integrated with the IB Primary Years Programme (PYP), supporting inquiry-based and concept-driven learning. Collaboration is a key feature of the program: at each grade level, one Unit of Inquiry is co-taught by homeroom and German teachers, enabling students to build meaningful connections between language and other subject areas.

Mandarin

Our Mandarin Language programme at DIS started in the 2025-26 academic year. The focus of this programme is to provide ongoing maintenance and development of language skills for those students whose home language is Mandarin. The majority of Mandarin students joining DIS come from Taiwan, therefore, reading and writing instruction in these lessons uses traditional characters. However, all fluent Mandarin speaking students from Grades 1 to 5 are welcome to join this programme.

The Arts

Drama

All students in the PYP enjoy drama classes once every week, except Grade 4, who plan and participate in a musical and have 2 drama lessons a week. Drama provides many opportunities for students to practice communicating with different audiences for a variety of purposes, through moving, speaking, and writing in role. When possible, the performing arts programme is linked to the Programme of Inquiry, either through continued exploration of the current transdisciplinary theme or through exploration and development of the key concepts.

Visual Arts

The visual arts curriculum is intended to help students develop their creativity, as well as the ability to communicate their understanding of the world around them through visual arts. The visual arts curriculum is rooted in the experience of art-making. Visual arts provide ways of describing, exploring, and responding, and can be used to express ideas, experiences, feelings, and provides ways to develop and demonstrate conceptual understanding. Visual arts helps support subject-specific areas (i.e. mathematics) and is also pivotal in developing conceptual understandings and exploring unit related ideas.

Music

Students from Grade 1 - Grade 4 engage in music lessons twice a week and Grade 5 once a week. Music enables students to communicate in ways that go beyond their oral language abilities. Music delights and stimulates, soothes and comforts us; music allows students to communicate in a unique way. Musical experiences and learning begin with the voice. It is important that students are given opportunities to discover a broad range of music experiences including classifying and analyzing sounds, composing, exploring body percussion, harmonizing, listening, playing instruments, singing, notation, reading music, songwriting and recording.

Physical Education

Students from Kindergarten - Grade 2 have either one period of swimming and one period of sport per week or 2 periods of sport. Students from Grade 3 - Grade 5 have 2 periods of sport every week unless they go swimming. All periods are led by teachers from our specialist Physical Education teaching team. During lessons, students identify and develop appropriate skills and strategies for taking part in games. They focus on the development of necessary locomotor and manipulative skills needed for a range of athletic activities and have opportunities to create their own sequences of physical movement in the form of dances and gymnastic routines. Wherever possible, sports lessons are linked with the Programme of Inquiry by making connections with the concepts and the transdisciplinary themes that are currently being addressed in class. Units, where PYP students cooperate and work closely together with our older MYP students, are implemented and help both- MYP and PYP students to use interpersonal skills in an authentic and meaningful way.

Home Learning

Home learning in the Primary School at DIS:

- Supports lifelong learning as part of our [DIS mission](#) to create self-sufficient individuals and the [DIS definition of learning](#)
- Promotes learner agency and is accessible for all learners
- Is optional and therefore supports a balance between home and school life
- Complements and reinforces school learning
- Acknowledges that learning also happens outside of school and through a variety of activities

Independent Reading, Reading Together, Listening to Reading

Reading for pleasure has consistently been proven to have a large impact on learning and academic achievement across all subject areas. In the Primary School we encourage and support a culture of reading and are advocates for the [International Reading Association's 'Right to Read' declaration](#). Reading is an act that promotes learning and growth. It is expected that each student is engaged in reading every night.

Home Language Learning

As a diverse, international community, our students are multilingual, often speaking more than one language. At DIS, we acknowledge the importance of home languages as the foundation of all other language learning. Families play a crucial role in maintaining and developing a student's home language. Students often need extra opportunities to practice, consolidate and extend their home language.

- Additional support for home learning in German will be provided by the German teachers in consultation with families.
- We encourage families who have home languages other than German to also seek learning opportunities to support their children at home.

Home Learning Activities for each Grade level might look like:

K5:

- Engage in daily reading with family members.
- Students will bring books home from the school library and their classrooms.
- Family members are encouraged to read with and to their children to support literacy development

Grade 1 - 5:

- Engage in daily reading.
- Students will bring books home from the school library and their classrooms.
- Explore and reinforce concepts taught in class further at home as suggested in the “Home Learning Ideas” section of parent/teacher communication. Home learning activities might include maths practice, spelling patterns in English and German or handwriting/typing practice.
- Students who receive EAL support will take home books to supplement the ones they borrow from the library for daily reading.

Students from Grade 2 on will have access to IXL (optional in Grade 1), an online learning platform that provides personalized practice in both Maths and English. IXL adapts to each child's level, offering questions that match their ability and giving instant feedback to support learning. It's a great way for students to review classroom concepts, build confidence, and extend their skills at home in a fun and interactive way.

Field Trips

We are fortunate in Dresden to have so many exciting field trip opportunities close by. Field trips provide meaningful opportunities to connect school-based inquiries to the larger community. Field trips may be on-site (i.e. guest speakers) or off-site (museums, parks, galleries, theatres, etc). In Grades 1, 3 and 5 students take part in a Residential Field Trip, usually consisting of two nights away.

Co-Curricular Programme

PYP students from K5 - Grade 5 may choose from a variety of clubs and activities offered at lunch or after school. Students are encouraged to choose a variety of activities in different areas: the arts, academics, clubs, and athletics. Co-curricular programmes are offered by DIS teachers at no charge, and by outside providers for a fee. Due to their young age, students in PK3/4 enjoy a limited range of activities after school when available.

IB PYP Glossary of Terms

1. Action	Taking responsible, ethical, and meaningful steps as a result of learning. International Mindedness Associated words: The action cycle- A process involving choosing, acting, reflecting, and demonstrating the impact of one's actions. How do we want students to act?; reflect, choose, act
2. Additional Concepts	A concept is a “big idea”—a principle or notion that is enduring and is not constrained by a particular origin, subject matter or place in time (Erickson 2008). Concepts represent ideas that are broad, abstract, timeless and universal.
3. Agency	Voice, choice, and ownership. When learners have agency, the role of the teacher and student changes; the relationship between a teacher and a student is viewed as a partnership.
4. Approaches to Learning (ATLs)	Skills that help students become self-regulated learners, that students develop across subject areas and apply to real-world situations. These are thinking, research, self-management, social, and communication skills.
5. Assessment	The process of evaluating and gathering information about an individual's or a group's understanding, knowledge, and skills. Associated: four dimensions of assessment: MONITORING, documenting, measuring, and reporting.
6. Assessment Criteria	Descriptors outlining levels of achievement for different aspects of learning.
7. Central Idea	A statement summarizing the main concept addressed in a unit of inquiry. The central must: Central ideas are written to be globally significant, provoke student inquiry and should be broad, timeless, universal and abstract.
8. Collaboration	Planning and reflecting together—inquiring into the effectiveness of their teaching, and reflecting on its impact on learning.
9. Concept-Based Learning	Focusing on big ideas and enduring understandings rather than isolated facts.
10. Conceptual Understanding	Grasping the deeper, abstract ideas that connect and organize knowledge.
11. Differentiation	Adapting teaching strategies to meet the diverse needs of learners.
12. Disciplinary	Refers to anything related to a specific field of study or discipline.
13. Early Learner	Experiences during the early years (3–6-year-olds) lay the foundation for positive social and cognitive learning in future years (McCoy et al. 2017).
14. Formative Assessment	Ongoing assessment during the learning process to provide feedback and inform instruction.
15. Global Contexts	Overarching themes that provide a framework for exploring real-world issues and making connections to the transdisciplinary themes.

16. Inquiry	A teaching and learning approach that encourages actively engaging in the process of exploring, questioning, and investigating the world around them. Associated: Inquiry Cycle: The process of inquiry involving exploring, engaging, explaining, and reflecting.
17. Interdisciplinary	This approach promotes collaboration and the blending of knowledge from different areas to create new insights, foster innovation, and solve problems in a more comprehensive way.
18. International Mindedness	A concept promoting understanding, respect, and appreciation for different cultures and perspectives.
19. Learner Agency	They direct their learning with a strong sense of identity and self-belief, and in conjunction with others, thereby building a sense of community and awareness of the opinions, values and needs of others through voice and choice.
20. Learner Profile Attributes	Dispositions that contribute to the well-being of individuals and the learning community. A set of attributes that learners are encouraged to develop, reflecting the IB mission and values. International Mindedness These are: inquirers, knowledgeable, thinkers, communicators, principled, open-minded, caring, risk takers, balanced, reflective.
21. Learning Environment	The physical, social, and psychological context in which learning takes place.
22. Lines of Inquiry	Specific aspects or perspectives of a central idea explored during a unit of inquiry. These are fact/knowledge-driven and support the understanding of the central idea.
23. Multidisciplinary	The IB definition: Multidisciplinary learning begins and ends with subject-based content and skills (Beane 1997). The boundaries among the subjects remain.
24. Play-Based Learning	An educational approach that uses play as the primary method for teaching and learning. It is rooted in the belief that play is a vital part of a child's development, fostering cognitive, social, emotional, and physical growth.
25. PYP Exhibition	A culminating project in the final year of the PYP, where students demonstrate their understanding and take action on a real-world issue.
26. Specified Concepts	Fundamental concepts that form the basis of understanding within the PYP. These are: form, function, causation, change, connection, perspective, responsibility (and reflection - which should be part of all learning).
27. Summative Assessment	Evaluation of learning at the end of a unit or period.
28. Transdisciplinary	A curriculum-organizing principle to offer students a broad, balanced, conceptual and connected learning experience. Transdisciplinarity transcends subjects. It begins and ends with a problem, an issue or a theme. Students' interests and questions form the heart of transdisciplinary learning. IB definition: "with the links and the transfer of knowledge, methods, concepts and models from one discipline to another".
29. Transdisciplinary Theme	Broad, organizing ideas that guide inquiry across multiple subject areas. These are: Who We Are*, Where We are in Place and Time, How We Express Ourselves*, How the World Works, How We Organize Ourselves, and Sharing the Planet (*2 of the 4 units taught in Early Years)
30. Translanguaging	Translanguaging is a process in which students draw on known languages, naturally and flexibly, combining their elements to meet communicative and social needs.
31. Unit of Inquiry (UOI)	The planned, taught, and assessed units at each grade level under the 6 (or 4 for EY) Transdisciplinary Themes.

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