

The Middle Years Programme: A Guide for Parents

The IB Middle Years Programme (MYP), for students aged 11 to 16, is designed as an inclusive, whole-school programme by the International Baccalaureate (IB), a not-for-profit organization supporting the education of more than 1 million students every year in over 3,700 schools in 147 countries.

Why the Middle Years programme?

Parents who want the best possible education for their children choose the MYP because it includes:

- rigorous learning objectives
- a student-centred approach to teaching
- international perspectives
- concern for the whole child
- sustained teaching and learning in more than one language
- a focus on learning how to learn
- the development of flexible thinking that prepares students to evaluate information critically and apply knowledge in complex, unfamiliar situations.

The MYP teaches tools for lifelong learning and fosters responsible attitudes that help students discover how to use what they learn to take principled action. The MYP’s focus on independent learning makes it the ideal preparation for the IB Diploma Programme (DP) but also our Advanced Placement (AP) programme.

Distinctive features of the MYP

At the core of all IB Programmes is the learner profile, 10 attributes fostered in students that promote their development as responsible members of their local, national and global communities. IB learners strive to be inquirers, knowledgeable, thinkers, communicators, principled, open-minded, caring, risk-takers, balanced and reflective.

“What the world cares about is not what our students know, but what they can do with what they know.”
 Tony Wagner, a fellow at the Technology and Entrepreneurship Center at Harvard University and author of *The Global Achievement Gap*.

In the MYP, students study 8 subject groups. Distinctive features of the MYP include:

- **Key and related concepts** are big ideas, which form the basis of teaching and learning in the MYP. They ensure breadth and depth in the curriculum and promote learning within and across traditional disciplines.
- **Global contexts** provide shared starting points for inquiry into what it means to be internationally minded, framing a curriculum that promotes multilingualism, intercultural understanding and global engagement.
- **Approaches to teaching and learning**, a unifying thread throughout all MYP subject groups, are skills which help students manage their own learning. They provide a foundation for success in further education and the world beyond the classroom.
- **Action and service**, essential components of the MYP, set out clear learning outcomes that grow from students’ participation in local and global communities.



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• **The personal project**, is a culminating experience in Year 10 in which students apply their approaches to learning skills to complete an extended, self-directed piece of work. This required component provides opportunities for creative and truly personal demonstrations of learning.

Assessment

All assessment is internal and founded on criterion-related standards established by the IB that are the same worldwide. Teachers assess student attainment against specified subject criteria rather than against individuals in the class.

Internal assessments typically include teacher evaluation of class work, homework assignments, process journals, orals, practical work, open-ended tasks, tests, investigations and portfolio assessments etc.

What are the advantages of an MYP education?

- ISWA is an IB World School and is a candidate school offering the MYP. The school is subject to a strict accreditation process monitored by the International Baccalaureate, ensuring that we provide a high-quality education.
- IB teaching methods and curriculums are research-based and draw from the best educational practices from systems around the world.
- ISWA teachers are required to participate in many professional development opportunities to continually promote their awareness of current educational practices and new thinking.
- IB programmes are recognized internationally.

“Student learning in the MYP focuses on taking one’s place in communities, acting in new contexts, making informed choices about one’s own welfare, interacting with the world and considering the consequences of human thought and action.” Judith Fabian, IB Chief Academic Officer

Frequently Asked Questions

Question: What curriculum do we teach?

ISWA teaches the Australian Curriculum.

Question: If my child is not planning to do the IB Diploma why should I consider them doing the MYP?

The MYP is also excellent preparation for Advanced Placement (AP) programme. The skills they learn through the MYP is ideal preparation for the Advanced Placement (AP) programme.

Question: How will my child adapt to doing the MYP when they have not come from an IB school?

Your child does not have to have done the PYP or MYP before coming to ISWA. The MYP is for all students as it offers breadth and depth in the curriculum.

Question: Have studies been done on the impact of the MYP?

IB Research studies provide evidence that MYP students tend to distinguish themselves from their non-IB peers (see ibo.org/research).

- A recent global study conducted by the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) examining student performance on the International Schools’ Assessment (ISA), found that MYP students performed better than their non-IB peers in all four assessment areas (mathematics, reading, narrative and expository writing). MYP students scored particularly well in grades 9 and 10 mathematics and reading, as IB student averages were significantly higher than OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) means for these subjects (Tan and Bibby 2012).
- Enrolment in the MYP appears to have a positive impact on global-mindedness.
- MYP students are more likely to engage in student service learning projects in school and to participate in volunteer activities outside of school.

The MYP is also considered a strong predictor of performance in the IB Diploma Programme (DP).

Interested in learning more about the MYP? Please visit the IB website: www.ibo.org/myp