



SWISS  
INTERNATIONAL  
SCIENTIFIC SCHOOL  
— DUBAI —

2021-2022



International Baccalaureate  
Primary Years Programme  
at SISD

## MESSAGE FROM THE PYP COORDINATORS



**SHONA GASTALDI**

PYP COORDINATOR AND DEPUTY HEAD OF PRIMARY SCHOOL

I am now in my 10th year working as an IB Educator, starting off as a teacher and grade coordinator and then part of the founding team at SISD as the PYP Coordinator. From day one I have loved the authenticity of an IBPYP education where students are active participants in their learning journey. It is holistic approach offering a curriculum where students explicitly learn what it means to be tolerant and open-minded whilst setting high expectations for academic achievement – the perfect balance of academics and wellbeing. An inquiry and concept based curriculum provides opportunities for students to take what they have learned and turn it into action – big or small this always instills a sense of purpose so that students aren't just coming to school to learn but coming to school to do something with their learning. Learning in the IBPYP builds international mindedness which can be taken for granted in our diverse and multilingual community at SISD, when actually our bilingual and STEAM programs organically steer students into experiencing cultures, languages and contexts that enable them to be global citizens. For that, I am continuously amazed at the knowledgeable and caring young people our students become.



**ANNMARIE STAKELUM**

EARLY YEARS PYP COORDINATOR

I first experienced IB curriculum when I joined SISD when it opened. I have never looked back. Being an IB teacher reinvigorated my teaching. An IB classroom has a dynamic energy and students are highly engaged in learning. Having spent the past 6 years in an EY classroom, it is amazing to see the personal growth and development of students so young. At the core of teaching and learning are the skills needed to succeed in life-thinking, social, communication, self-management and research. They become independent and confident critical thinkers, ready to meet the challenges of an ever-changing world. My daughter will be joining in Sept 2022, and I cannot wait for her to start her IB journey!

## An Overview of the IBPYP



## IB 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.

## SISD Mission Statement

SISD provides an inspiring, inclusive and challenging learning environment while celebrating academic excellence. We encourage and support all our students to become successful, global minded, enthusiastic lifelong learners who will confidently take advantage of future opportunities and help make a difference. Together with our teaching staff and parents, we support our students to develop their potential fully in a motivating, multilingual and international learning environment. SISD welcomes students of determination and gives them access to appropriate provision, resources and curricular options.



BILINGUAL



EXCELLENCE



SUSTAINABILITY



TOGETHER

## The IBPYP Essential Elements

*An inquiry and concept-based approach to student achievement and wellbeing*

Knowledge		Concepts	
<p>Facts and content students learn to know. Knowledge can be across subject areas or within subject areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Math</li> <li>• Language Arts</li> <li>• Science/STEAM</li> <li>• Moral Social and Cultural Studies</li> <li>• Physical Education</li> <li>• Art</li> <li>• Performing Arts</li> <li>• Personal and Social Education</li> <li>• Additional Language: French, German and Arabic</li> <li>• Arabic as Mother Tongue</li> <li>• Islamic Studies</li> </ul>		<p>IBPYP Key Concepts develop student <b>understanding</b> across subject areas.</p> <p>Form – What is it like? Function – How does it work? Causation – Why is it like it is? Change – How is it changing? Perspective – What are the points of view? Responsibility – What are the responsibilities? Connection – How is it connected? Reflection – How do we know?</p>	
Action and Agency	Attributes	Approaches to Learning - Skills	
<p>Student voice, choice and ownership is part of the learning experience promoting reflection, action and metacognition.</p> <p>Throughout learning and the inquiry students are facilitated to apply their knowledge, understanding and skills to meaningful action-taking.</p> <p>Examples include: Charity work, further research, educating others, supporting others, making balanced choices, connecting with the community etc.</p>	<p>IB Learner Profile: developing attitudes towards being a lifelong learner by learning to become:</p> <p>Knowledgeable Inquirers Reflective Principled Caring Open-minded Risk-takers Balanced Thinkers Communicator</p>	<p>While learning through inquiry students learn and develop 5 transdisciplinary skills:</p> <p><b>Social skills:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interpersonal relationships &amp; collaboration skills</li> <li>• Emotional intelligence</li> </ul> <p><b>Thinking skills:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Critical, creative and transferrable</li> <li>• Reflection and metacognition</li> </ul> <p><b>Communication skills:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exchanging information</li> <li>• Literacy</li> <li>• IT</li> </ul> <p><b>Research skills:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information and media literacy</li> <li>• Ethical use of media and information</li> </ul> <p><b>Self-management skills:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organization</li> <li>• State of mind</li> </ul>	

## Curriculum Benchmarking

The IBPYP framework and Scope and Sequence documents are designed as a concept-based continuum that is adaptable to the needs of the school and its community and can be applied internationally. At SISD we have enhanced this framework using benchmarks from internationally recognized curricula:

- English Language Arts, Math and Science: English National Curriculum (United Kingdom)
- French Language Arts: Plan d'études romand (Switzerland)
- German Language Arts: Lehr Plan 21 (Switzerland)
- Arabic and Islamic Studies: Ministry of Education (UAE)
- French and German as an Additional Language: Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

Our curriculum continuum identifies age related expectations as guidance for teachers, students and parents. However, student starting points are identified at the beginning of the year to ensure learning is personalised.

## Programmes

### IB Bilingual

Grade 1-3 bilingual programme follows a co-teaching model. There are two classroom teachers per class and two languages of instruction – English/French or English/German. Homeroom subjects are learned bilingually and the language of instruction is personalised to the needs of the students.

In Grade 4-5 bilingual programme there is a Week A/B rotation model. One week is learned in English and one week in French or German. This cycle of alternating weeks is repeated, and the curriculum is learned in this manner throughout the academic year.

Through our trans-linguaging approach, language is used as the medium for everyday learning and learned within an authentic context. The aim of trans-linguaging is the development of two or more languages within the understanding of one language system, as well as the appropriate knowledge of the subject content and intercultural competence. Learners can access the language in a natural setting where the languages of instruction are regularly applied and developed all around them in a bilingual setting. The language input is age-appropriate, comprehensive, and structurally language-rich contact is also action and content-oriented. Assessments are carried out in both languages.

### IB STEAM programme

In the IB STEAM-programme all homeroom subjects are learned in English. We offer a targeted STEAM programme that builds on the foundations of the IB PYP framework and will allow students wider breadth of knowledge into STEAM subjects through a trans-disciplinary approach. It is designed as a continuum across Pre-KG to Grade 5 allowing students to build their knowledge and skills from personalised starting points. Learning is focused on the design process, design thinking and enhancing computational thinking.

IB STEAM also offers the choice of learning either French or German as an additional language. During these lessons, the qualified additional language teacher communicates in the target language systematically, using an inquiry-driven approach while following a specific language acquisition curriculum. Learners build the communicative language skills and competencies they will use as global citizens. The school's unique international and multilingual environment provides students with authentic exposure to French and German, through regular daily contact with native speakers.

## Inquiry-Driven

*'The questions young people ask remind us that the search for meaning is fundamental to what it is to be human. The urge to inquire activates thinking on so many levels and in so many forms. When we seek to make sense of the world around us, we wonder, we plan, we analyse, we create, we reflect. At its very heart, inquiry is all about thinking – thinking in order to make meaning.'* **Kath Murdoch – Inquiry Learning**

At SISD we deliver a curriculum that is driven by inquiry. Teaching and learning for all subject areas is through inquiry, all teachers are inquiry teachers.

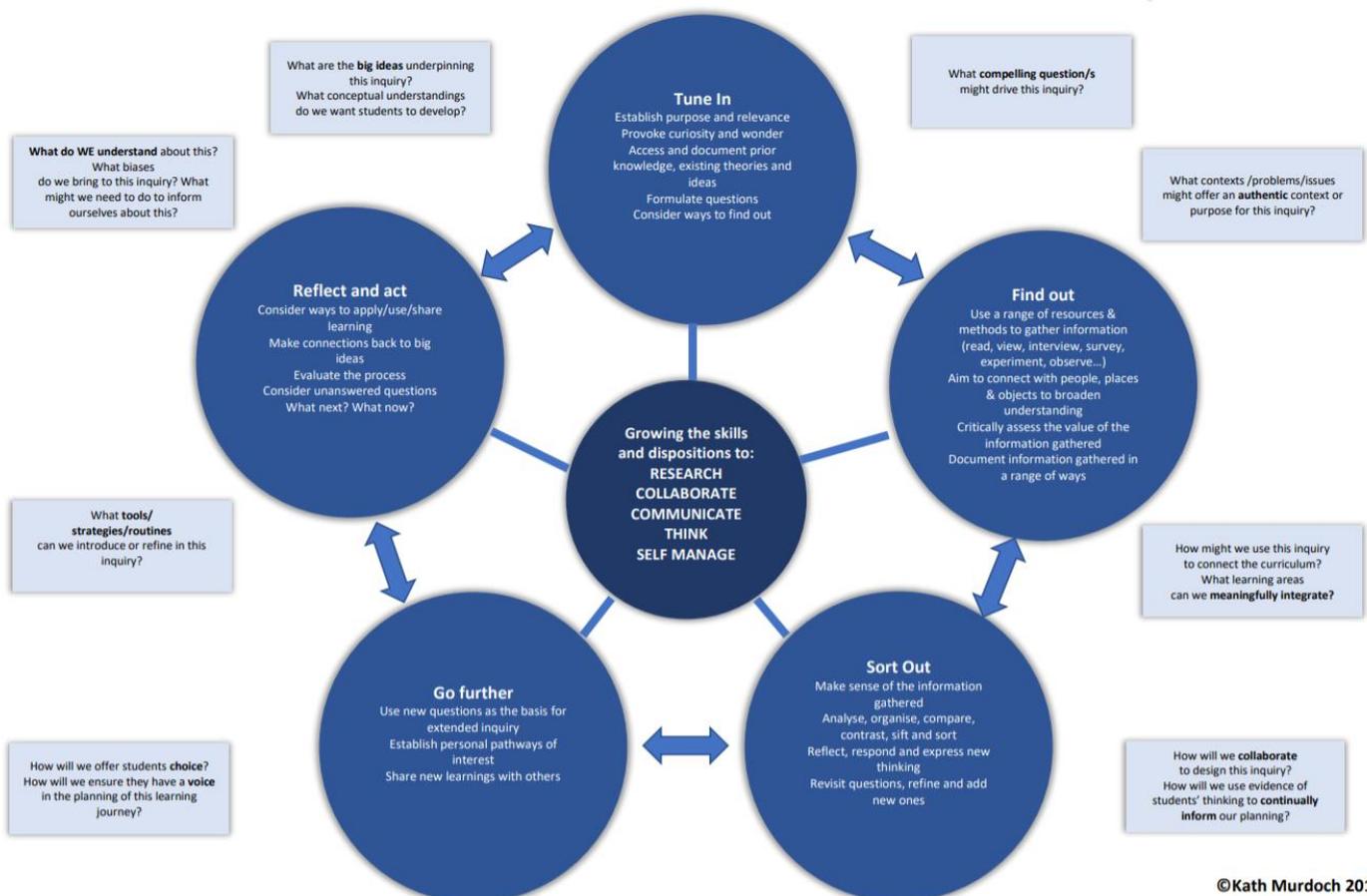
We use the Kath Murdoch Phases of Inquiry:

The phases can be seen as a cycle in which inquiry can go between different phases through the entire process. This cycle does not have a time limit and can apply to one lesson, across one week, across one unit, etc.

At SISD we use the cycle for:

- Planning
- Documenting inquiry
- Displaying inquiry

## A MODEL FOR DESIGNING A JOURNEY OF INQUIRY



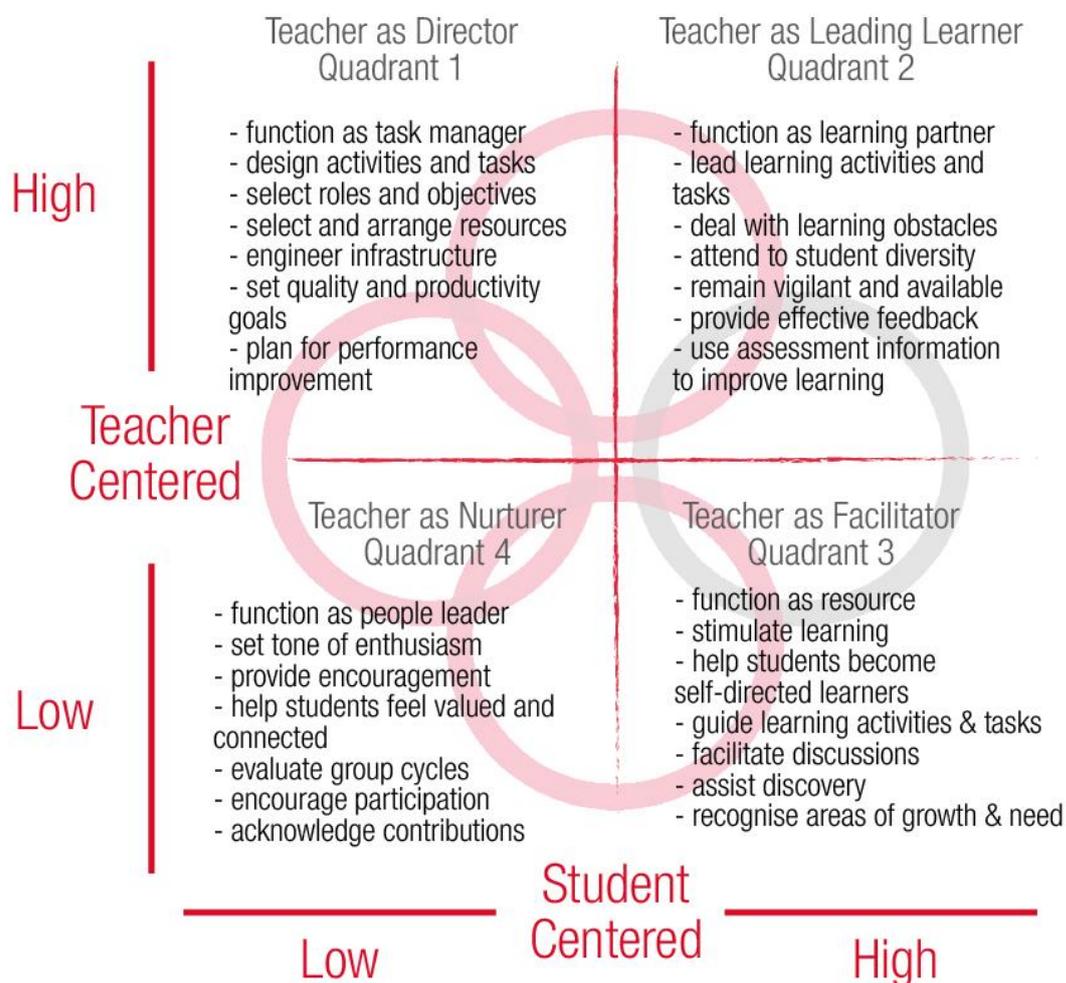
## Forms of inquiry

Inquiry driven teaching and learning should balance between students centred and teacher centred.

Across learning experiences teachers can adopt the role of:

- Director
- Leading Learner
- Facilitator
- Nurturer

Teachers should use the inquiry quadrant to reflect upon their role throughout inquiry:



Level of inquiry	Problem	Procedure	Solution
<b>Level 4 Open inquiry</b>	Student	Student	Student
<b>Level 3 Guided inquiry</b>	(teacher)	Student	Student
<b>Level 2 Structured inquiry</b>	(teacher)	(teacher)	Student
<b>Level 1 Confirmation/verification</b>	(teacher)	(teacher)	(teacher)

## Parent Partnerships

### Conferences:

There are 3 forms of conferences a year:

- 3-Way – the parent, student and teacher meet to reflect, share inquiry and set goals.
- Parent Teacher – the parent and teacher meet to discuss student progress, development and successes.
- Student Led – the student reflects, shares and sets goals with the parent and teacher. This conference is led by the student and is a celebration of their inquiry and learning across the year.

### Sharing to Parents:

Parents are invited into the classroom to experience the inquiry and learning with their child. This is normally some form of mini exhibition or learning experience with parents involved.

### Report Cards:

Report cards are sent three times a year:

- Starting points
- Semester 1
- Semester 2

Teachers comment on the student through the lens of the Learner Profile and detail their development in knowledge, concepts, skills, attitudes and action for each unit. Parents are also provided with strengths and next steps for subject areas.

### PYP Portfolio:

We use SeeSaw as the platform the PYP Portfolio. This is updated every unit. Where possible, students select pieces of work, pictures, videos etc. that reflect inquiry and progress they are proud of. All posts to SeeSaw have a learning focus and may detail the attitudes and skills demonstrated.

### Guest Speakers:

Parents are invited and welcome into classrooms as an expert or guest speaker for the unit of inquiry.

### Parent Forum:

A group of parent representatives meet with the Head of School and Head of Sections to provide feedback 3 times a year. Feedback is used as part of the further decision-making process.

### Class Parents:

All classes have a parent representative who works as the communicator between classroom teachers and parents. This role has agreements and expectations to focus on maintaining morale and positive relationships.