

DISV IB PYP
HANDBOOK
2017-18





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INTRODUCTION

DISV is proud to offer the International Baccalaureate programmes to all our students from 3 to 18 years old. This dynamic and demanding academic framework is, we believe, best designed to prepare internationally-minded students for the 21st century world.

Fully authorized to deliver three IB programmes, DISV offers consistency and continuity throughout our education structure. We are one of only 3 schools in Austria fully authorized to offer this.

Led by teachers from over twenty different nations, and with low student-teacher ratios, our classrooms provide a safe environment for students to become fully engaged in learning and inquiry. Our academic rigour is based on world-class standards for learning and delivered in an atmosphere of individual support and care. DISV enables all students to grow academically, socially, emotionally, physically, creatively and ethically whilst striving to achieve their academic and personal potential.

Our curriculum provides opportunities for students from the very youngest to develop attitudes and skills essential for life-long learning, whilst at the same time encouraging them to try new things, to stretch themselves and to strive for the highest achievements. The IB Primary Years Programme brings together all the aspects of our school motto and offers the best possible environment to grow into responsible and thoughtful citizens of the twenty-first century.

This booklet is designed to give you detailed information about the IB PYP curriculum and how it functions here at DISV. Please contact the school should you have further questions.

Sarah Ford
IB PYP Leader



THE IB LEARNER PROFILE

The IB learner profile is the IB mission statement translated into a set of attributes demonstrated by an internationally minded person. The learner profile provides a long-term vision of education. It is a set of ideals that can inspire, motivate and focus the work of schools and teachers, uniting them in a common purpose towards international-mindedness.

IB learners strive to be:

Inquirers: They develop their natural curiosity. They acquire the skills necessary to conduct inquiry and research and show independence in learning. They actively enjoy learning and this love of learning will be sustained throughout their lives.

Knowledgeable: They explore concepts, ideas and issues that have local and global significance. In so doing, they acquire in-depth knowledge and develop understanding across a broad and balanced range of disciplines.

Thinkers: They exercise initiative in applying thinking skills critically and creatively to recognize and approach complex problems, and make reasoned, ethical decisions.

Communicators: They understand and express ideas and information confidently and creatively in more than one language and in a variety of modes of communication. They work effectively and willingly in collaboration with others.

Principled: They act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness, justice and respect for the dignity of the individual, groups and communities. They take responsibility for their own actions and the consequences that accompany them.

Open-minded: They understand and appreciate their own cultures and personal histories, and are open to the perspectives, values and traditions of other individuals and communities. They are accustomed to seeking and evaluating a range of points of view, and are willing to grow from the experience.

Caring: They show empathy, compassion and respect towards the needs and feelings of others. They have a personal commitment to service, and act to make a positive difference to the lives of others and to the environment.

Risk-takers: They approach unfamiliar situations and uncertainty with courage and forethought, and have the independence of spirit to explore new roles, ideas and strategies. They are brave and articulate in defending their beliefs.

Balanced: They understand the importance of intellectual, physical and emotional balance to achieve personal well-being for themselves and others.

Reflective: They give thoughtful consideration to their own learning and experience. They are able to assess and understand their strengths and limitations in order to support their learning and personal development.

IB PYP OVERVIEW

The IB Primary Years Programme, for students aged 3 to 11, focuses on the development of the whole child as an inquirer, both in the classroom and in the world outside.

The programme:

- ◆ encourages international-mindedness in IB students
- ◆ encourages a positive attitude to learning by engaging students in inquiries and developing their awareness of the process of learning so that they become lifelong learners
- ◆ reflects real life by encouraging learning beyond traditional subjects with meaningful, in-depth inquiries into real issues
- ◆ emphasizes, through the learner profile, the development of the whole student – physically, intellectually, emotionally and ethically.



IB PYP CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

The most significant and distinctive feature of the IB Primary Years Programme is the six trans disciplinary themes. These themes are about issues that have meaning for, and are important to, all of us. They offer a balance between learning about or through the subject areas, and learning beyond them. The six themes of global significance create a trans disciplinary framework that allows students to “step up” beyond the confines of learning within subject areas. They are:



Who we are:

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; and what it means to be human.

Where we are in time and place:

An inquiry into orientation in place and time; personal histories; homes and journeys; the discoveries, explorations and migrations of humankind; and the relationships between and the interconnectedness of individuals and civilizations, from local and global perspectives.

How we express ourselves:

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.

How the world works:

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; and the impact of scientific and technological advances on society and on the environment.

How we organise ourselves:

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.

Sharing the planet:

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.

The programme puts great emphasis on learning through these trans disciplinary themes. All students, with the exception of students aged 3 to 5, who engage explicitly with four of the themes each year, address each theme each year. The themes, also importantly, provide the opportunity to incorporate local and global issues into the curriculum.

In addition to the trans disciplinary themes, the traditional subject disciplines retain a role in the IB Primary Years Programme. The specified subjects include languages, mathematics, social studies, arts, science, personal, social and physical education. The overall expectations for each subject area are defined for each year of the programme.

The Taught Curriculum

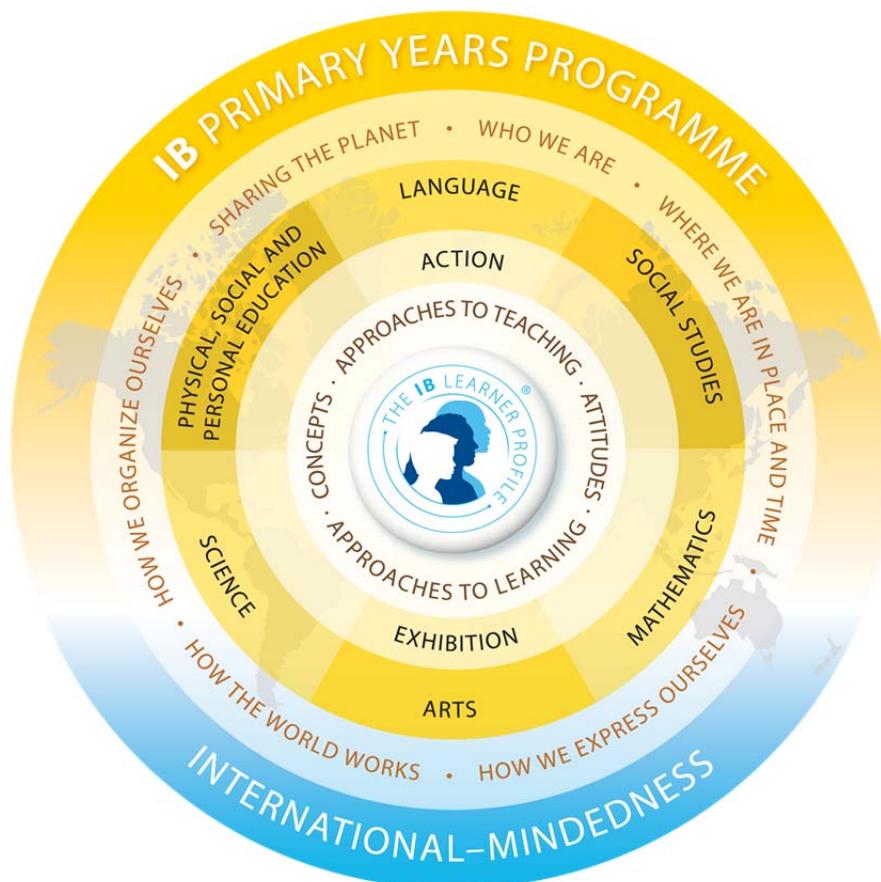
The six trans disciplinary themes help teachers to develop units of inquiry which are in-depth investigations into important ideas that require a high level of involvement on the part of the students. These inquiries are substantial, in-depth and usually last for several weeks.

For example, in an inquiry about 'Sharing the planet', we might look at 'finite resources and infinite demands'. In order to understand better the central idea that 'our planet has limited resources that are unevenly distributed' and using water as an example, we would inquire into where water comes from, how different people and countries use water, how much water we use, what happens after we have used it, the distribution of usable water around the world, how human activity has affected the availability of water, and our responsibility for water conservation. To support this inquiry, students would gain knowledge and acquire skills derived from science and social studies. In addition, they would develop trans disciplinary skills such as critical thinking, communication and time management.

Since these ideas are related to the world beyond the school but are also an important part of their lives, the students see the relevance of the content and connect with it in ways that are engaging and challenging. Students who learn in this way begin to reflect on their roles and responsibilities as learners and become actively involved with their learning.

Students discover that a unit of inquiry will involve them in exploration of an important idea, and that the teacher will be collecting evidence of how well they understand that idea. They will expect to be able to work in a variety of ways, including on their own and in groups, to allow them to learn to their best advantage.

The IB PYP Curriculum Model



Concepts: What do we want students to understand?

The following key concepts are used to support and structure the inquiries. The exploration of concepts leads to a deeper understanding and allows students to transfer knowledge learned in one area of the curriculum to another. The concepts are: form, function, causation, change, connection, perspective, responsibility and reflection.

Attitudes: What do we want students to feel, value and demonstrate?

The Elementary School encourages attitudes that contribute to the well-being of the individual and of the group. We help students to develop positive personal attitudes towards people, the environment and learning. At DISV we encourage: appreciation, commitment, confidence, cooperation, creativity, curiosity, empathy, enthusiasm, independence, integrity, respect and tolerance.

Approaches to Learning: What do we want students to be able to do?

Throughout their learning in the Elementary School, students acquire and apply a set of skills which are valuable not only for the learning that goes on within a classroom but also for life outside school. The five sets of trans disciplinary skills we particularly focus upon and seek to develop with our students are thinking, social, communication, self-management and research skills.

Approaches to Teaching: The 3 components of the PYP curriculum cycle

The three components of the PYP curriculum cycle (written, taught and assessed) are embodied in Approaches to Teaching. The design of the Programme of Inquiry allows students to learn in authentic ways, with emphasis on inquiry and experiences. It reinforces the PYP pedagogy of authentic learning that is inquiry-based and conceptually driven.

Action: How do we want the students to act?

Students are encouraged to take action as a result of their learning. Action can be a demonstration of a sense of responsibility and respect for themselves, others and the environment. Examples of action may include helping a friend when they have fallen over, taking care of new students, looking after the environment, watering the plants and running a bake sale to raise money for others less fortunate than themselves.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment is an important part of each unit of inquiry as it both enhances learning and provides opportunities for students to reflect on what they know, understand and can do. The teacher's feedback to the students provides the guidance, the tools and the incentive for them to become more competent, more skillful and better at understanding how to learn.

Students in the Primary Years Programme are required to create a portfolio from a range of experiences and curriculum areas. The portfolio is a collection of work selected by the students and teachers and is a record of students' involvement in learning. It is designed to demonstrate success, growth, thinking skills, creativity, assessment strategies and reflection. It is a celebration of each student's active mind at work and provides a picture of progress and development over a period of time. Portfolios enable students to reflect with teachers, parents and peers in order to identify their strengths and growth, as well as their areas for development.

Assessment is integral to the whole learning process and all assessment activities are designed to help students feel positive about their learning, as well as help them understand where they are and where they need to go next.

To assist the growth and development of the school and the learning that takes place, we administer some external assessment tools to help us benchmark our students' achievement against like students around the world. These assessments are used to ensure we provide a high quality education for our students and are used appropriately and sensitively with our children.

SUBJECT AREAS

A summary of the content of subject areas is found below. However, as a school, we are committed to continually explore ways to improve and develop our curriculum. Therefore, our curriculum is constantly reviewed and up-dated. Grade level curriculum guides are also available for parents.

Language (English):

Language is fundamental to learning and permeates our entire curriculum. Language is arranged into three main communication strands:

- ◆ Oral communication: listening and speaking - skills that are essential for language development, for learning and for relating to others.
- ◆ Written communication: reading and writing - for enjoyment, instruction, information; to learn to recognise, appreciate and apply a variety of literary styles, genres and structures .
- ◆ Visual communication: viewing and presenting - to understand the ways in which images and language interact to convey ideas, values and beliefs. The many aspects of language teaching will be integrated into all areas of the curriculum.

While the communication strands of listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing and presenting can be observed separately, they are also interrelated and interactive. At Danube, all teachers are considered language teachers – with a special responsibility to recognise and support each and every aspect of language development.

Language (German):

Acquisition of more than one language enriches intellectual and personal growth and helps facilitate international understanding. We therefore also provide the opportunity for all elementary students to learn an additional language, the language of our host country, German. For some of our students, German may be their first language and German classes are therefore differentiated to meet their needs.

Mother tongue languages can also be studied through the Privately Taught Language programme.

Mathematics:

The study of maths is split into five inter-related strands:

- ◆ Number (Studying the number system looking at operations of division, subtraction, addition and multiplication in order to solve problems.)
- ◆ Pattern and Function (Identifying patterns in the world as a foundation for future algebra.)
- ◆ Data Handling (Recording, organisation and summarisation of data and probability.)
- ◆ Measurement (With accuracy using a variety of standard and non-standard units.)
- ◆ Shape and space (Characteristics of 2D and 3D shapes, angles, tessellation and symmetry.)

Mathematics is taught both within and outside the Programme of Inquiry. Number, Pattern and Function are generally not taught within units of inquiry, whereas the other strands are authentically incorporated into the Units of Inquiry.

For example, in a unit on ‘Construction & Structures’, students would spend time looking at angles and 3D shapes. In another unit exploring pollution, students might collect and analyse data on pollution within the local area and make different types of graphs to display this information.

Social Studies:

The subject Social Studies is essentially about people:

- how they think, feel and act
- their beliefs, aspirations and pleasures
- how and where they live (or lived)
- how they interact with their environment
- how they interact with others
- the problems they have to face
- the work they do
- how they organise themselves.

The students will think about human behaviour realistically, objectively and with sensitivity. They will develop a deeper understanding of themselves, others and of their place in an increasingly global society. Social Studies aims to promote a sense of responsibility towards caring for and protecting the environment.

Science:

Science is the exploration of the natural, physical and material worlds. Students use inquiry to investigate and understand the world around them. It is taught and explored through the units of inquiry. They will experience what it is to think and act like a scientist. Science study is split into four main strands which overlap each other and with other disciplines such as mathematics, social studies, and personal, social and physical education.

Living Things: (The study of humans and other animals, plants, and the environment and the interactions between them.) Earth and Space: (The study of the planet Earth and its relationship to the universe.) Materials and Matter: (The study of the origins, properties and uses of natural and human-made solids, liquids and gases.) Forces and Energy: (The study of energy, its origins and transfer, and its effects.)

Personal, Social and Physical Education (PSPE):

PSPE is divided into 3 strands, all of which work together to develop the well-being of the students. Identity, Active Living and Interactions are all important for our students to gain a sense of their individual place within the community. The issues of beliefs, values and attitudes help form an understanding of personal identity and the ability to cope with change. The Active Living strand incorporates the different forms of Physical Education, while also considering the need to develop a healthy and balanced lifestyle. In the Interactions strand students build up an awareness of others around them, a consciousness of sharing the environment with others and the rights and responsibilities of being human.

The Arts:

Visual arts, music, dance and drama are powerful means of communication and expression. Through the arts, students can construct a sense of self, engaging in a creative cycle of experimentation, action and reflection. They are stimulated to think and articulate their thoughts in new ways and through a variety of media and technologies. Whenever possible the arts are taught within a unit of inquiry. They are also taught through independent inquiry, with the focus on developing students' individual creative talents.



Information Communication Technology (ICT):

We recognise that today's students develop and grow as digital natives in a technology rich environment, so ICT at DISV is not only viewed as a discrete subject area. It is also embedded and integrated in all areas of the curriculum and is seen as a tool to enhance and extend students' learning.



EXHIBITION

At the end of Grade 5 all students participate in presenting a PYP Exhibition. It is a significant event in the life of a PYP student and is an opportunity for them to exhibit the attributes of the IB Learner Profile that they have been developing throughout their engagement with the PYP and to celebrate their transition from Elementary to Secondary school.

The PYP Exhibition is an in-depth collaborative inquiry. Working in groups, the students investigate a real-life issue that is pertinent to them with the purpose of creating an action plan to make a difference. They can use a variety of source materials: first-hand experience, interviews, surveys, field visits, etc. and use a range of media (eg: moving and still images, audio, animation) and forms of expression (eg: written work, oral presentations, performances).

Teachers/mentors guide the students through each phase of the process. The exhibition is shared with members of the wider school community and includes a visual presentation and an expressive performance for parents.

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