



**THE  
INTERNATIONAL  
SCHOOL OF PENANG  
(UPLANDS)**

**IB PRIMARY YEARS PROGRAMME**

## WHAT IS THE PYP?

In the Primary School at Uplands, we are proud to offer the Primary Years Programme (PYP), an inquiry-based curriculum for students between the ages of 3 to 12. The PYP is one of the three programmes offered by the International Baccalaureate (IB) and is an international, transdisciplinary programme designed to foster the development of the whole child in the classroom and also in the world outside. The PYP combines the best research and practice from a range of national systems, with a wealth of knowledge and experience from international schools, to create a relevant and engaging educational framework for all children.

The PYP caters very much for the individual in that the students are given opportunities to follow their own enquiries, develop their thinking skills and become independent learners. We are also aware that different children learn in different ways and the activities we provide accommodate these differences.

### INQUIRERS

We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.

### KNOWLEDGEABLE

We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.

### THINKERS

We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyse and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.

### COMMUNICATORS

We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.

### PRINCIPLED

We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.



## THE PYP LEARNER PROFILE

The aim of all IB programmes is to develop internationally minded people who, recognising their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world.

The PYP strives to help children develop an international perspective and this philosophy is expressed in a series of desirable attributes and traits. Taken together, these qualities create a profile of a PYP student. The Learner Profile is central to the work of the PYP. At Uplands, the ten attributes are to be found in every child's classroom and attention is drawn to specific elements in each 'unit of inquiry'. More generally, the profile underpins the awarding of 'leaves' for our 'Growing International Students' tree in the main presentation area.



### OPEN-MINDED

We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.

### CARING

We show empathy, compassion and respect. We have a commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.

### RISK-TAKERS

We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.

### BALANCED

We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives - intellectual, physical, and emotional - to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognise our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.

### REFLECTIVE

We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experiences. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.

## PYP AND INQUIRY

Since its inception, the PYP has been infused with a spirit of inquiry. In seeking the answer to the question, 'What do we want the students to understand and be able to do?', there is a commitment to refining what is significant and relevant, and to quality rather than quantity. We believe that students will become more enduringly skilful when the learning is authentic and in context and through structured inquiry, they will have opportunities to build on their existing knowledge and make new connections through the exploration of 'big ideas'.

## WHAT DOES INQUIRY LOOK LIKE?

- exploring, wondering, questioning
- experiment and playing with possibilities
- making connections between previous learning and current learning
- making predictions and acting purposefully to see what happens
- collecting data and reporting findings
- deepening understanding of concepts
- researching and seeking information
- taking and defending a position
- solving problems in a variety of ways

## SKILLS

Those capabilities that the students need to demonstrate to succeed in a changing, challenging world, which may be disciplinary or transdisciplinary in nature.

## ATTITUDES

Dispositions that are expressions of fundamental values, beliefs and feelings about learning, the environment and people.

## ACTION

Demonstrations of deeper learning in responsible behaviour through responsible action; a manifestation in practice of the other essential elements.

## CONCEPTS AND THE PYP

The chain of inquiry begins with unpacking of central ideas through eight fundamental concepts, expressed as key questions. The questions act as a catalyst to propel the process of inquiry and help encourage the students to have ownership of their learning. These concepts drive the research units - called units of inquiry - which teachers and students design themselves.



Inquiry involves an active engagement with the environment in an effort to make sense of the world. An explicit expectation of the PYP is that successful inquiry will lead to responsible action initiated by the student as a result of the learning process.

## WHAT DO WE WANT TO LEARN?

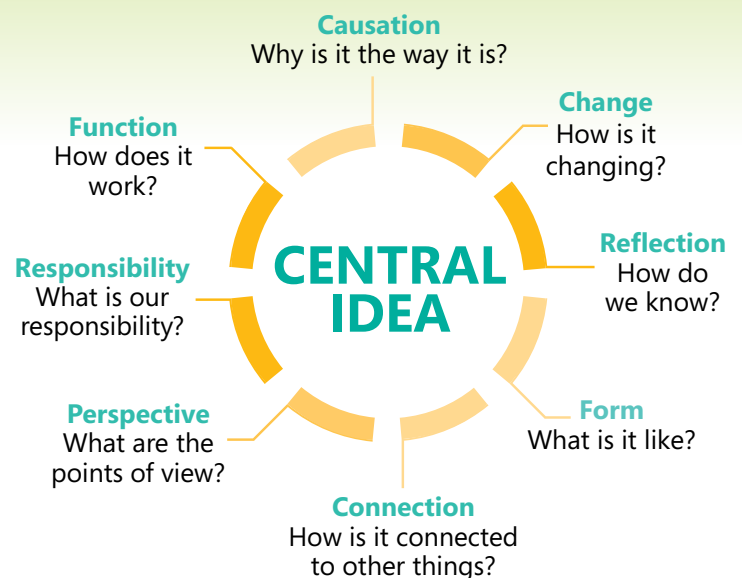
In the PYP, a balance is sought between acquisition of essential knowledge and skills, development of conceptual understanding, demonstration of positive attitudes, and taking of responsible action. In terms of achieving this balance, the five essential elements of the written curriculum are emphasised.

### KNOWLEDGE

Significant, relevant content that we wish the students to explore and know about, taking into consideration their prior experience and understanding.

### CONCEPTS

Powerful ideas that have relevance within the subject areas but also transcend them and that students must explore and re-explore in order to develop a coherent, in-depth understanding.



## WHAT IS THE CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK?

Six transdisciplinary themes provide the framework for the exploration of knowledge.



### Who We Are

An exploration of the nature of the self; of our beliefs and values; of personal, physical, mental, social and spiritual health; of our families, friends, communities, and cultures; of our rights and responsibilities; of what it means to be human.

### Where We Are in Place and Time

An exploration of our orientation in place and time; or our personal histories; of history and geography from local and global perspectives; of our homes and journeys; of the discoveries, explorations and migrations of humankind; of the contributions of individuals and civilisations.

### How We Express Ourselves

An exploration of the ways in which we discover and express our nature, ideas, feelings, beliefs and values through language and the arts.

### How the World Works

An exploration of the physical and material world; of nature and human-made phenomena; of the world of science and technology.

### How We Organise Ourselves

An exploration of human systems and communities; of the world at work, its nature and its value, of employment and unemployment and their impact on us and the world around us.

### Sharing the Planet

An inquiry into rights and responsibilities in the struggle to share finite resources with other people and with other living things; communities and the relationships within and between them; access to equal opportunities; peace and conflict resolution.

Subject areas are explored through these themes and in the process students develop an understanding of important concepts, acquire essential skills and knowledge, develop particular attitudes and learn to take socially responsible action.

## SKILLS: WHAT DO WE WANT STUDENTS TO BE ABLE TO DO?

Within their learning throughout the programme, students acquire and apply a set of transdisciplinary skills:

### THINKING SKILLS

Acquisition of knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation, dialectical thought, metacognition.

### SOCIAL SKILLS

Accepting responsibility, respecting others, cooperating, resolving conflict, group decision-making, adopting a variety of group roles.

### COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing, presenting, non-verbal communication.

### SELF-MANAGEMENT SKILLS

Gross motor skills, fine motor skills, spatial awareness, organisation, time management, safety, healthy lifestyle, codes of behaviour, informed choices.

### RESEARCH SKILLS

Formulating questions, observing, planning, collecting data, recording data, organising data, interpreting data, presenting research findings.

These skills are valuable, not only in units of inquiry, but also for any teaching and learning that goes within the classroom, and in life outside the school. These skills are best developed in the context of authentic situations such as those offered through the units of inquiry.

## ASSESSMENT IN THE PYP: HOW WILL WE KNOW WHAT WE HAVE LEARNT?

Assessment involves the gathering and analysis of information about student performance and is designed to inform practice - therefore assessment is central to all teaching and learning.

All assessment of student work in the PYP is carried out by teachers; there are no externally set examinations or externally moderated work. Assessment in the PYP is of two types:

**FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT** is interwoven with daily learning and helps teachers and students find out what the students already know in order to plan for the next stage of learning.

**SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT** happens at the end of the teaching and learning process and gives the students opportunities to demonstrate what they have learnt.

The PYP promotes the use of a range and balance of school-based assessment and feedback techniques, including student / teacher / parent conferences, writing samples, structured observations and performance tasks assessed by the teacher and by the students themselves.

Effective assessment allows parents to:

- See evidence of student learning and development
- Develop an understanding of student progress
- Provide opportunities to support and celebrate learning

Teachers and students are guided by these six themes as they design units of inquiry.

## PORTFOLIOS

One method of collecting and storing information that can be used to document and assess student progress and achievement is the portfolio. A portfolio is a celebration of an active mind at work and contains evidence of learning, growth, higher-order thinking, creativity and reflection. It is used to show the development of knowledge, conceptual understanding, attitudes, skills and action over a period of time. The students share their portfolios with their teachers and parents during our 3-way conferences.

## THE PYP EXHIBITION

In the final year of the PYP, students participate in the PYP Exhibition - a culminating project that requires each student to identify, investigate and offer solutions to real-life issues or problems. It also provides students the opportunity to demonstrate independence and responsibility for their own learning, synthesising and applying their learning of previous years, and reflecting on their journey through the PYP.

## ATTITUDES: WHAT DO WE WANT STUDENTS TO FEEL, VALUE AND DEMONSTRATE?

While recognising the importance of concepts, knowledge and skills, the PYP believes that these alone do not make an internationally educated person. It is vital that we also focus on the development of positive attitudes towards people, environment and learning.

## ACTION: HOW DO WE WANT STUDENTS TO ACT?

An explicit expectation of the PYP is that successful inquiry will lead to responsible action, initiated by the student as a result of the learning process. Students are encouraged to reflect, make informed choices and take action that will help their peers and the wider community. Through such service, students are able to grow both personally and socially, developing skills such as co-operation, problem solving, conflict resolution and creative and critical thinking.

## THE PYP CLASSROOM

The classroom is a place of variety and balance. Balance is seen in the attention given both to the pursuit of understanding and to the acquisition of knowledge and essential skills. Various teaching and assessment strategies and resources are used by teachers to meet the needs of each student.

Students are actively engaged in planning and assessing their own learning. They are supportive of each other and learning to establish their personal set of beliefs and values. They are empowered to do their best, for themselves, in order to contribute to the learning and well-being of others. A PYP classroom is a lively place, characterised by collaborative and purposeful activity. It is also a reflective place, where thoughtful consideration of issues, problems and successes is valued highly. Above all, and in summary, a PYP classroom is an intelligent place. It is a place in which the easy option is seldom sought and where the expectations are high. It is an environment in which learning knows no limits.

We look forward to welcoming you to Uplands.

WE WANT STUDENTS TO DEVELOP	ATTITUDES
TOLERANCE	Feeling sensitive towards differences and diversity in the world and being responsive to the needs of others.
RESPECT	Respecting themselves, others and the world around them.
INTEGRITY	Having integrity and a firm sense of fairness and honesty.
INDEPENDENCE	Thinking and acting independently, making their own judgements, based on reasoned principles and being able to defend their judgements.
ENTHUSIASM	Enjoy learning.
EMPATHY	Imaginatively projecting themselves into another's situation, in order to understand his/her thoughts, reasoning and emotions.
CURIOSITY	Being curious about the nature of learning and of the world, its people and cultures.
CREATIVITY	Being creative and imaginative in their thinking and in their approach to problems and dilemmas.
CO-OPERATION	Co-operating, collaborating, and leading or following as the situation demands.
CONFIDENCE	Feeling confident in their ability as learners, having the courage to take risks, applying what they have learned and making appropriate decisions and choices.
COMMITMENT	Being committed to their learning, persevering and showing self-discipline and responsibility.
APPRECIATION	Appreciating the wonder and beauty of the world and its people.

## GUIDING STATEMENTS

The International School of Penang (Uplands) is a not-for-profit, co-educational and non-denominational day and boarding school for students aged between 4- 18 years old.

### VISION

To provide an exemplar international education in a dynamic multi-cultural environment, encouraging all school members to be active learners and engage with the local and wider community.

### MISSION

To be an international community that upholds the School's values, nurturing its members to become globally minded citizens.

### SCHOOL MOTTO

Respect for Self. Respect for Others.

## SAFE SCHOOL COMMITMENT



At Uplands, we are committed to ensuring all members of our community are provided with a safe environment, enabling them to achieve, thrive and develop. It is our stated intention to be proactive and diligent in ensuring all members of our community are kept safe from exploitation, abuse or harm.

*Created by the Uplands Community January – July 2016*

## SCHOOL VALUES

**RESPECT:** At Uplands, we embody a culture of trust and support through empathy and an understanding of different beliefs. We celebrate the achievements, talents and efforts of our community.

**INQUIRY:** At Uplands, we encourage all members of our community to be inquirers and embrace creativity. We are innovative, reflective and enthusiastic life-long learners.

**COLLABORATION:** At Uplands, we engage in open-minded dialogue and active listening based on honesty, transparency and mutual respect, where every individual has something valuable to contribute. We work together to achieve common goals.

**RESILIENCE:** At Uplands, we provide an environment for personal and academic challenge. We praise perseverance and the willingness to be open to new experiences.

**BALANCE:** At Uplands, we aspire to maintain intellectual, physical and emotional balance. We cultivate and incorporate mindfulness and a positive attitude in all our decisions, actions and interactions with others.

**DIVERSITY:** At Uplands, we celebrate international mindedness, and embrace different perspectives. We are understanding and open-minded.

**INTEGRITY:** At Uplands, we expect all members of our community to be honest, principled and lead by example. We aim to create a safe and supportive environment where individuals reflect on and take responsibility for their actions in a spirit of decency and fairness.



## The International School of Penang (Uplands)

ESTABLISHED 1955 THE I.S.P. SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION (No. 2597 - V)

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An examination centre for Cambridge International Examinations, Edexcel International, The International Baccalaureate, Member of The Federation of British International Schools in Asia, Member of The Association of International Malaysian Schools and Member of The Boarding Schools' Association.

### WE AT UPLANDS

#### Think

The basis for learning is the generation, development and appreciation of ideas.

A lively, inquiring mind is essential for effective learning.

#### Learn

The development of knowledge, skills, feelings and attitudes is at the heart of learning. Learning is a life-long process.

Broad-based and balanced learning opportunities and experiences educate the whole person.

#### Care

Through positive values, self-esteem and understanding, we respect and appreciate the value of our diverse community.

A global perspective will develop an understanding of the major world issues.

#### Strive

Everyone must be afforded the opportunity to achieve success.

It is right to celebrate success and encourage excellence.

### EXAMPLES OF THIS INCLUDE

- The curriculum requires people to inquire, research and explore ideas.
- Problems are analysed from a variety of different perspectives.
- People are encouraged to make connections and establish the relationships between ideas.
- Adaptation to new ideas, technologies and situations is encouraged.
- People are encouraged to be critical, creative and reflective.
- People learn to exercise imagination, initiative and flexibility.
- All staff are encouraged to participate in personal and professional development programmes.
- Curriculum documents identify key learning objectives and concepts in order to ensure continuity and progression.
- All parts of the curriculum are equally valued as essential learning areas.
- Students enjoy opportunities beyond the normal classroom environment to enrich and extend themselves.
- The School is a secure, supportive and attractive learning environment. Students participate in a range of social and cultural activities.
- The School community believes in its motto: Respect for Self. Respect for Others.
- People are encouraged to look beyond the boundaries of their own situation.
- Consideration is given to the impact made on our lives by technology.
- Barriers to learning are identified and minimised.
- Broad educational goals that recognise a wide range of human potential are established.
- Achievement and success are embodied in the ethos of the School. Effort is acknowledged and respected.