

**ISPP Elementary Campus
(Early Years - Grade 5)**

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**EARLY YEARS
PARENT
HANDBOOK**



An Introduction to the International School of Phnom Penh's Early Years Programme

It is a pleasure to welcome you and your child to our school.

The Early Years Programme at the International School of Phnom Penh (ISPP) is committed to the development of the whole child. The programme has been designed to meet the expectations of the ISPP community of learners. Learning is developmental, and learning styles differ from child to child. Our most important goal is to help children become enthusiastic learners. That means encouraging children to be active and creative explorers, who are not afraid to take risks, try out ideas and to develop their own thoughts.

The programme seeks to foster each child's intellectual, physical, emotional, social, cultural, and aesthetic growth. Our basic philosophy is that children learn best by doing. Their discovery is concrete and is based upon their own experiences. In this programme, children are given opportunities to explore, experiment, and discover with hands-on materials. Their play is their work.

As well as being experiential, the Early Years Programme is child centred and flexible. The curriculum is integrated across the age groupings, and introduces meaningful Units of Inquiry which spark children's natural curiosities, interests and enthusiasm. Allowing children ages three through five time together provides the younger children with role models for imitation and the older ones



Thank you for taking the time to learn more about the Early Years Programme at ISPP. We look forward to working with you and your child. If you would like further information or have any questions regarding this Parent Handbook please contact the Elementary Office or your child's teacher.

tell times. Please check with your child's teacher about sharing times. Please do not allow your child to bring toy guns, knives, or other toys that might be considered as a weapon to school.

8. One of the Early Years Programme's goals is to help your child become more self-reliant. Your child is expected to feed herself/himself. Please organize for their lunch to be dropped off in the class basket near the gate on Street 360. We encourage children this age to feed themselves and therefore we discourage adult support. As a security measure, domestic staff are not allowed on the campus at lunch and snack time.
9. You may discover tiny cubes, puzzle pieces, beads, Lego, or other items in your child's pockets or bag. Thank you for returning our equipment to school.
10. Please label all of your child's belongings such as backpacks, water bottles, snack boxes. Lunch boxes, water bottles, swim gear, extra clothes, etc. This helps your child be organized and develop independence, as well as helping us to locate missing items.
11. Your child will only be allowed to go home with the person you authorized and who received the home pass. If your child will go home with another person, please inform the office.



an opportunity to reinforce their knowledge by helping the younger ones. We believe children go through sequences of growth within which they each have their own individual pattern of growth, personality, and learning style. We maintain that education for young learners develops in ever widening concentric circles. Skills are built sequentially. Each year the curriculum builds upon what the children have learned the year before.

In our Early Years Programme, each child is appreciated and accepted at the level of their own maturity and ability. Children are given the opportunity to develop, grow, and learn in a non-competitive climate of genuine affection and warmth, in their own time and in their own unique way.



The Primary Years Programme

The Early Years curriculum is the first stage in the Primary Years Programme which was developed by the International Baccalaureate Organisation and leads into the Middle Years and Diploma Programmes. It aims to synthesise the best research and practice from a range of national systems to create a transdisciplinary curriculum which is relevant, challenging and engaging for learners in the 3-12 age range. There are authentic links integrated from Language, Mathematics, and the Arts disciplines to the units of inquiry whenever possible. There is also a strong emphasis placed on the ideals of international understanding and responsible citizenship. Student learning occurs through the exploration of skills and attitudes during the units of inquiry. The Learner Profile is central to the beliefs of the PYP, representing its aims for the programme's graduates. It drives the curriculum framework and is central to the assessment process.

Learner Profile

Communicators
Inquirers
Thinkers
Risk-Takers
Knowledgeable
Principled
Caring
Open-Minded
Balanced
Reflective



Information adapted from "Making the PYP happen" IBO 2000

activities including painting, pasting, cooking, and outdoor sand and water play. Many important and fun things for children to do are messy. Sturdy shoes with ankle straps will assist your child to run, climb and ride bikes safely. On P.E. days, your child must wear sports shoes. We highly recommend that your child should have shoes that they can do up themselves. We also encourage your child to dress themselves. Easy to manage clothing helps your child be successful in accomplishing this. As most sun damage occurs to the skin before age 12, a hat is required for bike and water table activities.

5. Your child should have a school bag or backpack for school use. Please keep a change of clothing in their school bag as accidents do happen.



6. Your child should bring a healthy snack/lunch and a water bottle each day. Appropriate snacks includes fruit, vegetables, whole grains, etc. ISPP does not allow candy, unhealthy food such as chocolate, donuts, chips, etc. or soft drinks in school. We strongly

discourage fast-food also. Individually packaged jellies are not permitted at ISPP as they are associated with choking. If you need ideas about what to send for snack, please talk to one of the EY teachers. If you wish to celebrate your child's birthday in class, please consult with your child's teacher ahead of time. Invitations for birthday parties can only be distributed if all students in your child's class are invited.

7. Your child should not bring toys or stickers to school, however, toys may be brought for sharing and for show and

Basic Information

1. We welcome all children, ages 3 and up, who exhibit readiness for the Early Years Programme, and whose parents are willing and able to follow school policies and provide a continuity of experiences for their child. Children entering the Early Years classes must be fully toilet trained. No diapers are permitted and no baby bottles are permitted.
2. Early Years 1 classes operate five days a week from 7:30am until 11:30am. Early Years 2 classes operate five days a week from 7:30am until 2:30pm.
3. To gain the most from the programme, regular attendance is important. However, if your child is not well enough to participate in all normal school activities including P.E. and Swimming, they should be at home. A recovering child should be free of fever, rash with or preceded by a fever, diarrhoea or upset stomach, severe coughing, coloured nasal discharge, listlessness, loss of appetite, fatigue or headache



for 24 hours before returning to school. Medicines need to be administered by parents or through the school nurse. According to our policy, our school staff will not administer medicine to your child.

4. Please send your child to school in sturdy, washable play clothes. They will be experiencing a variety of

We address 8 Units of Inquiry over a two year cycle :

Who We Are (Families): Learning about our families helps us to know who we are.

How We Express Ourselves (Celebrations): People recognize important events through celebrations.

How the World Works (Where Does it Belong?): Matter can be changed in a variety of ways for different purposes.

How We Organize Ourselves (People in Our Community): In our community people have different roles to help us.

Who We Are (What it Means to Be Me): Everyday we learn more about who we are and what we can do.

Where We Are in Place and Time (Journeys): We make journeys for a variety of reasons.

How We Express Ourselves (Tell Me a Story): Stories are told in many different ways and for a variety of purposes.

Sharing the Planet (Living Things): All living things interact with their environment.

The Programme of Inquiry is a dynamic document and will modify throughout the year as teachers plan and reflect on units of inquiry.

Play

Play is the fundamental medium for young children's learning and is central to our programme. It is a natural activity for children through which they make meaning of the world around them. Play involves pleasure, enjoyment, free choices, spontaneity and active engagement.

The benefits children derive from play include:

- learning to represent their ideas through constructing, painting, drawing and building.
- developing social skills by communicating, caring, negotiating, cooperating and sharing.
- building foundations for early literacy and numeracy
- developing imaginations.
- making meaning of their world by exploring community and family roles.
- experimenting and making discoveries.
- working at their own pace and at their own level.

Language

Oral Communication: *Listening and Speaking*

Children are encouraged to participate appropriately in conversations, tell stories and events in sequence, and give and follow instructions. They talk about their thoughts, feelings and opinions and throughout the year, they use oral language with increasing confidence.



Written Communication: *Reading and Writing*

We encourage children to enjoy, and be interested in books, and grow to become avid readers. We regularly share a wide variety of stories, nursery rhymes, songs and poems together. We encourage the children to develop their pre-reading skills by matching shapes, pictures and words. By using visual clues from pictures, wordless books or posters, children learn to tell a story. Children in Early Years 2 begin to use the Jolly Phonics programme to develop their understanding of the letters of the alphabet and their sounds. They have many varied experiences with written text including: stories, charts, poems and songs. They begin to recognise their own and others' names as well as letters and words. Children enjoy playing and experimenting with writing by making marks to emulate writing. They progress from scribble or pretend writing, to writing letters and words. Drawing, sketching and diagramming are important as children imitate, rehearse and think about the writing process. Children begin to write their own names and those of family members. They are encouraged to use correct letter formation as they start to write. In Early Years 2 children begin to take home short reading books to share.

Parent Involvement

Effective communication between family and school partnerships is essential to our Early Years setting and curriculum. Respecting and responding to each other's expertise allows parents and teachers to share understandings about children's experiences in the home, school and community contexts. Teachers in the Early Years communicate in a variety of ways with parents including class newsletters, message boards, personal notes, emails and informal meetings.

During the year, there are scheduled opportunities for parents to meet with teachers such as Parent-Teacher Conferences, Curriculum Evening, Three-Way Conferences and Student -Led Conferences. Students are involved in collating portfolios to reflect their learning journey and to celebrate their acquisition of skills, knowledge, concepts and attitudes. Three times per year parents are asked to come and choose pieces of work to add to the portfolio with their child. Times are provided for parents and the teachers to discuss each child's progress. While a child's progress cannot be discussed "at the door", additional or informal parents visits are welcome at any time. Written progress reports will also be provided at the end of each semester. As with all classes at ISPP, conferences can be requested anytime throughout the year.



The Arts

Art: Children have the opportunity to use and experiment with a variety of materials, and develop coordination through drawing, painting, moulding, printing, folding, cutting, gluing and constructing. They have the opportunity to respond to their environment, to feel good about their creations and to appreciate others' art work.



Music: Elements of the programme include: Performing such as singing and playing instruments; Creating and composing; Listening.



Children sing and play a variety of songs and pieces. They experiment with sounds and rhythms. They develop an awareness and appreciation of music from different cultures.

Drama: Children have the opportunity to participate in a variety of drama activities such as mime, role play, puppet theatre, plays and simulation games. The class performs to peers, parents and the wider community.

Visual Communication: *Viewing and Presenting*

Children begin to understand that communication involves both visual and verbal features. They understand that signs and symbols carry meaning and begin to recognise a range of signs widely used in their immediate environment. During the Early Years, students are introduced to media resources, including books, audio, video, CD ROMs, computers and other tools and materials. Most of this experience takes place within the classroom environment, allowing students to proceed at their own pace and in conjunction with other learning activities. Students will also become familiar with the library procedures, including borrowing books, and will learn some fundamental computer skills, including using a mouse.



Enjoying a big book

Early Years students in the Library





Personal, Social and Physical Education

Children are encouraged and given opportunities to make choices and decisions, initiate inquiry and ask questions, work collaboratively with others and build up self-esteem and confidence. In Physical Education children become aware of the capabilities of their bodies and how they may use them effectively. They explore a number of activities that develop motor skills that may later be applied in various sports. Children learn the importance of physical fitness. They learn to follow directions, be aware of rules and work as a team. They participate in swimming lessons with a swimming teacher to learn basic technique and pool safety.

Mathematics

The mathematical process skills of problem solving, developing logic and reasoning, and communicating mathematical ideas, are learned and assessed within 5 strands. Children develop skills and knowledge in:

Number: Estimate, compare, order, encode and decode, numbers to 5 then to 10. Begin to explore the concepts of addition and subtraction through real life situations.

Measurement: Directly compare the attributes of objects and events.

Shape and Space: Explore and describe the paths, regions and boundaries of their environment. Explore, sort, classify and describe 2d and 3d shapes. Begin to use conventional location language to indicate position, e.g. on, under, beside.

Data Handling: Sort real life objects into sets by attribute. Graph real life objects and compare quantities. Identify events that are likely and unlikely.

Pattern and Function: Create, recognize, describe patterns made with real objects.

