



# Introduction to the PYP

## at Kyoto International School



This handbook is an overview of the Primary Years Programme curriculum. It is a reference book describing the nuances of the curriculum and provides you with the information that will make your child's year purposeful and rewarding in every aspect.

*Inspiring Active Learners, Developing Global Citizens*



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## IB Mission Statement

The International Baccalaureate aims to develop **inquiring, knowledgeable and caring** young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end the organisation works with schools, governments and international organisations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

## KIS Vision and Mission

### Our Vision

Inspiring active learners, developing global citizens

### Our Mission

In our community we foster passionate, collaborative, and internationally minded individuals through an engaging and supportive education.



# Primary Years Programme



The PYP (Primary Years Programme) is an international curriculum framework designed for all children between the ages of 3 and 12 years. The program focuses on the overall growth of the developing child, thereby addressing social, physical, emotional and cultural needs in addition to academic welfare.

## PYP Curriculum Framework

The PYP curriculum framework emphasises the central principle of 'agency' that is threaded throughout the three pillars of the curriculum:

- the learner
- learning and teaching
- the learning community

Everyone connected to the school community has voice, choice and ownership to impact learning and teaching. These components come together as a coherent whole to complement and reinforce each other. PYP learning is based on authentic inquiry-based learning and teaching that is engaging, significant, challenging and relevant.

## Primary Years Programme Curriculum

### The Learner

Students:

- are agents of their own learning and partners in the learning process.
- inquire, question, wonder and theorise about themselves, others and the world around them.
- develop knowledge, conceptual understandings, skills and the attributes of the learner profile to take action.

### Learning and Teaching

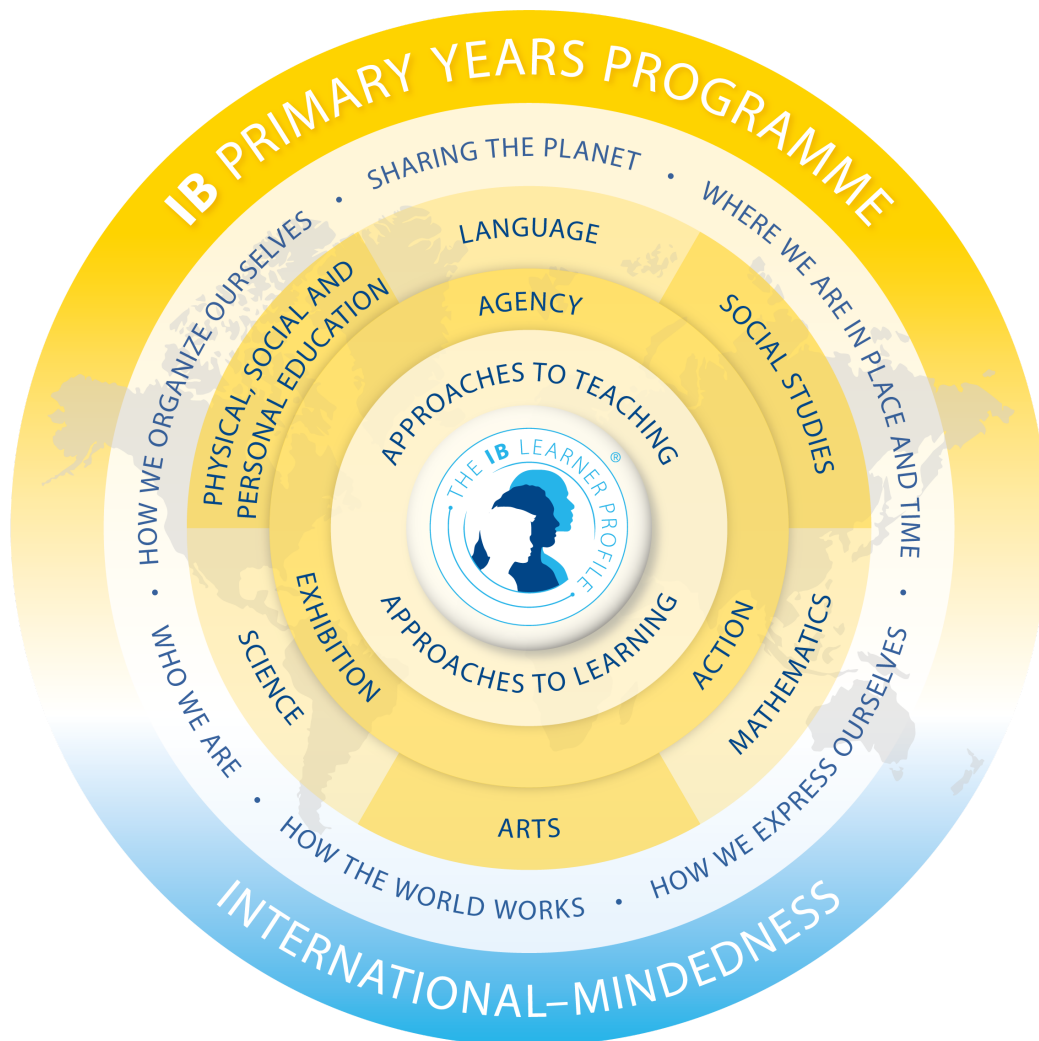
The PYP emphasises on:

- promoting an understanding of commonalities of local, national and global significance.
- connecting prior and new knowledge to broaden their understandings about the world.
- providing valuable feedback to students to inform the next steps in their learning.

## The Learning Community

The PYP believes that learning community:

- includes everyone involved in the life of the school, as well as other
- significant adults in student’s lives.
- will work together to sustain a positive school culture.
- will support the well-being of students and create a safe and engaging environment that nurtures lifelong learners.



The learner and learner profile is at the heart of the curriculum model and it helps to develop international mindedness.

## The 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.

Learner profile attribute	How you can help
Students who are <b>CARING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>are sensitive to other people needs</li> <li>care about their community and the environment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Role model the caring behaviour you would like to see</li> <li>Use kind words</li> <li>Be an active listener</li> <li>Help the less fortunate</li> </ul>
Students who are <b>COMMUNICATORS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>think and communicate in more than one language.</li> <li>express their ideas through speaking, drawing and writing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ask your child thought provoking questions</li> <li>Create opportunities for your child to communicate their feelings and ideas</li> <li>Speak in your mother tongue as much as possible</li> </ul>
Students who are <b>INQUIRERS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>are curious</li> <li>love learning and discovering new things</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage them in discussions about a variety of topics</li> <li>Model being an inquirer</li> <li>Seek out answers in front of your child</li> </ul>
Students who are <b>KNOWLEDGEABLE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>explore relevant and significant concepts</li> <li>can apply knowledge in new situations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage your child to read books at home about different topics</li> <li>Ask your child about what they are learning in school</li> <li>Ask open-ended questions</li> <li>Help your child to become familiar with current events</li> <li>Read the newspaper and watch the news when appropriate</li> </ul>
An <b>OPEN-MINDED</b> student <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>knows people are different</li> <li>listen to the points of view of others are tolerant and respectful of others, even if they do not share the same opinions and beliefs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage your child to try new foods, new games and new activities</li> <li>Expose them to different festivals, celebrations and traditions</li> <li>Encourage your child to really listen to others and to see different perspectives</li> </ul>
Students who are <b>PRINCIPLED</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>have sense of fairness</li> <li>are honest with themselves and with others</li> <li>have an understanding of moral reasoning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talk to your child about making ethical decisions and making right choices in everything they do</li> <li>Teach them the importance of honesty, trust and fairness</li> </ul>
Students who are <b>REFLECTIVE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talk about their strengths and areas for improvement</li> </ul>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● know what they are good at and where they need to improve</li> <li>● give thoughtful consideration to their own learning</li> <li>● consider their personal strengths and weaknesses in a constructive manner</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Discuss the goals that your child could set for themselves</li> <li>● Share memories together and discuss the impact different experiences have had on your life</li> </ul>
<p>Students who are <b>COURAGEOUS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● have the courage to try new things</li> <li>● explore new roles, ideas, and strategies</li> <li>● are brave and articulate in defending their beliefs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Encourage your child to try new experiences and activities</li> <li>● Help them overcome their fears and insecurities</li> </ul>
<p>Students who are <b>THINKERS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● solve problems independently.</li> <li>● imagine many solutions to a question or challenge</li> <li>● think creatively and critically</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Encourage your child to try independently</li> <li>● Pose different real-life problems</li> <li>● Ask questions that will require thoughtful responses such as: What if ..? I wonder.... What do you think...?</li> </ul>
<p>Students who are <b>BALANCED</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● take care of themselves.</li> <li>● understand the importance to balance between the physical, emotional, and mental aspects of their bodies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Encourage your child to participate in a variety of activities.</li> <li>● Make sure your child is getting enough exercise, rest and sleep.</li> <li>● Spend time as a parent or family doing many different things.</li> </ul>

## Knowledge

At each grade level, students explore knowledge which is of importance in understanding the human condition and has significance for all students of all cultures. The topics studied are engaging and challenging, and have the potential to actively involve students in their own learning.

PYP curriculum framework, with its 6 transdisciplinary themes, builds upon these 8 core commonalities. It's not an exact fit, but it does seem to match fairly well, and this implies that the PYP framework will certainly promote becoming an educated person.

The six transdisciplinary themes in PYP are :

- Who We Are
- Where We Are in Place and Time
- How We Organize Ourselves
- How We Express Ourselves
- How the World Works
- Sharing the Planet



These themes

- have global significance
- offer students the opportunity to explore the commonalities of human experience.

All PYP students from Grade 1 to Grade 5 are involved in inquiring into the six transdisciplinary themes except nursery and kindergarten students who participate in only four transdisciplinary themes.

## Inquiry

### How students learn best

As the leading pedagogical approach, inquiry in the PYP, is recognized as allowing students to be actively involved in their own learning and to take responsibility for that learning. Inquiry allows each student to understand the world in a manner and at a rate that is unique to the student.

### What does inquiry look like?

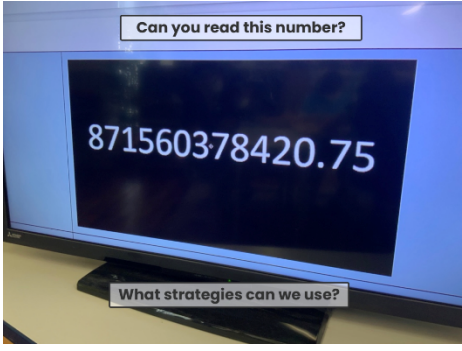


- exploring, wondering and questioning
- experimenting and playing with possibilities
- making connections between previous learning and current learning
- making predictions and acting purposefully to see what happens
- collecting data and reporting findings
- clarifying existing ideas and reappraising 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.

### Advantages of Inquiry

- it taps curiosity of the learners
- it is engaging for the learners
- it encourages developing independent thinking
- it deepens understanding
- it caters to different learning styles



## What does an inquiry classroom look like?

	<p>In Grade 5, students were challenged to read a long number and then compare the strategies they used to work it out. Students noticed that many of them have different but similar ideas about how to do this. The class then looked at each of the strategies and synthesised them to create a general rule for reading long numbers.</p>
<p>Students of Grade 2 investigate on the term health and shared their understanding using a graphic organiser</p>	
	<p>Students of Grade 3 used manipulatives to investigate the formation of a number.</p>

## Ways of helping your child at home

- Inquire about what the child is learning in class.
- Support and encourage interest and curiosity by following up with activities at home.
- Help to develop research skills online and from textual matter.
- Encourage independent thinking
- Pose real life problems to them
- Ask questions when working on something

## Learning in the Early Years

Children are natural inquirers from birth; they have the capacity to learn about, interact with and interpret the world around them.

Play is highly adaptive, involves students' choice and provides rigorous opportunities to inquire into important concepts and personal interests. Through play, children actively construct meaning from their interactions with their physical and social worlds.

At KIS teachers provide range of learning experiences and support play by:

- creating play stations and various learning spaces for students to explore
- scheduling uninterrupted time for play in both indoor and outdoor spaces

During play teachers are engaged in observing students' thinking processes, interests and theories. They monitor and document students' learning and development. They also provide support and feedback to students when required.

## Agency in the PYP

Agency is the power to take meaningful and intentional action, and supports voice, choice and ownership for students, teachers and the wider learning community.

Students with agency:

- have voice, choice and ownership; and a propensity to take action
- influence and direct learning
- contribute to and participate in the learning community.

At KIS we strive to promote student agency by:

- Creating a culture of inquiry and creativity
- Respecting students' perspectives
- Encouraging students to solve their problems
- Collaborating with students to design assessments and homework
- Involving students in planning the classroom layout

Ways to promote learner agency at home:

- Be a responsive observer, help but don't be too helpful
- Ensure opportunities for students to share their voice and hear their opinions
- Negotiate with your child to overcome tensions and strive for balance
- Support your child to plan, modify and discuss their projects and not plan for them
- Respond to their plans and curate appropriate resources so they can make their plans a reality
- Model risk-taking behaviour
- Praise your child's victories but celebrate their failure too and consider it to be a learning experience

## Approaches to Learning

### What do we want students to be able to DO?

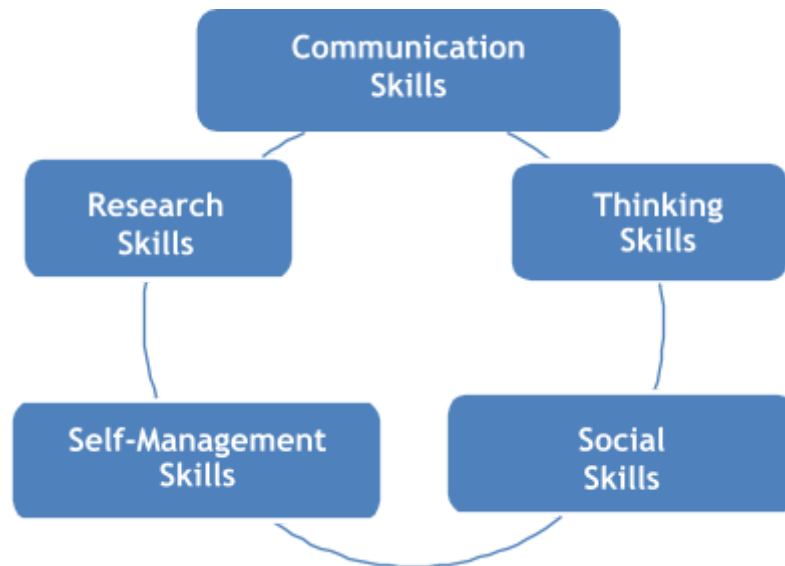
Within their learning throughout the programme, students acquire and apply a set of transdisciplinary skills:

- social skills
- communication skills
- thinking skills
- research skills
- self-management skills

These skills are valuable, for any teaching and learning within the classroom and in life outside the school. The students should be developing useful skills relevant to the subject areas outlined in the programme of inquiry.

If they are appreciating literature, they should be learning procedures and honing needed by writers. Whatever the subject may be, the students will be exploring the skills specific to a given discipline and engage in practising those skills within the context of the unit of inquiry.

Below is the list of skills deemed essential for the well-rounded development of a PYP student:



# Action

## How do we want students to act?

It's not just about relevant, engaging, challenging and significant things and developing skills. We want to bring a difference in the students' thinking and behaviour, we want students to **ACT**.

“An explicit expectation of the PYP is that successful inquiry will lead to responsible action, initiated by the student as a result of the learning process”


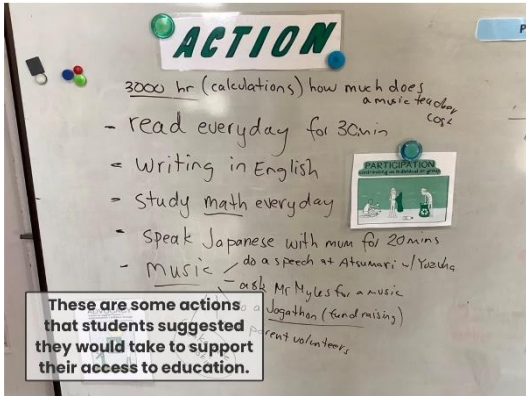


## What does Action look like?

Types of Action	Evidence
<p><b>Participation</b> Being actively involved in the learning community and showing commitment to contributing as individuals and as members of a group.</p>	<p><b>Examples include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• making appropriate choices and taking responsibility for personal learning and actions</li> <li>• working collaboratively with teachers and peers to plan, present, reflect</li> <li>• contributing to discussions and learning experiences</li> <li>• raising awareness</li> </ul>
<p><b>Advocacy</b> Taking action individually or collectively to publicly support positive social, environmental or political change.</p>	<p><b>Examples include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• supporting peers in the learning community</li> <li>• sharing ideas with others</li> <li>• presenting reasoned arguments on behalf of others</li> <li>• taking on the role of student representative at class, school, local community level and beyond</li> </ul>
<p><b>Social justice</b> 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</p>	<p><b>Examples include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• exploring issues of fairness from different perspectives</li> <li>• challenging assumptions and generalisations</li> <li>• volunteering in response to</li> </ul>

and justice for all.	community needs
<b>Social entrepreneurship</b> 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.	<b>Examples include:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>designing, planning and developing models and solutions to address identified issues</li> <li>initiating and maintaining projects that have a positive impact on the learning community</li> </ul>
<b>Lifestyle choices</b> Making positive lifestyle changes in response to learning.	<b>Examples include:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>considering and acting on factors that contribute to personal, social and physical health and well-being</li> <li>taking responsibility for interactions and relationships with others</li> <li>engaging in responsible and sustainable consumption (for example, making informed decisions surrounding food, energy, water, materials usage)</li> </ul>

## Examples of Action at KIS

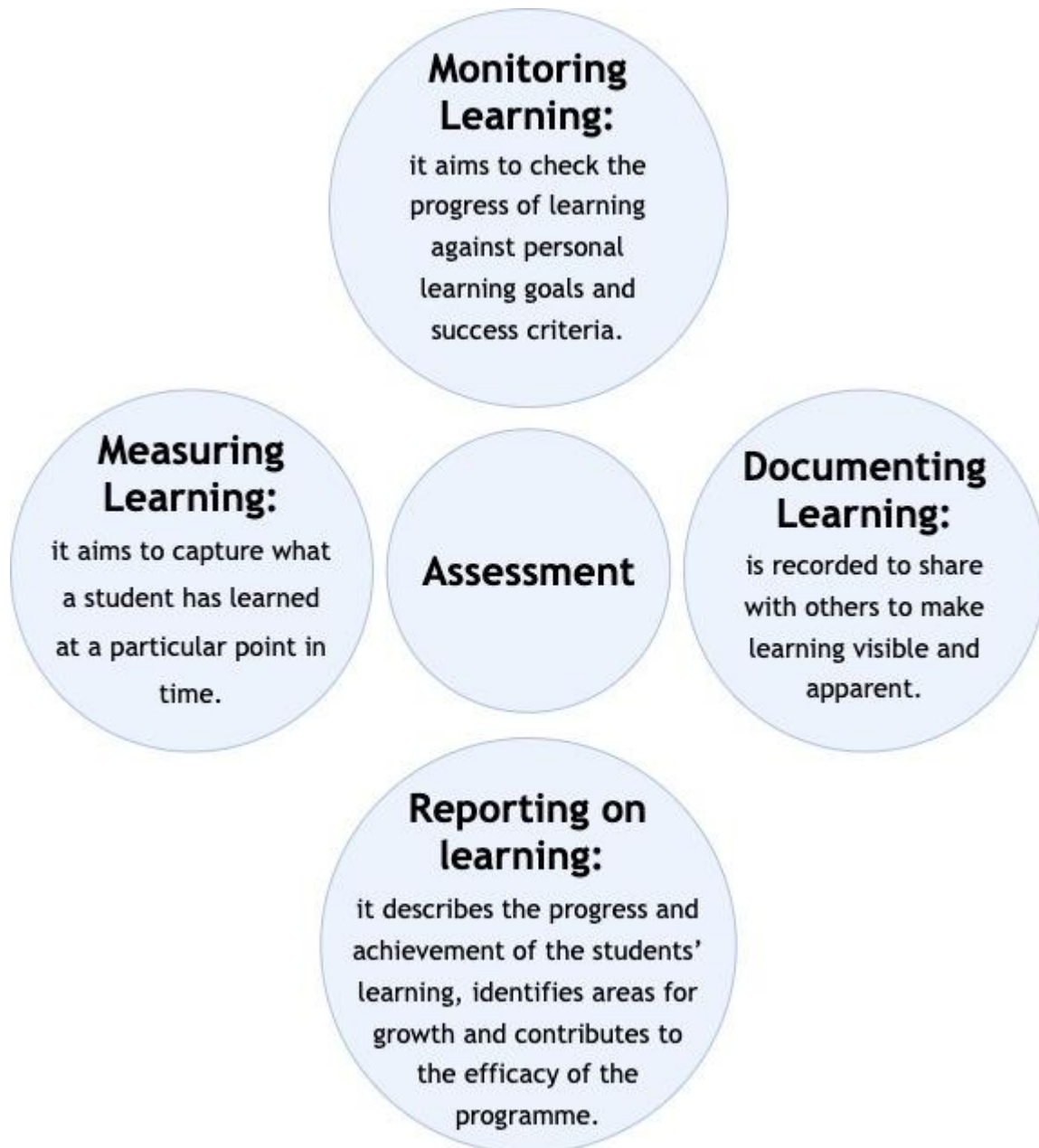
	<p>During the unit of inquiry on how we express ourselves, Grade 1 wrote their own stories. One student asked, "Is there a space in the library for books written by students?" He and his other friends checked the library and found none, so they set up a meeting with the then librarian to ask if this was possible and together they looked for a spot in the library for their books. Voila! The whole class was very happy to see their books on display.</p>
<p>Students of Grade 4 learned about Malala and her advocacy for the right to girls everywhere to be educated. Students suggested actions they could participate in, as well as ways they could be advocates for education as well.</p>	 <p><b>These are some actions that students suggested they would take to support their access to education.</b></p>

When your child is engaged in their learning, it can lead to some action at home!  
When this happens, we want to hear about it.



## Evidencing learning in the PYP (Assessments)

Assessment involves teachers and students collaborating to **monitor, document, measure, report** and adjust learning.



The assessments are used in all the areas of the curriculum and are not restricted to paper and pencil only.

**Pre-assessment** provides an insight into what students know and is the starting point of the teaching - learning process.



Looking at what the students know, understand and can do throughout the learning process is achieved through formative assessments. It is a tool to improve students' learning.

**Summative assessments** on the other hand take place at the end of a learning unit or process. It is a chance for students and teachers to evaluate progress and demonstrate what has been learned over the course of time.

Varied assessment methods are used by the Early Years Programme too.

The most suitable form of assessment in an early years setting is by documenting and analysing children's play narratives. These narratives are helpful in understanding students' thinking. Hence teachers make lots of video clippings to capture students narrating stories or constructing theories as they express their understanding of the world. Observing students work with manipulatives also gives teachers an insight into students' knowledge and understanding.

## Showcase Learning

Some important events during the academic year to showcase learning



### Student Led Conference

A student-led conference is a conference with parents led by the student. The role of the classroom teacher is that of a facilitator in the conference process. Students lead parents through a discussion of their work and established academic and social goals. The student directs the conversation focused on their work and classroom behaviour.

#### Effectiveness of a Student-Led Conference

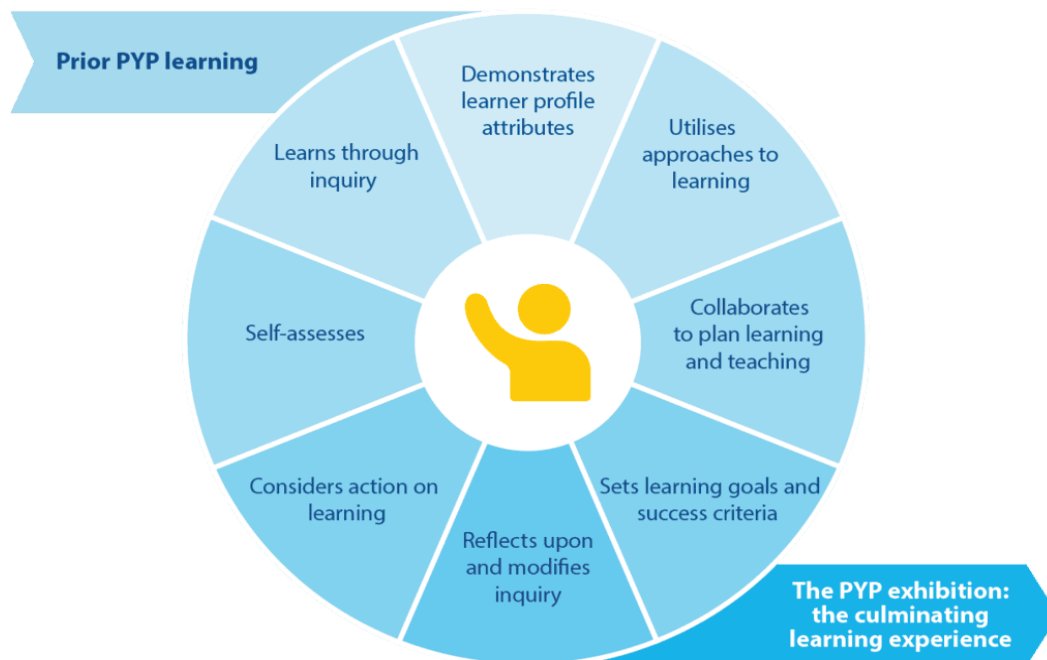
- The student takes responsibility for reporting their learning to parents.
- Students must organise their work and prepare to share what they have learned with parents.
- The student-led conference process increases parent involvement and participation in schools.
- Students engage in self-reflection of the learning process.
- To develop students' self-evaluation and presentation skills.

## PYP Exhibition

In the final year of the PYP, students carry out an extended, in-depth, collaborative project known as the PYP exhibition. This involves students working collaboratively to conduct an in-depth inquiry into real life issues or problems. Students collectively synthesise all of the essential elements of the PYP in ways that can be shared with the whole school community. It also provides teachers with a powerful and authentic process for assessing student understanding.

The exhibition represents a unique and significant opportunity for students to exhibit the attributes of the IB learner profile developed throughout their engagement with the PYP.

It also provides schools and students with a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the transition of learners to the next phase of their education.

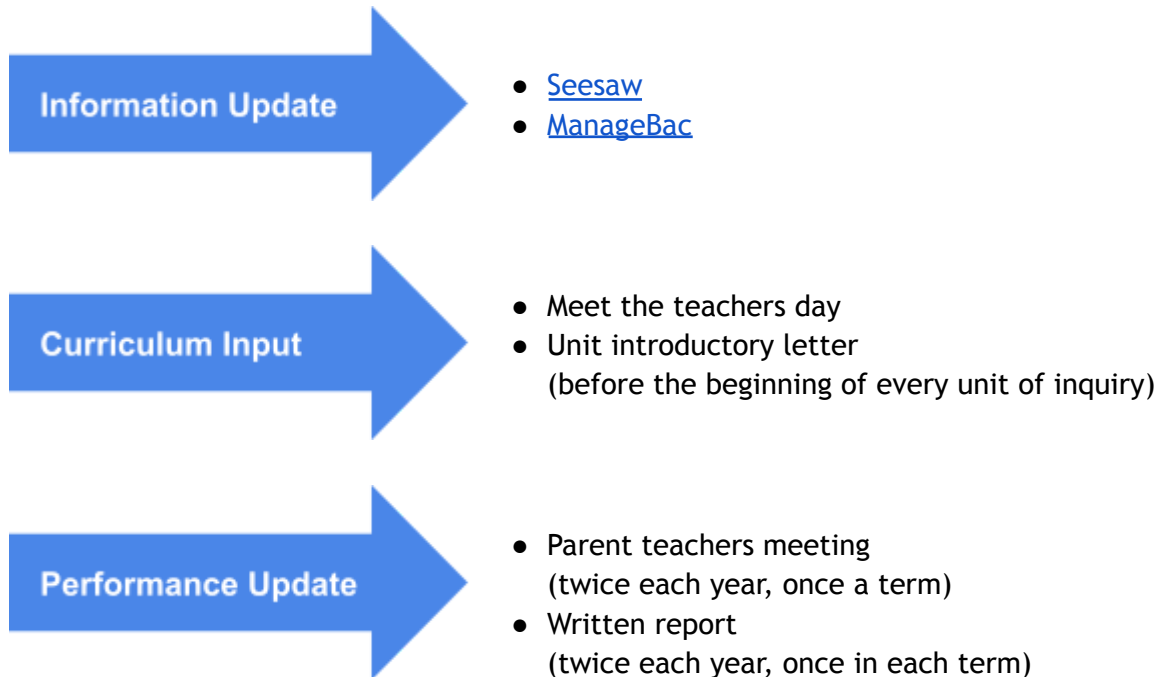


## Three Way Conference

The conference actively involves parents, students and teachers in reflecting on student progress and setting future goals/targets.



## Communication checkpoints



## For more information about the IB and PYP

- Visit the websites [IBO website FAQ about PYP](#)
- Attend orientations at school
- Speak with the school's PYP Coordinator
- Speak with your child's homeroom tutor

## References

- [PYP Playlist](#)
- [Primary Years Programme](#)

*“Education is not the learning of facts but  
the training of the mind to think”*

- Albert Einstein

...IB truly resonates this belief!