Amsterdam International Community School

PYP Curriculum Handbook for Parents

2024-2025

Contents

Introduction

The transdisciplinary curriculum at the AICS follows the principles of the IB Primary Years Programme (PYP) and its inquiry-based approach to learning and teaching.

This parent handbook contains information about the inquiry and wellbeing curriculum at AICS, the framework for inquiry teaching and what this means for children. The handbook also suggests how parents and families might actively be involved with learning and support beyond the classroom.

Finally, the last section of the handbook contains the AICS Primary Programme of Inquiry currently being used across AICS Primary.

The Primary Years Programme

The Primary Years Programme (PYP) is a curriculum framework of the International Baccalaureate, which is committed to the development of internationally-minded, global citizens.

International-mindedness is central to the IB mission and is a foundational principle to its educational philosophy; it is at the heart of the continuum of international education.

International-mindedness is a view of the world in which people see themselves connected to the global community and assume a sense of responsibility towards its members. It is an awareness of the interrelatedness of all nations and peoples, and is a recognition of the complexity of these. Internationally minded people appreciate and value the diversity of peoples, cultures and societies in the world. They make efforts to learn more about others and to develop empathy and solidarity towards them to achieve mutual understanding and respect (The Learning Community 11).

A commitment to wellbeing

Our Whole School Social and Emotional Wellbeing Programme supports students to develop their personal identity with confidence to develop a sense of belonging.

Wellbeing and academic achievement are inextricably linked and interdependent. We focus on the holistic development of each student. We provide students with the opportunity to develop self-efficacy and to feel that they are in charge of their own development. They are learning transferable skills that have a positive impact on wellbeing and academic achievement.

In order to ensure that students are able to develop holistically, all members of our community need to contribute. The students by taking charge of their own development, parents, teachers and support staff by supporting and helping to guide this development (Wellbeing programme 4).

A commitment to inclusion

Learning at the AICS is considered from a strength-based perspective and enhanced by the creation of affirmative, responsive environments that promote a sense of belonging, safety, self-worth and whole growth for every student. The development of the Learner Profile attributes and Approaches to Learning for all our students is central to inclusion at the AICS. We experience that a student's full potential is unlocked through connecting with, and building on previous knowledge. We aspire to offer all students equitable opportunities to participate and engage in quality learning. An IB education empowers the students to exercise their rights and accept their responsibilities as learners as well as global citizens (AICS Inclusion Policy 5).

The attributes of the learner profile support the learning community in exploring and expressing different aspects of health and well-being for everyone. Working together, members of the PYP community are supportive, not competitive; reflect a broad spectrum of society, not an elite cohort; are integrated, not stratified; and inspire lifelong learning to build a better and more peaceful world. (IBO, "The Learning Community" 6)

Our inclusion coaches, learning diversity specialists and English Language Aquistion team collaborate closely with teachers and teaching assistants to facilitate effective inclusive educational practices.

Our inclusion philosophy is also grounded in our mission, vision and values as well as in our commitment to the International Baccalaureate Organisation (IBO), Council of International Schools (CIS) and Esprit Scholen. The development of the Learner Profile attributes and Approaches to Learning for all our students is central to inclusion at the AICS. In addition, we comply and make maximum use of local, national and international regulations as well as services provided by our external partners.

We uphold that,

- education for all is a fundamental human right.
- multilingualism is recognised as a fact, a right and appreciated as a resource.
- diversity is understood to include all members of a community and valued as a rich source for building communities.

Student agency

Student-centred approaches to teaching and learning are at the heart of the PYP. Students are active inquirers and participants in their own learning. They exercise agency - voice, choice and ownership. They contribute their ideas and thinking to learning processes as core members of our learning community. The PYP is taught through transdisciplinary units of inquiry, meaning that traditional subject area content is integrated into real world explorations and inquiry projects. Knowledge, skills and concepts are developed through the transdisciplinary units of inquiry.

The 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, to help create a better and more peaceful world.

As IB learners, we strive to be:

inquirers	*knowledgeable*
thinkers	*communicators*
principled	*open-minded*
caring	*risk-takers*
balanced	*reflective*

(IB Learner Profile)

Transdisciplinary Learning

The Primary Years Programme (PYP) is a transdisciplinary curriculum framework that offers authentic learning experiences. The PYP encourages students to learn to appreciate knowledge, conceptual understandings, skills and personal attributes as a connected whole.

Each school collaboratively develops a programme of inquiry to reflect the unique aspects of that school's community. The programme of inquiry is organised and framed by six transdisciplinary themes:

- *Who we are*
- *Where we are in place and time*
- *How we express ourselves*
- *How the world works*
- *How we organise ourselves*
- *Sharing the planet*

These transdisciplinary themes together provide children with authentic learning experiences that are not confined to the boundaries of traditional subjects. Although subjects play an

important role in learning, PYP learners explore real-world problems by going beyond subject boundaries. Students have opportunities to reflect on the significance of their learning to take meaningful action in their community and the wider world.

(How the PYP Works)

Exploring the six Transdisciplinary Themes in the PYP

The programme of inquiry articulates how the six transdisciplinary themes will be explored across the different age groups. It provides students in the early and primary years with the opportunity to experience a coherent and balanced curriculum.

The PYP framework is dynamic because a transdisciplinary programme of inquiry leaves room for emergent and unexpected ideas, directions and connections that students might encounter.

Specifically, students and teachers engage with:

- *the programme of inquiry—the structure that articulates what, when and how learners explore the transdisciplinary themes from 3–12 years*
- *concepts that have relevance across, between and beyond the subjects and that connect knowledge to enable learners to build conceptual understandings*
- *the approaches to learning and approaches to teaching both crucial for developing inquiring minds and the skills needed to explore concepts and subject knowledge*
- *reflection and taking action to enhance individual and collective understanding and learning or to address personal, local and/or global challenges and opportunities.*

(How the PYP Works)

Approaches to Learning

The IB approaches to learning skills (ATL) are grounded in the belief that learning how to learn is fundamental to a student's life in and out of a school context. In broad terms, IB programmes support learners in developing:

- *Thinking skills*
- *Communication skills*
- *Research skills*
- *Self-management skills*
- *Social skills*

The approaches to learning and associated sub-skills support students of all ages in being agentic and self-regulated learners. Through a variety of strategies, PYP teachers collaboratively plan for implicit and explicit opportunities to develop ATL both inside and outside the programme of inquiry.

(How the PYP Works)

Inquiry-based learning

Inquiry can range from teacher guided to completely open inquiries (Bonnstetter 1998). The PYP emphasizes guided inquiry as a leading pedagogical approach. Guided inquiry scaffolds students' cognitive processing, supporting them to gradually learn and construct more complex understandings (Hmelo-Silver, Duncan, Chinn 2007).

Play, problem-based learning, collaboration, experimentation, and explicit teaching all have a place within well-considered inquiry-based learning experiences. In these experiences, teachers respond to students' emergent questions, theories and discoveries. In addition, they create opportunities for open, student-initiated inquiries. These inquiry approaches are fit for purpose to facilitate the development of the learner profile and support students to become critical and creative thinkers, researchers, collaborators and communicators. (Learning and Teaching, 41)

The most up to date AICS PYP Programme of Inquiry is linked to in this handbook on page 23.

Outdoor inquiry

At AICS, we celebrate our outdoor classroom!

Our everyday natural surroundings are used as the richest of learning environments, where we make intensive use of our senses, emotions and thinking skills.

We don't just learn about nature, we learn through nature in a holistic way. Hands in the soil, noses in the wind, from mathematics to art, from languages to science, learning happens in a spirit of curiosity and wonder.

Through games, free explorations, stories, gardening, crafting, exciting challenges or research… we explore the transdisciplinary themes, learner profile attributes and learning skills on the local and 'concrete' level.

From outdoor inquiries, we understand the concepts first in relation to ourselves and reflect on our learning process. We take ownership and develop an authentic understanding of our local ecosystems, naturally triggering accessible and impactful actions. By wondering about our local place, we develop our international mindedness.

Doing this, we reconnect with our deep self and with nature. We strengthen our health and learn to use nature as a resource for our wellbeing.

Families can also support children's connection to the outdoors. Allow yourself and your family outdoor free play time. Celebrate the time you spend in nature, your findings and your astonishments, whether it's about yourself or the living world, wherever your curiosity takes you!

Taking learning deeper at home with the PYP

Whether you are exploring the outdoors, talking about what happened in mathematics that day or watching a video posted on Seesaw together, PYP parents and families can support their child in a number of ways to take learning deeper.

Here are 5 ways to support your child's learning at home, whether its formal learning connected to schooling, or incidental, unplanned learning through play, exploration and life experiences:

- *Take an inquiry stance*
- *Support conceptual understanding*
- *Give feedback that goes beyond the moment*
- *Support your child's agency*
- *Prioritise reflection*

Take an inquiry stance

MEET A QUESTION WITH A QUESTION
How could you find that out?
BE PREPARED TO INQUIRE TOGETHER
Let's figure it out together!
ASK AN OPEN-ENDED QUESTION
What do you notice?
BE A LEARNER
Here is how I'm going to find out

Support conceptual understanding

VALUE PROCESS
How did you do that?
Why did you do that?
What strategy did you use?
HARNESS THE POWER OF KEY CONCEPTS
What does it look like? [Form]

Prioritise reflection

GET THEM THINKING ABOUT THEIR THINKING
How do you know?
What makes you think that?
Is there another way that you could do that?
What did you find easy or challenging? Why?

Support your child's agency

INVITE AND INVOLVE THEIR VOICE
Let them express themselves
SUPPORT THEIR CHOICES
What choice are you making for yourself as a learner?
EMPHASISE OWNERSHIP
You're in the driver's seat

Give feedback that goes beyond the moment

TEACH THE LEARNER, NOT THE LEARNING
Move from asking, 'How are you doing?' to 'Where to next?'
GIVE SPECIFIC FEEDBACK ON THE PROCESS
I like how you did… What might you try doing next?

Source: [Adapted from] 5 ways you could support your child as a PYP parent

Organising curriculum for inquiry

Organising curriculum for inquiry:

Conceptual understandings	Knowledge, strategies, skills, processes

What makes up a curriculum?

In teaching, there are some ideas which we need to share with children and some ideas which children are able to find out for themselves.

Conceptual understandings are ideas which learners can inquire into and become aware of.

Knowledge, strategies, skills and processes are things which children develop in pursuit of conceptual understandings.

We can understand this by thinking about the two following situations in mathematics and language:

| Mathematics	Language
What is the sum of the internal angles of a triangle?	Why do author's write non-fiction books?
The correct response to the question is that the internal angles of a triangle add up to 180°. This is an idea a learner can become aware of by inquiring and investigating. This is an example of a ***conceptual understanding***. To investigate this idea, children need to draw on ***knowledge and skills***. When teaching, we can just name the triangle and merely remind learners about the convention of 360 degrees in a full rotation, and then really go after the ***conceptual understanding***.	Non-fiction authors write to inform the reader about a topic that they know a lot about. This is an example of a ***conceptual understanding***. To investigate this idea, children need to draw on ***language strategies, skills and processes***. When teaching, we can explore authentic texts and scaffold our questions about the author's purpose, genre and audience. In this way, we can guide students' thinking towards conceptual understanding.

At AICS, the primary curriculum focuses on and is articulated in terms of ***conceptual understandings***. ***Knowledge, strategies, skills and processes*** contribute to these big ideas we are aiming for and they are best learned in the context of pursuing conceptual understandings.

A note on consistency and diversity

Aspects of mathematics and language will be taught through the Units of Inquiry. This arrangement depends on the units being taught in each year group.

Though different classes may be inspired to want to solve different problems and to communicate different ideas, it is important to understand that the school wide approaches are the same.

Consistency of approaches does not mean uniformity in the contexts of the lines of inquiry children are exploring.
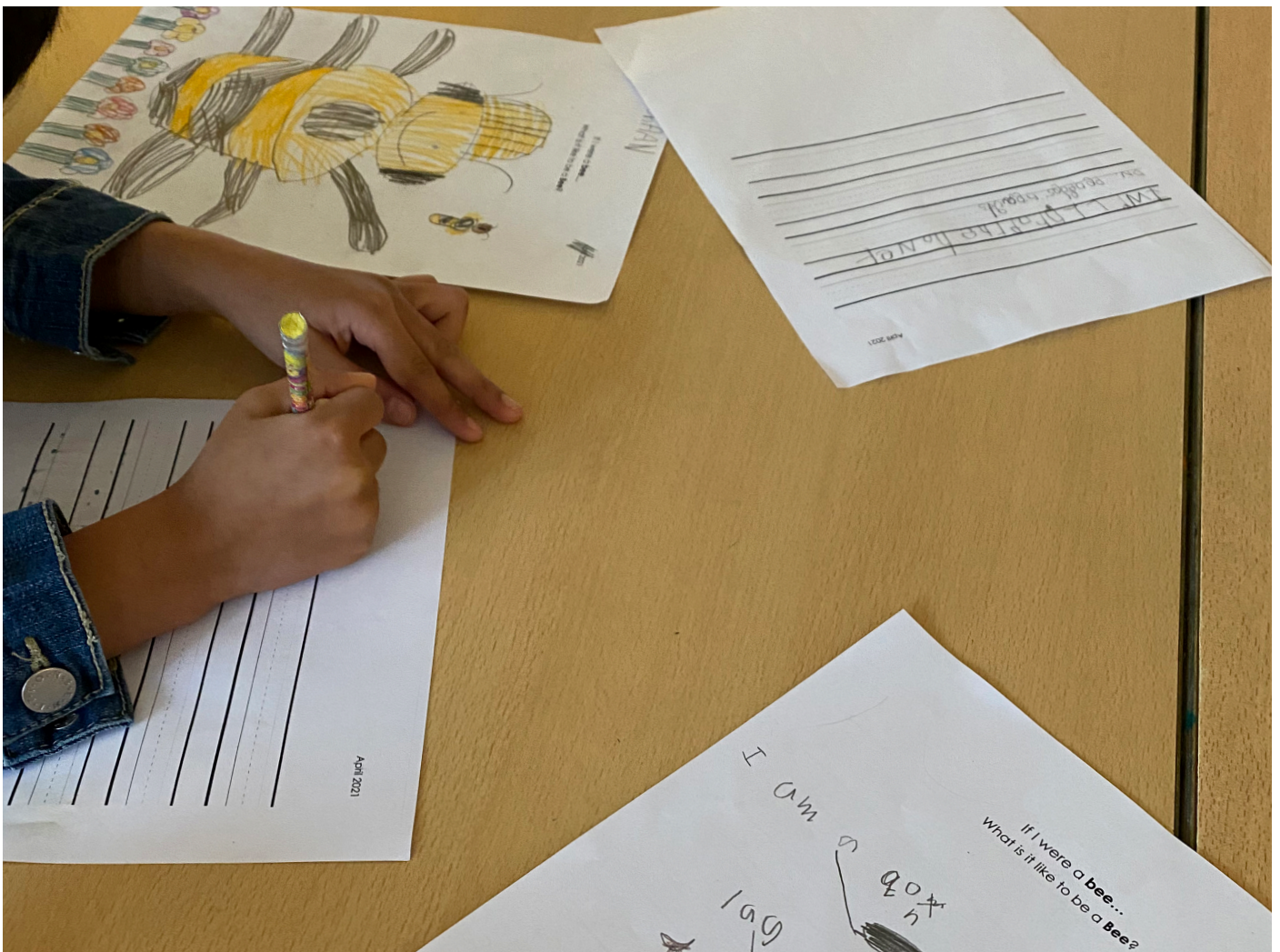
Language in the Primary Years Programme

Three intertwined ideas

Primary English Language at AICS can be understood by considering three key approaches:

- Organising a curriculum for inquiry - how we think about what is to be taught

- Teaching for inquiry - how we teach

- Language learning in practice - what do readers, writers, speakers and listeners do?

Though these three ideas are explained apart from each other, their implementation is intertwined. Organising a curriculum for inquiry has already been described.

Inquiry based Language Teaching

Teaching for inquiry:

Authentic contexts	Quality literature	Time and friends

Children constructing their own meaning

When working in **meaningful contexts**, children can think more deeply when they are presented with **high quality literature**. Exploring a variety of texts from a variety of genres provide the context through which deeper understandings can develop. They are also given **friends** to work with and **time** in which for them to explore inquiry questions and engage in conversations with each other.

This combination gives children opportunities to construct their own meaning.

As an example, if students are asked to analyse a character from their book during reader's workshop, they could be asked to consider the question, *"what clues do authors leave that readers can use to bring characters to life?"* This inquiry question guides students to interpretive comprehension strategies about inferences, character traits and author's craft. Children will be able to draw on these learned strategies during independent reading time and support their thinking with text evidence from their own developmentally appropriate and personally engaging book. In this process of text analysing, they may also engage in conversations with reading partners, comparing/contrasting their characters and widening their perspective and understanding of literature.

Working this way supports long lasting habits which children can utilise for inquiring into any piece of text through any transdisciplinary theme. This is a set of underlying skills and strategies that contribute to being lifelong learners.

The AICS approaches in practice

What do readers, writers, speakers and listeners do?

As well as developing conceptual understanding, knowledge and skills, it is the intention for children to consciously develop as readers, writers, speakers and listeners.

A teacher might engage in dialogue encouraging children to understand that:

- Readers can develop the skill to choose appropriate reading material for themselves and this is strongly linked to reading motivation
- Children learn to read and write by the regular and frequent act of reading and writing
- The development of the habit and stamina for reading and writing leads to success
- Children are motivated to read and write when the purpose is relevant and significant to them
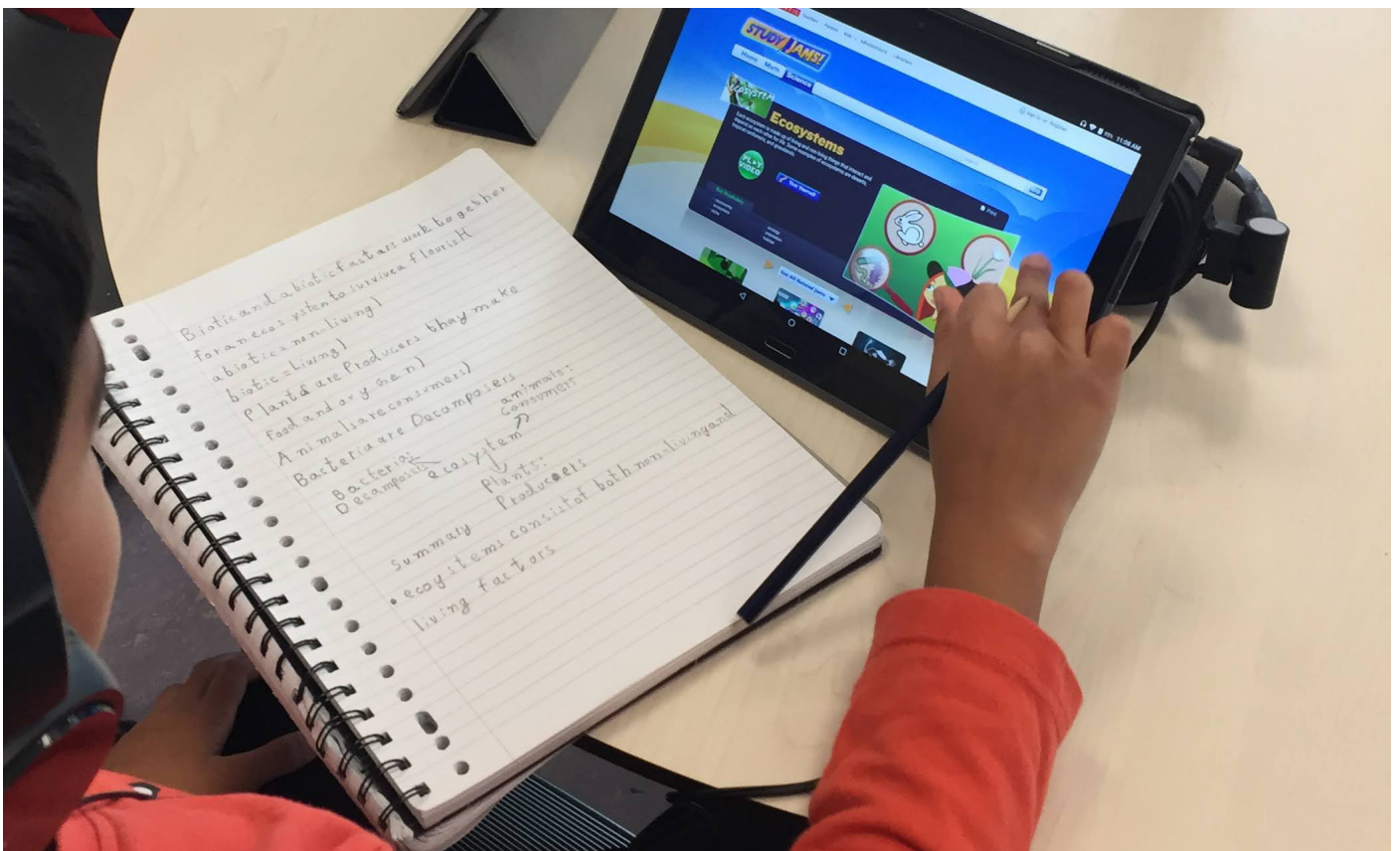
How has language learning changed?

What was true about language structures and skills from when our parent community was at school is still true today.

However, language teaching continually shifts as research is carried out and practices are shared and developed across international schooling. The table describes some of the shifts in modern language education practices:

How are language practices changing?	
Increased emphasis on:	**Decreased emphasis on:**
promoting integrated language development teaching	language as isolated strands
language as a transdisciplinary element throughout the curriculum	language as a separate discipline
additional-language teachers viewed (and viewing themselves) as PYP teachers	additional-language teachers seen as solely single-subject teachers
a literature-based approach to learning language	using skill-drill texts and workbooks to learn language
a teaching approach that sees making mistakes in language as inevitable and necessary for learning	a teaching approach that focuses on encouraging students not to make mistakes in language
reading for meaning	decoding only for accuracy
reading selected according to interest	reading selected according to decoding level
student-selected reading materials	teacher-directed reading materials
making world classics available for reading	having only school classics available for reading
making culturally diverse reading material available	having only monocultural reading materials available
encouraging appropriate cooperative discussion in the classroom	enforcing silent, individual work in the classroom
students engaged in spontaneous writing	students carrying out teacher-imposed writing
a variety of scaffolded learning experiences—with the teacher providing strategies for the student to build on his or her own learning	activities where teachers simply model language for students
writing as a process	writing only as a product
developing a range of independent spelling strategies	a dependence on the teacher as the only source of correct spelling
nurturing appreciation of the richness of language	language study as grammar and syntax
literature as a means of understanding and exploring	literature study as vocabulary, grammar and syntax
teaching students to read and research using multimedia resources	providing print-only resources for reading and research
using language for creative problem solving and information processing	using language for rote learning
a range of appropriate assessment methods such as portfolios, conferencing, miscue analysis, writing sample analysis, response journals	standardized reading and writing assessments

Source: Language scope and sequence.

Authentic language use

At AICS we believe that students learn best when learning activities are authentic and reflect real-life situations. This approach involves applying language skills within meaningful contexts. By using quality literature from around the world, rather than relying solely on graded or levelled readers and worksheets, AICS promotes cultural understanding and exposes students to diverse perspectives, languages, and cultural constructs.

Our use of the IB PYP curriculum is supported by the Units of Study by Lucy Calkins and her colleagues at the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project. Learning objectives that do not fit authentically within the transdisciplinary programmes of inquiry, but are fundamental skills, are taught through reader's and writer's workshop (groups 2-7) or phonics study (groups 1-4).

Language acquisition

English Language Acquisition - ELA

Our school offers English Language Acquisition support to students who need support in English to access our PYP curriculum. This support can take place both inside (push-in) or outside (pull-out) of the student's regular classroom. Students who receive ELA support do not take part in our Dutch Language Acquisition programme.

The ELA lessons connect with the classroom units of inquiry where possible, making authentic connections with the students' learning in the mainstream classroom. In addition to this, these lessons focus on the English skills the students need to express their needs and feelings - the language they need to socialize inside and outside of school.

Dutch Language Acquisition - DLA

Our school offers three hours of Dutch language acquisition for all students from group 1 onwards. In group 1, the teachers differentiate within the classroom. This means they can stay in a familiar environment with their friends and teaching assistant. From groups 2-7, students are grouped according to their general language need: emergent (beginning students who might stay in the Netherlands short term), capable (most AICS students; the lessons are differentiated according to developmental need) and fluent (students who might speak Dutch at home or a more regular basis).

The Dutch team follows their own programmes of inquiry centred around transdisciplinary generalisations and language targets through completely immersive language lessons. They provide students many ways to actively engage with the Dutch language- discussions, presentations, role-play, art and other various activities.

Groups 1, 2 and 7 participate in Lucia Marthas Institute for Performing Arts to support language learning through performing arts for one hour a week. Through activities such as singing, dancing and acting, students engage and connect with the Dutch language in an interactive and creative setting.

Home language inclusion

At AICS we highly value the linguistic diversity of our school community. This means we encourage students to share their home languages as much as possible. To support this, we use a range of pedagogical approaches including translanguaging and connecting with the wider school community.

Language teaching for a global community

We celebrate that our school community is incredibly diverse and provides a rich background for language teaching. We encourage students to share their home language as much as possible which provides authentic language use through social interactions in supportive environments. Celebrating diversity and valuing the languages and cultures of our students creates a vibrant and inclusive learning environment!

How can families support learning?

The most important thing to support your child's language learning is to support any interaction with language. Surrounding your children with books, other texts, audiobooks, storytelling in nature and informal writing opportunities provide a language rich environment to reinforce lifelong language learning. Regularly engage with your child in your home language(s) as meaningful conversations provide opportunities for language practice and support fluency.

Parent workshops

Keep an eye out for Primary Language workshops at AICS in the AICS Parent App. These take place regularly and are an opportunity to find out more about all aspects of curriculum and teaching.

Mathematics in the PYP

Primary Mathematics at AICS can be understood by considering three key approaches:

• Organising a curriculum for inquiry

• Teaching for inquiry

• Developing mathematicians and inquirers

Though these ideas are explained apart from each other, their implementation is intertwined. Organising a curriculum for inquiry has already been described. This section also discusses the role of the AICS community in developing mathematicians.

Inquiry based Mathematics Teaching

Teaching for inquiry:

| Meaningful problems	Manipulatives	Time and friends
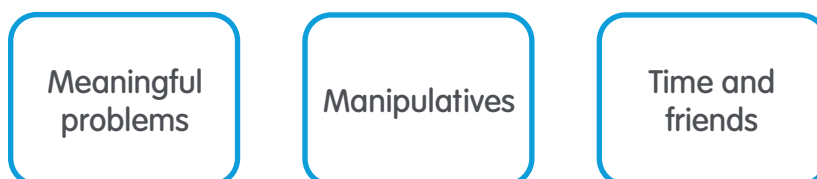
Mathematics at AICS taught through relevant, realistic contexts. These are experienced through the Units of Inquiry and we also make use of the Numicon Teaching Programme (Groups 2-7) and the Erikson Institute's Big Ideas of Early Mathematics (Group 1).

When working in *meaningful contexts*, children encounter relevant and rich problems to think about. To help overcome these problems, children are given *manipulatives*, which are physical resources (such as Numicon shapes). They are also given *friends* to work with and *time* in which for them to explore problems and engage in conversations with each other.

This combination gives children opportunities to construct their own mathematical meaning.

As an example, if children want to know how to share 189 by 3, children might use manipulatives. This means, they might physically take 100 and 80 and 9 and share it into 3 boxes:
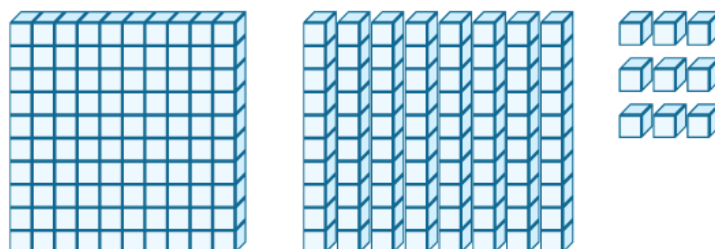
In the process of dividing the 189, children themselves will construct the process of what it means to divide the amount, including the moment of exchanging 100s for 10s to successfully divide the amount equally.

During this process, learners will physically split and move around the numbers as well as engage in mathematical communication using symbols, imagery and mathematical language. Alongside their note making with various examples,

we can move toward the more common conventions of division methods.

Working in this way supports long lasting strategies which children can utilise for inquiring into any problem. We call these strategies *working and thinking mathematically.*

Developing mathematicians

Developing mathematical thinkers and inquirers:

| Generalise | Communicate mathematically | Explore connections |

Working and thinking mathematically

With an intentionally designed curriculum, children are able to develop as mathematicians. This means they are able to work and think mathematically. Developing mathematicians is the broad underlying aim of our mathematics curriculum and teaching approaches in primary.

Specifically in mathematics, we know that far reaching mathematical dispositions serve children better when tackling problems of types they have not yet encountered. Studies tells us that learners are best equipped to deal with a variety of unknown of mathematical situations if they are able to:

- *Generalise* - realise and draw out big mathematical ideas
- *Communicate mathematically* - using symbols, imagery, physical resources and language
- *Explore connections* - between things they know and are still finding out, between different domains of mathematics and between types of mathematical representations.
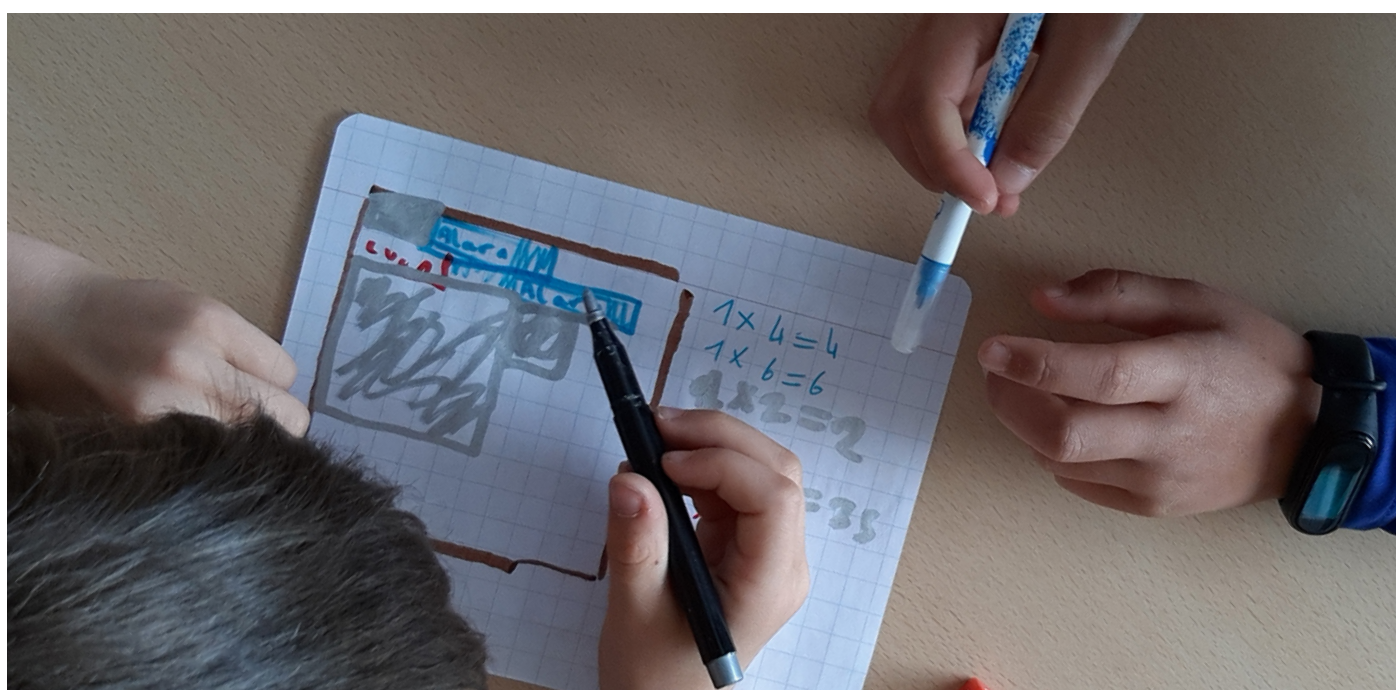
The AICS Community and primary mathematics

Has mathematics changed?

What was true about numbers, operations, maps, shapes and triangles from when our parent community was at school is still true today.

However, mathematics teaching continually shifts as research is carried out and practices are shared and developed across international schooling. The table describes some of the shifts in modern mathematics education practices:

How are mathematics practices changing?	
Increased emphasis on:	**Decreased emphasis on:**
connecting mathematical concepts and applications to learning	treating mathematics as isolated concepts and facts
manipulatives, to make mathematics understandable to students	rote learning, memorization and symbol manipulation
real-life problem solving using mathematics	word problems as problem solving
instruction built on what students know, what they want to know, and how they best might find out	instruction focused on what students do not know
a variety of strategies for possible multiple solutions—emphasis on process	one answer, one method, emphasis on answer
students being encouraged to speculate and pursue hunches	the teacher as the sole authority for right answers
a broad range of topics regardless of computational skills	computational mastery before moving on to other topics
mathematics as a means to an end	teaching mathematics disconnected from other learning
the use of calculators and computers for appropriate purposes	a primary emphasis on pencil and paper computations
programme of inquiry as the context for learning	the textbook as the context for learning
students investigating, questioning, discussing, justifying and journalling their mathematics	the use of worksheets
students and teachers engaged in mathematical discourse.	teacher telling about mathematics.

Source: Mathematics scope and sequence.

How can families support learning?

Mathematics in the PYP might look different to the way you were taught when you were at school. In situations which are new to you both, it can help to:

- take an inquiry stance and share the curiosity about solving a problem
- be a learner and find out about how they are going about a situation
- open up the conversation by meeting questions with more questions or asking them what they notice
- go deeper and ask them to explain thinking
- compare different ways of solving problems and talk about what is the same and different
- be playful, find the mathematics in games, real world situations and shared family moments.

Parent workshops

Keep an eye out for Primary Mathematics workshops at AICS in the AICS Parent App. These take place regularly and are an opportunity to find out more about all aspects of curriculum and teaching.

Support and intervention

Support for learner variability

In all IB programmes, teaching is... designed to remove barriers to learning. Teaching is inclusive and values diversity. It affirms students' identities, and aims to create learning opportunities that enable every student to develop and pursue appropriate personal goals.

Learner variability is a term that embraces all students and does not exclude on the grounds of strengths, challenges, age, social status, economic status, language, gender, race, ethnicity or sexuality. Taking into account changing histories, circumstances and contexts, learner variability represents the shifting combination of strengths and challenges that learners experience. Within this understanding it is recognized that there is no average brain and thus no average student. (Learning Diversity and Inclusion in IB Programmes)

Support for students begins within the classroom itself, led by teachers and mentors. Our aim is to ensure that we are able to meet the diverse needs of our student population by tailoring our teaching around individual student needs.

Student Support Pyramid
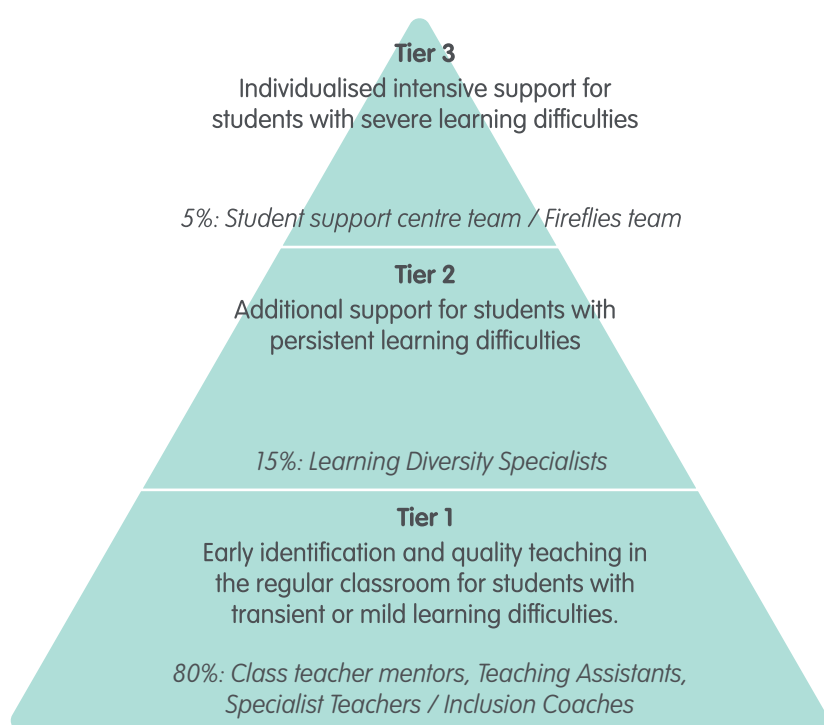
The first tier

Within the first tier of support the Primary School Teacher, Primary Teaching Assistants and the Secondary School mentors and teachers are the first point of reference. All teachers are responsible for the well-being of the specific students under their care.

Within this tier, teachers provide in-class differentiation and accommodation in order to best meet the needs of their students. Discussion through Student Forum and advice from our Learning Diversity Specialists and Inclusion Coaches are also used in this tier. Support within this tier should accommodate the needs of approximately 80% of our student population.

Student Forum

Throughout the school year our teachers engage in a discussion called Student Forum. At this forum teachers share observations, questions and strategies on the academic and social-emotional development of their class as a community. In addition to discussing the well-being of a class as a whole, observations, questions and

Tier 3
Individualised intensive support for students with severe learning difficulties

5%: Student support centre team / Fireflies team

Tier 2
Additional support for students with persistent learning difficulties

15%: Learning Diversity Specialists

Tier 1
Early identification and quality teaching in the regular classroom for students with transient or mild learning difficulties.

80%: Class teacher mentors, Teaching Assistants, Specialist Teachers / Inclusion Coaches

strategies are shared in relation to the academic, social and emotional development of individual students.

Student Support Pyramid: The second tier

Within the second tier of support, students with more specialised needs are supported by Learning Diversity Specialists. In tier two, students receive support in a combination of co-taught and small group support. It is important that students, parents and teachers work closely together to design the form that the support will take. Support within this tier accommodates the needs of approximately 15% of our student population.

Student Support Pyramid: The third tier

Our third tier of support is a programme through which students with more specialised needs receive support from care organisations external to the school. Our Student Support Centre team is responsible for monitoring, communicating and coordinating their care. Support within this tier accommodates the needs of approximately 5% of our student population.

AICS PYP Programme of Inquiry

The programme of inquiry (POI) is collaboratively designed by all teachers to meet the needs of our learning community and IB standards and practices.

The programme of inquiry consists of transdisciplinary units of inquiry that include:

- *a central idea— the primary conceptual lens that frames the transdisciplinary unit of inquiry and support students' conceptual understandings of the transdisciplinary theme under which it is situated*

- *concepts—key and related concepts that support higher-order thinking and provide lenses for considering knowledge related to the central idea in a range of ways*

- *lines of inquiry—statements that define the potential scope of an inquiry.*

Subjects play an important role in planning transdisciplinary units of inquiry. They can determine, support, enrich and connect learning.

To understand a central idea, or engage with particular lines of inquiry or learning experiences, knowledge, conceptual understandings and specific skills from one or more subjects may be required to support and inform learning. This support may be planned for in advance, or developed within a unit of inquiry (International Baccalaureate Organization, Primary Years Programme Learning and Teaching 58).

Link to the current Programme of Inquiry: here.

Note: The Units of Inquiry which make the up the whole school Programme of Inquiry are dynamic and grow as a result of teacher reflections and collaboration.

Connecting home and school

Two aspects of AICS PYP organisation support families in getting a more detailed and specific sense of learning from the POI at home:

 - the parent letter describes upcoming study from the POI.

 - documentation of learning on Seesaw shows how it looks for your children in the classroom.

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