



# BILINGUAL SCHOOL OF MONZA

## PARENT HANDBOOK 2015-2017

### Sharing Languages and Cultures Opening Minds



Welcome to the Bilingual School of Monza. We hope that you will find the information in this pack helpful.

Please feel free to contact the office if you have any further questions, via email: [info@bilingualschool.it](mailto:info@bilingualschool.it) or by telephone: 039 2312282

## Table of contents

School Director's Welcome .....	4
Educational philosophy .....	5
Learning Principles .....	5
School Goals.....	6
Educational Goals.....	6
How to find us .....	6
School Status and Organization .....	6
School Population .....	6
School staff .....	6
Grade Level structure and organization.....	6
Lateness .....	7
School office hours .....	8
The school day for the Elementary .....	8
Ipads .....	9
Mid-morning and Afternoon Snacks.....	10
The school calendar: Special Events and Celebrations.....	10
Facilities .....	10
The Library- Media centre.....	10
The Atelier.....	11
The School Curriculum .....	12
IBO History.....	13
The IBO Mission Statement .....	13
IBO Information For parents .....	14
What is so special about The IB programmes? .....	14
The delivery of the curriculum in two languages.....	15
Why an International Curriculum?.....	15
Third Language Instruction and Language Awareness Courses .....	15
Third Language Instruction .....	15
Aims of the course .....	16
Language Awareness .....	16
Course aims.....	16
Course Structure.....	16
Course syllabus .....	17
Assessment .....	17

Portfolios and Report Cards.....	17
Support services and Enrichment Activities .....	18
Classroom assistants and classroom support .....	18
School Psychologist.....	18
Pre and After School Care Service .....	18
After School Clubs .....	18
Students Teacher and University undergraduates.....	19
Procedures.....	19
Class size and structure.....	20
Admissions by age.....	20
Elementary and Middle School Admissions by age .....	20
Children with Difficulties – School Behaviour Policy .....	21
The School/Teacher/Parent/Child Agreement .....	23
Homework policy.....	23
Accidents and Illness .....	24
Insurance .....	25
Birthday Parties.....	26
Parents as Partners .....	26
Meetings with Teachers/ Parent Education program as per school calendar .....	26
Newsletters .....	27
Appendix 1 .....	28

## School Director's Welcome

Mrs. Eugenia Papadaki

"Children best learn in an emotionally secure environment. For learning to take place, including learning a second language as well as learning through a second language, we need to first focus and invest our energies in building trustworthy and caring bonds between adults and children."



"Adults are strong language models for children. Children bond to adults through language. It is important therefore that parents develop and maintain these affective bonds through the constant and consistent use of their mother tongue. Having a strong foundation in and learning to value one's mother tongue will facilitate and accelerate second language learning."

Dear parents,

I would like to extend to you all a very warm welcome to our school and wish you and your children many happy years, drawing on the benefits and learning experiences our Bilingual Program has to offer. This handbook has been designed with the clear objective of being able to offer more information on our school; its organisation, structure, policies and procedures, enabling you to grasp an understanding of our school. The handbook has also been divided into subsections according to the different areas of school life. This document has been produced to help answer possible questions you may have, to serve as a reference when queries arise and assist you to integrate smoothly and gradually into our school community.

Please feel free to raise your questions at any time and seek further clarification as and when required. Both myself and all the staff are more than happy to help and provide guidance when necessary.

I would like to thank you for your interest in our Bilingual School and in the innovative model of education we provide for your child/ren. The Bilingual model of education and the program design we offer is based on valid scientific research and world-wide studies and on an internationally recognised curriculum. Our approach to education does not limit itself to only creating knowledgeable learners, but looks at and caters for the whole child. We aim to develop internationally minded lifelong learners who through their learning experiences will acquire critical and higher order thinking skills, become good communicators in two or more languages and develop a flexible mind and approach to life so that they can appreciate, adapt and perform efficiently within a variety of contexts and situations.

Our school and all the staff create and provide a context for a community of learners, one where we hope you will feel comfortable to become an active participant with your child/ren.

### **School Vision**

We believe that every child has the right to an education which lays the foundation for a world of peace. Bilingual Education provides an academically rigorous educational model which embraces human communication, understanding, empathy and appreciation of diversity. Our school will exemplify the qualities of global citizenship as we prepare children for the demands of an ever-changing world.

### **School Mission**

Play English and the Bilingual School of Monza aim to develop caring, inquiring, and responsible world citizens who are highly competent in both English and Italian. We offer a Dual Language Immersion model of education to both local and international learners. Our approach to teaching and learning promotes critical thinking, intercultural understanding and respect. The school is committed to establishing collaborative and caring learning communities amongst children, teachers and parents. We strive to continually reflect on and assess our practices and progress.

### **Educational philosophy**

Play English and the Bilingual School of Monza offer a Dual Language Immersion model of Education in English and in Italian where young learners can acquire a second language while developing and maintaining their mother tongue.

Our program of studies and model design are based on sound constructivist educational theories and scientific research.

We believe in the values of additive bilingualism and therefore aim to enable our learners develop high levels of both conversational competencies and academic language proficiency in the two school languages.

We believe that children best learn in an emotionally secure and safe environment and as such we place particular importance on establishing caring environments and relationships amongst adults and children.

We consider the child's family as partners in the educational process and as such we encourage them to be active members of our learning community.

We believe that all children have equal rights to the curriculum and as such aim to differentiate our instructional and assessment practices in order to cater for the diversity of students' learning styles, needs and levels of competencies.

Bilingual education lays the foundations for global citizenship and intercultural understanding and through an international programme of studies, it provides students with opportunities for learning which embrace and go beyond local and national significance, leading thus to a better understanding of human life and the world we live in.

### **Learning Principles**

Learning happens when based on prior knowledge and experiences

Learning is active and developmental

Learning is for understanding

Learning needs to be meaningful, relevant, challenging and engaging

Learning requires regular, timely, meaningful, user-friendly feedback

Learning needs to be visible and tangible

Learning needs to be guided by goals and desirable outcomes which are measurable

Learning needs to be reflective and to be reflected upon

Learning is about taking risks, experimenting

Learning needs to be personalized and differentiated

Learning focuses on strengths

Learning is transdisciplinary

Learning is driven by intrinsic motivation

## **School Goals**

Play English and the Bilingual School of Monza aim to:

- provide a model of Bilingual and International Education which is based on sound constructivist educational theories and scientific research.
- create a community of lifelong learners who are caring, inquirers, knowledgeable, thinkers, communicators, reflective, risk-takers, balanced, principled, and open-minded
- provide an educational experience to our learners that best prepares them to become world citizens
- strive for student improved learning and on-going school improvement
- render this model of Education as open and accessible to all sectors of the society
- contribute to the existing evidence on the validity of the model
- raise public awareness on the multiple benefits of Bilingualism and Bilingual Education
- become a pioneer school on local territory and part of the world-wide Bilingual Education Movement
- seek ways for communicating clearly and effectively our vision, mission and goals which will be understood and shared by the whole school community.

## **Educational Goals**

The students will:

- develop their skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing in English and Italian for both academic and social purposes.
- develop socially, emotionally, physically and cognitively in order to succeed in Italian and English settings.
- acquire an understanding and develop appreciation of other cultures, whilst building positive attitudes towards themselves and others.

## **How to find us**

The school is located in Via Confalonieri n. 18, Monza (MB) in a residential area close to the historical centre of town, just a short walk from the Monza Park. The 2000 square metres horse-shoe shaped building hosts our Pre-School, Elementary and Middle school classes.

## **School Status and Organization**

Our school is an IBO-PYP World School and authorised as an International school on Italian territory. We have full membership status of ECIS (European Council of International schools) and the Director is a member of the ECIS Mother Tongue and ESL committee.

## **School Population**

The majority of our children are Italian, with either 1 or both parents being Italian. Approximately 10% of our school population are international, coming from a variety of countries, including USA, Brazil, Serbia, Turkey, Spain, Romania, Korea, and Russia. At the time of updating this guide there were 15 different languages spoken in the school other than English and Italian.

## **School staff**

Our staff come from various corners of the world, including Italy, England, Spain, Greece, New Zealand, Finland, India, Australia, and the USA. Our staff are all qualified teachers and many of them are either bilingual or multilingual.

## **Grade Level structure and organization**

There are two pre-school classes for children aged 3-5 and one class per grade level from Transition to Grade 8. Please refer to our school's Admissions Policy below for more information on admissions by age and size of

classrooms. These classes below correspond to the following classes in the Italian and British school systems while they are aligned with the American school system.

Bilingual School of Monza	Italian System	British System
Pre-school 1	Scuola materna	Nursery school
Pre-school 2	Scuola materna	Reception
Transition	Ultimo anno di materna	Year 1
Grade 1	Prima	Year 2
Grade 2	Seconda	Year 3
Grade 3	Terza	Year 4
Grade 4	Quarta	Year 5
Grade 5	Quinta	Year 6
Grade 6	I media	Year 7
Grade 7	II media	Year 8
Grade 8	III media	Year 9

### School hours and attendance

**Pre-school** arrival time is between 8.45am to 8.55am and pick up at 3.50pm.

In the morning, parents with children in Pre-school must take their children directly to their classrooms. At the end of the day parents will pick up their children directly from the classroom.

**Transition to Grade 5** drop off time is from 8.40am until 8.55am and pick up time at 4.00pm.

Parents with children in Transition to Grade 5 can drop their children off at the school gate from 8.40am onwards where a staff member on duty will meet them. Teachers will call each class into school at 8.55am. At the end of the day teachers will bring the children outside and meet the parents by the entrance gate, where they will hand over each child to the designated adult.

**Grade 6, 7 and 8** drop off time is from 8.30am until 8.40am and pick up at 4.15pm

Parents with children in Grades 6 to 8 can drop their children off at the school gate where a member of staff on duty will meet them from 8.30am onwards and will ask them to wait in the playground with the member of staff on duty. At the end of the day teachers will bring the children outside, where they will hand over each child to the designated adult.

Please ensure that you arrive in school prior to 8.45am/9.00am according to the Grade your child is in. It is essential for all concerned that classes are able to begin on time, with the minimal amount of disruption. Please ensure that you collect your child promptly at the end of the day. It is distressing for children if their parent / carer is consistently late to collect them from school. If you are more than ten minutes late to collect your child, he/she will be taken to **dopo-scuola** in the Early Years section. Please collect your child from there.

Any parent or carer who knows that they will be late to collect children, even by 10 or 15 minutes, must ring the school office and make provision for them to go to **dopo scuola**.

For security reasons, the child may only be picked up by the people identified on the registration form and any changes to such arrangements will only be accepted in writing.

Please phone the school office by 9:00am if you will not be bringing your child to school or if you will be arriving late. If your child is going to be out for more than 2 days please call or email the office.

For safety reasons, once your child has been handed over to you please ensure that he/she remains with you at all times. Children are not allowed to return to the playground and use the play equipment and in case of accidents the school cannot be held liable.

**Lateness** in lessons: students who arrive more than three times a month late to lessons will need to report to the school principal to get permission to enter classrooms. Parents need to be mindful that lateness causes disruption to lessons and this is not fair to other students or to teaching staff.

### School office hours

The school office hours are as follows:

Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday from 8.30 to 9.30 and from 3.30 and 4.30.

Tuesday from 8.00 to 9.30 and from 3.30 to 5.30

### Preschool Daily routine

<b>08.00 - 08.50</b>	<b>Pre-school care</b>
08.45 - 09.00	Welcome time (one teacher on carpet, one teacher at the door welcoming children)
09.00-09.15	Good morning circle time
09.15 - 09.25	Planning Time in small groups
09.25 - 10.15	Work Time *
10.15 - 10.30	Tidy up Time
10.30 - 10.45	Outdoor play
10.45 - 11:05	Recall and Snack Time in small groups
11.05 - 11.35	Small group time
11.35 - 11.45	Prepare for Lunch
<b>11.45 - 12.30</b>	<b>Lunch</b>
12.30 - 14.30	Settling children to sleep Quiet activities for non sleepers / Outdoor play
14.30 - 15.30	Specials(Atelier, Music, PE, Library)
15.30 – 15.45	Snack, story time and get ready for home time
15.50	Home time
<b>16.00 - 17.30</b>	<b>After school care and/or After school clubs</b>

\* During Work Time children carry out activities in the different interest areas, following their interests and plans being supported in their learning and inquiries by their teachers who assume the role of partners in play.

### The school day for the Elementary School Classes is structured as follows:

Lessons are delivered in both English and Italian almost on a daily basis and the daily schedule will include both single subject instruction as well as lessons based on the units of inquiry.

Language, mathematics and Units of Inquiry are both planned and taught by the Italian and English class teachers.

Music and Spanish are taught by specialist teachers who plan with the class teachers using the theme and central idea of the units of inquiry. ICT is integrated into the curriculum as much as possible and as such will be taught by classroom teachers.

## **Ipads**

Ipads are used from Grade 3 to Grade 8 and students are expected to carry those to school on a daily basis. Whenever possible and for specific projects, specialist teachers will work with classroom teachers to support their work in the classroom and serve as an extra resource. Physical Education activities will be linked to the Programme of Inquiry whenever possible and appropriate.

Language is taught everyday, either in English or in Italian.

Mathematics is taught everyday, either in English or in Italian.

Swimming is taught in the first term, once a week.

Please refer to the timetable schedules for more information.

## **The school day for the Middle School Classes is structured as follows:**

The English part of the curriculum (approximately 50%) is delivered by a single multi-subject teacher while the Italian part is taught primarily by subject specialists. During the school day pupils will have lessons in both English and Italian. Students will need to adhere to the school timetable in order to be always prepared for each day's lessons and come to school with the necessary resources and materials.

Double periods of single subjects have been inserted into the daily schedule to guarantee continuity and completion of unit work.

Break times and lunch times are organized separate from the rest of the school but Middle school students will participate whenever appropriate in whole school assemblies and other school events.

## **Organization and structure of break times and outdoor playground activities**

The school timetables will indicate the specific times for morning, lunch time and afternoon breaks for the different sections of the school. A rota system is built into schedules to allow for differentiation in the break times of the different grade levels according to designated areas of the playgrounds and age group of students.

There are always at least two members of staff on break duty.

All children need to have appropriate clothing for outdoor play and are expected to be outside regardless of weather conditions. There is no provision for supervision indoors at these times.

## **Lunch**

Meals are prepared, in full compliance of HACCP regulations, by an outsourced catering service. Winter and summer menus have been drafted by the ASL (*National Health Service*), with a clear definition of the balanced nutritional value children need for a healthy growth. While ensuring a balanced diet, we have been able to substitute the less popular dishes by other courses or where possible also offer an alternative (eg spelt (farro) puré or warm spelt salad seasoned with olive oil and parmesan cheese). Although we strongly believe that we should carry on encouraging children to try food they do not like, in situations of persistent refusal and in order to avoid "forced fasting", we will be able to offer the following choices as alternatives: fresh cheese, parmesan cheese, ham or bresaola. Children are aware that they have to taste a little of every dish, vegetables included, before refusing it and asking for the alternative. Please rest assured that the menu offered to your children, in addition to being guaranteed in terms of quality of the raw materials used (certificate chain) is strictly in line with the current national health regulations. Please be informed that the supplier uses the following organic ingredients for the preparation of all meals: olive oil, vinegar, tomato sauce, fresh tomatoes and butter. A special menu will be prepared for children with allergies or other special dietary requirements, upon production of a medical certificate. **Please inform the office by 9.15 in case of absence or lateness.** At the end of every month you will receive the amount of the lunch that will be paid through the SEPA.

### **Mid-morning and Afternoon Snacks**

The school will provide seasonal fruit, yogurt, crackers, French toast, cake (twice a month) and water or fruit juices for the two snack periods during the day. Should your child have special dietary requirements please discuss this with the office.

### **The school calendar: Special Events and Celebrations**

The school is a non-denominational institution and as such respects and celebrates all cultural events and festivals.

Please find a list of the events below that the school organises on a yearly basis for all members of the school community. For specific dates please refer to the school calendar.

European Day of Languages in September  
Christmas Bazaar  
Christmas Celebrations and Carol Singing  
Open Days and Open classrooms  
Carnival  
Book Week  
Parent Appreciation Day  
Parent curriculum Coffee morning and nights  
Easter Bonnet Parade and Spring Festival  
Teacher Appreciation Day  
Sports Day  
Summer Fair  
Spring Concert-Barbeque  
Summer Courses

### **Facilities**

The 2000 square metres horse-shoe shaped building hosts our Pre-School, Elementary and Middle school classes.

The facilities include an ICT suite, a library, a gymnasium, a refectory, a music room, an Atelier (art studio) and outdoor playgrounds.

### **The Library- Media centre**

The school library- media centre plays an important role in the whole learning process. The school library is next to the computer lab with internet access and video conferencing facilities. Students and teachers have access to a variety of resources, such as fiction and non-fiction literature, journals, DVDs, and other audio-visual materials. Our vast variety of library books (currently 20,000+ volumes) are accessible to the whole school community. Aside from children's books in both school languages and in some of the minority languages, our library also holds books on various parenting and child development topics as well as on Bilingualism, Bilingual Education and Bilingual development. Parents are welcome to consult or borrow these. There is a full time school librarian who not only takes care of the general organisation and running of the library, but also works closely with the teaching staff and children in supporting the development of units of inquiry.

The Library is open from Monday to Friday from 8.30 to 9.30 and from 15.30 to 16.30.

Every child can access the Library at any moment and can borrow up to a maximum of 5 books for a 2 week period. In order to extend the book loan period the librarian needs to be notified.

Parents are welcome to visit the Library during opening hours and at the end of the school day with their children.

Missing or damaged books while on loan need to be replaced by families, and the librarian will explain what the procedure is. Please, consult the Librarian in case you need any further information at:

library@playenglish.it

## **The Atelier**

The concept of the “Atelier” comes from the famous Reggio Emilia schools where our school has participated in a number of their professional development opportunities. Over the years we have been inspired by their approach to education and have introduced to our learning environment a number of ideas and resources which aspire to the Reggio approach. One of them has been the concept of the “Atelier” and of a specialist teacher, the “atelierista”. The Atelier is a well-structured space, an “art studio” where children meet weekly with the “atelierista” to carry out specific art projects. The purpose of the Atelier is to offer children the space and the opportunity to express their innate creativity as another language of communication. The role of the “atelierista” is to observe and record children’s thinking processes and through a structured system of documentation make their learning visible. This is used for reflecting on children’s stage of development, on their interests and on their approaches and attitudes to learning.

The documentation, which is often in visual form (photographs) is displayed as well as kept in a portfolio and is shared with both the child’s teachers and parents.

## **Below are some of the aims and objectives of the Atelier**

To activate a child’s hands, brain and emotions.

To help a child’s skills and potential emerge.

To cultivate imagination, to strengthen a child’s sense of possibility.

To light up fires and passions.

## **Programme Design and School Curriculum**

The school offers a Dual Language Immersion model which is structured as follows:

Pre School have a language input of 50% English and 50% Italian.

Transition has approximately 80% of their lessons in English and 20% in Italian.

Grade 1 has approximately 70% of their lessons in English and 30% in Italian.

Grade 2 has approximately 70% of their lessons in English and 30% in Italian.

Grade 3 has approximately 70% of their lessons in English and 30% in Italian.

Grade 4 has approximately 60% of their lessons in English and 40% in Italian.

Grade 5 has approximately 60% of their lessons in English and 40% in Italian.

Grades 6 to 8 have approximately 50% of their lessons in English and 50% in Italian.

N.B. These percentages do not include third language or language awareness lessons.

## **Bilingualism and Bilingual Education Overview**

**Bilingualism:** The terms “bilingual” or “bilingualism” tend to often be misused and people have different perceptions of what a bilingual person or a bilingual educational model might be. However it is a fact that today most of the world population is bilingual leaving the monolinguals in the minority. Most scholars of Bilingualism would agree that it is hard to find one single definition of “Bilingualism”, and bilingual people can be classified in a number of categories; e.g. someone who can speak and understand two languages but is unable to read or write them or vice versa; some bilinguals can function in certain domains only in one of their two languages and in other domains only in their other language. Bilingualism can therefore be broadly defined as the ability to use two languages in varying degrees and contexts. The acquisition of a second language, can happen in many different ways, contexts and at different times and it is difficult to say which one would be more effective than the other. When browsing through the literature, the most common second language acquisition definitions one comes across are;

a) simultaneous acquisition( i.e. from birth) and

b) consecutive acquisition (i.e. after the age of three).

The Bilingual model of education we have created promotes and aims to develop bilingualism in the following ways;

We strive for “**additive bilingualism**” which entails the acquisition of a second language while the first one carries on being developed and nurtured within the school context. One of the advantages of additive bilingualism is that by having the child’s primary language as one of the official languages of instruction, there

is an explicit recognition and appreciation of the importance of the **mother tongue** as a key to learning, giving thus the due “institutionalized” support and value to this language which supplements and reinforces what is already happening at home. Research findings have shown that when a child’s mother tongue development takes place only within the boundaries of the family environment, the forms of bilingualism that will result from this will be limited and restricted.

In our school, we strive for a form of bilingualism which does not limit itself in developing competencies only in the areas of interpersonal communication (i.e. verbal skills), but will include the development of competencies in **academic language** and therefore will also encompass the skills of reading and writing (bi-literacy). It is our belief therefore that the provision for bilingual development we offer, will create all rounded bilinguals who will be able to function at high and broad levels of linguistic competencies in both languages.

**Bilingual Education:** Once again, it is important that the term of “Bilingual Education” does not get confused with other forms of “second language instruction” which in some instances may mean that two modern foreign languages are on offer in a monolingual program. Through a simple search in the literature on Bilingual Education, one will come across many different models and program designs. However, whatever model we are looking at, it is important that we ensure there is evidence of sufficient scientific research behind this model. In recent years, the term “Bilingual Education” has become of fashion, and as a result, many programs have sprung up calling themselves “bilingual” but of bilingualism they know very little.

Our Bilingual Education model, apart from having been founded on sound scientific research, and given the composition of our school population, is designed as a dual language immersion model where the instruction of the different curriculum areas take place through the medium of two languages; Italian and English. We have invested time and resources into looking at different types of Bilingual Education across the world, consulting with experts in the field, attending conferences and seminars, bringing overseas and local expertise into the school for staff training and program evaluation. Our Bilingual Education model design is a result of all these efforts. The model design has been explained above and more detailed information on the curriculum can be found in another section of this handbook. In our school brochure and school website, you can read information on who can access this model of education and the multiple advantages one can draw from it. Our staff receives specific training and on-going support in order to be able to fulfill the requirements and meet the criteria for effective program implementation.

It is important for parents to understand that, in our school, all languages and cultures are valued and respected and as such children feel free and encouraged to express themselves in the language they feel most comfortable in. There are no rules about “obliging” the child to communicate in one language rather than the other, but children are encouraged and motivated to use the two languages in the appropriate contexts. Research findings on the effects of Bilingual Education have shown that children who have gone through a bilingual program, will, in both linguistic and academic performance, outperform their monolingual counterparts provided they have had uninterrupted attendance in the program, of a minimum of 4 to a maximum of 7 years. We encourage our parents to be active participants in this learning journey with their children; celebrating the successes when they occur, being patient and confident of the long term positive outcomes. We would not recommend comparisons, or measuring their children’s progress based on their expectations. We would ask parents to refrain from using their children as “show cases” for second language acquisition outside the school environment. We could encourage parents on the other hand to keep well informed on the type of educational choice they have made for their children.

### **The School Curriculum**

The school follows the IBO Primary Years Programme (PYP) in pre-school to Grade 5, while in the Middle school the curriculum is IBO-Middle Years Programme (MYP) inspired.

The IB [HYPERLINK "http://www.ibo.org/pyp/index.cfm"](http://www.ibo.org/pyp/index.cfm) Primary Years Programme (PYP) is designed for pupils aged 3 to 12. It is an inquiry-based programme, which focuses on the total growth of the developing child, touching hearts as well as minds and encompassing social, physical, emotional and cultural needs in addition to academic development.

The IB **Learner Profile** represents the Action component of the curriculum and is incorporated in every aspect of teaching and learning and school life. Please refer to appendix 2

## IBO History

The International Baccalaureate was founded in Geneva, Switzerland in 1968 as a non-profit educational foundation. The three fully developed IB programs(PYP, MYP DP) are today implemented by over 4.000 schools around the world.

## The IBO Mission Statement

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.

## How is the Primary Years Program structured

**Six transdisciplinary themes** of global significance provide the framework for exploration and study. These are:

- who we are
- where we are in place and time
- how we express ourselves
- how the world works
- how we organize ourselves
- sharing the planet.

Teachers are guided by these six transdisciplinary themes as they design units of inquiry that both transcend and articulate conventional subject boundaries.

The programme can be illustrated by a hexagon with the six transdisciplinary themes surrounding six subject areas:

- language
- social studies
- mathematics
- arts
- science and technology
- personal, social and physical education.

The themes and subject areas outlined above form the knowledge element of the programme. Five essential elements—**concepts, knowledge, skills, attitudes, action**—appear at the centre of the circle.



**The five essential elements** listed above are incorporated into this framework, so that students are given the opportunity to:

- gain knowledge that is relevant and of global significance
- develop an understanding of concepts, which allows them to make connections throughout their learning
- acquire transdisciplinary and disciplinary skills
- develop attitudes that will lead to international-mindedness
- take action as a consequence of their learning

The curriculum framework is further structured around three interrelated questions.

- What do we want to learn? *The written curriculum*
- How best will we learn? *The taught curriculum*
- How will we know what we have learned? *The learned curriculum*

The school's delivery of the programme is evaluated by the IB three years after authorization and then every five years.

**Teachers receive training before and after a school becomes authorized to teach the programme.**

Before a school becomes authorized to teach the programme, the principal, coordinator and teachers involved are required to undergo training; either by attending IB workshops or by participating in school-based training organized by the IB.

For more information on the PYP Curriculum you can visit [HYPERLINK "http://www.ibo.org"](http://www.ibo.org) [www.ibo.org](http://www.ibo.org)

**IBO Information For parents:** Parents of current and future IB students are involved in an important decision-making process regarding the education of their child and may be keen to understand the IB programmes as well as the challenges and advantages this may bring.

IB World Schools aim to provide parents with enough detailed information to answer any concerns, and we encourage parents to contact the IB coordinator in our school in order to discuss any doubts or queries they may have.

### **What is so special about The IB programmes?**

IB programmes are recognized around the world and ensure an increased adaptability and mobility for IB students.

The curriculum and pedagogy of [IB programmes](#) focus on international perspectives of learning and teaching, while allowing room for the study and appreciation of the students' home culture and language([www.ibo.org/programmes/index.cfm](http://www.ibo.org/programmes/index.cfm)).

IB World Schools must undergo an exhaustive authorization process in order to offer one or more of the programmes, which includes a study of the school's resources and commitment to the IB.

IB teachers participate in a wide variety of [professional development](#) opportunities to constantly update their knowledge and share their expertise with colleagues around the world.

Many students graduating from the Diploma Programme find that it enhances their opportunities at tertiary institutions. The IB works closely with universities around the world to gain [recognition](#) for IB programmes.

The core components of IB programmes encourage students to participate in creative and service-oriented activities, while at the same time emphasizing the importance of reflection on a personal and academic level.

***NB The above information has been taken by the IBO website and publicity material***

### **The delivery of the curriculum in two languages**

The curriculum in our school is delivered in two languages, in accordance to the percentages of teaching time in each language listed above. There are 2 main teachers assigned to each grade level, one Italian and one English. The two language contexts are kept distinct by a carefully thought out weekly time schedule and by subject allocation. Both teachers teach to the same curriculum, plan in a collaborative manner and with shared learning objectives in mind. Curriculum delivery and progression take place in all areas of learning regardless of what language the subject is taught in. Teachers do not repeat the same lesson in both languages but they do ensure that pupils develop the necessary linguistic skills to express key concepts in both languages. Pupils feel free to use whatever language they are comfortable with when engaging in interactions as they negotiate and construct meaning. The teachers' role, besides being a "language model", is to also monitor language use in the classroom environment and through appropriate strategies to encourage students to use the target language.

Due to the nature of the majority of our student population and bearing in mind the future educational prospects of the majority of our pupils, our school has made every attempt possible to incorporate and align the Italian National Curriculum learning objectives into the main school curriculum. Parents need, however, to be aware that **content** as well as **methods and approaches to teaching and learning** will be different to the traditional Italian school system and be willing to accept that this is part and parcel of the choice they have made when selecting our school for their child.

### **Why an International Curriculum?**

Our school has chosen to introduce an international curriculum in May 2005 as this meets the evolving changes of the school in terms of both student and staff population.

The IB philosophy on education with its sound guiding pedagogical principles is aligned to and supportive of the Bilingual Education pedagogy we are promoting. Besides the IB programs through their curriculum framework offer the flexibility and allow schools to develop their own curriculum by respecting national curriculum requirements and expectations.

The introduction of the IB programs in our school can only reinforce our practices and create a solid foundation for a single and common curriculum to be taught through the medium of two languages. Teachers who come from both Italian and international teaching backgrounds find it easier to develop a common approach to teaching and learning when planning, teaching, assessing and collaborating for a single common curriculum.

The IB programs encourage collaboration at all levels and reinforce the concept of building and nourishing learning communities.

Implementing an international world-wide recognized curriculum and obtaining IB world school status offers many of our families the reassurance of a quality and valid program.

The implementation of an international curriculum offers our students the possibility of transferring, once they leave our school, to different school systems including the Italian state school.

It is our belief therefore that through an international program of studies, our students will develop the competencies to function as well rounded world citizens in a variety of contexts.

Many of our families choose our program because of its uniqueness in combining Bilingual with International education.

### **Are two languages enough? Multilingualism is our goal**

## **Third Language Instruction and Language Awareness Courses**

### **Third Language Instruction**

In Grade 1 a third language is introduced as part of the curriculum and the children have 2 lessons per week. Children have the opportunity to also learn the culture and deepen their understanding about the people and countries where this language is spoken.

### **Aims of the course**

- To offer children from Grade 1 to Grade 8, the opportunity to learn an additional language and its culture.
- To develop basic communication and academic language skills in an additional language.
- To make children aware of the benefits of multilingualism and linguistic diversity of our planet.
- To value other languages and cultures existing in the school and the wider community.
- To raise students linguistic and cultural awareness for life long language learning, better intercultural understanding and interpersonal communication.
- To encourage positive attitudes towards less “common” languages and cultures.
- To empathize with and share the emotions and experiences that learning a new language brings.

### **Course Syllabus**

A course syllabus has been developed for all grade levels. This is based on the PYP/MYP units of study of the school's Program of Inquiry. A more detailed outline of the syllabus can be found in the relevant curriculum guides. Children may be asked to use a text book to support their learning.

### **Language Awareness**

In Transition the children begin a ‘Language Awareness’ course. This entails a four week block of “tasting” learning different languages and cultures and languages are chosen on the following criteria:

- (1) languages spoken by children in the Transition class
- (2) languages spoken by the larger school community

Native speakers are invited to deliver the course and often school parents, speakers of the selected language, are encouraged to participate.

### **Course aims**

- To make children aware of our school's linguistic diversity which they will learn to value as a positive and enriching resource.
- To challenge stereotypes regarding high status and low status languages
- To value and encourage the use of children's mother tongue in and out of school
- To affirm all students identities
- To raise children's awareness of the multiple benefits of multilingualism
- To instil in children a desire for language lifelong learning
- To prepare children for taking on the learning of an additional language as from Grade 1.

### **Course Structure**

The course runs for the whole school year starting in October and ending in June. Students experience a different language learning experience every 4 weeks starting from the languages existing in the classroom

Lesson duration: 1hr 30mins to 2hrs

Interactive, cross-curricular approach.

Taught by a native speaker of the language (could be a parent).

Children's work is documented through photographs, filming or in LA folders

Classroom teachers take part in the experience

An assessment is carried out at the end of the course to ascertain whether our objectives have been met

## **Course syllabus**

Basic conversational language; e.g. greetings, introductions

Learning numbers and learning to count through games.

The alphabet – identify similarities and differences (letter sounds, script)

Learning to write my name in the new language.

Geographical awareness: i.e.

- Identity on the map where the language is spoken,
- Where is the country in relation to Italy?
- How can we travel there?

Explore colours of the flag.

Traditional tales and stories

Links with other curriculum areas e.g. history or geography e.g. Greece, Egypt.

Cultural information: Traditions, national costumes, dances, typical food, celebrations and festivals.

## **Assessment**

Teachers assess students by following the IB guidelines on assessment.

Our school's beliefs and practices on assessment define the purpose of assessment as a tool for **LEARNING**.

We assess for understanding and assessment has a direct impact on our approach to teaching and learning.

The prime objective of assessing students' learning and performance is to give feedback to:

Students—to encourage the start of lifelong learning

Teachers—to support their reflection on what to teach and how to teach it

Parents—to highlight their child's learning and development.

In our school we have developed to date a variety of assessment strategies and tools which include portfolios, pupil reflection journals, rubrics, child observations records, report cards, pupil-led conferences. This continues to be developed every year in accordance with the school assessment policy.

The formal reporting of pupil progress to parents happens five times during an academic year, as indicated on the school calendar; a Parent-Teacher-Child conference and Pupil Report Cards in the autumn term, Pupil-Led Conferences, Pupil Report Cards and Parent-Teacher-Child conferences in both the Spring/Summer term.

## **Portfolios and Report Cards**

Portfolios are used to document and assess your child's progress. This is an on-going document that both your child and the teacher create throughout the school year. They are used for consultation purposes during Parent and Teacher Evenings and for the children to talk you through their learning journey in the Student Led Conferences.

Report cards are sent out to you twice a year. The dates are to be found in the school calendar. They are a reflection of your child's progress and growth, celebrating their achievements and identifying future goals. The reports are written by your child's teachers and some comments will be in Italian and others in English. Teachers will make themselves available or post appointments for parents who wish to meet them to discuss their child's report.

## **Italian State School Exams (Grades 5 and 8)**

Our school status(International school on Italian territory and our school curriculum(IB-PYP and MYP inspired) are not recognized by the Italian State as equivalent to the Italian state schools status(scuola parificata). As such our students when they have to transfer to the Italian school system they need to take an entry test (esame d'idoneita') which will qualify them to transfer to the Italian state school. Our school offers an after school program to prepare those students who will need to transfer at the end of the school year to the Italian school system. For our Grade 5 and Grade 8 students this program is offered free of charge. The school will send out all relevant information about signing up for the Italian exam in January of each year. Parents of students in Grades 1 to 4 and Grades 6 and 7 are asked to contact their local Italian school in time to obtain relevant information and are responsible for signing up and accompanying their children to take the test. If you child is in the above mentioned grades and will be transferring to an Italian state school in the following year,

please inform us as early as possible and not later than February 1<sup>st</sup> as to whether your child will be attending the after school program.

## **Support services and Enrichment Activities**

### **Classroom assistants and classroom support**

Classroom assistants are employed to work with our Transition class, on a part time basis for a class of 15 or more and on a full time basis should the class reach numbers of 20 plus. Where there are less than 15 children, extra support may be provided by a member of our Italian teaching staff, to support the transition of our young learners into a more structured program.

When numbers are high or there is a particular need for support in other classes within the school, classroom assistants or special support will be provided as needed.

### **School Psychologist**

An outside school psychologist works closely with staff in order to offer specialised support in developing common and coherent strategies for dealing with challenging behaviours or specific learning needs.

### **Swimming**

All children from Grade 2 to Grade 5 will participate in a weekly lesson during the first term of each academic year at a pool close to the school. This is a compulsory part of the curriculum and all children are required to attend these lessons.

Swimming is scheduled in the time table as a weekly two hour block and it replaces the Physical Education lessons.

A medical certificate is needed if you withdraw your child from the entire swimming program, and in such a case you will be expected to pick up your child from school at the time the classroom lessons end.

If your child is unable to swim for a week, please write a note to the teacher or speak to them at the beginning of the day. Any child who is unable to swim should either be collected from school before the class leaves for the swimming pool or will sit beside the pool with the teachers during the lesson. It is not possible for supervision to be arranged on school premises.

Your child must have a swimming hat. This is a rule of the swimming pool.

Your child's classroom teachers will advise you on how the hairdryer tokens are going to be purchased.

The boys only need one token per session. The girls usually use two tokens per session.

Children will be transported to the pool by coach and the cost of this is not included in the school fees.

### **Outings and School Trips**

Trips and outings to places of interest will be arranged by staff throughout the course of the academic year.

These form an integral part of the curriculum and all children are expected to attend. You will be required to fill in a parental consent form at the time of registration. This is kept with your child's school records.

Some of trips for Grades 4 – 8 may be residential and parents will be informed well in advance of these.

The office staff will offer clerical support for the organization of school trips and outings, including the booking and organization of all transportation required. These trips/outings are not included in the school fees.

### **Pre and After School Care Service**

Our school offers a pre and after school care for children in Pre-school and elementary classes. This runs from 8.00am – 8.45am and from 3.50 to 5.30 pm

This service has an additional cost. Please contact our school office for more information.

You may request or reserve this service at the time of enrolment or at the start of each school year.

Short term bookings need to be made 24 hours in advance.

The fee structure for this service is available from the office.

### **After School Clubs**

As part of our extended day activities our school organizes a series of fun after school activities normally led

by our teachers. These start in October and end in May. We make every effort to organize clubs that appeal and are appropriate for both young and older learners. They run from 16:30 to 17:30. Please ask in the office for details and price list of the clubs available as these differ from year to year.

### **Creative workshops for students during teacher collaborative planning afternoons**

On selected Friday afternoons during the school year (please refer to the school calendar for dates), lessons end at midday to allow teachers plan collaboratively the new units. This is an IB requirement.

Our school provides an extended day child care by organizing creative workshops for those students who need to stay till the end of the school day. Parents are informed via email and need to register their children beforehand. A registration fee is applied.

### **Music and language private tuition**

Our school can organise a series of private lessons through our teacher specialists for a variety of subject areas; musical instruments, English, Italian, Spanish, Greek. These are open to both children and adults and the school office will be happy to assist you with more information.

### **Students Teacher and University undergraduates**

Our school has been selected by a number of Italian and overseas universities as a qualified institution for teacher student placements. Furthermore a number of university professors direct their undergraduate students to conduct their final year theses/research projects at our school.

These students and undergraduates are assigned a member of staff as their mentor, and can use our facilities to gain experience and collect data for their projects. Up to date, seven university theses have been published on our school. Parents may notice therefore that from time to time, there is an extra person in the classrooms. Parents may also be approached by these students to fill in questionnaires or arrange for an interview. We encourage our parents to be supportive in such instances.

## **School Policies and Procedures**

### **Admission Policy**

#### **Statement**

At Play English and the Bilingual School of Monza we admit children from the age of 3 years old up to the age of 13/14 years old, regardless of gender, social status and ethnicity, linguistic or cultural background. We aim to meet the needs of each individual child and provide a quality bilingual educational program.

For the 1-3 year old children, our school has a partnership with a local Day Nursery and will offer parents all relevant information for enrolment.

#### **Procedures**

The school will admit children both at the beginning and during the course of the school year provided there are vacant places in the respective age groups.

For all school families there are set enrolment dates as stated in our school calendar.

All siblings have priority of places ahead of new families.

All children are placed in the relevant Grade levels, according to their chronological age, unless there are special circumstances which will be discussed and agreed upon with the child's family prior to enrollment.

An assessment of the child's/family's needs and family's expectations will be carried out prior to admission to ensure that our school structure, organization, educational philosophy, provision and resources will offer the child and his/her family the best educational experience possible.

Language ability in one of the two school languages of instruction **does not** normally represent a barrier to the admission procedures. More specifically the school will admit children who may not speak one or either of the school languages of instruction up to Grade 1. From Gr 2 onwards language ability levels will be assessed through an informal interview and/or entry test in order to ascertain the need for extra support or resources.

The family will be informed of the assessment outcomes and, in the case of confirmed admission, of school expectations, action to be taken and expected outcomes.

Whenever possible we aim **not to** withdraw children from the classroom environment in order to offer additional language support (English as a second Language or Italian as a Second Language). When support is needed, this will be provided both as in-classroom support and withdrawal by either a specialist or by the classroom teacher through an individualized and differentiated program. The school curriculum is accessible to all children. Our school adopts the **sheltered programme** approach to support second language learners and to enable children to attain their full potential in all subject areas.

Parents are expected to provide previous school records for their child(ren) and a letter of attendance. It is at the school's discretion to contact your child's previous school for further information when and if necessary.

The school will organize, if possible, a **taster** session for your child in his or her new classroom before admission.

The Head Teacher will consult with the relevant staff members during the admission process. The family will be informed of the school's decision within a week of their application for enrolment.

Upon confirmation of admission the family will have to complete all necessary enrolment procedures and fulfil all the necessary financial obligations within three working days. Following this the school will inform the family of the date the child will start school.

### **Class size and structure**

Pre-school Section

The school aims to maintain the following class sizes and pupil-adult ratios:

**Pre school** (3 to 5 years old) max 20 children adult /child ratio 1:10

#### **Elementary and Middle Schools**

The school aims to maintain the following class sizes and pupil-adult ratios:

**Transition:** max 22 children

**Grades 1 to 8:** max 25 children

**N.B.1. In Transition only if numbers exceed 15 children a part-time classroom assistant will be provided to support the teachers and students, whereas a full time classroom assistant will be provided should numbers exceed 20 children.**

**N.B.2.** According to the National schools admission regulations in Italy, schools are allowed to enrol an extra 10% of pupils in order to make up for daily pupil absences. This may imply that although more children may be on register in each class, the established school adult-child ratio should almost always be maintained.

### **Admissions by age**

Children between the ages of 3 to 5 are admitted to our Pre-school Class(es).

The school will admit children as follows :

In the **3 – 5 years old group in Pre-school:** children who will turn 3 years of age by the end of December and will turn 4 by the end of December for that academic year.

**All children entering pre school must be toilet trained and will not be admitted if still in diapers/nappies.**

### **Elementary and Middle School Admissions by age**

The school will admit children as follows:

a) In the **Transition class:** children who are **5 years of age** or will turn 6 by the end of December for that academic year.

b) In the **Grade 1 class:** children who are **6 years of age** or will turn 7 by the end of December for that

academic year .

c) In the **Grade 2 class**: children who are **7 years of age** or will turn 8 by the end of December for that academic year.

d) In the **Grade 3 class**: children who are **8 years of age** or will turn 9 by the end of December for that academic year.

e) In the **Grade 4 class**: children who are **9 years of age** or will turn 10 by the end of December for that academic year.

f) In the **Grade 5 class**: children who are **10 years of age** or will turn 11 by the end of December for that academic year.

g) In the **Grade 6 class**: children who are **11 years of age** or will turn 12 by the end of December for that academic year.

h) In the **Grade 7 class**: children who are **12 years of age** or will turn 13 by the end of December for that academic year.

i) In the **Grade 8 class**: children who are **13 years of age** or will turn 14 by the end of December for that academic year.

#### **Criteria for admitting children:**

Parents should pay the school's fees and do so by the published deadlines.

Parents will have read and signed the school/teacher/child agreement which makes them responsible to support the school in its work with their child/ren.

Parents accept all the terms and conditions as explained in the relevant school documentation.

Places in each group (other than siblings) will be filled on a 'first come first served' basis.

#### **Pupils may be refused admission if:**

The relevant class is full.

If the school is unable to meet the educational needs of the child.

**N.B.1** The school may consider to admit a child with special educational needs for which the school is unable to provide adequate support on the basis that an outsourced specialist support teacher can be hired. The cost of this extra support will be met entirely by the child's family.

#### **N.B.2 Four Week Pre-Assessment Period**

When new children start attending our school, during their first month of school, they will all be observed and assessed both formally and informally, by their Italian and English class teachers. During this period the teachers will be able to assess whether the placement of your child is appropriate and beneficial, socially, emotionally and academically. This period of time allows the teachers to make a professional and well informed decision regarding future arrangements for your child/ren's education.

We strongly believe that each child needs to be treated as an individual and as such our teaching staff are trained to organize their teaching and learning contexts in ways that meet the needs of all children. Each child is placed in the class where the educational provision best serves his/her needs.

The class teachers will meet with the parents, the Curriculum Coordinator and the Director to discuss how the child has settled and offer feedback based on their observations and assessments. An agreement needs to be reached and jointed decision to be made as to whether the child will stay in his/her age group appropriate class or gets moved to another grade level.

#### **Children with Difficulties – School Behaviour Policy**

Our school provides the following support systems for students with special educational needs, for their teachers and families:

- A student study team made up of the student's main teachers, specialists, a member of the Pedagogical Leadership Team and the Principal. An outsourced specialist (i.e. school psychologist, speech therapist etc) may also be invited in special circumstances. The role of the SST is to discuss the student case and provide support, recommendations or strategies to be used by the teachers. The student's parents are always kept informed.
- An outsourced psychologist who works with teachers, the school and parents in providing specific projects, courses and other specialized services.

Our school's Special Educational Needs and Behaviour policies guide our work with students and parents in this area of learning.

Our school aims to develop in children socially responsible behaviours within a caring, mutually respected and shared controlled environment. All members of staff aim to adopt uniform practices and strategies when dealing with challenging behaviours and learning difficulties.

To enable us meet our goals, staff use the IB Learner Profile and Attitudes as their guiding and assessment tools (Appendix 1).

Children are supported by their teachers to understand the set limits, to develop problem solving skills to conflict resolution, to reflect on their actions and the impact these may have on others and/or the environment, to make choices and actively engage in creating classroom agreements which promote positive behaviours. This approach requires investment of time on behalf of the caring adult and at times the desirable outcome is not immediate and apparent. Our aim is to support children in internalising the codes of positive behaviour by developing their own understandings of what is right and wrong; in using their intrinsic motivation when choosing certain types of behaviour; in being reflective over and responsible for their choices and actions by building a positive self-image, confidence and self-esteem. These are long term goals which will give the desirable outcome over a period of time. We trust parents to understand, share and support us in this area of our work.

Our school behaviour policy states that no form of punishment, shouting, praise or rewards are implemented as tools for establishing positive behaviours. We consider these to be manipulatives of human behaviour, “quick fixes” and external motivators with no long lasting impact.

Whether dealing with a challenging behaviour or a learning difficulty, teachers may need to seek the assistance of the Student Study Team who will help them to develop a Response to Intervention Plan for each pupil in difficulty. Teachers will regularly monitor the situation and will set goals in collaboration with the SST which will share with parents. Differentiated instruction is part of our normal classroom practice.

At the beginning of the school year, all teachers create classroom/lesson agreements with students where they agree on what will make them live and learn well in school and students and teachers also agree on logical consequences in the case of the agreements not being respected.

### **“Settling In” Process for New Children in Pre-school and Transition**

We recognize that when children enter Pre-school and Transition for the first time, they need support to help them feel a sense of belonging and a sense of security. We devote the early weeks of the child’s experience to gradually releasing parent participation in the school day.

Young children exhibit varying levels of comfort with a transition to a full school day. The process that is outlined below is meant to be flexible according to the child’s individual needs, but it provides an idea of how we generally support children during the “settling in” process.

#### **Preschool**

##### **FIRST TWO WEEKS:**

Days 1 & 2: The teachers meet the parent/s and child for a short (15mins) introduction to the classroom

Day 3: The parent remains in the class with the child until 11.30, at which time they go home together

Day 4: The parent remains in the class with the child until 10.00, and returns to get the child at 11.30

Day 5: The parent stays to participate only in Circle Time, then leaves at about 9.15, returning to get the child at 11.30

Day 6: The parent says goodbye to the child at the door of the classroom, and returns after lunch at 12.30 to get the child

Day 7: The child leaves at 12.30 with the parent.

Days 8, 9 10: If ready, the child stays all day

#### **Transition**

##### **FIRST WEEK:**

Day 1: The parent remains in the class with the child until 10:45, at which time they go home together

Day 2: The parent remains in the class with the child until 10.00, and returns to get the child before lunch.

Day 3: The parent stays to participate only in Circle Time, then leaves at about 9.15, returning to get the at 12.30.

Days 4 & 5: The parent says goodbye to the child at the door of the classroom, and returns to get the child at 12.30.

Second Week: If the child is ready, attendance will be extended to full days

### **The School/Teacher/Parent/Child Agreement**

This is a document that outlines a shared commitment, responsibility and expectations among the school, the teachers, the parents and the children. By signing, you are demonstrating your commitment and agreement to the school's educational philosophies. We would ask you to sign both copies and then return one to school (either to the office or to your child's class teacher) and keep the second copy for your own reference. (Appendix 3)

### **Attendance/Absences/Tardiness**

We care for your child's learning and steady progress and for these to happen it is essential that your child attends school regularly. Extended absences are not only unsettling for students but do impact their learning, their progress and general well-being in school.

We ask parents to always inform us in advance and in writing for any extended absences.

In the case of parents needing to withdraw their child from lessons during the school day, a special permission form needs to be filled in each time and signed by a member of the school's senior management team before picking up your child from school. The school office will provide this form and the parent or carer will need to collect the signed form from the school office and hand it to their child's teacher at the time of picking the child up. Children will not be allowed to leave the school building without authorized permission.

We ask parents to organize their children's after school activities after the school day ends, since no permissions will be granted for requests to take the child out of school on regular days and before lessons end unless this is for medical reasons.

### **Homework policy**

Our pupils spend a big part of their day at school and as such we feel that there is no benefit in extending their school day by adding homework on a daily basis. Recent research studies on the futility and potential negative impact of homework on the quality of life of the pupil and his/her family, this has led our school to adopt clear guidelines with regards to this matter.

Teachers will not set homework unless a request for completing unfinished work at home is initiated by the pupils themselves. We encourage, however, reading at all times and our pupils may be asked to take library reading books home or extend their "inquiry" in contexts outside school.

Children in Transition and Grade 1 will bring home reading activities on a weekly basis (including reading to a family member, being read to, playing reading games).

Children in Grades 2 to 5 will be given library books as well as reading scheme books for independent reading on a regular basis, and at times activities which complement and extend the classroom curriculum. While generally reading homework will be set on a weekly cycle (e.g. Wednesday to Wednesday), the time required should not exceed a daily equivalent of approximately 30 minutes over 4 or 5 days.

**Children in Grades 6, 7 and 8** will have daily homework tasks, a more detailed schedule will be organised by their teachers.

Parents are kept informed of the homework set through the school diaries, and a system of on-going reciprocal feedback is established.

### **School Supplies**

You will receive from your child's teacher, a list of things that your child needs to bring to school during the first week of attendance. Please label all items clearly with your child's name.

### **School Uniforms (Pre-school and elementary only)**

You are expected to purchase the school uniform and this comprises of a school T-shirt and jumper. ***It is compulsory for your child to wear the school uniform on a daily basis.*** Your child also requires a set of clothes for physical education lessons (t-shirt, shorts and gym shoes or trainers). Please label all of your child's clothes clearly with his/her name.

## School Photographs

The school arranges for a professional photographer to visit the school in the final term of each academic year and be available to take individual, class and whole school photographs. Parents will receive a form explaining how to order the photographs and all parents wishing to purchase them need to complete and return the form to the office.

With respect to the privacy law, you will be required to fill in a permission form to allow the school to use your child's/children's photograph/s or filming for internal or publicity purposes.

## Accidents and Illness

### Accidents

Every effort is made to ensure that the children are safe and supervised at all times, however accidents may occur. These are usually minor bumps and scrapes which will be dealt with by our qualified First Aid staff. The staff will record these accidents and inform you of them when you collect your child.

In the case of more serious injuries, you will be contacted immediately. If, for any reason we are unable to contact you or any of your emergency contacts, the staff may seek medical advice and if necessary, treatment from the nearest hospital. Please make ensure you complete and sign your child's medical consent form.

### Illness

If your child is ill, we kindly request that you inform the school office and keep him/her at home, until he/she will be better and ready to come back to school. Following the Health regulations of September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2004 of Lombardia region and with regards to Infectious Diseases, the measures for prevention and monitoring of such diseases have been amended as follows:

There is no requirement for a readmission medical certificate for absences up to 5 school days.

Children showing one or more of the symptoms listed in Table n.1 must be excluded from the school community. The Head teacher or a substitute can therefore inform the parents and send the child home accordingly. Parents must comply with the school decision at all times.

AGE	TEMPERATURE	DIARROHEA	EXHANTEM	PURULENT CONJUNCTIVITIS
<b>3 – 5 years</b> Pre-School & Transition	If > 38,5	If > 3 liquid bowel movements in 3 hours	If sudden appearance, not motivated by pre-existent pathologies.	In case of red eyes and purulent discharge
<b>6 – 10 years</b> Elementary School	If > 38,5	If cannot control bowel movements	Yes, if not otherwise motivated	No*
<b>11 – 13 years</b> Middle School	NO, if no other symptoms *	No*	Yes, if not otherwise motivated	No*

**(\*) exclusion from school is not envisaged as a preventative measure for the school community, however the child must be kept at home if he/ she cannot take part in the normal classroom activities .**

In case of **exanthema, conjunctivitis or diarrhoea**, parents must contact their GP in order to check how long the child must be kept home. In order to be readmitted in school, **parents must sign a certificate declaring that they have followed the guidelines provided by their GP, using the form attached (Appendix 3). The form must be handed in the school office.**

The child's return to school must not entail any risks for the school community, therefore it is extremely important to respect the recommended period of exclusion for each disease, according to the following table:

### Table of infectious diseases and school exclusion times:

#### DISEASE

#### EXCLUSION

Anthrax	Until clinical healing
Cholera-typhus	Until 3 negative faeces tests
Conjunctivitis	After starting treatment
Diarrhoea and/or vomiting	Up to 24 hours after the last episode
Viral hepatitis a	Up to 7 days after clinical onset
Bacterial meningitis – meningococcal disease	Up to 48 hours after starting antibiotic
Measles-mumps-whooping cough-chicken pox-rubella	Up to/after 5 days (7 in case of Rubella) after clinical onset, or in case of whooping cough, after starting antibiotic treatment.
Salmonella-amoebas-giardiasis-tapeworm	Clinical healing; in case of amoebas, negative exams.
Scabies	until asl ( <i>national health service</i> ) checks that treatment has started
Scarlet fever	up to 24 hours after starting antibiotic treatment
Tuberculosis	up to 3 weeks after starting adequate treatment for non multi resistant lung tuberculosis.

### **Medication**

It is school policy not to administer medicines such as tachipirina (paracetamol), cough mixtures or antibiotics. However in the case of life-saving medication, the school can request from the local Health Authority the permission to administer these under the following conditions: Parents will need to submit to the school office

- a) a medical certificate on which it is clearly stated the child's name, the name of the medicine, the quantity and the frequency of administration.
- b) a written request by the parent which authorises the school for administering the relevant medication.

For further information, please contact the school office.

### **Vaccinations**

Pre-school children who have vaccinations must remain at home for the first 24 hours and can be brought back to school when they have fully recovered.

### **Fire Drills and Evacuation**

In the case of an emergency, teachers are trained to follow the school's emergency evacuation procedure to ensure all children's safety. The school administration team will then follow the emergency communication network and contact all parents to inform them of the given situation.

The school organises periodical staff training for safety and fire regulations. The school has a contract with a local authorised agency which assists us on any issues regarding fire and safety. In compliance with Italian law, we hold one fire drill per year.

### **Insurance**

The school has an insurance policy for the whole school population. This offers a comprehensive cover for the times school community members are on school premises and during school trips and outings.

### **Safety and Internet use**

The school has taken the necessary measures by installing appropriate filters which will ensure a safe use of the internet at school.

### **Personal Belongings and Toys from Home**

The school is not responsible for the loss or damage of any personal belongings or toys brought in from home. We advise parents to discourage children from bringing toys to school unless this is for a specific educational purpose.

### **Lost Property**

There is a lost and found property box in the entrance of the Elementary and Early Years sections of the school.

### **Parking and Transportation**

Please be aware that there are parking restriction times and zones during weekdays in the parking areas outside the school building. Parents and carers are requested to pay attention to the traffic signs placed on the streets. For safety and fire regulation purposes, we ask parents not to park in front of the school gates. The school does not operate a school bus service and as such parents use their own means of transport to bring and pick up their children to and from school. However for swimming, school trips and outings the school will book a coach through a local coach company and parents will be expected to meet the cost of this.

### **Birthday Parties**

Please give class teachers at least 24 hours notice should you wish to organize a birthday party during normal school hours. We welcome birthday cakes (no home-made cakes are allowed and please remember to submit a list of ingredients). Drinks and treats for these special occasions are welcome.

For a Birthday party organized on the school premises, we need at least a fortnight's notice. Please contact the school office for details regarding costs and organization.

### **Parents as Partners**

We firmly believe in a family-school partnership in order to maximise learning and help the children to make progress in all areas of their development. Our approach to education is **child-centred** and we see the child (in the centre) being guided along the path of new experiences; the school holding one hand and the parent holding the other.

It is vital for us to have as much information about your child as possible, as well as information on his/her routines and behaviour at home. In order to help us understand and meet the needs of your child and family, we would kindly ask you to fill in as much information as possible on the forms provided within this brochure. We welcome parents taking an active role in school life and consider them as valuable partners and members of our learning community.

### **Parent Communication**

Most school communications are sent via email and rarely by hardcopy. It is extremely important that you check your emails on a regular basis in order to be kept up to date with school events.

Please remember to always check in your child's bag or diary in case there is a letter from the classroom teachers.

Classroom teachers regularly upload information and photographs on **classroom blogs** and parents will be given the relevant links at the beginning of the school year.

### **Meetings with Teachers/ Parent Education program as per school calendar**

We make every attempt to offer parents a variety of opportunities to raise their awareness and understanding on how their children learn, the curriculum we teach and our approaches to teaching and learning, throughout the year. We encourage parents to attend these. Here are some of the scheduled events.

During September parents are invited to an induction evening where they can meet their child's class teachers and specialist teachers who will give information on the curriculum and their teaching intentions for the year.

The school organizes two "**Parent Curriculum evenings**" per year and frequent "**Parent Coffee Mornings**" as part of our parent education program.

Parent- Teacher- Child conferences are held twice a year following pupil report cards.

Parents will be invited to attend "classroom unit celebrations" at the end of units.

Student Led Conferences are scheduled during the Spring term.

Details pertaining to the additional meetings will be communicated to you at the appropriate times in a letter sent to you via email.

Additional appointments can be made throughout the year for you to meet with your child's class teachers if you have questions or concerns that cannot wait until the times stated above. These times can be made through direct discussion with your child's teacher and must take place before or after school.

### **Procedure for expressing concerns or seeking clarification**

The channels of communication in the school are as follows:

Initial questions and concerns to be addressed to your child's class teacher.

Should you still have concerns, please address these to the Principal.

Finally if after meeting with all of the above members of staff and you still remain unhappy, an appointment can

be made to meet with the Director.

### **Newsletters**

You will receive a school newsletter approximately once per month, available in both Italian and English. These will contain important information about events, staffing, current school issues, articles regarding Bilingual Education and the PYP Curriculum.

You will also receive a classroom newsletter which will give you more specific information on the units of inquiry and any important announcements relevant to your child's class.

### **PTSA**

Our school has an active Parents, Teachers and Staff association (PTSA). The role of the association is to provide parents a forum to meet and explore ways of supporting the school in its mission. It is a way of parents getting involved in the school life by taking part in school activities through events, fundraising and other social occasions. The PTSA committee is made up of parent class representatives elected by parents and by teacher and staff representatives. All parents are welcome to attend the monthly PTSA meetings.

**“School-Teacher-Parent-Child Agreement”**

***The School will commit to:***

Respect and acknowledge the parents' role as the child's first educators.  
Respect and acknowledge children's feelings and needs and cater for the whole child.  
Establish a safe, secure and nurturing environment within the whole school community.  
Offer an enriched bilingual model of education in English and Italian which is based on sound constructivist theories and scientific research.  
Offer an approach to teaching and learning where children are encouraged to reach their full potential.  
Provide a learning environment in which English and Italian have equal status.  
Value and promote learning in all our students' mother tongues.  
Provide a developmentally and age appropriate curriculum which is be accessible to all students.  
Develop internationally minded students whose behaviours and actions reflect the IB Learner Profile and attitudes.  
Promote a multilingual and multicultural environment where diversity is embraced, valued and respected.  
Provide a caring and active learning environment where children can develop self-esteem, self-confidence and grow into life-long learners.  
Nurture positive and collaborative partnerships among teachers, parents and child.  
Provide Parent Education programs with the aim to raise awareness of our educational model.  
Maintain effective ways of school-parent communication.  
Offer effective administrative support, assistance and thorough information when parent inquiries occur.  
Respect the environment we live in, and create a shared knowledge and understanding of important and current environmental issues.  
Hire suitably qualified teaching staff.  
Offer opportunities for staff professional development.  
Offer regular feedback to parents on their children's academic progress and development.

***The Teachers will commit to:***

Establish a secure, safe, nurturing and respectful learning environment where children's natural curiosity is fostered and acknowledged as a key to learning.  
Provide a learning environment where multilingual and multicultural diversity is a source of learning.  
Promote and cater for additive Bilingualism  
Respect and value the children's mother tongue and home culture  
Promote learning in all students mother tongue.  
Act as Language models and keep the two languages distinct.  
Develop a sound understanding of the processes by which the children acquire both their primary and second language.  
Use teaching strategies that promote bilingual development.  
Respect each child as individuals and establish trustworthy relationships which are based on shared control and understanding  
Implement the school's curriculum through structured planning which addresses the needs of both the whole class and of the individual children.  
Promote the attributes of the PYP Learner Profile and IB attitudes by incorporating them in their day to day practices.  
Adhere to the essential elements of the PYP curriculum and develop them through careful planning and implementation of the programme.  
Acknowledge, and show respect of others' feelings, ideas and opinions.  
Plan differentiated-learning lessons and activities that are based on age appropriate and on sound bilingual education theory and practices.  
Adopt a holistic and child-centred approach to teaching and learning.  
Monitor children's development and progress by adopting appropriate methods and assessment strategies for both primary and second language learners.

Report and communicate to parents, children's growth and development through effective assessment methods and tools such as, parent-teacher conferences, pupil report cards, pupil-led conferences, portfolios etc.

View parents as partners in the learning process and provide appropriate information and support when needed.

Work collaboratively with both teaching and non-teaching staff.

Undergo professional development training.

Respect and work within the school's policies and procedures

***The Parents will commit to:***

Understand and share the school's vision, mission, philosophy and learning goals.

Support and value their child's Mother Tongue development

Develop an understanding of second language acquisition and development.

Understand and respect the minimum 4 to 7 year time line for their child's/children's attendance in a Bilingual Program before they start comparing or measuring their progress and performance.

Maintain a regular and consistent attendance of their child in school.

Respect teachers and other school staff as professionals and support them in their role.

Raise matters of concern by following the school's set procedure.

Read and act timely and promptly to information sent by the school.

Understand and respect their child's developmental needs and use these to guide parent expectations

Have realistic expectations of their child's development and growth in both language and academic domains

Adopt a positive attitude towards their child's learning experiences and offer encouragement and support for their efforts.

Become informed and develop an understanding of the curriculum.

Provide their child with the necessary materials requested by the school.

Attend parents' meetings and other parent education opportunities provided by the school.

Respect drop off and pick up times.

Agree and respect the school's policies and procedures.

Be supportive and pro-active members of the school community.

***The Child will commit to:***

Accept and respect all members of the school community regardless of their role, race, nationality, gender, religion, political beliefs.

Be caring and sensitive to others needs and feelings.

Engage in self-reflection and evaluation as a means of self-improvement.

Respect others and their property.

Show respect for opinions and ideas of others even if they may not agree with them.

Be an active and reflective participant of their own learning.

Be responsible of themselves and of their actions.

Take care of the school environment and look after equipment and other resources.

Build a respectful and collaborative partnership between the teacher and themselves.

Adopt socially responsible behaviours when dealing with conflict

Ask for help and adult support when in need.

Name of the child \_\_\_\_\_

Class \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Updated July 2015