DISV IB PYP CURRICULUM HANDBOOK 2020-21

DANUBE
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL VIENNA




CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

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

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

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

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

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

Bridie Anderson
IB PYP Leader

THE IB LEARNER PROFILE

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

IB learners strive to be:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

IB PYP OVERVIEW

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

The programme:

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

IB PYP CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

The PYP transdisciplinary framework focuses on the development of the whole child as an inquirer, both at school and beyond. It encompasses students' academic, social and emotional wellbeing, focusing on international-mindedness, agency and strong personal values through the IB Learner Profile. The PYP nurtures independent learning skills, encouraging every student to take responsibility for their learning. The programme incorporates local and global issues into the curriculum, asking students to look at six related, transdisciplinary themes and to consider the links between them.

THE ENHANCED PYP

The IB Learner Profile places the student at the centre of IB education. New enhancements to the PYP curriculum framework serve to reinforce the centrality of the learner and learning community, with a strong emphasis on action, agency and learner-centred language.

Under the Enhanced PYP, there are three main areas of focus:

- The Learner
- Learning and Teaching
- The Learning Community

With student agency at the core, the Enhanced PYP fosters learners who:

- Are actively engaged in various stages of learning (thinking about, planning, modifying and creating)
- Are actively involved in discussion, questioning and by being self-directed in their learning
- Apply their understanding of concepts through construction of their projects and play
- Make connections to the real world by taking past experiences into their play worlds
- Have an active voice and stake in the classroom and school community
- Face challenges and are given the freedom to independently overcome these or fail through experimentation or trial and error
- Are risk-takers
- Express their theories of the of the world, which are honoured in the environment
- Reflect on their actions and self-regulate

The Learner

Agency: How do we empower learners?

The PYP programme encourages students to be agents of their own learning through:

- **Voice**: Students question, guide and direct their learning. Students propose and initiate action, and participate in decision-making.
- **Choice:** Students co-construct their learning goals and engage with multiple perspectives.
- **Ownership:** Students define their own learning goals and reflect on their progress. Student ideas are supported throughout planning and taking action.

Early Learners: How do we engage young learners?

The Elementary School recognizes the vital importance of early learning for children aged 3-6 years. Young learners develop their understanding of themselves, others and the world around them by exploration, discovery, play and interaction with the learning environment. The Enhanced PYP offers young students authentic opportunities to learn and develop at their own pace through engagement with 4 transdisciplinary themes during the school year. Meaningful learning opportunities are created through a vibrant learning environment, hands-on learning, child-initiated play and co-constructed learning between teachers and young learners. Through play and exploration, young students learn to inquire and exercise agency as they build and test theories to help make sense of the world around them.

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

The Elementary School encourages the development of attributes that contribute to the well-being of the individual and of the group. Through the IB Learner Profile Attributes, we help students to foster positive personal attitudes towards people, the environment and learning. The IB Learner Profile is detailed on page 5.

Action: How do we make a positive difference?

Within the Elementary School, action is nurtured within the school day, often as outcomes from the curriculum. Students are encouraged to take action as a result of their learning

through the Action Cycle (Choose – Act - Reflect). Students initiate ideas to make a positive difference to themselves, others or the environment. At DISV, we believe that action is defined as 'taking a responsible step towards improvement'. This can be demonstrated in a variety of ways by doing, feeling, thinking, having, saying or simply being different and making a positive difference.

Forms of action include:

- **Participation:** contributing as an individual or group *(e.g. taking care of new students)*
- **Advocacy:** taking action to support social, environmental or political change *(e.g. sharing ideas at Assembly about climate change)*
- **Social justice:** taking action for positive change relating to human rights, equality and equity *(e.g. raising awareness about rights of the child around the world)*
- **Social entrepreneurship:** innovative, resourceful and sustainable social change *(e.g. organizing and running a bake sale to raise funds for a chosen cause)*
- **Lifestyle choices:** making positive lifestyle choices in response to learning *(e.g. starting a Bring Your Own Water Bottle campaign to reduce plastic use in school)*

Exhibition: How do we celebrate the PYP learning journey?

In the final year of the IB PYP, students participate in a culminating project known as the Exhibition. The Exhibition is a celebration of all of the knowledge, skills and attributes that Grade 5 students have developed during their time in the Elementary School. It is an opportunity for students to collaborate with peers across the grade level and inquire into something that they are deeply curious and passionate about. Students are required to engage in a collaborative, transdisciplinary inquiry process that involves them identifying, investigating and offering solutions to real-life issues or problems. Student agency is central to this process; the students must develop their own central idea, which must be of sufficient scope and significance to provoke detailed investigation by all students.

Students are guided through the process by the Grade 5 teaching team and work within their designated exhibition group through the stages of the inquiry cycle. Each exhibition group is also assigned a mentor: a member of staff from our school community who volunteers to meet with students each week to support them in the inquiry process, facilitate discussion and guide them in their collaboration and weekly planning. The Exhibition inquiry process will run throughout the year as students develop the Approaches to Learning target skills in each unit and apply them to their own Exhibition topics. At the end of the year the students put on an Exhibition event where they showcase their learning and present their findings and action to the school community. The Exhibition process is truly an engaging learning experience for everyone involved and is a wonderful celebration of our collaborative inquiry-driven approach to learning.

Learning and Teaching

Transdisciplinary Learning

The most significant and distinctive feature of the IB Primary Years Programme is the six transdisciplinary themes. These themes are about issues that have meaning for, and are important to, all of us. They offer a balance between learning about or through the subject areas, and learning beyond them. The six themes of global significance create a transdisciplinary framework that allows students to "step up" beyond the confines of learning within subject areas. All students, with the exception of students aged 3 to 6, who engage explicitly with four of the themes each year, address each theme each year. The themes also provide the opportunity to incorporate local and global issues into the curriculum. They are:

Who we are:

An inquiry into the nature of the self; beliefs and values; personal, physical, mental, social and spiritual health; human relationships including families, friends, communities, and cultures; rights and responsibilities; and what it means to be human.

Where we are in time and place:

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

How we express ourselves:

An inquiry into the ways in which we discover and express ideas, feelings, nature, culture, beliefs and values; the ways in which we reflect on, extend and enjoy our creativity; our appreciation of the aesthetic.

How the world works:

An inquiry into the natural world and its laws; the interaction between the natural world (physical and biological) and human societies; how humans use their understanding of

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

How we organise ourselves:

An inquiry into the interconnectedness of human-made systems and communities; the structure and function of organizations; societal decision-making; economic activities and their impact on humankind and the environment.

Sharing the planet:

An inquiry into rights and responsibilities in the struggle to share finite resources with other people and with other living things; communities and the relationships within and between them; access to equal opportunities; peace and conflict resolution.

The six transdisciplinary themes help teachers to develop units of inquiry, which are in-depth investigations into important ideas that require a high level of involvement on the part of the students. These inquiries are substantial, in-depth and usually last for several weeks. Students discover that a unit of inquiry will involve them in exploration of an important idea, and that the teacher will be collecting evidence of how well they understand that idea. They will expect to be able to work in a variety of ways, including on their own and in groups, to allow them to learn to their best advantage.

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

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

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

Throughout their learning in the Elementary School, students acquire and apply a set of skills, which are valuable not only for the learning that goes on within a classroom but also for life outside school. These skills enable students to transfer knowledge learned in one area of the curriculum to another. The five sets of transdisciplinary skills we particularly focus upon and seek to develop with our students are:

- **Social skills:** Developing positive interpersonal relationships and collaboration skills. Developing social-emotional intelligence and intrapersonal skills.

- **Research skills:** Developing information-literacy and media-literacy skills. Understanding the ethical use of media and information.

- **Thinking skills:** Developing critical-thinking and creative-thinking skills. Transferring skills from familiar to unfamiliar problems. Learning to evaluate and developing appreciation of how we learn (reflective and metacognitive skills)

- **Communication skills:** Developing literacy skills (oral, written and visual), ICT skills and exchanging-information skills.

- **Self-management skills:** Developing organization skills and awareness about states of mind and states of body.

Inquiry: How will our students develop their understanding?

The PYP encourages students to be actively involved in their own learning and to take responsibility for that learning. Inquiry is the process that moves the student to a deeper level of understanding. It involves the synthesis, analysis and manipulation of knowledge, whether through play, project-based learning or more formally structured learning. Inquiry can take many forms, including:

- Exploring, wondering and questioning
- Making and testing theories
- Making connections between previous learning and current learning
- Researching and seeking information
- Collecting data and reporting findings
- Taking and defending a position
- Solving problems in a variety of ways
- Deepening understanding through the application of conceptual lenses

Purposeful, structured inquiry is a powerful vehicle for learning that promotes meaning and understanding, and challenges students to engage with significant ideas.

Concepts: What do we want students to understand?

The PYP provides a framework for the curriculum that includes key concepts. These are used to support and structure the inquiries by providing different lenses for considering knowledge. The exploration of concepts leads to a deeper understanding and encourages higher-order thinking.

The concepts are:

- **Form**: What is it like?
- **Function**: How does it work?
- **Causation**: Why is it as it is?
- **Change**: How is it transforming?
- **Connection:** How is it linked to other things?
- **Perspective:** What are the points of view?
- **Responsibility:** What are our obligations?

Assessment: How do we know what our students understand?

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

Assessment at DISV:

- Is an integral part of teaching and learning
- Reflects a belief that every student can learn and grow
- Involves students in setting learning goals
- Provides feedback that helps students visualize their progress and understand the next steps in learning
- Involves students, teachers and parents in reflecting on learning progress

What we assess

DISV Elementary uses the benchmarks for the AERO Standards to support the PYP curriculum framework. The AERO Standards provide benchmarks for key age-related learning objectives that help students, teachers and parents understand the standards they are aiming for. These support assessment of learning and support teachers and students as they develop next steps for learning.

How we assess

Teachers select assessment strategies and design assessments to reflect the particular learning outcomes. Within a unit of inquiry, assessment will reflect the central idea and lines of inquiry, underpinned by the related grade-level AERO Standard benchmarks. Teachers employ a range of strategies for assessing student work that are differentiated to take into account the diverse ways students learn.

Formative assessment is about the process of learning. It can be any activity that provides feedback to teachers and students about learning, and can be used to inform differentiation, correct misconceptions and provide guidance for the learning direction. This may be in the form of a conversation, written feedback on class work, an exit ticket or quiz, among others.

Summative assessment is about the product of learning. Summative assessment tasks take place at the end of a unit of inquiry and should reflect the learning that has taken place. They are a snapshot of student understanding at that time. End-of-unit summative assessment tasks are designed to reflect the learning outcomes, key concepts and approaches to learning for the given unit. Summative assessment tasks may include individual, partner or group projects, oral or written presentations, or oral or written tests.

Assessment is integral to the whole learning process and all assessment activities are designed to help students feel positive about their learning, as well as help them understand where they are and where they need to go next. The PYP emphasizes the importance of both teacher assessment and student self-assessment and reflection.

External assessment

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

Portfolios

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

Language

DISV Elementary students come from diverse backgrounds and experience the world in different ways. The IB PYP curriculum framework provides an opportunity to support student agency and affirm cultural identity through language. Language development is an interplay between:

- Language learning
- Learning *through* language
- Learning *about* language

The Elementary School fosters a positive culture of language learning through multiliteracies (developing multiple ways to access and make meaning, including digital literacy), multilingualism (developing competency in more than one language) and translanguaging (flexibly drawing on known language skills to support communication in another). Further information about language learning can be found on page 16.

The Learning Community

Community of Learners

As an inclusive school, we recognise and value the diverse perspectives, experiences, cultures and learning styles of the DISV community of learners. We encourage all members to contribute to the learning community: through collaborative learning and teaching, involvement in whole-school and community events, and action within and beyond our school community.

International mindedness

International-mindedness is integral to the IB philosophy. In the Elementary School, this is developed through a commitment to fostering action and agency, supporting language development, embodying the learner profile attributes and recognising the shared responsibilities of the learning community.

Leadership

Within the DISV learning community, everyone is seen as a leader. Shared leadership fosters a collective sense of ownership of and responsibility for the school. With the enhanced focus on agency, students are encouraged to adopt formal and informal leadership roles within the DISV learning community. Student leadership capacity is developed by encouraging student voice, choice and ownership. This is nurtured through student agency and action; students are encouraged to take action to make a positive difference in the school.

Collaboration

Collaboration is a distinguishing feature of transdisciplinary learning in the Primary Years Programme, involving all members of the learning community: teachers, students, families, experts and outside organisations. Students are valued participants of the collaborative learning teams. They demonstrate agency and their capacity to take action for their own learning by collaborating with teachers and other students. Collaborative learning allows students to consider others' perspectives as well as sharing their own cultural identity, unique experiences and learning styles.

Learning environments

Teachers and students in the Elementary School work together to co-construct learning spaces that are vibrant, inviting, and support optimal learning. These foster an environment of inquiry, collaboration and well-being by encouraging student agency and

developing awareness of how students learn effectively. We take advantage of outdoor learning environments through close proximity to the Prater and educational visits within the city.

Technology

We recognise that today's students develop and grow as digital natives in a technology rich environment. The Enhanced PYP provides opportunities for exploring different learning technologies: both learning *about* technology and learning *through* technology.

SUBJECT AREAS

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

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

Language (English):

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

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

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

Language (German):

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

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

Mathematics:

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

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

Mathematics is taught both within the Programme of Inquiry, where they can be authentically incorporated into units of inquiry, or discretely. For example, in a unit on 'Construction & Structures', students would spend time looking at angles and 3D shapes. In another unit exploring pollution, students might collect and analyse data on pollution within the local area and make different types of graphs to display this information. Numeracy concepts may be taught largely separate from the unit of inquiry with cross-curricular links being made when problem solving, to support the transfer and application of knowledge in authentic contexts.

Social Studies:

The subject Social Studies is essentially about people:

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

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

Science:

Science is the exploration of the natural, physical and material worlds. Students use inquiry to investigate and understand the world around them. Science learning in the Elementary School uses the Next Generation Science Standards as benchmarks for teaching and learning. It is explored through the units of inquiry or as a standalone subject where appropriate. Students will experience what it is to think and act like a scientist. Scientific inquiry is split into four main strands.

Physical Sciences: The study of the origins, properties and uses of natural and human-made solids, liquids and gases; the study of energy, its origins and transfer, and its effects.

Life Sciences: The study of humans and other animals, plants, and the environment and the interactions between them.

Earth and Space Sciences: The study of the planet Earth and its relationship to the universe.

Engineering, Technology and Applications: The study of scientific methodology and application of scientific thinking to solve problems.

Personal, Social and Physical Education (PSPE):

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

The Arts:

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

Information Communication Technology (ICT):

We recognise that today's students develop and grow as digital natives in a technology rich environment, so ICT at DISV is not viewed as a discrete subject area. It is embedded and integrated in all areas of the curriculum and is seen as a tool to enhance and extend students' learning. Grade 2 students receive a log-in and school email and are taught one hour per week as a stand-alone class in addition to the integrated technology in class.

Danube International School Vienna

Josef Gall Gasse 2, 1020, Vienna
Tel: +43 (1) 720 31 10
Fax: +43 (1) 720 31 10 40
registrar@danubeschool.com
www.danubeschool.com