

# Primary School



## Curriculum Guide



PDF Version







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# Vision, Mission and Values



## Our Vision

To create an inspiring world of education by building self belief and empowering individuals to succeed.



## Our Mission

We inspire wellbeing and learning so that our diverse, internationally-minded community flourish as energized, engaged and empowered learners.



## Our Values



Curiosity



Achievement



Resilience



Empathy





# Learning at ISHCMC



Our understanding of the individual learner is the foundation of our approach to learning and teaching. As children consistently inquire, question, wonder and theorize about themselves, others and the world around them, they are therefore keen observers and explorers. Through their experiences and interactions they naturally develop intricate, multi-layered perceptions and understandings. Throughout the PYP a student is an agent for both their own and others' learning through the concept of learner agency, which is connected to a student's belief in their ability to succeed (self-efficacy).

## ISHCMC Principles of Learning

- Every learner is capable of achieving their goals within an environment where there is an appropriate balance of standards, challenge, and support.
- Learning builds on prior knowledge and experiences and is contextual, meaningful, and valuable.
- Learning is an active process that takes time and is strengthened through opportunities for error, practice, reflection, and further revision of ideas.
- Motivation is a key factor in learning.
- Learning is effective when adapted to meet each individual's abilities.
- Learning should take place in a safe and engaging environment.
- Learning should encompass personal, local and global issues with the aim to make for a better world.



# IB learner profile

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

As IB learners we strive to be:

## INQUIRERS

We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.

## KNOWLEDGEABLE

We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.

## THINKERS

We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyse and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.

## COMMUNICATORS

We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.

## PRINCIPLED

We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.

## OPEN-MINDED

We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.

## CARING

We show empathy, compassion and respect. We have a commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.

## RISK-TAKERS

We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.

## BALANCED

We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives—intellectual, physical, and emotional—to achieve wellbeing 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.

The IB learner profile represents 10 attributes valued by IB World Schools. We believe these attributes, and others like them, can help individuals and groups become responsible members of local, national and global communities.



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# The Taught Curriculum

At ISHCMC we are committed to teaching through structured, purposeful inquiry that engages students actively in their own learning. In the PYP we believe that this is the way in which students learn best and that they should be invited to investigate significant issues by: formulating their own questions, designing their own inquiries, assessing the various means available to support their inquiries, and proceeding with research, experimentation, observation and analysis that will help them in finding their own responses to the issues.

The starting point for learning is a student's current understanding, and the goal is the active construction of meaning by building connections between that understanding and new information and experience, derived from the inquiry into new content. Inquiry, as our leading pedagogical approach, is recognized as allowing students to be actively involved in their own learning, and for them to take responsibility for that learning. Inquiry allows each student's understanding of the world to develop in a manner, and at a rate, that is unique to that student. We recognize that in the PYP, there is a role for drill and practice in the classroom, yet we feel that teaching to the fullest extent possible about central ideas that are concept-based, leads to the most substantial and enduring learning.

## What does inquiry look like?

Inquiry is the process initiated by students or teachers that moves students from their current level of understanding to a new and deeper level of understanding. This can entail any or all of the following:

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 concept
Making and testing theories
Researching and seeking information
Taking and defending a position
Solving problems in a variety of ways

# Play at ISHCMC

All PYP learners at ISHCMC are provided opportunities to explore social, emotional and academic learning in many ways, including the time to interact through structured and unstructured play.

Specifically in the early years and lower primary, we support hands-on learning through play as part of all inquiries, and through this play, students can inquire into many things like the natural world, physical laws, organization skills, social interactions and more. During play learners are constructing and testing theories in addition to observing and drawing conclusions. By using play activities teachers initiate a range of intentional queries, provocations, challenges and learning engagements. The teachers then document, monitor and further challenge students to form new theories or draw conclusions, and also provide support or feedback when needed. All parties are active members of the play to bring learning into a student's world.

## Agency



Learner Agency

Conceptualized by Bandura in social cognitive theory, agency “enable[s] people to play a part in their self-development, adaptation, and self-renewal with changing times” (Bandura 2001).

PYP students with agency use their own initiative and will, and take responsibility and ownership of their learning. They direct their learning with a strong sense of identity and self-belief, and in conjunction with others, build a sense of community and awareness of the opinions, values and needs of others.

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

Students take initiative, express interest and wonderings, make choices and are aware of their learning goals - they are actively engaged, and can monitor and adjust their learning as needed. Students offer feedback to others and



consult on decisions that will affect them. In school, students take responsibility for their learning and collaborate with teachers and other students to plan, present and assess learning needs.

Teachers recognize students’ capabilities through listening, respecting and responding to their ideas, and they can make thoughtful considerations and decisions with an emphasis on relationships, dialogue and respect for one another.

At the International School Ho Chi Minh City (ISHCMC), through the PYP, we seek to strike a balance between the acquisition of essential knowledge and skills, development of conceptual understanding and taking responsible action.

The four essential elements of the written curriculum for PYP students at ISHCMC are:

Knowledge	Significant, relevant content that we wish the students to explore and know about, taking into account their prior experience and understanding.
Concepts	Powerful ideas that have relevance within the subject areas but also transcend them, which students must explore and re-explore in order to develop a coherent, in-depth understanding.
Skills	Those capabilities that the students need to demonstrate to succeed in a changing, challenging world, which may be disciplinary or transdisciplinary in nature.
Action	Demonstrations of deeper learning in responsible behavior through responsible action; a manifestation in practice of the other essential elements.





# The Written Curriculum



## Knowledge

### What do we want students to know about?

Each year, all PYP students will conduct in-depth inquiries based on transdisciplinary themes considered essential in the context of a program of international education.

These themes:

- Have global significance for all students in all cultures.
- Offer students the opportunity to explore the commonalities of human experience.
- Are supported by knowledge, concepts and skills from the traditional subject areas but utilize them in ways that transcend the confines of these subjects, thereby contributing to a transdisciplinary model of teaching and learning.
- Will be revisited throughout the students' years of schooling, so that the end result is immersion in broad-ranging, in-depth, articulated curriculum content.
- Contribute to the common ground that unifies the curriculums in all PYP schools.

### PYP Transdisciplinary Themes

<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 Organize 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.

Students inquire into, and learn about, globally significant issues in the context of units of inquiry, each of which addresses a central idea relevant to a particular transdisciplinary theme. Lines of inquiry are identified in order to explore the scope of the central idea for each unit.

These units collectively constitute the school's program of inquiry. The full program of inquiry at ISHCMC is dynamic and subject to minor changes as teachers adapt and plan collaboratively to meet the needs of their students and the changing context of the world around them.

## Language

All learning at ISHCMC involves language. Learners listen, talk, read and write their way to negotiating new meanings and understanding new concepts. Language is the most significant connecting element across the school's curriculum, both within and outside its program of inquiry. Language is delivered to students across several different strands: oral, visual and written.

Language Strands	
<b>Oral Language</b> <b>(speaking and listening)</b>	<p>Listening (expression) and speaking (receiving) work together in interactions between listeners and speakers and are both essential for ongoing language development. PYP learners at ISHCMC are provided meaningful and well-planned opportunities to be both speakers and active listeners.</p> <p>Examples of the wide range of oral language are: the language of the classroom, the language of play, the language of inquiry, conversations with peers, giving instructions, interpreting creative texts, the language of fantasy, the language of different times and places.</p> <p><b>Related Concepts:</b> meaning, imagination, audience, persuasion, interpretation, opinion, information, entertainment, responding, interconnection, techniques.</p>
<b>Visual Language</b> <b>(viewing and presenting)</b>	<p>The receptive processes (viewing) and expressive processes (presenting) are connected and allow for paired growth in understanding; neither process has meaning except in relation to the other. PYP learners at ISHCMC participate in a balanced program with opportunities for students to experience both viewing and presenting. Visual texts may be paper, electronic or live, and observable forms of communication consciously constructed to convey meaning, allowing them instant access to information and data.</p> <p>Examples of visual texts are: advertisements, brochures, computer games and programs, websites, movies, posters, signs, logos, flags, maps, charts, graphs, diagrams, illustrations, graphic organizers, cartoons and comics.</p> <p><b>Related Concepts:</b> symbols, rules, message, visual language, data, information, influence, order, communication, audience, structure, pictures, images, form, technique</p>



## Language Strands

### Written Language (reading)

Reading is a developmental process that involves constructing meaning from text. Enthusiasm and curiosity are essential ingredients in promoting the desire to read. Children of all ages need to experience and enjoy a wide variety of interesting, informative, intriguing and creative reading materials as well as practicing the strategies/skills needed to recognize words and comprehend texts. As inquirers, learners need to be able to identify, synthesize and apply useful and relevant information from text. Children learn to read by reading.

As learners engage with interesting and appealing texts, appropriate to their experiences and developmental phase, they acquire the skills, strategies and conceptual understanding necessary to become competent, motivated, independent readers.

**Related Concepts:** message, grammar, pictures, written text, perspective, interpretation, comprehension, sequence, information, images, text, themes, techniques, stories, imagination, strategies, interconnection.

### Written Language (writing)

Writing is a way of expressing ourselves. From the earliest lines and marks of young learners to the expression of mature writers, it allows us to organize and communicate thoughts, ideas and information. Writing is primarily concerned with communicating meaning and intention. ISHCMC PYP learners are exposed to and encouraged to experiment with different skills to accurately share meaning and information through writing and to express themselves and reveal their own “voice.”

Children learn to write by writing. Acquiring a set of isolated skills will not turn them into writers. It is only in the process of sharing their ideas in written form that skills are developed, applied and refined to produce increasingly effective written communication.

**Related Concepts:** expression, audience, grammar, order, information, technique, voice, print, text, revision, stories, meaning, opinion, order, organization, interpretation, perspective, structure, communication.

## Mathematics

In the PYP, mathematics is viewed primarily as a vehicle to support inquiry, providing a global language through which students make sense of the world around them. It is intended that ISHCMC PYP students become competent users of the language of mathematics, and that they begin to use it as a way of thinking, as opposed to seeing it as a series of facts and equations to be memorized. The power of mathematics for describing and analyzing the world around us is such that it has become a highly effective tool for solving problems.

The teaching of mathematics at ISHCMC is a blend of inquiry and direct instruction, depending on students' individual needs and context. The subject is delivered across several different strands, described further below.

Mathematics Strands	
Number	<p>Our number system is a language for describing quantities and the relationships between quantities, so 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, and 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.</p> <p><b>Related concepts:</b> number sense, equivalence, quantity, place value, representations, patterns, money, operations, relationships.</p>
Data Handling	<p>Data handling allows us to make a summary of what we know about the world and to make inferences about what we do not know. Data can be collected, organized, represented and summarized 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.</p> <p><b>Related concepts:</b> patterns, representation, proportion, organization, relationships.</p>
Measurement	<p>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 and it is important to know how accurate a measurement needs to be or can ever be.</p> <p><b>Related Concepts:</b> quantity, accuracy, measurement, scale, proportion, equivalence.</p>
Shape and Space	<p>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) worlds.</p> <p><b>Related concepts:</b> patterns, representation, space, relationship, scale.</p>

## Mathematics Strands

### Pattern and Function

To identify patterns 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 learning builds a foundation within our PYP students for the later study of algebra.

**Related concepts:** models, patterns, generalizations, simplification, algebra, function, repetition.

## Science

In the PYP science is viewed as the exploration of the biological, chemical and physical aspects of the natural world, and the relationships between them. Our understanding of science is constantly changing and evolving and the subject encourages curiosity and ingenuity and enables ISHCMC PYP students to develop an understanding of the world. Reflection on scientific knowledge also helps our students to develop a sense of responsibility regarding the impact of their actions on themselves, others and their world.

Inquiry is central to scientific investigation and understanding. Students actively construct and challenge their understanding of the world around them by combining scientific knowledge with reasoning and thinking skills. Scientific knowledge is made relevant through its innumerable applications in the real world. The scientific process, by encouraging hands-on experience and inquiry, enables students to make informed and responsible decisions, not only in science but also in other areas of life.

## Science Strands

### Living Things

The study of the characteristics, systems and behaviors of humans and other animals, and of plants; the interactions and relationships between and among them, and with their environment.

**Related concepts:** adaptation, animals, biodiversity, biology, classification, conservation, ecosystems, evolution, genetics, growth, habitat, homeostasis, organisms, plants, systems (digestive, nervous, reproductive, respiratory).

### Earth and Space

The study of planet Earth and its position in the universe, particularly its relationship with the sun; the natural phenomena and systems that shape the planet and the distinctive features that identify it; and the infinite and finite resources of the planet.

**Related concepts:** atmosphere, climate, erosion, evidence, geography, geology, gravity, renewable and non-renewable energy sources, resources, seasons, space, sustainability, systems (solar, water cycle, weather), tectonic plate movement, theory of origin.



## Science Strands

<b>Materials and Matter</b>	<p>The study of the properties, behaviors and uses of materials, both natural and human-made; the origins of human-made materials and how they are manipulated to suit a purpose.</p> <p><b>Related concepts:</b> changes of state, chemical and physical changes, conduction and convection, density, gases, liquids, properties and uses of materials, solids, structures, sustainability</p>
<b>Forces and Energy</b>	<p>The study of energy, its origins, storage and transfer, and the work it can do; the study of forces; and the application of scientific understanding through inventions and machines.</p> <p><b>Related concepts:</b> conservation of energy, efficiency, equilibrium, forms of energy (electricity, heat, kinetic, light, potential, sound), magnetism, mechanics, physics, pollution, power, technological advances, transformation of energy.</p>

## Social Studies

In the PYP, social studies is viewed as the study of people in relation to their past, their present and their future, as well as their environment and their society. Social studies encourages curiosity and develops an understanding of a rapidly changing world. Through social studies, ISHCMC PYP students develop an understanding of their personal and cultural identities. They develop the skills and knowledge needed to participate actively in their classroom, their school, their community and the world, and to understand themselves in relation to their communities.

The aim of social studies within the PYP is to promote intercultural understanding and respect for individuals and their values and traditions. The social studies component of the PYP curriculum encourages students to “understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right”. Therefore, there is a strong emphasis on the reduction of prejudice and discrimination within the classroom, the school, the community and the world.

## Social Studies Strands

<b>Human Systems and Economic Activities</b>	<p>The study of how and why people construct organizations and systems; the ways in which people connect locally and globally; the distribution of power and authority.</p> <p><b>Related concepts:</b> communications, conflict, cooperation, education, employment, freedom, governments, justice, legislation, production, transportation, and truth.</p>
<b>Social Organization and Culture</b>	<p>The study of people, communities, cultures and societies; the ways in which individuals, groups and societies interact with each other.</p> <p><b>Related concepts:</b> artifacts, authority, citizenship, communication, conflict, diversity, family, identity, networks, prejudice, religion, rights, roles, traditions.</p>

Social Studies Strands	
<b>Continuity and Change Through Time</b>	<p>The study of the 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.</p> <p><b>Related concepts:</b> chronology, civilizations, conflict, discovery, exploration, history, innovation, migration, progress, revolution.</p>
<b>Human and Natural Environments</b>	<p>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.</p> <p><b>Related concepts:</b> amenities, borders (natural, social and political), dependence, geography, impact, landscape, locality, ownership, population, regions, and settlements.</p>
<b>Resources and the Environment</b>	<p>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.</p> <p><b>Related concepts:</b> conservation, consumption, distribution, ecology, energy, interdependence, pollution, poverty, sustainability, wealth.</p>

## PSPE

Personal, social and physical education (PSPE) provides the models, processes and vocabulary for handling social and personal issues, and ensuring health and well-being. ISHCMC PYP students are prepared to address moral issues in their lives and act upon a set of positive values such as appreciation, empathy and respect. They are given guidance to help develop positive attitudes and behaviors in order to meet challenges, make healthy lifestyle choices, and serve as responsible, respectful members of society. This guidance is specific, explicit and continuous, and takes place in a non-threatening environment.

Physical education is more than just student participation in sports and games. Its purpose is to develop a combination of transferable skills promoting physical, intellectual, emotional and social development; to encourage present and future choices that contribute to long-term healthy living; to understand the cultural significance of physical activities for individuals and communities. In the PYP there are specific opportunities for learning about movement and through movement in a range of contexts. Students of all abilities are challenged to improve their movement skills, but they are also supported and encouraged to enjoy physical activity and see it as part of a healthy and active lifestyle with connections to other areas of the curriculum and community.

## Personal, Social and Physical Education Strands

<b>Identity</b>	<p>An understanding of our own beliefs, values, attitudes, experiences 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 situations 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.</p> <p><b>Related concepts:</b> autonomy, character, diversity, ethnicity, fulfillment, gender, heritage, image, initiative, perseverance, resilience, self-regulation, sexuality, spirituality, trust.</p>
<b>Active Living</b>	<p>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 expression; the importance of nutrition; understanding the causes and possible prevention of ill health; the promotion of safety; the rights and responsibilities 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.</p> <p><b>Related concepts:</b> aesthetics, biomechanics, body control, body form, challenge, competition, energy, flexibility, flow, growth, goal setting, improvement, leisure, mastery, overload, physiology, power, rest, spatial awareness, strength and endurance, stress.</p>
<b>Interactions</b>	<p>An understanding of how an individual interacts with other people, other living things and the wider world; behaviors, rights and responsibilities of individuals in their relationships 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.</p> <p><b>Related concepts:</b> belonging, citizenship, community, conflict, conformity, control, culture, discrimination, fair play, interdependence, justice, leadership, peace, preservation, reparation, safety, stereotype, teamwork.</p>



## The Arts

The Arts are integral to the PYP as a powerful mode of communication through which students explore and construct a sense of self and develop an understanding of the world around them. Arts provide students with a wide range of opportunities and means to respond to their experiences and engage with historical, social and cultural perspectives. ISHCMC students are stimulated to think and to articulate their thoughts in new ways, and through a variety of media and technologies. The PYP recognizes that not all learning can be supported solely through language, and that arts as a medium of inquiry also provide opportunities for learning, communication and expression. Learning through arts is fundamental to the development of the whole child; fostering creativity, critical thinking, problem-solving skills and social interactions.

### Dance

Dance is an integral part of many cultures, and it plays an important role in society as it brings people and communities together. As an art form, dance explores how we express ourselves through movement. To understand and respond to dance, students need to understand how dance is used in cultural, ritual and social contexts. Students are given opportunities to view a wide variety of dance from various sources, such as live performance, peer choreography, guest dance artists and recordings. Dance as an art form has evolved considerably over the past century. Exploring dance in a historical and cultural context, and in a variety of genres, enriches the student's experience in creating and responding to dance.

### Drama

Drama explores how we express ourselves physically and vocally. Via drama students will explore the use of facial expressions, gestures, movement, posture and vocal techniques to convey emotional or cultural meaning to both characters and stories. Students are exposed to a variety of dramatic forms including creative movement, impersonation, improvisation, mask work, mime, musical, role play, pantomime, puppetry, re-enactment, scripted drama and skit. ISHCMC PYP students will experience a wide variety of scripts and stories from different times, cultures and places and, where possible, access live theatre performances and presentations. Students have opportunities to present their creative work to an audience and to witness their peers in performance, and through this, become critically aware audience members.

### Music

Music enables students to communicate in ways that go beyond 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. Students are given opportunities to discover a broad range of music including classifying and analyzing sounds, composing, exploring body music, harmonizing, listening, playing instruments, singing, notation, reading music, song-writing and recording. Students will use their imagination and musical experiences to organize sounds-natural and technological-into various forms that communicate specific ideas or moods. Students are given the opportunity to respond to different styles of music, as well as to music from different times and cultures. By exposing students to a wide and varied repertoire of musical styles, they can begin to construct an understanding of their environment, their surroundings and structures, and begin to develop personal connections with them.

### Visual Arts

The term “visual arts” is used to describe practices that have been more traditionally described in education as “art, craft and design”. Students are exposed to a broad range of experiences which illustrate the field of visual arts, including architecture, bookmaking, ceramics, collage, costume design, drawing, graphic design, film, illustration, industrial design, installation, jewelry, land art, mask making, metalwork, painting, papermaking, performance art, photography, printmaking, sculpture, set design, textiles and woodwork.

## Creating

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. ISHCMC PYP 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.

**Related concepts:** (there are many that could provide a further link such as performance, imagination, techniques, symbols, expression, movement, space, creativity, purpose, audience, beliefs, values, tempo, influence and more)

## Responding

The process of responding provides students with opportunities to react 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 the use of 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, ISHCMC students become more mindful of their own artistic development and the role that arts play in the world around them.

**Related concepts:** (there are many that could provide a further link such as interpretation, rhythm, line, angle, method, relationship, reaction, choice, strategies, style, pattern, melody, harmony, audience, emphasis and more)

# Concept

## What do we want students to understand?

Central to the philosophy of the PYP is the principle that purposeful, structured inquiry is a powerful vehicle for learning that promotes meaning and understanding, challenging students to engage with significant ideas. At ISHCMC, we have a commitment to a concept-driven curriculum as a means of supporting that inquiry.

The PYP curriculum is structured around important concepts driven by the following beliefs:

- Education for the understanding of significant ideas has often been sacrificed for the memorization of isolated facts and the mastery of skills out of context.
- By starting with the students' prior knowledge, and by confronting and developing their earlier conceptions and constructs, teachers can begin to promote real understanding.
- The exploration and re-exploration of concepts lead students towards an appreciation of ideas that

transcend disciplinary boundaries, as well as toward a sense of the essence of each subject area.

- Transdisciplinary units, where concepts are used to support and structure the inquiries, provide context in which students can understand and, at the same time, acquire essential knowledge, skills and attitudes.
- A concept-driven curriculum helps the learner to construct meaning through improved critical thinking and the transfer of knowledge.
- Transdisciplinary concepts increase coherence across the curriculum.

<b>Form</b>	<b>What is it like?</b>	The understanding that everything has a form with recognizable features that can be observed, identified, described and categorized.
<b>Function</b>	<b>How does it work?</b>	The understanding that everything has a purpose, a role or a way of behaving that can be investigated.
<b>Causation</b>	<b>Why is it like it is?</b>	The understanding that things do not just happen, that there are causal relationships at work, and that actions have consequences.
<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>What is our responsibility?</b>	The understanding that people make choices based on their understandings and the actions they take as a result do make a difference.
<b>Change</b>	<b>How is it changing?</b>	The understanding that change is the process of movement from one state to another. It is universal and inevitable.
<b>Connection</b>	<b>How is it connected to other things?</b>	The understanding that we live in a world of interacting systems in which the actions of any individual element affect others.
<b>Perspective</b>	<b>What are the points of view?</b>	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.



# Approaches To Learning (ATL skills)

Categories	EE - KG	G1 - S5
<b>Thinking Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Critical-thinking skills (analysing and evaluating issues and ideas)</li> <li>• Creative-thinking skills (generating novel ideas and considering new perspectives)</li> <li>• Transfer skills (using skills and knowledge in multiple contexts)</li> <li>• Using thinking skills to reflect on the process of learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Critical-thinking skills (analysing and evaluating issues and ideas)</li> <li>• Creative-thinking skills (generating novel ideas and considering new perspectives)</li> <li>• Transfer skills (using skills and knowledge in multiple contexts)</li> <li>• Reflection/metacognitive skills (re) considering the process of learning;</li> </ul>
<b>Research skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information-literacy skills (formulating and planning, data gathering and recording, synthesizing and interpreting, evaluating and communicating)</li> <li>• Media-literacy skills (interacting with media to use and create ideas and information)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information-literacy skills (formulating and planning, data gathering and recording, synthesizing and interpreting, evaluating and communicating)</li> <li>• Media-literacy skills (interacting with media to use and create ideas and information)</li> <li>• Ethical use of media/information (understanding and applying social and ethical technology)</li> </ul>
<b>Communication Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exchanging-information skills (listening, interpreting, speaking)</li> <li>• Symbolic exploration and expression (using language to gather and communicate information)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exchanging-information skills (listening, interpreting, speaking)</li> <li>• Literacy skills (reading, writing and using language to gather and communicate information)</li> <li>• ICT skills (using technology to gather, investigate and communicate information)</li> </ul>
<b>Social Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interpersonal relationships, social and emotional intelligence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing positive interpersonal relationships and collaboration skills (using self-control, managing setbacks, supporting peers)</li> <li>• Developing social-emotional intelligence</li> </ul>
<b>Self Management Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organization skills (managing time and tasks effectively)</li> <li>• States of mind (mindfulness, perseverance, emotional management, self-motivation, resilience)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organization skills (managing time and tasks effectively)</li> <li>• States of mind (mindfulness, perseverance, emotional management, self-motivation, resilience)</li> </ul>

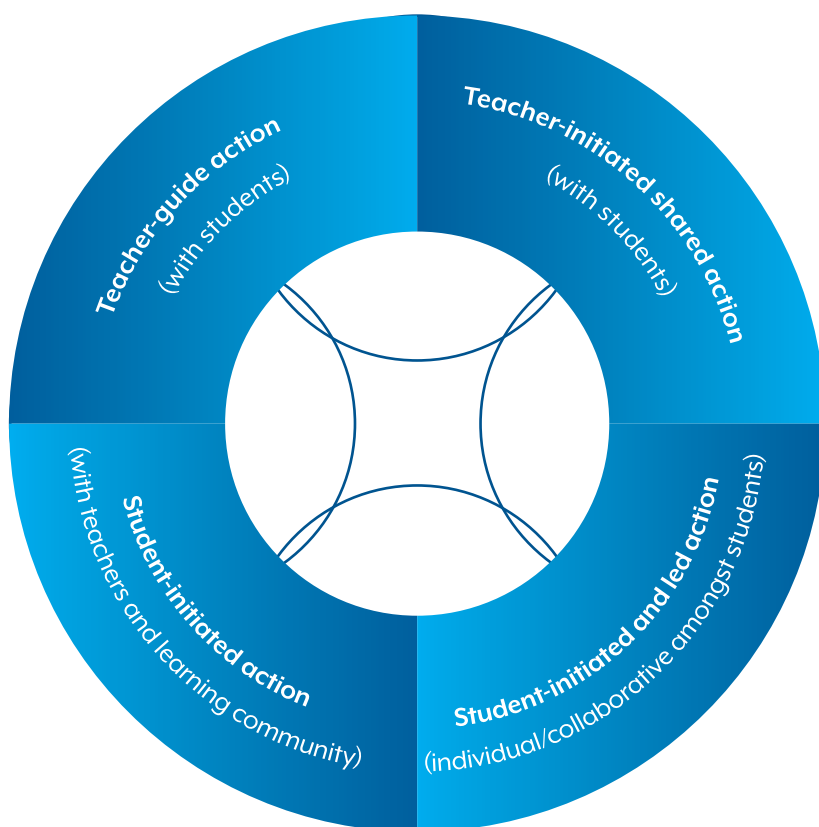
# Action

At ISHCMC action is integral to the Primary Years Programme (PYP) learning process and part of the program's overarching outcome of international-mindedness.

## Action could be:

Initiated by students, PYP action is authentic, meaningful, mindful, responsible and responsive.

- a change in attitude
- a consideration or plan for action in the future
- a demonstration of responsibility, or of 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 the community, local and global decision-making.



Through taking individual and collective action, students come to understand the responsibilities associated with being internationally minded and to appreciate the benefits of working with others for a shared purpose. When students see tangible actions that they can choose to make a difference, they see themselves as competent, capable and active agents of change (Oxfam 2015). Action is a means for students to show that they have linked their learning to real-life issues and opportunities, and that they are developing responsible dispositions and behaviours towards social and physical environments and to the community within and beyond school, belonging to local and global communities. They understand and recognize the interconnectedness and interdependence of issues, and they consider these from multiple perspectives (Oxfam 2015, UNESCO 2015).

Action might come in the form of participation, advocacy, social justice, social entrepreneurship or life choices.

## **Participation**

Being actively involved in the learning community and showing commitment to contributing as individuals and as members of a group.

## **Advocacy**

Taking action individually or collectively to publicly support positive social, environmental or political change.

## **Social justice**

Taking action for positive change relating to human rights, equality and equity. Being concerned with the advantages and disadvantages within society, and with social well-being and justice for all.

## **Social entrepreneurship**

Supporting positive social change through responding to the needs of local, national and global communities; applying prior knowledge and skills to identify and address challenges and opportunities in innovative, resourceful and sustainable ways.

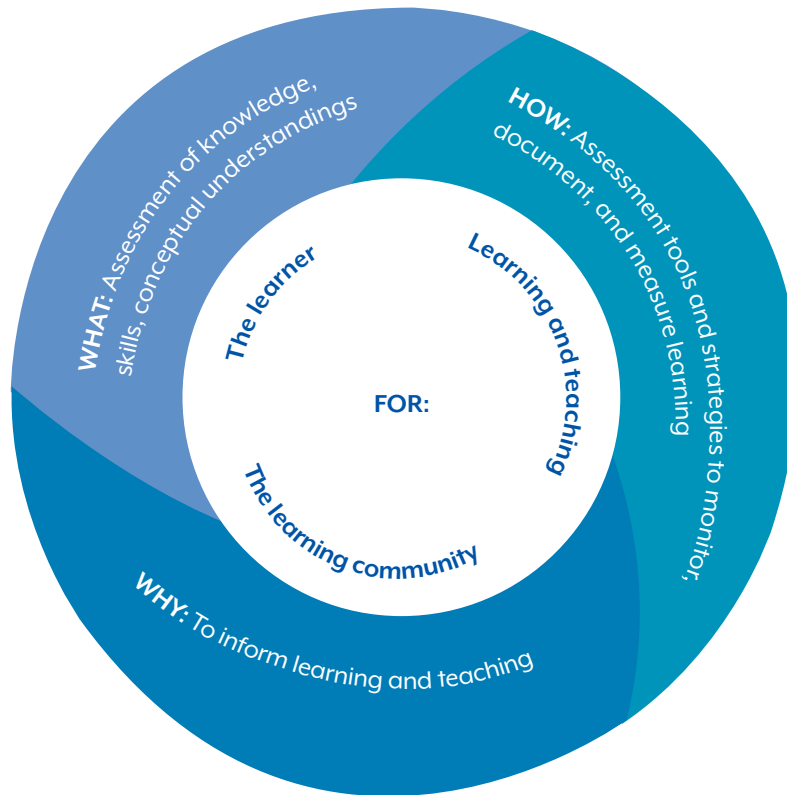
## **Lifestyle choices**

Making positive lifestyle changes in response to learning.





# The Assessed Curriculum



Assessment is central to the Primary Years Programme (PYP) by supporting students through the acquisition of subject-specific knowledge and skills, the understanding of concepts and the development of approaches to learning.

The purpose of assessment is to inform learning and teaching and it involves the gathering and analysis of information about student learning to inform teaching practice. It identifies what students know, understand and can do at different stages in the learning process.

Effective assessment provides information to understand what constitutes learning and how to support it, and is meaningful to all members of the learning community. Students become effective, self-regulated learners when they are actively engaged in assessment and act on constructive feedback. This helps them reflect on their progress and set goals for their learning and also engages them in making decisions about what they need to do in order to achieve these goals.

Teaching and learning becomes more effective when we continually learn about what students know and can do, and teachers reflect on practice, adjust teaching based on data, and offer timely and specific and well-considered feedback.

Parents and legal guardians become more informed when they understand the learning goals their child is working towards and the progress their child is making. They extend their child's understanding and development of skills when they support learning. They contribute to their child's joy of learning and growth as a successful learner through sharing insights with the learning community.

## Developing Assessment Capable Learners

All members of the learning community develop assessment capability (Absolum et al. 2009) to make the “tacit knowledge that is ‘hidden’ within the learner transparent, explicit and available” (Clark 2012). In an assessment capable learning community, everyone has a clear understanding of the reasons for assessment, what is being assessed, the criteria for success and the methods by which the assessment is made.

## Assessment

### How do we discover what students have learned?

Student learning is promoted through planning and refining the teaching and learning processes to meet individual or group needs. Assessing the students' prior knowledge and experience, as well as monitoring their achievement during the teaching period, enables teachers to plan and refine their teaching accordingly. Teachers know that a well-designed learning experience will provide data on students' knowledge, skills and conceptual understanding and that it is consequently a vehicle for summative or formative assessment.

Assessment aims to give teachers and students a clear insight into students' understanding. Assessment informs and improves student learning and the teaching process; it measures understanding of the central idea and it prompts students towards action.

Formative assessment provides information that is used in order to plan the next stage in learning. It is interwoven with learning and helps teachers and students to find out what the students already know and can do. Formative assessment and teaching are directly linked and function purposefully together. Formative assessment aims to promote learning by giving regular and frequent feedback. This helps learners to improve knowledge and understanding, to foster enthusiasm for learning, to engage in thoughtful reflection, to develop the capacity for self-assessment and to recognize the criteria for success.

### Assessment in the ISHCMC PYP classroom includes:

- Using representative examples of students' work or performance to provide information about student learning
- Collecting evidence of students' understanding and thinking
- Documenting learning processes of groups and individuals
- Engaging students in reflecting on their learning
- Students assessing work produced by themselves and by others
- Developing clear rubrics
- Identifying exemplar student work
- Keeping records of test/task results



**After any assessment is complete, it is important to ask further questions such as the following:**

- Have the tasks provided ample information to allow a judgment to be made about whether the purposes or objectives have been met?
- What does the students' performance reveal about their level of understanding?
- Have any unexpected results occurred?
- What changes should be made in the assessment procedure?
- How should the teaching and learning process be modified as a result of the assessment?

**Effective assessments allow students to:**

- Share their learning and understanding with others
- Demonstrate a range of knowledge, conceptual understanding and skills
- Use a variety of learning styles, multiple intelligences and abilities to express their understanding
- Know and understand in advance the criteria for producing a quality product or performance
- Participate in reflection, self-assessment and peer-assessment
- Base their learning on real-life experiences that can lead to further inquiries
- Express different points of view and interpretations
- Analyze their learning and understand what needs to be improved

**Effective assessments allow teachers to:**

- Inform every stage of the teaching and learning process
- Plan in response to student and teacher inquiries
- Develop criteria for producing a quality product or performance
- Gather evidence from which sound conclusions can be drawn
- Provide evidence that can be effectively reported and understood by the whole school community
- Collaboratively review and reflect on student performance and progress
- Take into account a variety of learning styles, multiple intelligences and abilities including different cultural contexts
- Use scoring that is both analytical (separate scores for different aspects of the work) and holistic (single scores)

**Effective assessments allow parents to:**

- See evidence of student learning and development
- Develop an understanding of the student's progress
- Provide opportunities to support and celebrate student learning

## Recording

**Recording: how do we collect and analyze the data?**

Assessment strategies and tools form the basis of a comprehensive approach to assessment and represent the school's answer to the question "How will we know what we have learned?" The strategies are the methods or approaches that teachers use when gathering information about a student's learning. Teachers record this information using a variety of tools, which are the instruments used to collect data.

Assessment Strategies And Tools					
	Rubrics	Exemplars	Checklists	Anecdotal Records	Continuums
Observations	✓		✓	✓	✓
Performance Assessments	✓	✓		✓	✓
Process-focused Assessments	✓		✓	✓	✓
Selected Responses		✓	✓		✓
Open-ended Tasks	✓	✓		✓	✓

## Assessment Strategies

The following strategies are central to the assessment process. They cover a broad range of approaches, from the more subjective and intuitive to the more objective and scientific. They have been selected in order to provide a balanced view of the student.

<b>Observations</b>	All students are observed often and regularly, with the teacher taking a focus varying from wide angle (e.g. focusing on the whole class) to close up (e.g. focusing on one student or one activity), and from non-participant (observing from without) to participant (observing from within).
<b>Performance Assessments</b>	The assessment of goal-directed tasks with established criteria. They that provide authentic and significant challenges and problems. In these tasks, there are numerous approaches to the problem and rarely only one correct response. They are usually multimodal and require the use of many skills. Audio, video and narrative records are often useful for this kind of assessment.
<b>Process-focused Assessments</b>	Students are observed regularly and the observations are recorded by noting the typical as well as non-typical behaviors, collecting multiple observations to enhance reliability, and synthesizing evidence from different contexts to increase validity. A system of note taking and record keeping is created that minimizes writing and recording time. Checklists, inventories and narrative descriptions (such as learning logs) are common methods of collecting observations.
<b>Selected Responses</b>	Single occasion, one-dimensional exercises. Tests and quizzes are the most familiar examples of this form of assessment.
<b>Open-ended Tasks</b>	Situations in which students are presented with a stimulus and asked to communicate an original response. The answer might be a brief written answer, a drawing, a diagram or a solution. The work, with the assessment criteria attached, could be included in a portfolio.

# Assessment Tools

The assessment strategies listed above may be put into practice using the following assessment tools:

<b>Rubrics</b>	An established set of criteria for rating students in areas. The descriptors tell the assessor what characteristics or signs to look for in students' work and then how to rate that work on a predetermined scale. Rubrics can be developed by students as well as by teachers.
<b>Exemplars</b>	Samples of students' work that serve as concrete standards against which other samples are judged. Generally, there is one benchmark for each achievement level in a scoring rubric. Each school is encouraged to set benchmarks that are appropriate and usable within their particular school context.
<b>Checklists</b>	These are lists of information, data, attributes or elements that should be present. A mark scheme is a type of checklist.
<b>Anecdotal records</b>	Anecdotal records are brief written notes based on the observations of students. "Learning stories" are focused, extended observations that can be analyzed later. These records need to be systematically compiled and organized.
<b>Continuums</b>	These are visual representations of developmental stages of learning. They show a progression of achievement or identify where a student is in a process.

The following assessments have been selected by ISHCMC in order to assess teaching and learning and to identify patterns across the school as a whole:

- PM Benchmark and PROBE Reading Assessments (KG – Studio 5)
- Gloss and JAM Numeracy Interviews (KG – Studio 5)
- WIDA English as Additional Language Assessment (KG – Studio 5)
- MAP Reading, Mathematics and Language Usage Assessments (Grade 3 and Studio 4–5)

## Documentation

The documentation of student learning is an assessment strategy that is relevant for students of all ages at ISHCMC. Teachers use a range of methods to document student learning as a means of assessing student understanding. This may include, but is not limited to, videos, audio, photographs and graphic representations. Teachers may also use written records of student conversations, comments, explanations and hypotheses as well as annotated pieces of student work that may form part of a student's portfolio.

## Reporting

### How do we choose to communicate information about assessment?

Reporting on assessment is about communicating what students know, understand and can do. It describes the progress of the students' learning and identifies areas for growth. At ISHCMC we are committed to finding the most effective format for reports in order to provide parents and students with a meaningful evaluation of student learning. Through ongoing communication with parents we believe that we can create a reporting system that is as powerful, dynamic, relevant and informative as possible.

The purpose of conferences is to share information between teachers, students and parents.

# Written Reports

Written reports are a record for students, parents and the school itself of a student's progress and performance through the unit. In addition, ISHCMC firmly believes in the formative potential of an effective reporting procedure. Our written reports clearly indicate areas of strength and areas for improvement in varied subject areas. These documents may contain data that come from teacher assessments, student self-assessments and even parent reflections, and are helpful aids to a student's development.

By reading and discussing written reports thoroughly as a family, parents or guardians will quickly understand the expectations and terminology of the PYP. Teachers are always very happy to go through them with families to explain anything that remains unclear.

Written reports are shared with parents using SEQTA. Parents will need to log on to SEQTA in order to access the information.

## Seesaw

At ISHCMC we use Seesaw as our portfolio of students' learning and Seesaw journals demonstrate success, growth, higher-order thinking, creativity, assessment strategies and reflection. The Seesaw journals are a celebration of an active mind at work and provides a picture of each student's progress and development over a period of time both as individual and group learners. It enables students to reflect with teachers, parents and peers in order to identify their strengths and growth as well as areas for improvement, and then set individual goals and establish teaching and learning plans.

At ISHCMC our Seesaw journals focus on process over product and regular time is dedicated for students, teachers, and occasionally parents to review and reflect on the student's learning journey.

## Conferences

### Student-Led Conferences

Student-led conferences involve the student and the parent. The students are responsible for leading the conference, and also take responsibility for their learning by sharing the process with their parents. This may involve students demonstrating their understanding through a variety of different learning situations and several conferences might take place in the room simultaneously.

The conference will involve the students discussing and reflecting upon samples of work that they have previously chosen to share with their parents. These samples will have been previously selected with guidance and support from the teacher and could be from the student's portfolio. The student identifies strengths and areas for improvement. The process enables parents to gain a clear insight into the kind of work their child is doing and offers an opportunity for them to discuss it with their child. The conferences must be carefully prepared and time is set aside for the students to practice their presentations. The format of this conference will depend on the age of the student and all of the participants must understand the format and their roles prior to the conference.



### Three-Way Conferences

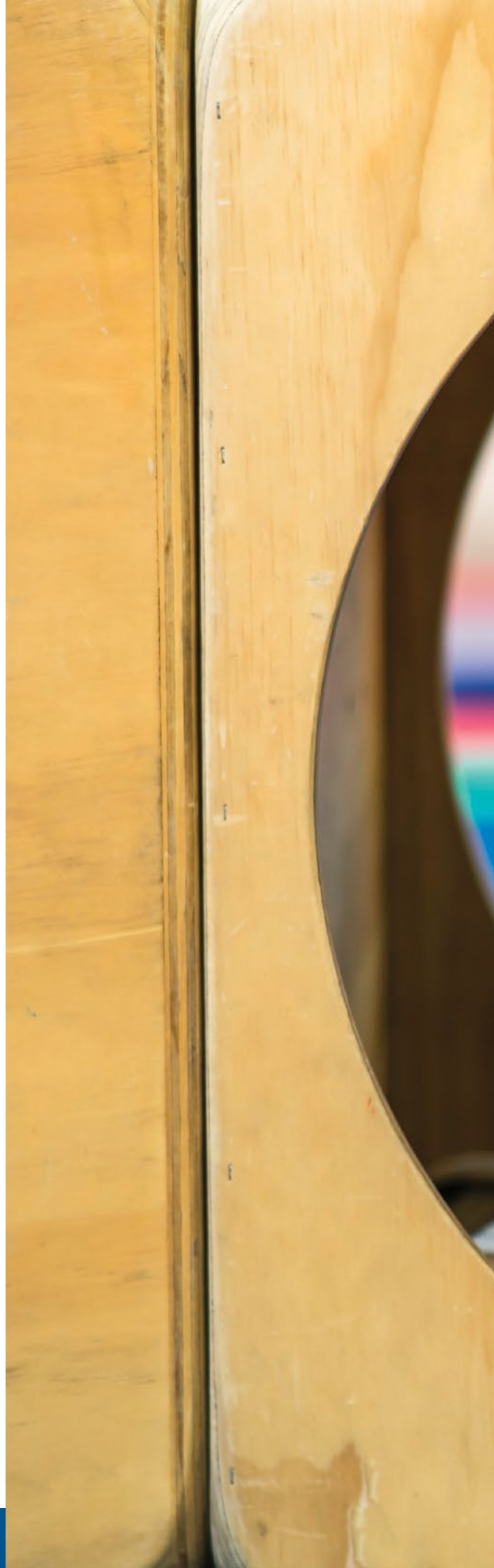
Three-way conferences involve the student, parents and teacher. Students discuss their learning and understanding with their parents and teacher, who are responsible for supporting the student through this process. Students are responsible for reflecting upon work samples that they have chosen to share, that have been previously selected with guidance and support from the teacher and could be from the student's portfolio. The student, the parents and the teacher collaborate to establish and identify the student's strengths and areas for improvement. This may lead to the setting of new goals, with all participants determining how they can support the achievement of the goals. The teacher is an integral part of the process and takes notes on the discussion and these notes may then be used in the written report. All of the participants must understand the format and their roles prior to the conference.

### Teacher-Student Conferences

These are designed to give students feedback so that they can reflect on their work and further refine and develop their skills. It is important that these individual conferences occur frequently in order to support and encourage the students' learning and teacher planning.

### Parent-Teacher Conferences

These are designed to give parents information about the student's progress, development and needs, and about the school's program. Teachers take this opportunity to gather background information, to answer the parents' questions, to address their concerns and to help define their role in the learning process. Parents take the opportunity to provide the teacher with the cultural context of the student's learning.





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