



# ISS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

PARENT / STUDENT  
**HANDBOOK**  
For 2013/2014



ISS INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

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Educating to Make A Difference

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## INTRODUCTION

Your children's school years are extremely important and none can be more important than the elementary years. It is where your children get their start on the journey of formal learning.

ISS welcomes students from every country and they represent over fifty nationalities in the elementary school. This provides an excitingly diverse learning environment for children to learn and grow in. To meet the needs of such a diverse learning community, ISS has been the first international school in Singapore to offer the three International Baccalaureate Programs: the Primary Years Programme (PYP) the Middle Years Programme (MYP) and the Diploma Programme (DP). ISS has a solid history of implementation of this world-renown international curriculum and we place special emphasis on continued professional development to improve its implementation.

You will find throughout the Elementary School, committed and dedicated teachers who bring a wealth of knowledge and experience in international education. We ourselves hail from many nations. We feel fortunate to be able to work with parents and students from different countries and cultures. It enriches our lives as we hope being a part of the ISS Community will enrich the lives of your children.

I hope this handbook will give you an initial overview of the programs and policies at the Elementary School. The office staff, the teachers and myself welcome your questions at any time. Please do not hesitate to let us help you if you need further explanation.

Please contact the school office at:

Julia Alden



Elementary School Principal

2013-2014

## **ISS VISION STATEMENT**

### **‘Educating to make a difference’**

## **ISS SCHOOL MISSION**

Our mission is to provide a multi-cultural educational environment for our students in which they achieve academic success, personal growth and become socially responsible and active global citizens with an appreciation of learning as a life-long process.

We accomplish this through an international and dynamic curriculum delivered by an enthusiastic and experienced faculty and staff in partnership with students, parents and guardians, in a caring and supportive community.

## **ISS BELIEFS**

ISS is a community in which:

- The IB Learner Profile is the core of our teaching and learning practice
- Mutual respect and communication are essential to the educational process
- Our diverse multi-cultural community is essential to our identity
- All individuals are unique and valued
- All individuals are nurtured to achieve their full potential
- Self-esteem is developed in a safe and caring environment
- All individuals reflect on and inquire into their roles and responsibilities as a global citizens
- We strive for academic excellence for all students

## **International Baccalaureate Mission**

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 organization works with schools, governments and international organizations 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.

### OUR OBJECTIVES (The IB Learner Profile)

The aim of all IB programs 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. IB learners strive to be:

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

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

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

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

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

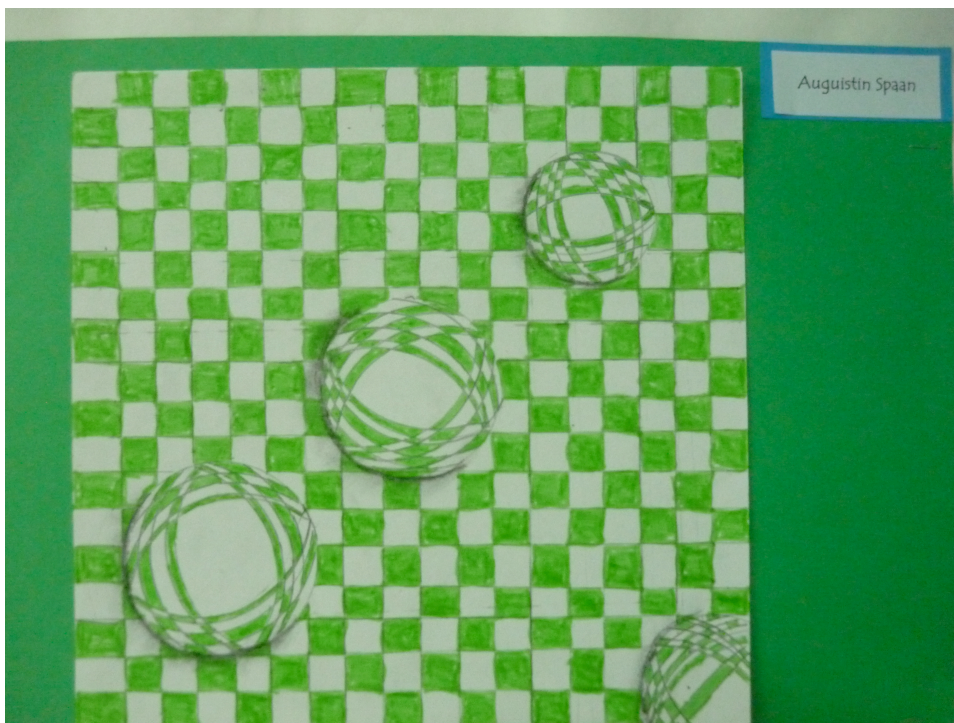
**Open-minded** We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.

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

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

**Balanced** We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives- intellectual, physical and emotional-to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.

**Reflective** We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.



## **ADMINISTRATION AND ORGANIZATION**

### **Administrative Structure**

#### ***The Group***

*International School Pte. Ltd.* is a privately owned organization that provides an international education, resulting in qualifications for university entrance throughout the world. Classes range from preschool through the first two years of an American college program. The group is comprised of the ISS International School, the Center for American Education, the Beijing International School Singapore (BISS). The offices of the Chief Executive Officer, together with the various administrative departments, provide support to the academic institutions. The group structure is shown on the organizational chart.

#### ***Head of School***

Mrs. Margaret Alvarez is the Head of School and has the responsibility for the academic administration of the school within the requirements of the Committee of Management (School Board). Her function is to facilitate the overall educational process through supervision of teachers, curriculum planning, inter-disciplinary cooperation, and implementation of policies consistent with the educational welfare of the students and the positive development of the school in line with ISS philosophical goals. Mrs. Alvarez serves on the ISS Management Committee.

#### ***Elementary Principal***

Julia Alden is the Elementary School Principal. She is primarily responsible for the daily operations of the Elementary School on Paterson Campus.

#### ***Middle School Principal***

Tim Walsh is the Middle School Principal. He is primarily responsible for the daily operations of the Middle School on the Paterson Campus.

#### ***High School Principal***

Mel Hughes is the High School Principal. She is primarily responsible for daily operations of the High School on Preston Campus.



## FACULTY & STAFF --- ELEMENTARY SCHOOL 2013-2014

Staff Member	Position	Email Address
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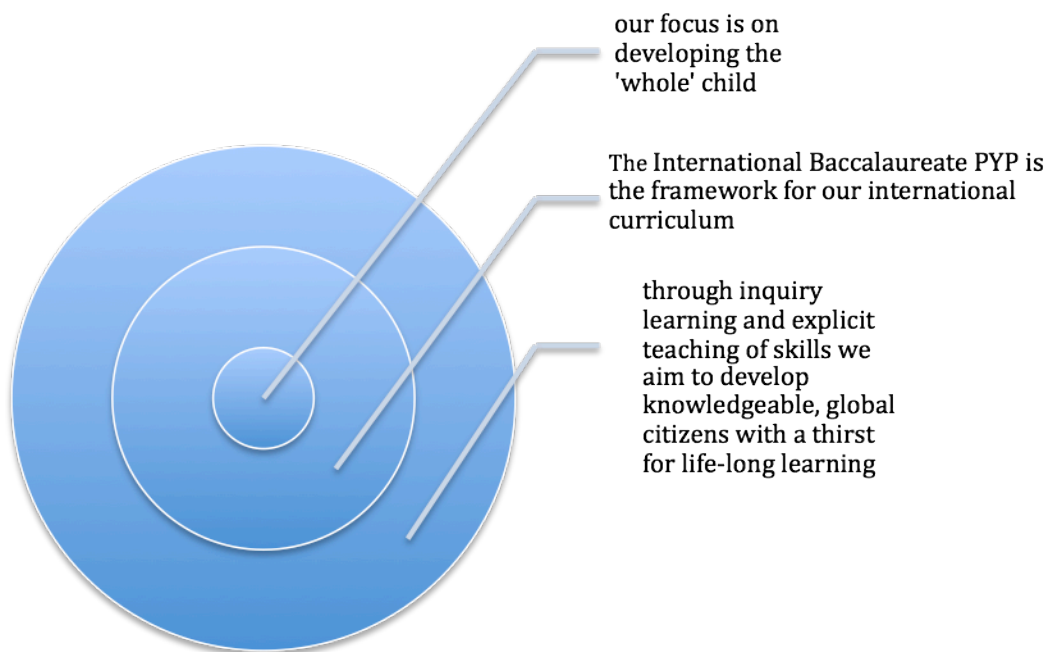
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## THE PYP IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

### ***How is Learning Organized in the PYP Framework?***



*The PYP Within the Educational Framework*

At the heart of the PYP philosophy is a commitment to structured, purposeful inquiry as the leading vehicle for learning.

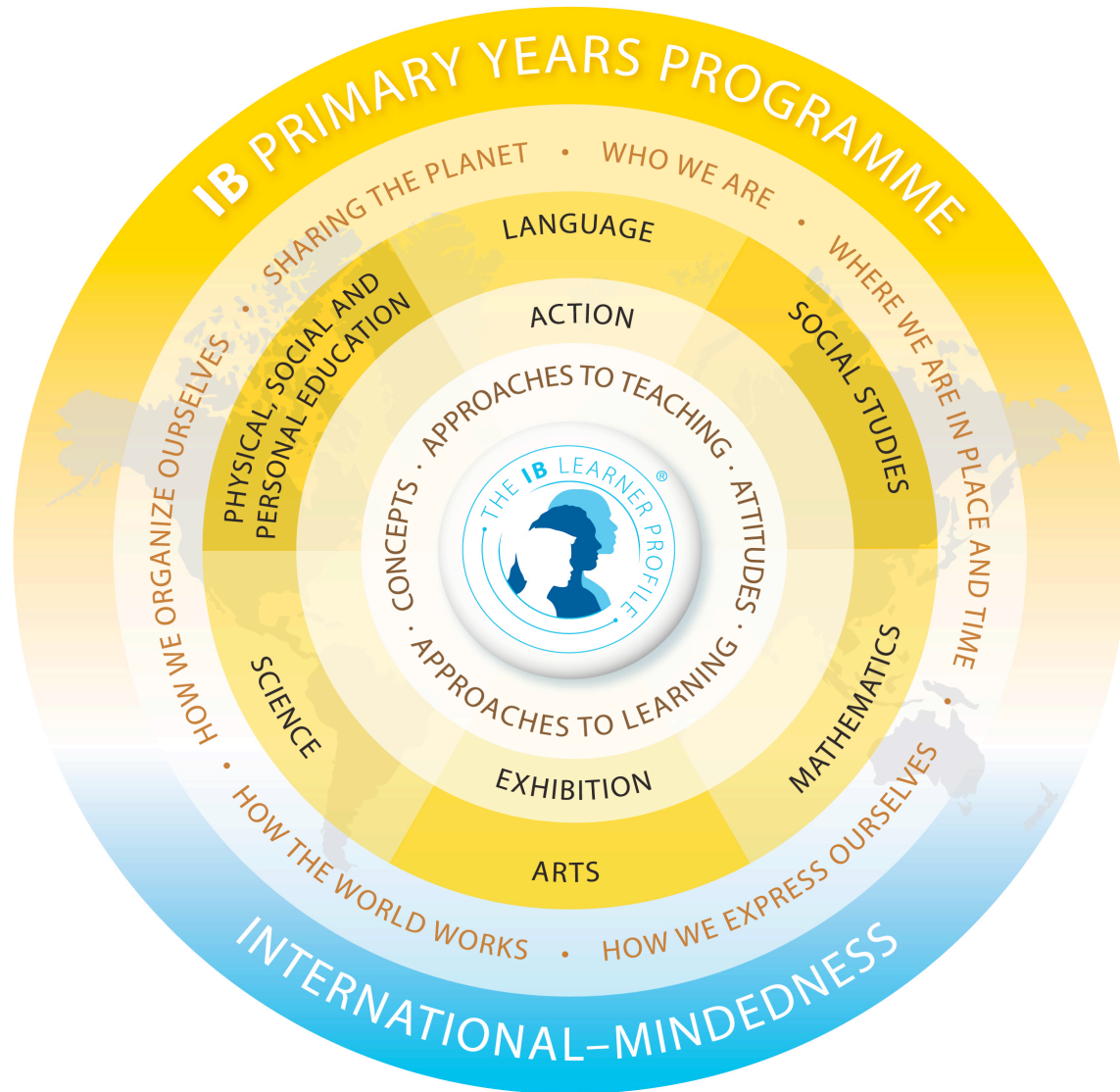
The PYP draws on research and best practice from a range of national systems with a wealth of knowledge and experience from international schools to create relevant, challenging and engaging educational framework for students.

PYP is a comprehensive approach to teaching and learning with an international curriculum model that provides guidelines for what students should learn, a teaching methodology and assessment practices.

Through the PYP your child will:

- Engage in structured, purposeful inquiry actively being involved in their own learning
- Develop a deep understanding of important concepts through the inquiry approach
- Conduct research into areas which have local and global significance
- Acquire and practice a range of transdisciplinary skills
- Be encouraged to develop positive attitudes towards learning, the environment and other people through the learner profile and attitudes
- Have the opportunity for involvement in responsible action and social service

## How Will Your Child Learn in the PYP?



*An overview of the PYP framework with the Transdisciplinary Skills*

### Programme of Inquiry

The PYP curriculum is centered on six “Units of Inquiry” at each grade level (four in K1 and K2). In order to offer a balanced programme of units at each grade level, the PYP has identified six transdisciplinary themes representing significant knowledge areas. All grade levels study one unit from each knowledge area.

The six-transdisciplinary themes 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; what it means to be human.

### **Where we are in place and time**

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

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

### **How we organize 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 complete programme of inquiry and other PYP documents can be viewed on our ISS Website at [www.iss.edu.sg](http://www.iss.edu.sg) under *Academics/Curriculum/ PYP Resources*. Parent informational sessions will be held during the school year.

## LITERACY/LANGUAGE LEARNING IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Language is fundamental to PYP learning and is at the core of our entire curriculum.

At ISS, students learn language, learn through language, and learn about language in an environment where they are actively engaged in asking questions and solving problems, making meaning, thinking reflectively and building enduring understandings.

ISS recognizes that the acquisition and control of language contributes genuine empowerment for individuals in society, and that in order to adequately equip students for success in their lives, it is crucial that they develop proficiency and expertise in speaking, listening, reading and writing in a wide range of mode and registers.

ISS Elementary fosters the development of each student's full literacy potential through the integration of home, school and community. ISS believes every student can be successful in literacy and can become an independent reader, writer and speaker. Through carefully planned reading instruction and a **balanced literacy approach**, students will learn strategies that support the continued growth as life-long readers, writers and speakers (*taken from ISS Literacy Guidelines 2012*).

### How is Literacy is Taught at ISS?

The development of essential literacy skills – reading, writing, speaking and listening is a vital part of a student's literacy development. All students receive an enriched language instruction in which English is the primary language. With the aim to move students from 'supported to independent' learning in Literacy, 90-minute blocks per day will be dedicated to the teaching of literacy. All teachers will use strategies from the *First Steps Reading Program* and use the *Gradual Release of Responsibility Model* of teaching and Learning to support best practice.

Teachers will collaborate at grade levels to plan the Language program to ensure balance and progression at all grade levels. Using the school's PYP Scope and Sequence for Language and other agreed-upon documents, the aim is to provide consistency of approach, standards and expectations. *PM Benchmarks (K-Grade 3)* and the *PROBE Reading Assessment (Grades 4-5)* are used to assess student reading levels twice a year to ensure appropriate reading instructional level. As the PYP is a transdisciplinary approach, literacy will be incorporated into the Units of Inquiry when authentically possible.

Students are encouraged to take their reading books home daily so that parents can share and support them in the process of reading acquisition. All students have Reading diary/log, providing an opportunity for parent discussion and support.

All students in grades K-5 will follow the *Six Traits Plus* Writing Program. Students are taught how to structure their writing around six key components. This program also allows teachers to assess student writing on these traits and to highlight areas of improvement. Handwriting is also taught in the lower grades using the D'Nealian approach. All grade levels use the *Words Their Way Word Study Program*, which ensures a differentiated approach to spelling.

## **ESL (English as a Second Language) in the Elementary School**

A significant component of the Literacy Program is the ESL Program. Almost one third of ISS student body is learning English as a second or even third language.

Our ESL program is designed to give ESL students the support and individual attention needed to succeed in their classes while building their English proficiency. ESL students need to communicate and function academically in a language that is not their mother tongue as well as adjust to a new living and school environment.

Both the ESL and the classroom teachers work collaboratively and are committed to meeting the needs of the students. The ESL teachers meet weekly with the classroom teachers to plan and program for individual student success. At ISS we believe that English Language skills develop best when students are engaged in learning 'content' linked to their classroom studies and taught in a sequential order. "Language learning in CBEC [content based English curriculum] provides purposeful, meaningful, and authentic opportunities for ESL students (Short, 1993).

Students are encouraged to interact with their multi-lingual peers. Working with their English proficient peers gives ESL students the opportunity to practice and hear proficient speakers, which encourages them to use English and develop their socializing and language skills.

**Our ESL Program:** At ISS there are two levels of ESL support, *Withdrawal* classes and in-class *Inclusion* support. The Withdrawal class is for emerging and developing ESL students who have limited or no English proficiency and is conducted at the same time and frequency as Mandarin. In-class support is given once the student has a level of English that allows the student to confront classroom activities in the language, but with teacher support.

**Fees for ESL Support Services:** Each semester a fee is charged for the ESL support services and the Finance Department generates this invoice.

Students are continually monitored and assessed in order to determine when they may move into a more independent phase of language development or to exit the program.

## **Mandarin**

Learning the host country language is an essential component of the PYP. It is also important in that acquiring languages enriches cognitive functions and leads to greater international understanding and an appreciation of other cultures. English is the language of instruction at ISS, and we offer Mandarin to all students from K-I through Grade 5. In the early years, Mandarin focuses on learning basic communication skills through oral practice, engaging the students in speaking and listening activities. Starting at Grade 2, Mandarin is leveled into three groups in order to meet the differentiated learning needs of the students. Whenever possible, Mandarin instruction is integrated into the Units of Inquiry, however it is also a key aim to develop a basic foundation in the language.

## **ES Student Support Services**

ISS international School aims to serve all children who can benefit from our program, given the resources available, while acknowledging the contributions made by the diversity of learners to our learning community. We believe that children have unique characteristics, interests and learning abilities and that students respond best to educational programs that are developmentally appropriate and meet their individual needs.

The ES Student Support Program aims to provide a model of services that match students' special needs: remedial, learning challenges and enrichment. The Learning Support staff includes teachers with training in Special Education. The Learning Support staff works in coordination with the Student Support Team in order to respond to referrals and provide informal assessment, programs and services for these students. The Student Support Team includes: the Principal, ESL teachers, Learning Support teachers, and classroom teachers. Students identified for Learning Support Services may receive differentiated instruction in their own classrooms and/or in the Learning Support resource area, depending on their individual needs and the availability of services.

## **Admissions**

While ISS is essentially non-selective and students in the elementary are accepted without an examination, the Principal is authorized in accordance with the Student Support Guidelines not to accept students for whom the school feels it has inadequate resources and who might call for specialist teaching which the school cannot provide or a disproportionate amount of the teacher's time.

ISS is committed to ensuring the success of every student and it is towards this goal that, where appropriate, we request parents to respect our recommendation of an assessment of their child's learning needs. The school reserves the right to determine whether our current resources can meet the student's needs. Where necessary, outside service provision at an additional cost to the parents may be recommended. It is important to note that we have limited learning support available and that students with mild learning needs should be able to function in a mainstream class. If over a period of time, needs emerge which are beyond the resources that the school can provide, a more appropriate educational setting will be recommended.

## **Literacy Support**

In the 2011-2012 academic year, the ES began supporting students in their literacy acquisition with a Literacy Support Teacher. Our students bring diverse linguistic backgrounds and ways of learning how to read and write. To help them acquire the needed language skills to be successful in their educational program, the literacy support teacher will collaborate with teachers to provide both extensive supports in these areas, as well as developing enrichment strategies for those students who need to further their instruction. The literacy support teacher will work both in classrooms and may pull out students for individual or group instruction.

All Grade 1 students undertake an assessment called the Early Literacy Foundation (ELF) to screen for phonological awareness and readiness for reading and writing and motor and sensory skills necessary for maintaining focus, posture and handwriting skills. Students are given small group intervention within the school day in this area if needed to support their early literacy development.

## **OTHER ACADEMIC PROGRAMS**

### **MATHEMATICS**

The goal of the PYP Mathematics curriculum is to structure mathematics education so that children experience the enjoyment and fascination of mathematics and see the value and importance of it as they gain confidence and skills. We believe that all children need to be comfortable with a broad range of mathematical ideas as well as arithmetical operations. Students will gain essential understanding and see relationships in the mathematical areas, which represent the main strands of the curriculum:

- Shape and space
- Measurement
- Number
- Pattern and function



- Data handling

Special emphasis is placed on mathematical literacy, mental math and problem-solving experiences, their applications, and the importance of communicating mathematical ideas effectively. We believe it is important that students acquire mathematical understanding by constructing their own meaning, through ever-increasing levels of abstraction. It is expected that children will apply previously learned knowledge as they progress through the mathematics curriculum. Moreover, it is fundamental to the philosophy of the PYP that, since it is to be used in context, mathematics is taught in relevant, realistic contexts, rather than through an attempt to impart a fixed body of knowledge directly to students. The curriculum reflects high standards for mastery of specific grade level objectives. All grade levels use *Math Investigations* and *Math Exemplars* as the program foundation and these are supplemented with other math resources.

## Visual Arts

The ISS Visual Art program runs concurrently and in collaboration with many of the PYP units of Inquiry, but may also take its own path. Students engage all learner profile skills across the year in diverse art based activities. There are opportunities to try different materials and apply them in different ways, ranging from abstract, expressionistic and experimental methods, to traditional drawing, painting and model making skills. Students aim to develop a range of skills through observing demonstrations, experimentation, practice and being introduced to different art forms and approaches. They are encouraged to develop confidence in applying verbal, physical and visual communication skills. They explore and express ideas as well as debate and analyze concepts through group and individual work. The year culminates in a whole elementary school *Art Exhibit*.

## Physical Education

Physical Education (PE) offers children the opportunity to explore the capabilities of their bodies and the variety of ways in which they are able to use their bodies to solve simple problems, tackle appropriate physical challenges, manipulate equipment or apparatus, and express themselves in a range of situations. Children will be exposed to a number of activities that will develop gross motor skills that may later be applied in various sports. Children will become aware of safe behavior practices when engaging in physical activities, recognize the importance of fair play, cooperative behaviors and the ability to function as part of a group. Children will be introduced to some of the ways exercise affects their bodies.

The swimming program takes place in the spring semester, over a six week period. Students are bused to a nearby swimming complex. Students wear their PE uniforms on days when they have scheduled PE. On swimming days, they will bring their swim wear and change at school or at the pool.

## **Music**

Music is an essential part of the PYP and commences at the Kindergarten level. The music curriculum in the PYP is made up of five strands:

- Performing (singing),
- Performing (playing instruments),
- Creating and composing,
- Notation and
- Listening and appreciation.

Through the music program, students will have the chance to play different types of instruments, to sing and compose music and to explore their creative self through musical activities. An emphasis is placed on learning about music from diverse cultures and time periods. Music is sometimes linked with the class Unit of Inquiry, but where a natural link does not present itself, it is taught as a stand-alone unit.

All children take part in a production once a year, as well as performing for in- class presentations and assemblies. Performing in this way helps the children build confidence and further develop cooperation skills.

Extra curricular activities, such as a choir, are also offered in music.

## **Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)**

ICT in the PYP utilizes the use of a range of digital tools, media and learning environments for teaching, learning and assessing. ICT supports and enhances learning as it is effectively integrated into the units of inquiry and linked to real and practical applications within the classroom. Specific skills will also be taught, as they are necessary for the learner at a particular grade level. The ICT skills for teaching and learning for all grade levels of the ICT program allow for:

### **Investigating**

Investigating is to carry out a purposeful inquiry or research, to test existing understanding, discover new information and create new understanding. Through investigation, learners critically evaluate a variety of sources, making connections and synthesizing findings to apply knowledge to real-life contexts.

### **Creating**

Creating is a process through which learners are provided with an opportunity to innovate and test boundaries. Learners construct meaning, apply critical thinking and original ideas to real-world situations, and share knowledge through self-expression, problem posing and problem solving, and reflection.

### **Communicating**

Communicating is the exchange of information with various audiences using a range of media and formats. Effective communicators contribute to cross-cultural understanding, make informed choices when deciding on tools to articulate meaning, and provide relevant, significant feedback to others.

### **Collaborating**

Collaborating is the process through which learners validate and negotiate ideas and reach a deeper understanding and a global perspective. Learners are empowered through digital media and environments and through active participation in creating and sharing knowledge.

### **Organizing**

Organizing is the ability to structure or arrange connected items. Learners understand that ICT systems can be used to inform, adapt, manage and problem-solve during their creative, communicative, and collaborative and investigative processes. Learners make connections, transfer existing knowledge and independently explore new technologies.  
(Taken from IBO 'ICT in the PYP').

The ES has developed a 'Safe Use' policy that all students and parents (Grades 3-5) will receive in the beginning of the school year. Safe use of on-line technology will be an integral part of the teaching program. **We encourage parents to collaborate and to seek support from the school and at any time when issues regarding safe use arise.**

## **ASSESSMENT IN THE PYP**

Assessment is a continuous process that allows teachers, parents and children to identify areas of strength and areas that need improvement, as well as the effectiveness of the program. It is a daily activity at ISS and takes various forms. There are two main categories of assessment. *Formative Assessment* is interwoven with daily learning and helps teachers and students find out what children already know, understand and can do in order to plan for further student learning and growth. Formative assessment occurs throughout a learning unit or process. *Summative Assessment* takes place at the end of a learning unit or process. It is a chance for students, teachers and parents to evaluate progress and demonstrate what has been learned over the course of time. It is a formal ending point to a

taught unit or of a process but not necessarily the end of student learning in the areas being assessed.

At ISS we use a range of assessment tools and strategies, which include: observations, performance assessments such as presentations, debates and role-plays, product based assessments, quizzes and tests and open-ended tasks. Students are evaluated on assessment tools such as: rubrics (student and/or teacher designed criteria), benchmarks, checklists, and continuums that show progression of achievement.

A *Portfolio* (collection of student work) is kept to share with parents and to demonstrate how students are progressing during the year. Many classes are working to present their progress on *e-portfolios*.

*The PYP Exhibition:* At the end of Grade 5 all students participate in the PYP Exhibition. It is a significant event in the life of a PYP school and student: an opportunity for students 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 Primary to Middle School. The PYP Exhibition is an 8-10 week in-depth collaborative inquiry. Working in groups, the students investigate a real-life issue that is interesting to them with the purpose of creating an action plan to make a difference. Teachers mentor students through each phase of the research project. The Exhibition is shared with members of the wider community at the end of the process,

Your child's progress will be reported to you regularly both verbally and in writing. You are encouraged to play an active role in supporting your child's learning and staying in touch with the teacher throughout the year.

## GENERAL PROCEDURES AND INFORMATION: A-Z



### **Absences/Tardiness**

It's important that students attend school each day. They are also expected to be on time for school and for each class throughout the day.

When a child arrives late, needs to leave school early, or wishes to go home with a friend, s/he must give the classroom teacher a note from the parent or guardian. If you change your school leaving details during the school day, you must contact the school office to let us know the new plans. If you wish for your child to take public transport or walk home independently, we must have written permission from you. When you are leaving early with your child, please get a pass in the ES office. This helps us to know where students are at all times. As well, we ask that if you are visiting the campus, please check in with the school office. This helps us to know who is on campus at any time.

If your child will be away from school, please phone the school by 7.55 a.m. each day to inform us. If your child travels on the school bus and is absent for any length of time, please notify the bus company.

### **Action as Service**

*Action as Service* projects form an essential component of Elementary School PYP curriculum by helping to develop international citizens, who are able to contribute to issues related to local and global communities through intercultural awareness and



understanding. It is our belief that we share a responsibility for helping to make the world a better place for everyone to live in.

The action component of the PYP can involve service in the widest sense of the word: service to fellow students, and to the larger community, both inside and outside the school. Action as Service projects at ISS will model and facilitate action, whilst also allowing scope for students to initiate further action.

### **Goals: Action As Service at the Elementary:**

- Has a learning component through active participation providing opportunities to use skills and knowledge in real-life situations
- Allows a student to develop an awareness of local and global issues and to foster a sense of caring for others and the community.
- Develops problem solving strategies
- Integrates and extends curriculum beyond the classroom
- Provides structured time for students to reflect.
- Allows for continuity and building of relationships with people and organizations, so Action as Service projects or components of the project will be carried over from one year to another as much as possible.

### **After-School Hours**

We ask that elementary students do not stay to play on the playground after school for safety and supervision issues unless they are supervised by a teacher or are attending an ECA. While we understand that parents may want to have some time to chat as they are picking up their children, we ask that you please leave the playground area by 3:00 p.m. We appreciate your support in this matter.

### **Appointments/Communication**

It is very important that you feel you have access to the school should you have questions or need advice. If you need to make an appointment with the class teacher, the most effective way to do this is by email and stating the reason for the visit. If you would like to visit the classroom, please let the teacher know in advance.

There are times when you feel that you need to discuss an issue or make a comment to the Principal. We want to be available to parents and while a drop-in meeting is not always possible, you may at any time make an appointment through the ES Secretary.

## Arrival Times/School Day

The school day officially begins at 7:55 a.m. and runs until 2:25. Students may arrive any time after 7:30 and go directly to the playground (except for K1 and K2 students who go to the classroom). We ask that parents do not arrive before 7:30 a.m. as there is no supervision for students. Also, we ask that you always drive slowly through the parking lot as you drop off your children for a safe arrival for everyone! Taxis are permitted to enter before school to drop off students and after ECA's in the afternoon.

The Elementary School office hours are from 7:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.

## Assemblies

Students in grades K1 – 5 attend **assembly** every Friday. K1 to Grade 2 occurs from 1:00 p.m. until 1:30 p.m. and Grades 3 to 5 attend from 1:40 p.m. until 2:25 p.m. Awards are presented, birthdays are celebrated, and each class gives a short presentation once during the year to highlight their learning in the PYP or class program. Teachers will notify parents when their class is presenting at assembly so that you may attend if you wish. Assembly is a time where during the year students who portray specific PYP learner profiles or attitudes are recognized with a special award.

## Behavioral Expectations and the 4 Be's

ISS ES recognizes that self-discipline and the development of responsibility and judgment is a continuous learning process. Teachers structure a consistent and safe environment for children where we all model appropriate and respectful interactions. The *PYP Learner Profile* and the *Attitudes* form the basis of our behavioral agreements.

We also have a *Code of Conduct* in place in the ES. This is a simple behavior plan to guide actions and is called the **4 Be's**.

- Be Safe
- Be Respectful
- Be Honest
- Be Responsible

The *4 Be's Code of Conduct* strives for:

- Establishing and maintaining a nurturing, safe, orderly and supportive environment
- Providing a consistent, fair process and structure within which students can learn
- Enabling our students to be safe, respectful, honest and responsible
- Recognizing the uniqueness of each student in order to support them in being their best

- Using the PYP Learner Profile to guide our behavior and actions

You may view the full guidelines at any time by contacting the school Principal or the class teacher.

In line with our 4 Be's Code Of Conduct, the belief in our Elementary School is that **bullying** behavior is not acceptable and will not be tolerated. To this end:

- The School Community (students, staff and parents) will work in co-operation towards building and maintaining an anti-bullying ethos in the school.
- The school will provide a happy, supportive and safe environment in which everyone can achieve their full potential.
- Students and adults will feel able to report bullying behavior, confident that they will be listened to and action taken to remedy the situation.
- Students will be valued and respected in the school community.
- Students will be encouraged to become creative, motivated and lifelong learners prepared for an ever-changing, global community.

You may ask the class teacher or the Principal for more information on the Anti-bullying guidelines established in the ES.

## **Birthdays**

Birthdays are acknowledged in the classrooms and the Elementary School assembly. If parents wish to provide a birthday cake or treats to share with the students in the classroom, they should notify the teacher to schedule a suitable time. We ask that you refrain from bringing in an overabundance of food; especially sugary treats that impact on some children's cognitive ability and behavior. There is an abundance of research on how sugar can negatively impact on a child's health.

If you are planning your child's private party and you do not intend to invite ALL the children from your child's class, please refer to the class telephone list for addresses and personal telephone numbers. We ask that you please email or telephone invitations from home to avoid hurt feelings for those who are not included.

## **Emergency Procedures**

Fire drills and evacuation exercises are carried out regularly throughout the year. Your children will be warned in advance for the first fire exercise at the beginning of the year. Future fire exercises will be carried out without advance warning. Parents visiting the school should make themselves familiar with the fire procedures that are clearly posted around the school.

## Extra-Curricular Activities (ECA)

Extra Curricular Activities (ECAs) are offered for a 10-week period in both the first and the second semester. They are organized directly after school and are held on the school campus whenever possible. Occasionally, sporting ECAs will compete off campus with other schools. Information regarding specific activities will be sent out at the beginning of each term. We encourage parents to put forth suggestions for ECA's from within the Singapore community.

Mr. Nathan Horne (PE teacher) will be coordinating the ECA's for the 2013-2014 academic year.

## Field Trips

Singapore is an excellent venue for supporting the PYP and the educational program. During the school year, field trips will be taken to supplement and extend learning in the classroom. Teachers will notify parents of upcoming trips and often ask for parent volunteers to accompany the class on the trip. Permission forms for field trips **MUST** be signed and returned on time.

In Grades 3-5 students have the opportunity to take an overnight camp (2 nights) experience, which is usually aimed at building independence and responsibility. Grade 2 will also go on a one-night trip during the spring semester. Parents will be well informed of these trips and a parent information session will be organized to answer questions parents may have.

## Health/Nurse

The Elementary School has a full-time nurse on duty (7:30 a.m. to 4:30 a.m. and shared with the Middle School). The nurse is stationed in the Elementary School office area.

New students to ISS International School are required to complete and return the school medical form to the nurse. A physical examination is strongly recommended at least every other year. **It is extremely important that the school be informed of any updates in a physical condition or any special health or medical attention the child requires.** For example, we have students that have specific allergies requiring epi-pens or medication and all ISS faculty and staff will need to be aware of these students and their medical needs. Please make sure that you contact the school nurse if your child requires specific medical attention.

## Immunization

Please check your health records and make sure your child has received all necessary immunizations. During the school year, the nurse will be reviewing the immunizations and may contact you to update if needed.

### **Illnesses/Diseases**

As in any school, we often have students with communicable diseases and we will alert you when a student has been diagnosed with such disease. We will use the local Singapore health guidelines when these cases arise.

### **Medication**

Medication can be brought to school if it is essential to the health of the student. The medicine or accompanying written statement must be clearly marked with the student's name, correct dosage, and parent's signature. This prescribed medicine must be sent to the school nurse's office. The school nurse is the only person who will administer prescribed medicine.

### **Group Personal Accident Insurance for Students**

The school's Group Personal Accident Insurance for Students covers death/disablement/injuries if accidents arise when the injured student is:

- Within the school premises
- Taking part in school activities in Singapore authorized by and under the supervision of the school authorities, and/or
- Traveling to and from school or school activities.

This policy may be reviewed at the secretarial offices in the respective schools. Parents are advised to purchase additional coverage if they feel that the school's insurance is insufficient. Further inquiries can be referred to the Human Resource Office at our Preston campus.

## **Homework**

The school believes that completion of homework assignments, encouraged and monitored by parents, is part of the learning experience. Assignments are set in order to extend learning, reinforce skills, and establish independent habits of study. The amount of homework increases with age and grade level. The following guidelines outline the fundamentals of the homework policy.

### **Elementary School: PYP**

#### **I. GUIDELINES**

I.1 Homework will be prepared in a way that is:

- Relevant to the school programme
- Appropriate to the student's abilities

I.2 Students and parents should be aware of the expected time of the activity and this will be consistent within year levels.

I.3 Year level information will include homework expectations at the start of each year.

I.4. Reading should be encouraged on a nightly basis, not necessarily confined to school based resources.

I.5 Where method is important an example should be provided for students.

I.6 Work set will be introduced and explained by the teacher and followed up with students at the completion of the task.

I.7 Feedback on student's achievements, difficulties, participation etc will be regularly provided by the teacher, student and parent.

I.8 Under special circumstances more time may be required to complete requirements.

## **2. Implementation**

2.1 Homework will be set in collaboration with all teachers at the year level.

2.2 The timeframe for when homework is sent home and brought back will be consistent across the year level.

2.3 Teachers at each year level will plan relevant activities appropriate to students' abilities.

2.4 Time anticipated for completion of homework tasks (which may include IXL, math activities relating to classroom work, Raz Kids, Spelling City and unit work) and personal reading (of books selected by the student at their appropriate level) Monday to Thursday will be:

**K2:** 10 15 minutes of reading

**Grade 1:** 10 minutes of homework tasks and 10 minutes of personal reading

**Grade 2:** 15 minutes of homework tasks and 15 minutes of personal reading

**Grade 3:** 20 minutes of homework tasks and 15 minutes of personal reading

**Grade 4:** 20 minutes of homework tasks and 20 minutes of personal reading

**Grade 5:** 30 minutes of homework tasks and 20 minutes of personal reading

2.5 The time suggested for personal reading is the minimum required. It is expected that students will keep a reading log and also complete personal reading over the weekends.

2.6 Teachers will ensure that homework expectations are explained clearly and discuss the completed work with their students.

It is the teacher's responsibility to evaluate the homework and to notify parents if a student is not doing what is required. Each student will receive a **homework diary or reading record book**. It is the responsibility of parents to check and sign the homework diary every day to monitor student performance.

**Please consult with the classroom teacher if you have any questions or concerns regarding homework issues.**

## **Learning Resource Centre (Library)**

Our campus has a LRC appropriate to the age range of students. The ES Librarian will work with each class teacher to develop our children's interest in books and refine their research skills. On a designated day each week, the students visit the library to change their books. The Library Assistant will notify parents when their child has not returned their borrowed books. If a student is unable to return the book after a set period of time, it will be the parent's responsibility to buy a similar book to replace the lost book.

The students also use the LRC throughout the week in conjunction with their class work. The LRC is resourced with computers that have access to the Internet as well as a variety of software related to class Units of Inquiry.

## **Parent Contact/Emergencies**

It is essential that parents keep the class teacher and the office informed of any changes to your phone numbers, emails and emergency contact numbers. Each family fills in a form as they enter the school but this data may often change during the school year. In order for the school to be able to contact you at any time regarding your child, please always give this new information to the school.

You may email the office using **[lilyong@iss.edu.sg](mailto:lilyong@iss.edu.sg)** with this information.

ISS Elementary School Emergency Procedures:

- In case of a serious injury, the nurse or school representative will:
  - 1<sup>st</sup> – call an ambulance/and or transport the child to emergency services at Glen Eagles Hospital
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> – notify the parents

3<sup>rd</sup> - call the emergency contact if the parents are not available

- If a doctor is required, the nurse or school representative will:

1<sup>st</sup> – call the parents

2<sup>nd</sup> – call the emergency contact if the parents are not available

## **Parent Support**

The research overwhelmingly demonstrates that parent involvement in children's learning is positively related to achievement. The research shows that the more intensively parents are involved in their children's learning, the more a child achieves and works to his/her potential. Further, parent involvement is positively related to benefits other than student achievement. These benefits include attitude toward school or toward particular subject areas, self-concept, motivation, classroom behavior, time spent on homework, and expectations for one's future.

Given the importance of parent involvement, ISS expects parents to support their child's education in the following ways:

### **Support the Developmental Needs of Your Child**

- Be patient and supportive.
- Do not compare your child with others. Each child is unique and learns differently.
- Make sure your child gets enough sleep (8-10 hours per night) and eats nutritious, balanced meals, especially breakfast.
- Be open to discussion of your child's academic, as well as, social, and personal successes and struggles.
- Communicate to your child that his/her effort, progress, and achievement are equally valued. Students will do their best by doing their own work.

### **Establish a Family Culture of Learning**

- Ask your child about his/her school day. Ask about the day's lessons and what your child learned. Show an interest as your child describes the school day. Share your own learning experiences and show your child resources that you may have in your own home that relate to your child's learning experiences.
- Ask your child what homework s/he has to do each evening and offer your help and support.
- Provide a quiet and comfortable space and time for your child to do homework.
- Encourage your child to bring home books to read from the school library.
- Set aside at least 20 minutes a night for the whole family to read together or independently, in English or in your native language. Take some time to discuss what you are reading.



- Encourage your child to write letters to family and friends.
- Communicate the importance of education and school attendance to your child. Arrange family holidays around the school calendar.

## **Parent-Teacher Conferences**

Parent Teacher Conferences are held two times during the school year, one October and one in April, for grades K1 through Grade 5. The October conference involves parents, students and the teacher. The April Conference is **Student-Led** where students will present selected pieces of work to discuss with parents and will demonstrate activity-based learning. Students will reflect and analyze their work samples, demonstrating knowledge and progress in the programme.

The purpose of these conferences is to discuss student progress and to plan appropriate methods for maintaining or improving the present standard of achievement. Classroom teachers will arrange appointments for these conferences.

We encourage parents to contact teachers at any time to discuss their child's education.

## **Parent-Teacher Association (PTA)**

The Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) was formed to facilitate communications between parents, teachers, and the school. The aims of the PTA are:

1. To promote the well-being of the school
2. To organize activities for members
3. To encourage a positive rapport between the school and the home

You will receive information from the PTA at various times throughout the year. All parents are members of the PTA and your participation can be of great support to the students at ISS, so we encourage you to become involved.

Each class has a parent representative who assists in organizing activities for parents in relation to class needs. ALL parents are requested to provide a contact telephone number and home address for the class list to assist communications related to your child. Additionally, a school list is maintained regarding special interests or areas in which you would like to participate. Please let us know how you would like to be involved in school life.

## **Personal Property**

Please label all the items students bring to school to help ensure that items can be returned if they are misplaced. Please check in the lost and found box situated in the ground floor kitchen area for misplaced items.

We ask that students do not bring expensive toys or fragile objects to school. If teachers request these objects, they will remain in the classroom. If personal items become a distraction or annoyance in the classroom, they will be taken and returned when the student is dismissed from class at the end of the school day. Students are also asked not to bring money to school unless there is an organized event.

## **Report Cards (Progress reports)**

Report cards are sent home with students two times during the school year, in December and at the end of the school year. The purpose of the report card is to:

- Interpret student achievement and effort relative to the student's abilities
- Highlight areas of merit or concern
- Strengthen communication between the school and the home

You are encouraged to discuss the report card with your child and to contact the class teacher should you have any questions or would like to discuss it further.

## **School Supplies**

The classroom teacher, as needed, gives students in grades K1 through Grade 5 various general school supplies during the school year. These supplies are included in the school fees. On certain occasions, teachers may ask for parents to provide certain snacks, etc. for a class celebration. The class teacher will give a list of essentials for the year to you at the beginning of the year.

## **Snack/Lunch**

During the course of the day, each student will need a snack for mid-morning break and a lunch. Students in Grades K1 – 5 may order a hot lunch through our canteen service and this is done through the office on a monthly basis. Menus will be sent home with students for each four-week period. Students may also bring a packed lunch from home if they wish. This will be stored in the refrigerator situated in each classroom.

We ask that students bring nutritional snacks and lunch foods. Eating sugar and processed foods can have a detrimental impact on some children's cognitive ability. We appreciate your concern and care in this issue.

All students need to have several drinks for this hot, humid climate and many students (starting at Grade 1) bring a filled water bottle, which they can re-fill at school. Water is an essential element for this hot and humid weather! We suggest that you also provide a hat for outside play.

## Special Events

**UN Day** is usually the first highlight of our calendar and is celebrated in the Elementary School with a variety of activities reflecting our multicultural population. It is a special time of year for our school, and parents are encouraged to participate with their children and the teachers to make this celebration a memorable day. A parent committee is in place to support the organization of this event and you will receive information about it starting in September.

Each December the ES will perform a **December Concert or Production**. A venue is secured off campus so that all parents can attend. It is another opportunity to highlight the talents of our students.

In the spring, the PTA sponsors a **Fun Fair** on the Paterson Campus. Games and activities are organized by parents, students and teachers for all ISS families to enjoy. Funds are raised for service learning projects and school-related projects.

**ES Sports Day:** In Term 1 all students will be involved in organized sports events. This will be held off-campus and students will be bused to the venue. Parents are invited to attend and to help with the events if they wish.

**ES Swim Gala:** At the culmination of the six week swimming instruction and in the month of May, all students participate in a swim gala where they can demonstrate the skills they have learned. Again, students are bused to the venue and all parents are invited to attend and to help with events.

## Student Council

An Elementary Student Council presents a unique opportunity for young students to learn organization, leadership and teamwork skills and prepares them for later student leadership. The ES Student Council has elected officers and class representatives from each grade beginning at Grade 1. We have two teacher facilitators who support the organization and decision making process.

Our elementary Student Council helps plan activities for the school and classes. These activities vary depending on what the student council decides. Elementary school activities are usually fun and non-taxing for the council to plan. They also help to identify ways in which the school and learning environment might be improved upon.

## **Teaching Assistants**

Teaching assistants provide valuable support to teachers and students throughout the Elementary School by supporting the learning environment in the classroom. The overall responsibility of the TA is to assist in the social and educational development of students under the guidance of class teachers and the Head of School. The TA supports the class teacher in implementing school programmes and in performing duties as requested by the classroom teacher.

## **Telephone**

If students must contact home, they may use the telephone in the office after gaining permission from a teacher/secretary to do so. The use of the telephone will be restricted to important issues. If you need to leave a message for your child, the secretary will take the message and will pass it to the student at a suitable time.

Student personal telephone use: If students in the Elementary School do carry a mobile phone, we ask that they remain in the student bags until the end of the day. Should a student need to talk with a parent, the request must go through the teacher and then made in the school office.

## **Transportation**

Busing can be arranged by contacting the school-approved bus company: Smoothway Transport Service and the contact person for this service is Mr. Chua at **9765-5455** or email **[schoolbus@iss.edu.sg](mailto:schoolbus@iss.edu.sg)**.

Parents may make other arrangements in order to ensure that their child arrives and leaves school at the appropriate times.

Buses will depart from the school ten minutes after classes are dismissed. If children are not using the bus services, parents must arrange to have them picked up within this ten-minute period.

If a student who regularly commutes by school bus intends to use alternative transportation on a given day, please ensure that a note is sent to the classroom teacher.

Please address any concerns regarding the school bus service to Mr. Chua at [9765-5455](tel:9765-5455). You may also contact the school Principal or Elementary Office for assistance.

**The ES Student Council has developed the following agreements for student behavior while on the bus:**

We would like our bus trips to be enjoyable and safe for all who ride on them. Therefore at ISS we:

- Always sit with our seatbelts on
- Listen to and respect any adult giving us instructions
- Speak quietly
- Do not eat or drink on buses
- Keep our hands to ourselves
- Use appropriate language
- Tell bus workers if there are any problems

Parents will be contacted when students are having behavioral challenges on the bus. There is a system for reporting bus issues each day to the class teacher or the Principal.

## **School Attire**

Uniforms are required in the styles and colors prescribed by the school. Students should be in uniform within two weeks from the date they begin school. These can be obtained ready-made from the school tailors:

**QUEENSWAY SHOPPING CENTER**  
**SHOPPING PLAZA**

**#03-49**

**1 Queensway**

**Singapore 149053**

**Tel: 6474-8523**

**CORONATION**

**#02-44A**

**587 Bukit Timah Road**

**Singapore 269707**

**Tel: 6479-2329**

If parents need to contact the manager they may call the office at 6353-0921. You may also send email responses or questions to [uniteduniforms@hotmail.com](mailto:uniteduniforms@hotmail.com)

**Shoes:** Children are expected to wear sensible shoes as part of their school uniform and for safety reasons. These must be close-toed. No sandals or 'croc's'.

**Jewelry:** Lower School students are not encouraged to wear jewelry other than a wristwatch. Children with pierced ears need small, non-dangling earrings. In the interest of safety, no jewelry may be worn during P.E. class.

**Physical Education:** Uniforms are also required for the PE program and can be purchased at the above shops. At the beginning of the school year, your child's class teacher will give you a copy of the PE schedule and students should wear their uniform to school on this day. PE classes are held on the premises. Swimming will be held in the last term and the students will be bused off to the Delta swim complex, which is near to the school.

**Free Dress Day:** Normally the last Friday of each month is Free Dress Day. On this day the students (KI – Grade 5) may wear their regular clothes to school. However, we request that all students wear safe and sensible shoes to ensure that they are safe when playing during break times. Parents will be notified when Free Dress Day occurs.

## **Withdrawal from ISS**

If you need to withdraw from ISS at any time during the school year, please let the ES Office know immediately of your withdrawal date. They will pass a *Leaver's Form* to you that will need to be filled out and returned to the office. You should contact the Accounting Office directly @ [accounts@iss.edu.sg](mailto:accounts@iss.edu.sg) regarding any deposit or payment issues.

