

Curriculum Policy

Abstract

Southbank International School's curriculum reflects its mission statement, from which its culture and ethos are generated. The school is committed to a curriculum which is broad and balanced, as well as rigorous and demanding – but at the same time accessible to all students admitted to the school. We aim to ensure that all students fulfil their academic potential as well as provide for their spiritual, social, moral, cultural, physical and creative development. Through their experience of the curriculum we hope that all our students commit themselves to the philosophical values of the IB, and become 'life-long learners'.

The School's curriculum aims to:

- Cater for the needs of individual students whom it admits to the school, whatever their gender, ethnic, cultural, religious or social background, or academic ability
- Ensure that academic rigour is maintained
- Provide academic challenges and intellectual stimulation for all students, of whatever ability.
- Instill in students the value of academic study as a valuable end in itself, as well as a means to career success
- Promote doubt as an intellectual strength, not weakness
- Facilitate students' acquisition of knowledge, understanding of concepts, and development of skills and attitudes
- Help students develop intellectually, emotionally, socially, physically, morally and aesthetically
- Help students to become independent, responsible, useful, inquisitive, confident and considerate members of the community
- Provide opportunities for service to the local and wider community
- Create and maintain an exciting and stimulating learning environment
- Ensure students' education has continuity and appropriate progression so they remain challenged and stimulated
- Provide breadth and balance, as reflected in the International Baccalaureate (IB) programmes, for all students aged 3 -18
- Build literacy, numeracy and information technology skills necessary for students to be successful in their future academic careers
- Recognise the crucial role which parents play in their children's education, and encourage parental involvement in the educational process
- Treat students in a dignified way, with the help of the IB learner profile and philosophy
- Build on students' prior experiences, skills, knowledge and understanding
- Ensure students experience and demonstrate continuous progress and achievement

Through the curriculum, all students should:

- Learn to be adaptable, solve problems in a variety of situations, and work independently as well as members of a team
- Develop the ability to make reasoned judgments and choices, based on interpretation and evaluation of relevant information from a variety of sources
- Be enthusiastic and eager to learn
- Develop a set of moral values, such as honesty, integrity, sincerity and personal responsibility
- Learn to become responsible for their own actions
- Care for and take pride in the school and communities of which they are a part
- Develop tolerance, respect and appreciation of the feelings and capabilities of others
- Develop non-discriminatory attitudes
- Know how to think and solve problems mathematically, using concepts – among others - of number, measurement, shape and space
- Be able to listen and read and communicate accurately and appropriately through speech and writing, for a variety of purposes
- Develop sound scientific knowledge and an enquiring mind in their approach to scientific problems
- Be able to solve problems using technological skills
- Be capable of communicating their knowledge and feelings through various art forms including art/craft, music, drama, and acquire appropriate techniques to enable them to develop their inventiveness and creativity
- Acquire knowledge of geography, history and society, and the skills associated with these subjects, at local, national and international levels
- Acquire knowledge of the major world religions
- Develop agility and co-ordination in and through physical movement, and personal team skills through participation in sport
- Know the basic principles of health, hygiene and safety, and how to apply them
- Be prepared for the challenges and opportunities of life after school, in the context of further education as well as longer term career opportunities, and in their wider existences.

Southbank aims to secure these objectives by providing a full time education for children between the ages of 4 and 18, with part-time or full-time classes for children of 3 to 4 years old (EC3). The school publishes programmes of teaching and learning based on the expectations laid down by the International Baccalaureate. To that end, it provides a full programme of professional development for teachers so they are qualified, prepared and able to deliver the curriculum in the most effective manner.

Equality and Diversity: Curriculum Principles

All children will be respected and their individuality and potential recognised, valued and nurtured.

Activities and the use of play equipment offer children opportunities to develop free from prejudice and discrimination, and encouraged to enjoy and learn from them equally.

Our aim is to show respectful awareness of all major events in the lives of children within our school and in society as a whole.

Appropriate opportunities will be given to children to explore, acknowledge and value similarities and differences between themselves and others.

We will provide positive opportunities for disabled students so that we treat them as favourably as non-disabled students, where necessary making reasonable adjustments to put them on a level footing with students without disabilities.

We will carry out accessibility planning aimed at increasing the extent to which disabled students can participate in the curriculum, improving the physical environment to enable disabled students to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided, and improve the availability of information to disabled students.

The IB Primary Years Programme

The IB Primary Years Programme is followed from Early Childhood (3-5 years) to Grade 5 (10-11 years old).

Organisation of the curriculum

Early Childhood (3-5 years) students learn through four units of inquiry throughout each school year. Students study the different disciplines of the curriculum including language, mathematics, social studies, science, PSPEE, art and music. These disciplines may be integrated into units of inquiry or taught as stand alone subjects. Students in Early Childhood attend music and PE lessons.

In the Early Childhood children explore, investigate and play through a balance of child and adult-initiated activities. The classroom environment is set up so that the students may move freely around defined areas both in and out of doors for reading, writing, art, construction, imaginative play, science, and mathematics. There is a balance between activities that the teacher chooses for the student and opportunities for student initiated learning in a structured environment

There is an assessment framework for Early Childhood, which outlines the assessment practices in line with PYP guidelines.

During each year of school, students in Kindergarten (5-6 years) to Grade 5 (10-11 years) learn through different units of inquiry and spend approximately six weeks on each unit. Students from Kindergarten to Grade 5 also attend music, PE, Spanish, art, ICT and library lessons.

Each unit of inquiry includes opportunities for students to develop all five of the following essential elements: knowledge, skills, concepts, attitudes, and action. Units are integrated or may be subject specific where appropriate.

In Grade 5 students apply their skills, knowledge and understanding in a culminating unit of work known as the PYP Exhibition. It is an 8-10 week in-depth collaborative inquiry. Working in groups, the students investigate a real-life issue that is pertinent to them with the purpose of creating an action plan to make a difference.

A wide range of field trips, residential courses, in school workshops and extracurricular activities supplements and enriches the curriculum. We use London as a classroom to extend students' understanding of their host country and to broaden their understanding of British values, culture and institutions.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students is embedded in the curriculum in units planned, through the use of the 10 IB Learner Profile attributes: inquirers, thinkers, communicators, risk-takers, and to be knowledgeable, principled, caring, open-minded, balanced and reflective.

Curriculum development

Ongoing curriculum review is an integral part of the programme with staff reflection after each unit taught, which informs future planning. An annual programme of inquiry review involves all staff in reviewing the progression and cohesion of units taught across the whole primary. Regular 5 year evaluations by the IB involve the entire faculty in reflecting on existing curricular delivery and recommending areas for development. The curriculum is also reviewed in peer groups across the two Southbank primary schools.

The IB Middle Years Programme

The IB Middle Years Programme is followed by all students in Grades 6 through 10.

Organisation of the curriculum

In Grade 6 through Grade 10, students follow courses in the eight subject groups of the programme: Language A (English), Language B (Spanish or French with the option of following a Mother Tongue language instead in Grade 10), Individuals & Societies, Science, Mathematics, Design, Physical & Health Education and the Arts. From Grade 9 students choose one specific subject in the Arts to follow. There is also an Extended Mathematics course from Grade 9.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students is embedded in the curriculum in units planned around the areas of interaction: Health and Social Education, Communities and Service, and Human Ingenuity. In addition, students have a weekly lesson with their advisors where topics in personal, health and social education are explored along with topical issues of concern to the group.

A wide range of field trips, residential courses, in school workshops and extracurricular activities supplements and enriches the subject-based curriculum.

Curriculum development

Ongoing curriculum review and development takes place both in Grade level meetings to ensure coherence of learning across the year and in faculty and departmental teams to ensure progression along the continuum. The MYP curriculum builds on and develops the PYP curriculum. It is developed around 6 interdisciplinary themes, the global contexts, and at least one interdisciplinary unit of work forms part of the curriculum in each Grade. Approaches to Learning are taught explicitly in each unit of work. An Approach to Learning framework sets out the expectations at each Grade level.

The IB Diploma Programme

The IB Diploma Programme or IB Courses Programme is followed by all students in Grades 11 and 12.

Organisation of the curriculum

A choice of subjects in each of the IB subject groups is offered:

- Studies in Language and Literature: English, Spanish and French are offered as part of the curriculum, with additional languages available on an individual basis
- Language Acquisition: English, French and Spanish are offered as part of the curriculum, with additional languages available on an individual basis.
- Individuals and Societies: Economics, Geography, Global Politics, History, Psychology (online), Business Management (online): Sciences: Biology, Chemistry, Design Technology, Environmental Systems and Societies, Physics, Sports Exercise and Health Science
- Mathematics: Applications & Interpretation, Analysis and Approaches
- The Arts: Visual arts, Theatre, Film and Music

Placement in appropriate courses is done through a process of consultation, with report grades and placement test results considered along with teacher recommendations.

The aims of the curriculum are achieved through the Theory of Knowledge course, the completion of the Extended Essay and the programme of Creativity, Activity and Service (CAS) activities, as well as through the academic rigour of the subject courses. A wide range of field trips, residential courses, in school workshops and extracurricular activities supplements and enriches the curriculum. Weekly personal and social education lessons address spiritual, moral, social and cultural topics as well as issues of health and well-being.

Curriculum development

The subject curriculum is regularly reviewed within faculties to ensure that it is up to date and effectively delivered. The senior leaders and CAS coordinator contribute to the development of extracurricular and service activities. Heads of Faculty meet together to address programme-wide development such as academic honesty, information literacy and research skills.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Equality and Diversity Policy and the Teaching and Learning Policy.

Policy reviewed September 2024