



أكاديمية قطر
Qatar Academy

عضو في مؤسسة قطر
Member of Qatar Foundation

PRIMARY SCHOOL HANDBOOK 2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR

WELCOME TO QATAR ACADEMY PRIMARY SCHOOL



SAFE

RESPECTFUL

RESPONSIBLE LEARNERS

Curriculum

The Primary Years Program (PYP)

The Primary Year Programme (PYP) is an international curriculum framework designed for children 3 to 12 years of age. It combines the best research and practice from a range of national systems with a wealth of knowledge and experience from international schools to create an engaging, relevant, challenging and significant educational programme.

The PYP applies a comprehensive in-depth inquiry-based approach that engages the learner in hands-on active learning. Through the process of inquiry, the learners gain knowledge as they work to understand and create meaning from real life experiences. It is an international model designed for concurrency of learning and in student learning styles, teaching methodologies and assessment strategies.

The PYP framework is composed of a transdisciplinary model where global themes are inquired both in and outside of the classroom. The subject areas are integrated providing learners opportunities to make connections throughout their learning.

IB Learner Profile

At the core of the PYP is the Learner Profile. These characteristics were identified by the developers of all four International Baccalaureate programs and provide a common core to the IB continuum. Students and teachers often refer to these 10 attributes and strive actively on a daily basis to be:

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.

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 challenge 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 recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.

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

Essential Elements of the PYP

The PYP has compiled essential elements which are used in the classroom to aim towards a balance in the program of study. Below you will find the essential elements which are used throughout a PYP classroom:

- Knowledge
- Concepts
- Approaches to Learning (skills)
- Action

Each essential element contributes to the social and cognitive development of a child. These essential elements create the foundation of the PYP and set it apart from other thematic approaches to learning.

Knowledge - What do we want the students to know?

As PYP is a transdisciplinary program most subjects are taught in our units of inquiry. We make sure that all students work towards reaching grade level content and skills within the QAD curriculum

A school year consists of six units of inquiry. These units are based upon a central idea, which the teacher and the students explore for a number of weeks, usually 4-6. Both students and parents need to be actively working with the central idea during the current unit. Doing so helps the students deepen their understanding and inquire deeper into the unit at hand.

The central ideas are formulated to fit under the six different transdisciplinary themes that are chosen from the IB for their global significance and illustrating the commonalities of human existence. The transdisciplinary themes are considered essential in the context of a program of international education.

The PYP transdisciplinary themes:

- Who we are
- Where we are in place and time
- How we express ourselves
- How we organize ourselves
- How the world works
- Sharing the planet

All science and social studies education will be taught inside the framework of the units and often many other subjects will be part of them as well. If some of the subject specific goals and skills don't fit under the unit work, they will be taught as stand alone topics.

Concepts - What do we want the students to understand?

The teacher and students look at the inquiry at hand through different conceptual lenses, to give the students chances to make connections over the subject boundaries. Teachers choose two or three concepts for each unit that they think supports that unit, and they will make sure that all key concepts are used during the year.

The PYP Key Concepts:

- Form
- Function
- Responsibility
- Reflection
- Causation
- Connection
- Change
- Perspective

Approaches to Learning (skills) - What do we want the students to be able to do?

The importance of developing subject specific skills as well as skills that transcend subject boundaries is identified in the IB curriculum. It is important for the student to not only learn certain skills, but also to understand them and to be able to connect skills in different subject areas to each other. When studying a certain unit of inquiry, the teacher identifies which skills will be necessary for the students to develop and understand. The students will also have time to reflect over the skills and to what extent they think the skills were applied

in that certain unit of inquiry. Below you can find the specific skills the IB has determined essential for the development of the student.

Thinking Skills	Social Skills	Communication Skills	Self-management Skills	Research Skills
Acquisition of knowledge	Accepting responsibility	Listening	Gross motor skills	Formulating questions
Comprehension	Respecting others	Speaking	Fine motor skills	Observing
Application	Cooperating	Reading	Organization	Planning
Analysis	Resolving conflict	Writing	Time management	Collecting data
Synthesis	Group decision-making	Viewing	Safety	Recording data
Evaluation	Adopting a variety of group roles	Presenting	Healthy lifestyle	Organizing data
Dialectical thinking		Non-verbal communication	Codes of behavior	Interpreting data
Metacognition			Informed choices	Presenting research findings

Action - How do we want the students to act?

The PYP believes that successful inquiry will lead to responsible student action. As an IB school, it is our obligation to make sure that there is opportunity for action within the unit of inquiry. Teachers guide students in choosing action, and acting and reflecting over their action in order to make a difference in the world. The form of action will of course look very different depending on the grade level. Action can and will take place both guided in the classroom and independently elsewhere. As parents, we would like you to report to the class teacher anything that the child has said or done as a reaction to something learned at school, especially if it shows that your child has developed a sense of sensitivity towards bigger issues in the society. Action as a result of an inquiry can take place anywhere and anytime. Therefore, teachers would be very happy if you told them about the actions the students take at home or outside of school, as it is powerful evidence of one of the essential elements of the PYP.

Other key features include:

International perspective: In order to make the most of the diversity of background and experience of our students, the curriculum combines the best practice from education systems around the world and gives the Qatar Academy students a global view of the world.

Inquiry-based: our teaching methods build on a student's individual knowledge and interests, and emphasize learning how to learn and how to find out.

Integrated: the subject areas of Mathematics, Literacy, Science, Social Studies, PE, Music, Art and Arabic are taught through interdisciplinary themes in order to help the students make connections between the subjects, thereby facilitating more effective learning.