

OUR MIDDLE YEARS PROGRAMME

We strongly believe our International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme (MYP) provides the education students aged between 11 and 16 need at this stage of their life. One that is holistic and engaging, and relevant to the personal, local and global issues that affect and concern them.

Our MYP curriculum also helps students to ask challenging questions, learn how to learn, establish a strong sense of their own identity and culture, and develop their ability to communicate with and understand people from other countries and cultures. Importantly, it also builds upon the knowledge, skills and attitudes acquired through our Primary Years Programme; and it prepares students for the academic challenges of our Diploma Programme.

Overall, our MYP Programme is organised around the rigorous and thorough study of eight traditional subject areas, as well as participation in extra-curricular activities and community work. These eight subject areas are:

- Language and Literature (English or another mother tongue)
- Language Acquisition (French or Spanish)
- Individuals and Societies
- Sciences
- Mathematics
- Arts
- Physical and Health Education
- Design

You can find out more about these subject areas in our subject guides section, which starts on page 22.

THE COMMUNITY PROJECT FOR GRADE 8 STUDENTS

The Community Project is an important piece of work for students aged 13 and 14 which takes place over a significant period of the school year.

The project gives students an opportunity to understand the needs of various communities and use what they've learnt in class to have a practical, positive impact on people's lives. Importantly, the Community Project develops skills such as decision making, problem solving and effective communication, and helps students to acquire in-depth knowledge of their chosen subject.

SERVICE AS ACTION

We place a strong emphasis on community and supporting charities through the Service as Action (SA) programme, part of the MYP curriculum, as well as our extra-curricular activities. These help students to gain a better understanding of the needs of others and make a difference in the world.

MYP GLOBAL CONTEXTS

Another important aspect of our Middle Years Programme is that our teachers deliver the curriculum through the MYP Global Contexts. These contexts help students approach subjects holistically and encourage them to see the links and cross over between different subjects.

Identities and relationships

- Who am I? Who are we? Students explore identity; beliefs and values; personal, physical, mental, social and spiritual health; human relationships including families, friends, communities and cultures; what it means to be human.

Orientation in space and time

- What is the meaning of 'where' and 'when'? Students explore personal histories; homes and journeys; turning points in humankind; discoveries; explorations and migrations of humankind; the relationships between, and the interconnectedness of, individuals and civilizations, from personal, local and global perspectives.

Personal and cultural expression

- What is the nature and purpose of creative expression? Students explore 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.

Scientific and technical innovation

- How do we understand the worlds in which we live? Students explore the natural world and its laws; the interaction between people and the natural world; how humans use their understanding of scientific principles; the impact of scientific and technological advances on communities and environments; the impact of environments on human activity; how humans adapt environments to their needs.

Globalisation and sustainability

- How is everything connected? Students explore the interconnectedness of human-made systems and communities; the relationship between local and global processes; how local experiences mediate the global; reflect on the opportunities and tensions provided by world-interconnectedness; the impact of decision-making on humankind and the environment.

Fairness and development

- What are the consequences of our common humanity? Students explore rights and responsibilities; the relationship between communities; sharing finite resources with other people and with other living things; access to equal opportunities; peace and conflict resolution.

ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING

At the end of term one, every student's 'approach to learning' is reported on by each of their teachers, who assess the student's skills, behaviour and attitude in class. Students use this information to make targets for themselves to improve their own learning style and overall achievement in each subject area. Parents also have the opportunity to discuss a student's progress at two parent / student / teacher conferences held during the year.

At the end of each school year, we also provide our students with an IB MYP summative grade for attainment in each of the eight subject areas. These grades range from 7 for excellent / outstanding to 1 for very poor.

In Grade 10, students must submit a mandatory Personal Project (see left) which they work on throughout the final MYP year. This is moderated and assessed by the IB and awarded an attainment grade of 1 to 7.

OUR SCHOOL DAY

Our school day starts with registration at 8.40 and finishes at 15.30, apart from Wednesdays when the school day finishes at 15.15. Students have a 50 minute lunch break (55 minutes on Wednesdays) at 11.50.

We operate on a two-week timetable. Over the course of two weeks, each lesson meets 5 times. Lessons run for 80 minutes except for Wednesdays when they run for 50 minutes. ECAs take place during lunch and after school.

Our MYP students do not have to wear a school uniform, and no school bells are sounded during the day. This aligns with our liberal ethos and belief that students should be encouraged to be independent and express their individuality.

“Since going to Southbank, I've learnt from so many different people. All my friends are from so many different countries. I've learnt about their cultures, their backgrounds, and everything about them.”

Cambron, Grade 9 student

INSIDE AN MYP CLASSROOM

Every one of our classrooms is a genuine melting pot of cultures and languages, which truly helps our students to broaden their minds and see themselves as a global citizen. Our classrooms are also vibrant, stimulating environments that nurture exploration and discovery. Without doubt, this creates independent individuals who are confident and curious learners, ready to fulfil their potential throughout their lives.



“The small class size gives you an opportunity to learn more because the teachers can concentrate on you, and help you out in a personal way.”

Luka, Grade 8 student

1 Our one to one digital device programme helps to develop the information literacy and research skills of our MYP students.

2 Our MYP curriculum helps to increase the self-esteem of our students so they are confident about sharing their own views.

3 We place great importance on our students learning to collaborate effectively and listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.



“The teamwork between the teachers and students makes for a fantastic experience for the student and their family.”

Jacqui, parent of an MYP student



IBELIEVE

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MIDDLE YEARS PROGRAMME SUBJECT GUIDES

LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

Our Language and Literature course equips students with linguistic, analytical and communicative skills that help them to develop interdisciplinary understanding. Students develop skills in six domains – listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing and presenting – both independently and with others.

The course also includes a balanced study of genres and literary texts, including a world literature component. Students' interactions with texts generate moral, social, economic, political, cultural and environmental insights. Through their studies, students also learn how to form opinions, make decisions and engage in ethical reasoning.

LANGUAGE ACQUISITION (French or Spanish)

This course aims to meet the needs of students of mixed ability and varied backgrounds. Through the study of a new language, students develop the skills which are fundamental to the language learning process: speaking, listening, reading and writing.

The curriculum encourages students' curiosity, interest and enjoyment in a foreign language and provides them with sophisticated communication skills. For the native or near-native student who needs a greater challenge, the course aims to reinforce balanced bilingualism as a long-term goal.

Language and literature are studied and assessed through a variety of oral and written work. Creativity and critical skills are also encouraged. This involves the production of creative writing tasks and longer analytical essays of around 500–1,000 words.

“I think I've become more mature, more independent, more worldly, and more engaged with learning”

Sofia, Grade 8 student



INDIVIDUALS AND SOCIETIES

Our Individuals and Societies course incorporates disciplines traditionally studied under humanities and social sciences. This subject group encourages students to respect and understand the world around them, and equips them with the necessary skills to inquire into historical, geographical, political, social, economic, and cultural factors that affect individuals, societies and environments.

The study of individuals and societies helps students to appreciate critically the diversity of human culture, attitudes and beliefs. Courses in this subject group are important for helping students to recognise that both content and methodology can be debatable and controversial, and for practising the tolerance of uncertainty.

SCIENCES

With inquiry at its core, our MYP Sciences course aims to guide students to independently and collaboratively investigate issues through research, observation and experimentation. Importantly, its curriculum explores the connections between science and everyday life. As they investigate real examples of science applications, students discover the tensions and dependencies between science and morality, ethics, culture, economics, politics and the environment.

Scientific inquiry fosters critical and creative thinking about research and design, as well as the identification of assumptions and alternative explanations. Students learn to appreciate and respect the ideas of others, gain good ethical-reasoning skills and further develop their sense of responsibility as members of local and global communities.

Students study an integrated science programme in the Lower Seniors, with more specialised options from Grade 10.



ARTS

In Grades 6–8, our students separately study Drama, Visual Arts and Music for one term of each academic year. Then, in Grades 9 and 10, they may choose a specialised arts course.

Drama

Students gain an understanding of drama and theatre in contemporary society, throughout history and the world. They have the opportunity to extend their own dramatic and presentational skills, as well as develop skills in the sourcing or design and construction of sets, costumes, props, and in the technical areas of lighting and sound production.

As well as developing individual skills, the study of Drama gives students extensive practice at working cooperatively in an ensemble. Because of its interactive nature and its culmination in performance, Drama also helps students develop eloquence in communication and social and physical confidence.

Visual Arts

The study of Visual Arts allows students to explore, learn and express themselves visually, orally, kinaesthetically and through writing. Students have opportunities for both independent and cooperative activity. They are encouraged to research, discuss, solve problems and create. As well as developing subject specific skills in each area through the creative cycle of planning, creating and evaluating, students develop their awareness of the arts in contemporary society and in different times and places.

Music

Our music course provides students with lots of hands-on opportunities to compose, produce and perform their own work, either can individually or in small groups. This work can involve their use of their voice, instruments or music technology.

The course also helps to build up a strong understanding of musical theory and techniques. This includes students engaging in critical listening and developing a strong awareness of the different cultural, historical and social contexts from which music emerges.

MATHEMATICS

Our MYP Mathematics course focuses on four branches of mathematical study: number, algebra, geometry and trigonometry, and statistics and probability.

We believe the study of mathematics is a fundamental part of a balanced education. It promotes a powerful universal language, analytical reasoning and problem-solving skills that contribute to the development of logical, abstract and critical thinking. In line with this, our Mathematics course promotes both

inquiry and application, helping students to develop problem-solving techniques that transcend the discipline and are useful in the world outside our school.

This course is also tailored to the needs of students and seeks to intrigue and motivate them to want to learn its principles. The curriculum also outlines authentic examples of how mathematics is useful and relevant to the lives of students and encourages them to apply the discipline to new situations.

PHYSICAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

Students studying our Physical and Health Education course explore a variety of concepts that help foster an awareness of physical development and health perspectives, as well as positive social interaction. Physical activity and health are of central importance to human identity and global communities, creating meaningful connections among people, nations, cultures and the natural world.

Through our Physical and Health Education programme, students

learn to appreciate and respect the ideas of others, and develop effective collaboration and communication skills. This subject area also offers many opportunities to build positive interpersonal relationships that can help students to develop a sense of social responsibility and intercultural understanding.

Activities which have previously featured in Physical and Health Education classes include football (soccer), basketball, cross country running, handball, athletics, swimming, volleyball and dance.



DESIGN

Design, and the resultant development of new technologies, has given rise to profound changes in society, transforming how we access and process information, adapt our environment, communicate with others, solve problems, work and live. As a result, our MYP Design course challenges students to apply practical and creative-thinking skills to solve design problems; encourages students to explore the role of design in historical and contemporary contexts; and raises students' awareness of their responsibilities when making design decisions and taking action.

At the heart of the course are the disciplines of inquiry and problem solving. To support the development of these disciplines, students use the design cycle as a tool. It provides them with the methodology to structure their inquiry and analyse problems; develop feasible solutions; create solutions; and test and evaluate solutions. These solutions could be a model, prototype, product or system created and developed by students.

