

# ISHCMC



## Who We Are











# Contents



<b>Reflect and Refresh</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Our Vision</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Core Values</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Our Mission</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Wellbeing</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Learning</b>	<b>20</b>



# Reflect and Refresh



## Rationale

The previous vision and mission were developed and adopted in 2014 at a point in leadership transition at ISHCMC.

The ISHCMC Strategic Plan 2017-2020 was developed in 2016-17 and then abandoned in July 2019. On an annual basis the senior leadership team engaged in a SWOT analysis and defined new priorities for the upcoming school year.

The CIS 2018 re-Accreditation report stated that a major area for action was the school to ...

‘Domain A Standard 5 (Major) - The senior leadership team create and commit to a review process for the guiding statements involving the whole community’. CIS Evaluation Team Report 2018.

Domain A Standard 6 - The senior leadership team develops a formal process for monitoring and evaluating the implementation and impact of the guiding statements on the community as whole and the learners in particular, using the ensuing data to drive decision-making at all levels.

Through the process of reflection it was imperative that we maintained our foundations, protected our history and identity, and created a pathway that would enable us to build from our foundations into the future.

Through a series of workshops with faculty, support staff, parents and students it was identified that the existing vision was our practice and Who We Are. Therefore, the ISHCMC mission was refreshed to reflect the 2014 vision that all learners would flourish. The ISHCMC vision was aligned with the Cognita Schools Group. To be completed.





# Our Vision

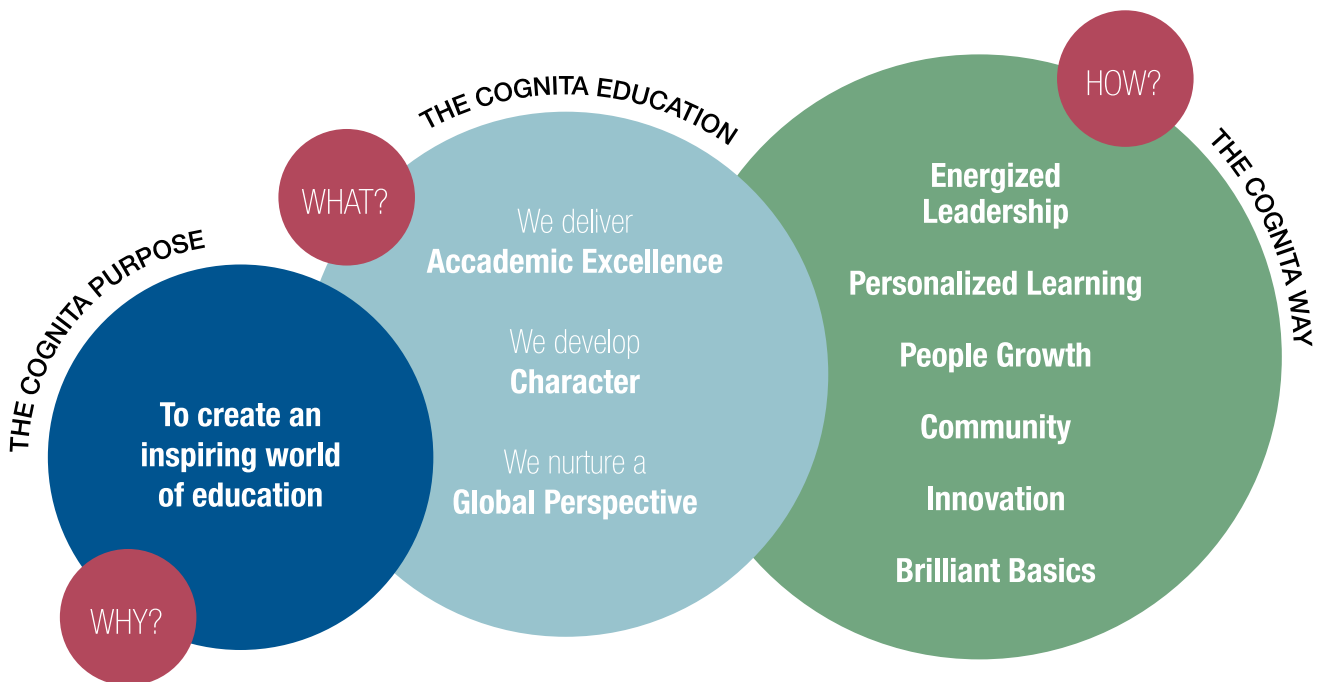


## Our Vision

To enable our students to thrive  
in a rapidly evolving world.

## Cognita Vision

Alignment with the Cognita Schools Group









# Core Values



## Our Values



Curiosity



Achievement



Resilience



Empathy

Our values underpin our vision of enriching the lives of children to achieve more than they believe they can. Our values are our building blocks for our culture of CARE and enable our diverse, internationally-minded community to flourish as energized, engaged and empowered learners.

Our values help shape our culture, the behaviours of those individuals who choose to work with us and our behaviour as a school community. Our values also underpin how we recruit and support our staff with regard to professional development and learning.

## Curiosity



Curiosity is self-motivation, self-efficiency and the continuous pursuit, discovery and eventual understanding of the unknown.

As **energized** learners, we seek new information and experiences and take time to ask questions and listen. We explore novel possibilities, view tough situations more creatively and collaborate to think outside of the box.

As **engaged** learners, we are thinkers, doers, creators and makers. We maintain a sense of wonder to fuel our creativity and innovation. By asking questions we promote more-meaningful connections and more-creative outcomes.

As **empowered** learners, we never stop learning, because we know that exploring and inquiring into new ideas and considering fresh perspectives is how we thrive. We are ok when we do not know and demonstrate intellectual humility.

## Achievement



Achievement encompasses a wide range of academic and character skills and competencies that ensures we are successful in our futures.

As **energized** learners, we have a strong sense of purpose, persistence and align our learning to our personal sense of meaning.

As **engaged** learners, we feel a sense of achievement when we see our own progress in learning and mastering a subject or skill.

As **empowered** learners, we set clear objectives, and help each other to grow, persevere and develop a stronger sense of wellbeing.



## Resilience



Resilience is being self aware and confident so that we can overcome setbacks and achieve the things that are important to us. Resilience enables us to stay motivated, achieve goals and live a happy life.

As **energized** learners, we are agile and see solutions. We are ready to respond to opportunities and we adapt and evolve to different circumstances with a growth mindset.

As **engaged** learners, we have self control and embrace our community through our sense of commitment and desire to contribute. We are persistent and feel safe and supported to take risks and grow from our mistakes.

As **empowered** learners, we are self aware. We are conscious of our character, inner thoughts and enjoy self acceptance which allows us to be passionate about our beliefs. We are mentally strong and use mindfulness to maintain balance and push past failures with a positive mindset.

## Empathy



Empathy is recognizing the humanity in each person that we have contact with and treating everyone with respect. Empathy enables us to understand each other better, work together more cohesively and build collective efficacy.

As **energized** learners, we present our ideas and beliefs considerately and celebrate diversity.

As **engaged** learners, we value our relationships with each other and are present, ask open ended questions and listen thoughtfully. We respect others, understand different beliefs and perspectives, act with kindness and resolve conflict peacefully. We take care of our environment and take responsibility for our own actions.

As **empowered** learners, we understand ourselves so that we can understand others and recognize other people's emotions so that we all feel valued. We reject actions that hurt or offend others and treat others as we would like to be treated.





# Our Mission



## Our Mission

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

## We are ... Diverse

We are a diverse community of different nationalities, cultural and educational backgrounds, race, ethnicity, geographies, socio-economic background, gender roles, age, sexual orientation, religion, political views, neuro-divergences and physical differences, co-curricular abilities etc.

Diversity promotes creativity, as well as better education, as those with differing viewpoints are able to collaborate to create solutions. We celebrate our communities' diversity as it positively impacts our learners' performance by enabling them to concentrate and push themselves further when there are people of other backgrounds working alongside them.

## We are ... Internationally Minded

The 10 characteristics of the IB Learner Profile: Open Minded, Principled, Knowledgeable, Communicator, Inquirer, Risk-taker, Caring, Thinker, Balanced and Reflection; can only truly come to fruition if students are energized, engaged and empowered through their learning. By ensuring that the three E's are at the centre of ISHCMC's educational outcomes ensures students are prepared and have the temperament and skills to fully access the traits of an IB Learner and to be internationally minded.

Internationally mindedness is demonstrated when we

- actively listen to the ideas of others
- feel slightly uncomfortable with the actions of others and want to understand why we feel uncomfortable
- question whether viewpoints we hold are culturally specific
- are open to exploring new ideas
- try to communicate across language barriers
- seek to understand the point of others even though we might ultimately end up disagreeing with it
- accept that people view actions differently depending on their cultural background
- realize how little I know and am excited by how much I have to learn about the world and its peoples.

We strive through our philosophy, organization and curriculum to create active and principled contributors to the world. Therefore our learners engage in a broad and diverse curriculum that draws on perspectives from different cultures around the world. Our learners are taught to appreciate; value and respect all cultures; religions and languages. Students learn to see themselves as global citizens and are asked to look beyond: gender, class, race, nationality and culture to understand human nature.

## We are ... A Community

Our community encompasses various individuals - parents, students, teachers, support staff, alumni and friends of ISHCMC. All of these individuals are invested in the vision, mission and values of the school. We are a community as we have strong relationships with each other, foster feelings of inclusion, caring, shared purpose and collective investment.

As a community all of our members share responsibility for one another, provide an environment for intellectual learning, and create a healthy social atmosphere where all the members of the community are supported. As a community we all have a social and emotional attachment to ISHCMC, we communicate honestly with each other, we celebrate with each other and support each other when times are challenging. We are all involved in the process of planning and improvement.

## We ... Flourish

Flourish is to find fulfillment in our lives, accomplishing meaningful and worthwhile tasks, and connecting with others at a deeper level—in essence, living the “good life” (Seligman, 2011).

Flourishing is the state that we create when we tend to each aspect of the PERMA model: increasing our positive emotions, engaging with the world and our work (or hobbies), develop deep and meaningful relationships, find meaning and purpose in our lives, and achieve our goals through cultivating and applying our strengths and talents.

## as ... Energized, Engaged & Empowered Learners

Students who are energized, engaged and empowered demonstrate curiosity, achievement, resilience and empathy. They understand that effort is important and that often it is important to fail before enjoying meaningful success.

Research shows that being healthy, mindful, positive and in control of one's life is the foundation that allows students to become engaged and active in their learning. It has also been shown that mindfulness boosts cognitive resources and breadth of attention to help students manage many events at once. When students are actively engaged they become life-long learners, passionate and connected to their learning and this in turn empowers students in their lives.



The following defines the terms energised, engaged and empowered;

Energized	Engaged	Empowered
Individual, physical, emotional and interpersonal well-being that through curiosity, achievement, resilience and empathy results collaboration and an eagerness for learning	The rational, emotional and behavioural connection to learning that is fuelled by curiosity, achievement, resilience and empathy through a constructivist inquiry-based approach to teaching and learning that results in motivation for learning.	The increased capacity of learners' curiosity, achievement, resilience and empathy that enables them to have agency of their own learning and lives.

The following provides further guidance on how we define the terms within the above definitions;

### Collaboration

Collaboration is seen as the process of shared creation: two or more individuals with complementary skills interacting to create a shared understanding that none had previously possessed or could have come to on their own in an environment of trust.

Collaboration creates a shared meaning about a process, a product, or an event. Collaborators not only plan, decide, and act jointly; they also think together, combining independent conceptual schemes to create original frameworks.

When people collaborate, there is also commitment to shared resources, power, and talent: no individual's point of view dominates, authority for decisions and actions resides in the group, and work products reflect a blending of all participants' contributions.

### Connection

For learners to flourish they have to forge multiple connections. Safe and knowledgeable technological connection is essential but beyond this it is important that students know how to connect with each other; have the emotional intelligence needed to be collaborative problem solvers; are connected to their environments and understand the importance of green time and finally that they are connected to communities

### Constructivist

Constructivist teaching and learning encourages us to see learning as an active, constructive process. The learner is an information constructor. Learners actively construct or create their own subjective representations of reality. New information is linked to prior knowledge thus mental representations are subjective. Constructivists shift the focus from knowledge as a product to knowing as a process. Constructivism recognizes the importance of the prior knowledge in students' learning, recognizing that students are not blank slates or empty vessels waiting

### Agency

The concept of student agency, as understood in the context of the OECD Learning Compass 2030, is rooted in the principle that learners have the ability and the will to positively influence their own lives and the world around them.

Agency is thus defined as the capacity to set a goal, reflect and act responsibly to effect change. It is about acting rather than being acted upon; shaping rather than being shaped; and making responsible decisions and choices rather than accepting those determined by others.

When learners are agents in their learning, that is, when they play an active role in deciding what and how they will learn, they tend to show greater motivation to learn and are more likely to define objectives for their learning. These learners are also more likely to have “learned how to learn” – an invaluable skill that they can and will use throughout their lives.

Agency can be exercised in nearly every context: moral, social, economic, creative. For example, students need to use moral agency to help them make decisions that recognise the rights and needs of others. While a well-developed sense of agency can help individuals achieve long-term goals and overcome adversity, learners need foundational cognitive, social and emotional skills so that they can apply agency to their own – and society’s – benefit.

The term agency refers to learning through activities that are meaningful and relevant to learners, driven by their interests, and often self-initiated with appropriate guidance from teachers. This gives students a stake in choosing from opportunities provided for them. For example students may be given a choice between projects, writing assignments, or other activities. Their ability to make a decision triggers a greater investment of interest and ownership resulting in higher levels of motivation.

#### **Student agency is not...**

- A free-for-all for students: Our students need the guidance of their teachers and sometimes too many choices can be counterproductive instead of inspiring.
- Lacking accountability: Students must demonstrate mastery of concepts and skills.
- A replacement for an expert teacher: While students might choose areas for personal inquiry they will still require course-correction along the path to mastery.







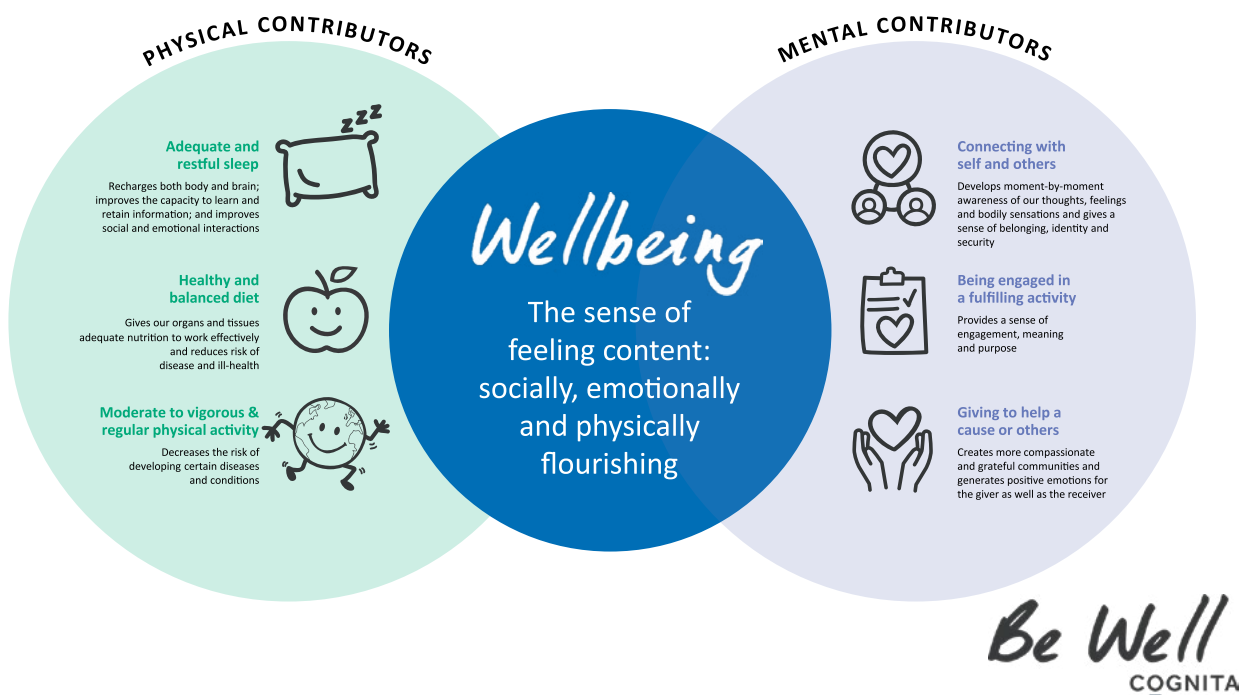
# Wellbeing



Wellbeing is the foundation of a Cognita Education and it is integral to our overall purpose of 'Providing an inspiring world of education: building self-belief and empowering individuals to succeed'.

## Be Well Charter

The Cognita Be Well Charter defines wellbeing and highlights six key contributors to wellbeing. These contributors are both physical and mental.



Across our Cognita Schools Group ensure that we embed a culture of wellbeing in our schools that is living and breathing through a number of Be Well initiatives, track and evaluate wellbeing across all our schools and ensure the availability of high-quality resources and guidance for our school communities.

Global Be Well Day (GBWD), an annual event when all Cognita across the globe collapse the curriculum for one day to focus entirely on wellbeing.

# Principles of Wellbeing

Wellbeing means to be able to manage life situations in a balanced manner, rely on and reach out to others and cooperate in harmony with members and to feel safe and valued in the community.

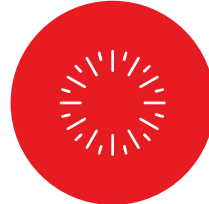
Wellbeing is the balance of 4 main areas: personal, relational, mental and physical which allows us to function positively in all areas of life.

The ISHCMC principles of wellbeing are:



## Positive Emotions

The right balance of acceptance and happiness to boost our resilience.



## Meaning

A sense of connection to something greater than ourselves through respected and valued relationships that allow for equity.



## Engagement

Regular development of our strengths and mindful practice - Those things we are encouraged to do and recognised for doing.



## Accomplishment

The belief and the confidence to do the things that give us purpose and promote resilience.



## Relationships

The creation of safe and authentic, energizing connections through clear communication and a caring environment.



## Health

Eat well, move well, sleep well.







# Learning

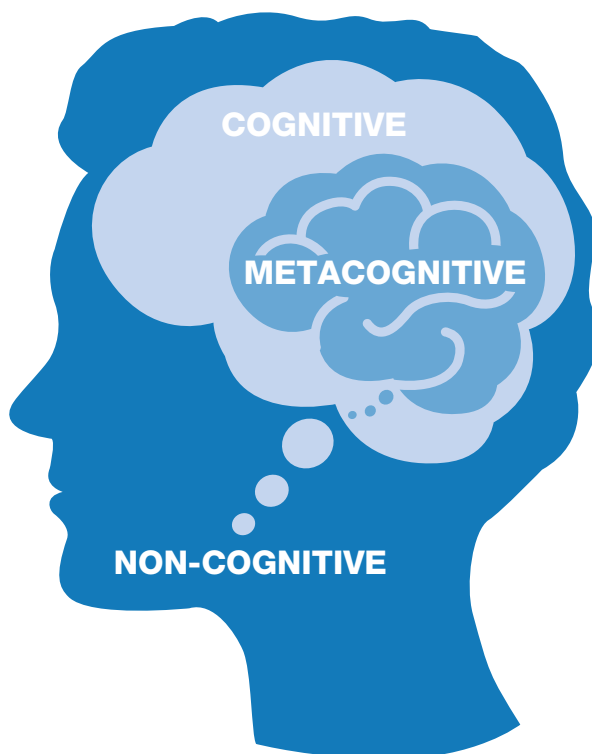


ISHCMC is an International Baccalaureate (IB) World School and offers three IB programmes: the Primary Years Programme (PYP), the Middle Years Programme (MYP), and the Diploma Programme (DP). ISHCMC was the first international school in HCMC and compared to all international schools in Ho Chi Minh City, we are proud to have the longest history of graduating IB Diploma students.

An IB education is unique because of its rigorous academic standards and its holistic approach to education. IB programmes challenge students to excel not only in their learning but also in their personal growth. The IB and ISHCMC The IB believes that together we can help to prepare students for living in a complex, highly interconnected world.

Inquiry is central to all teaching and learning in the IB. The inquiry model builds on student's prior knowledge and enables students to think critically, raise their own questions and develop their research skills. As an IB learner, students are also encouraged to apply what they have learned to take meaningful action in their local communities.

Integral to all learning in the IB programmes are the 'approaches to learning' (ATL) skills. Students develop, practice, and master these ATL skills throughout their ISHCMC journeythe school. The ATL skills are the vehicle by which students develop their Learner Profile characteristics, and empower them for a lifetime of learning, both independently and in collaboration with others.



## SOCIAL

Collaboration skills

## COMMUNICATION

Communication skills

## THINKING

Critical thinking skills  
Creative thinking  
Transfer

## RESEARCH

Media literacy  
Information literacy

## SELF-MANAGEMENT

Affective skills  
Organizational skills  
Reflective skills

# Principles of Learning

At ISHCMC teaching and learning is guided by our Principles of Learning. They inform planning and, in the very best teaching, ‘interleave’ together to give the impression of classroom learning which is smooth, consistent, immersive, and sustained.

The curriculum at ISHCMC is authorized by the IB and accredited by the Council of International Schools. This accreditation and authorization provide assurance to our students and parents that the curriculum at ISHCMC is comprehensive and ensures international age-appropriate growth across all domains of learning.

At ISHCMC teaching and learning is guided by our Principles of Learning. They inform planning and, in the very best teaching, ‘interleave’ together to give the impression of classroom learning which is smooth, consistent, immersive, and sustained.

**All learners are capable of achieving their goals in a guided environment where there is an appropriate balance of standards, challenge and support**

It is expected that all students make the effort to progress in their learning and achieve their goals. Clear learning goals and performance objectives are set for and by students. These objectives and goals involve meaningful performance criteria and answer genuine questions that challenge students to make an effort to attain their goal.

A growth mindset will be purposefully developed by teachers in the classroom as they nurture curiosity and higher order thinking in their students. Students will be provided with examples, models and formative rubrics to support their learning.

**Learning builds on prior knowledge and experiences and is contextual, meaningful and valuable**

Students do not learn isolated facts and theories in an abstract state of being separated from the rest of their lives: they learn in relation to what else they know, what they believe, their prejudices and their fears. Learning needs to be purposeful, age appropriate and personal to the students, drawing on and valuing their prior knowledge and experiences. The more students know, the more they can learn. Prior learning provides a context to new learning whilst at the same time providing a degree of ownership of the learning process. It is expected that students use what they already know to construct new meanings.

Teachers model effective questioning routines for and with students to construct meaningful, trans-disciplinary learning experiences in order to guide the student to see the value of what they are learning in the wider world and ask students to demonstrate their understanding through “real world” applications that genuinely use the knowledge and skills that have been acquired in an authentic setting.

**Learning is an active process that takes time and is strengthened through opportunities for error, practice, reflection, and further revision of ideas**

Learning is not the passive acceptance of knowledge which exists but engaging with the world through real world applications of their learning. For significant learning to take place it is important that students are given plenty of time and the opportunity for trial and error, practice, pondering, reflecting, drafting and redrafting their ideas. Reflection and metacognition will be required of all students. This should be guided by the teacher, be meaningful, natural and lead to progression of learning through continuous self-assessment and self-adjustment. Learning is seen as a continuous process that when effective produces life-long learners.

**Motivation is a key factor in learning**

Motivation is essential for learning. Learners' motivation to learn and sense-of-self affects what is learned, how much is learned, and how much effort will be put into the learning process.

Three important components of motivation are: Purpose, Autonomy and Mastery. Hence, teachers explain clearly the learning objectives of each class, provide opportunities for students to learn independently and at their own pace, whilst providing students with the opportunity to display their learning in different ways. In order to maintain student motivation, it is expected that teachers will provide authentic feedback that students can use to build their mastery of concepts and knowledge

**Learning is effective when personalized**

Learners have different strategies, approaches, patterns of abilities and learning styles. Hence, learning is most effective when it is differentiated. Learning activities and assessments embrace individual differences and draw upon a rich repertoire of teaching and assessment strategies matched to learning goals.

Teachers develop innovative ways of teaching using: learning styles, multi-sensory approaches, experiential learning, providing student choice and engaging minds as well as hands.

**Learning takes place in a safe, engaging environment**

Learning is a social activity that is most effective in a safe, scaffolded environment where students are encouraged to: feel able to take risks, collaborate, be creative and learn from each other. Social interactions exert an influence on learning.

The teacher creates a socially, emotionally and physically welcoming and inspiring environment that encourages the well-being and flourishing of students through the use of positive language and expectations. The teacher encourages learning by providing regular and timely formative feedback to students that drives continued engagement and growth.

**Learning encompasses the personal, local, and global—aiming to make for a better world**

By relating learning to real world scenarios and asking students to use their understanding and skills to problem solve, students become more engaged in the learning process. This process is achieved when learning begins with the “I” and moves systematically to the “us” and the “we”. Through this experience students develop a greater empathy and compassion for others as they develop their international mindedness.

Teachers facilitate this growth by using inquiry pedagogy; valuing student experiences; introducing global examples; inviting outside consultants to share their knowledge and connecting students to communities beyond the classroom.



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