



Early Years Curriculum Guide



BRITISH INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL
OF CHICAGO, SOUTH LOOP
A NORD ANGLIA EDUCATION SCHOOL

2016-17

Understanding the Curriculum

Our Early Years curriculum for children in Nursery (Preschool) and Reception (Junior Kindergarten) integrates the best components of the International Primary Curriculum and follows the Early Years Foundation Stage framework.

International Primary Curriculum

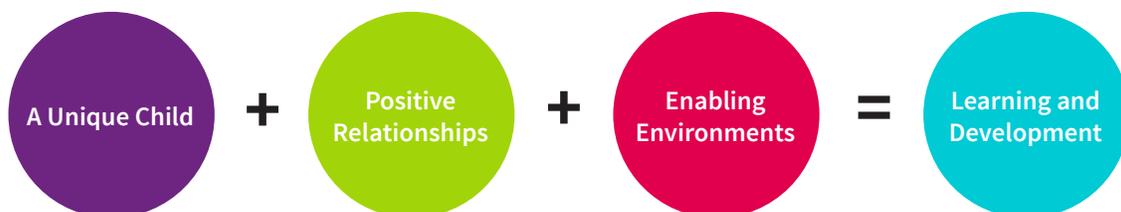
The International Primary Curriculum (IPC) is thematic, creative and employs specific goals for learning in each subject as well as for personal development. The curriculum applies a global approach that helps children connect learning to where they are living now and view learning from the perspectives of people in other countries. To aid learning, teachers chose the following themes. They ensure a varied and exciting curriculum that follows an appropriate progression of skills and helps children reach their highest potential.

	AUTUMN	SPRING	SUMMER
Nursery	All About Me Animals	Houses and Homes Transport	Plants and Flowers
Reception	All About Me Treasure	Clothes Up and Away	Changes

Early Years Foundation Stage

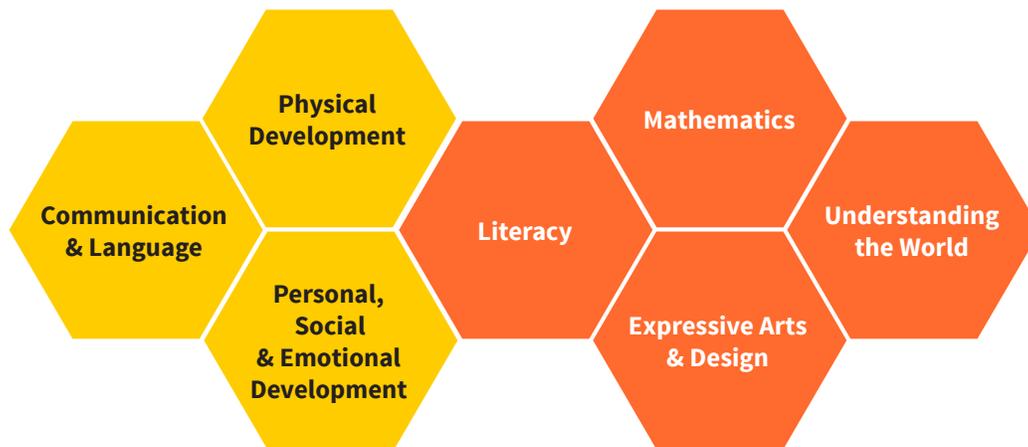
Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets standards for the learning, development and care of children at birth to age five. It ensures children's readiness for Primary School and provides a broad range of knowledge and skills that form a strong foundation for future progress through school and life. EYFS integrates four guiding principles that shape learning:

1. Every child is a **unique child**, constantly learning and resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
2. Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**.
3. Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments**, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there's a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
4. Children develop and learn in **different ways and at different rates**.



Areas of Learning and Development

As part of EYFS, children play, explore, create and think critically through a variety of activities shaped by the seven Areas of Learning and Development. We use these inter-connected areas to promote children's individual interests and unique learning needs. The three Prime Areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. Learning in the three Prime Areas is strengthened and applied in the four Specific Areas. The activities, stories and games through which learning takes place in each area are challenging, exciting and fuel progress towards learning outcomes. Through a mix of child-initiated and adult-led experiences that are relevant to the children's lives, we also encourage effective listening and positive behavior.



Prime Areas of Learning and Development

COMMUNICATION & LANGUAGE

In this area, children have opportunities to experience a rich language environment and develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves while speaking and listening in a range of situations. We also ignite their interest in reading and writing.

Children study French and Spanish as part of this area. They learn greetings and introductions, and also how to speak about colors, numbers, food and transport. In learning to speak these languages, children also explore the associated cultures.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Here, children enjoy opportunities to be active and interactive, and to develop their coordination, control and movement. They also learn basic principles of health and self-care, including the importance of physical activity and making healthy choices in relation to food.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT (PSED)

This area involves helping children develop a positive sense of themselves and others. They develop social skills and learn about making relationships. Children also learn how to manage their feelings and demonstrate appropriate behavior. The overarching theme is self-confidence and self-awareness.

Specific Areas of Learning and Development

LITERACY

Literacy development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters, and to begin to read and write. Children have access to a wide range of reading materials, including books, poems and other written work.

MATHEMATICS

The Mathematics area provides children with opportunities to improve their skills in counting and understanding and using numbers. They calculate simple addition and subtraction problems, and learn how to describe shapes, spaces and measures. This area supports children's understanding in different situations by providing opportunities to explore, practice, learn and talk.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORLD

Children make sense of their physical world and their community through activities that help them observe and learn about people, places, technology and the environment. Learning is based on first-hand experiences that involve making predictions and decisions, and taking part in discussions.

EXPRESSIVE ARTS & DESIGN

Here, children use their imaginations and work with various media and materials. They're encouraged to share their thoughts, feelings and ideas by creating art and music, taking part in movement, dance and role play, and exploring design and technology. Through these activities, children learn to value their own ideas and those of others. This area particularly supports children's curiosity and desire to play.

Sample Timetable

Children develop their skills and understanding in the seven Areas of Learning by taking part in a number of courses and activities, as outlined in the following sample timetable. Following lunch, children have an opportunity to rest for 25 minutes. During this session, children participate in quiet activities and may also nap if they wish.

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
8:25 A.M.	Assembly	Assembly	Assembly	Assembly	Assembly
9:00 A.M.	Math	English	Math	English	Math
9:50 A.M.	Guided Reading	Guided Reading	Guided Reading	Guided Reading	Guided Reading
10:15 A.M.	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break
10:40 A.M.	English	Math	English	Math	English
11:55 A.M.	Physical Development	Physical Development	Physical Development	Physical Development	Physical Development
12:20 P.M.	Lunch & Quiet Time	Lunch & Quiet Time	Lunch & Quiet Time	Lunch & Quiet Time	Lunch & Quiet Time
1:10 P.M.	Music	French	Music	French	PSED
1:35 P.M.	Creative Development	Dance	Creative Development	Dance	
2:00 P.M.	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break
2:25 P.M.	Creative Development	Understanding the World	Creative Development	Understanding the World	PSED
3:15 P.M.	Sharing	Sharing	Sharing	Sharing	Sharing

Assessment

Purpose of Assessment

Assessment is the gathering and analysis of information about student performance. It identifies what students know, understand, can do and feel at different stages in the learning process; this information guides teachers in instruction. Assessment is an ongoing and daily part of school life, and the formative comments students receive develop their understanding of the skills and knowledge required to be successful in each course. At BISC South Loop, the aims and purpose of assessment are to:

- Provide information to enhance and improve learning and teaching.
- Provide information for target-setting for individuals, groups and cohorts.
- Share learning goals with students.
- Involve students in self-assessment.
- Help students know and recognize the standards they're aiming for.
- Raise standards of learning.
- Identify children for intervention.
- Inform parents of their son/daughter's progress.
- Complete a critical self-evaluation of the school.
- Measure progress and value added.

Academic Reports

Academic reports describe children's academic and social development and list targets in all subjects for the child to concentrate on before the next report. Nursery and Reception teachers communicate with families about children's achievement and progress in two academic reports:

1. October Half-Term
2. Beginning of June

There are regular parent consultations with teachers scheduled during the school year. Parents may also meet with teachers outside of the consultation dates.

Tapestry

In addition to academic reports, we also use an online learning journal called Tapestry for children in Nursery and Reception. Tapestry enables you to see exactly what your child is learning each day. For any given activity, the teacher will take a photo or video of your child's participation and upload it along with a written observation, which is sent directly to your smartphone.

Questions?

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