



AARHUS  
INTERNATIONAL  
SCHOOL

# **DEN PÆDAGOGISKE LÆREPLAN**

# **THE PEDAGOGICAL CURRICULUM**





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## Early Years Programme

### DEN PÆDAGOGISKE LÆREPLAN THE PEDAGOGICAL CURRICULUM

#### **International Baccalaureate (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.*

[www.ibo.org](http://www.ibo.org)

#### **Purpose of the Strengthened Pedagogical Curriculum**

According to the Ministry of Children and Education, Børne- og Undervisningsministeriet, "The pedagogical curriculum supports teaching staff and management in creating a nurturing pedagogical learning environment for, and with, the children (2018). The Pedagogical Curriculum plan defines the framework and the shared vision of the pedagogical work which supports each individual child's development and which is based on a foundation of play.

All kindergarten programmes in Denmark are required to develop and maintain a written pedagogical curriculum plan based on the provisions of the Day Care Services Act (dagtilbudsloven). As an international kindergarten running the recognised International Baccalaureate (IB) Primary Years Programme (PYP), Aarhus International School (AIS) implements a play-based programme which strives to lay the foundation for future learning. The Early Years Programme at AIS is focused on developing each young learner's individual interests and is built on the premise that that young children are constantly and actively constructing their own meaning. This provides a framework which supports the development of

inquirers, whilst nurturing their basic skills and needs, thus providing a sound beginning to the continuum of learning that goes on throughout the Primary Years. In this spirit, the Pedagogical Curriculum Plan is a living written curriculum plan, which meets the requirements of Day Care Services Act (dagtilbudsløven) and is in alignment with the shared philosophy within Aarhus Kommune. It represents collaboration between teaching staff, parents/guardians, and the Pedagogical Leadership team at AIS. Through this document we strive to create a clear connection between the Early Years Programme at AIS and how we reach and facilitate an understanding of the shared pedagogical approach which is required by all Danish kindergartens and which adheres to the recommendations within Aarhus Kommune. The Pedagogical Curriculum Plan will be reflected upon, adjusted and updated on an ongoing basis.

This document has been prepared in the unique spirit of the IB Learner Profile and the core values of Aarhus International School. The development of this document is directly linked to the AIS mission statement and values:

<b><i>Our Mission</i></b>	<b><i>Our Values</i></b>
<i>AIS provides a high-quality international education, which enables students to become socially and environmentally responsible citizens, enthusiastic inquirers and lifelong learners in a challenging and nurturing environment.</i>	Responsible Caring Respectful



# IB learner profile

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

As IB learners we strive 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 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 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.

The IB learner profile represents 10 attributes valued by IB World Schools. We believe these attributes, and others like them, can help individuals and groups become responsible members of local, national and global communities.



## **Who Are We? Hvem er vi?**

Aarhus International School (AIS), formerly known as Aarhus Academy for Global Education (AAGE), founded in 2011, is a private kindergarten and day school for students of expatriate and Danish families. All instruction and interaction at AIS is conducted in English, although our young students come from a wide variety of international, cultural and linguistic backgrounds. As an International Baccalaureate (IB) World school, both the Middle Years Programme (January 2016) and the Primary Years Programme (June 2016) are fully authorized.

The Early Years Programme consists of our PYP1 (3 years old), PYP2 (4 years old) and PYP3 (5 years old) classes and prepares students to transition into the school-aged programme in the calendar year they turn 6, in accordance with Danish laws. In some school years, AIS offers multi-age classrooms (mixed 3-4 year old students, for example) to meet the needs of our school community. The Early Years Programme at AIS maintains a close relationship with Aarhus Kommune and follows all relevant local guidelines. Kindergarten school hours are 8.30-14.00 daily (part-time programme), and we also offer a full-time programme from 7.00-17.00. During school hours, the children are divided by age into classes, but during morning supervision and After School Activities (14:00-17:00), the children are typically not divided by age groups and therefore have the opportunity to meet and play with peers from across classes and age groups.

## **Leadership & Educational Staff (Pedagogical Personnel)**

The Early Years Programme is an essential part of Aarhus International School and solidifies our ability to cater to the international community in Aarhus and students from the ages of 3-16. The Early Years Department is organised and led by the AIS Head of School in collaboration with our Kindergarten Administrator and is supported in curriculum development by our Primary Years Programme Coordinator. Each class is led by a trained and certified Early Years Teacher, and staffed with a Teaching Assistant and ASA Support Team.



## ***The Strengthened Pedagogical Curriculum: The shared pedagogical basis and the six curriculum themes***

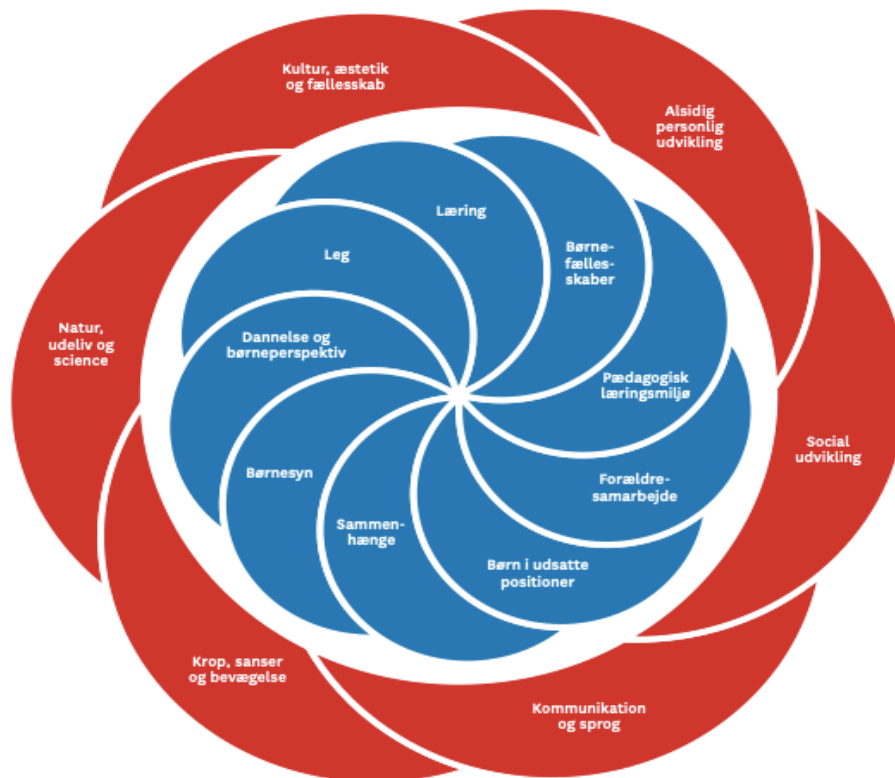
In Denmark, there are shared responsibilities and understandings which all 0-6 programmes must follow in order to develop the wellbeing and learning of all children. The pedagogical curriculum foundation is published by The Ministry of Children and Education (Børne- og undervisningsministeriet). The Early Years Programme at AIS has developed a unique written pedagogical curriculum which consists of:

- A common pedagogical foundation based on a number of key elements which form the foundation for working with children's well-being, learning, development and education in the day care and kindergarten settings. These elements are shared and recognisable across all kindergartens in Denmark and lay a foundation for pedagogical work in kindergartens.
- The six curriculum themes, including broad pedagogical goals for the connection between the learning environment and children's learning. These curriculum themes are also shared by all kindergarten programmes in Denmark. Our plan takes into consideration how these themes and the Danish Pedagogical Curriculum are tied to and addressed by the framework of the IB Primary Years Programme.

### **The Strengthened Pedagogical Curriculum**

The common pedagogical foundation and the six curriculum themes

#### **Den styrkede pædagogiske læreplan** Det fælles pædagogiske grundlag og de seks læreplanstemaer



## Legal Background

The pedagogical curriculum must be prepared on the basis of a common pedagogical basis.

*Dagtilbudslovens § 8, stk. 2*

### Elements in the common pedagogical foundation:

Focus Area	Description in Danish	Description in English
<b>Børnesynet</b> <i>Our Perception of the Child</i>	Det at være barn har værdi i sig selv.	Being a child has value in itself.
<b>Dannelse og børneperspektiv</b> <i>Education and the Child's Perspective</i>	Børn på fx 2 år og 4 år skal høres og tages alvorligt som led i starten på en dannelsesproces og demokratisk forståelse.	Children of eg 2 years and 4 years must be heard and taken seriously at the beginning of their developmental process and as they form a democratic understanding.
<b>Leg</b> <i>Play</i>	Legen har en værdi i sig selv og skal være en gennemgående del af et dagtilbud.	Play has a value in itself and must be a recurring part of a day care offer.
<b>Læring</b> <i>Learning</i>	Læring skal forstås bredt, og læring sker fx gennem leg, relationer, planlagte aktiviteter og udforskning af naturen og ved at blive udfordret.	Learning must be understood broadly, and learning takes place, for example, through play, relationships, planned activities, exploration of nature and by being challenged with new experiences.
<b>Børnefællesskaber</b> <i>Children's Communities</i>	Leg, dannelse og læring sker i børnefællesskaber, som det pædagogiske personale fastsætter rammerne for.	Play, education and learning take place in children's communities, for which the pedagogical staff sets the framework.
<b>Pædagogisk læringsmiljø</b> <i>The Pedagogical Learning Environment</i>	Et trygt og stimulerende pædagogisk læringsmiljø er udgangspunkt for arbejdet med børns læring.	A safe and stimulating pedagogical learning environment is the starting point for working with children's learning.
<b>Forældresamarbejde</b> <i>Parent Collaboration/Cooperation</i>	Et godt forældresamarbejde har fokus på at styrke både barnets trivsel og barnets læring.	A good parent collaboration focuses on strengthening both the child's well-being and the child's learning.
<b>Børn i udsatte positioner</b> <i>Children in Vulnerable Situations</i>	Alle børn skal udfordres og opleve mestring i lege og aktiviteter.	All children must be challenged and experience successes in games and activities.
<b>Sammenhæng med børnehaveklassen</b> <i>The Transition between the Early Years Programme and the School Programme</i>	Sammenhæng handler blandt andet om at understøtte børns sociale kompetencer, tro på egne evner, nysgerrighed mv.	Transition to further education, among other things, is about supporting children's social skills, belief in their own abilities, curiosity, etc.

*(Den styrkede pædagogiske læreplan: Rammer og indhold, pg. 14)*

## The Pedagogical Curriculum of the Early Years Programme at Aarhus International School



### 01: Børnesynet - Our Perception of the Child

The International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme focuses on the rapid development of each and every young learner across the physical, emotional, social and cognitive domains. At AIS we recognize that experiences during the early years lay the foundation for all future learning. We focus on recognising the unique nature of each learner and valuing each child as an individual. We meet children at their unique developmental stage and level, and provide a safe, happy and predictable learning environment, which focuses on routine and structure. We recognise that learning is a constant process, and we create learning experiences and routines to guide and nurture the development of our young students.

Children are constantly inquiring into the world around themselves and constructing their own meaning; they are natural, active learners and inquirers. In the Early Years Programme at AIS we strive to nurture this curiosity, while providing learners with the skills needed to lay a sound foundation to the continuum of learning that goes on throughout the Primary Years.

We strive to provide a setting where young learners feel comfortable and safe so that they are able to express themselves and satisfy their natural curiosity. We take pride in each individual child, as well as the variety of diverse cultures represented in our Early Years Programme, amongst students and staff alike. We celebrate the uniqueness of all learners and support them as they begin developing language and academic skills to prepare them for their school years ahead. We also provide the support and space for our young learners to develop their skills in the English language, as many children join with little or no prior exposure to English. (IBO, "The Learner," 2018)

At AIS, our Early Years Programme is taught by qualified, internationally experienced Early Years teachers and supported by teaching assistants. Our learning environment offers many opportunities for students to engage in an inquiry-based programme, with a variety of resources and experiences that extend and challenge their personal potential across all domains.



### 02: Dannelse og børneperspektiv - Education and the Child's Perspective

As our young learners are in a constant process of development across a variety of domains, we use the values of the IB Learner Profile and of Aarhus International School as our foundation. We focus on helping students to develop and use their voice in a democratic environment, which encourages the development of learner agency. Agency can be described as a sense of self-responsibility or playing an active part in one's own and others' learning. Learner agency is tied closely to a student's belief in his or her own ability to succeed; this is also known as self-efficacy.



PYP students develop and display agency as they use their own initiative and free will, and take responsibility and ownership of their learning. They direct their learning with a strong sense of identity and self-belief, and in conjunction with others, thereby building a sense of community and awareness of the opinions, values and needs of others. These beliefs underpin our pedagogical initiatives with students and impact the development of our written curriculum and the implementation of our Units of Inquiry. These beliefs are also closely and intentionally tied to the democratic principles and understandings which are a common part of Danish law. Finally, these beliefs are in alignment with the mission of Aarhus International School, and of the International Baccalaureate, which strives to prepare, "active, compassionate and lifelong learners."

As an example of how we encourage learner agency at AIS, we can point to flexibility of our curriculum. As students engage in Units of Inquiry across a variety of relevant themes, they are also given an opportunity to use their voice in the development of their learning, make choices in their learning, and therefore take ownership over the learning process. The Early Years teachers at AIS are particularly skilled at observing students, helping them develop reflective questions, supporting their inquiries and responding through flexibility in learning experiences. If a particular group of students is very interested in a certain topic, or concept, there is time, space and flexibility to explore what is relevant, important and engaging - even if it may not have been an original part of the plan. On a regular basis, students play an active role in shared decision-making across a variety of areas in the Early Years programme.



### 03: Leg - Play



Play is a foundational feature of any child's learning and development, and one of the central features of an IB Early Years education. Play is also a connecting principle across all kindergarten programmes in Denmark. Play provides benefits for cognitive, social, emotional and physical development for students from all socio-economic, cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Play also offers authentic opportunities for students to begin their exploration and development of the IB Learner Profile.

In the Early Years Programme at AIS, play is the primary driver of inquiry, and allows learners the opportunity to construct meaning. Play is essential in supporting all areas of development and occurs throughout the entire Early Years environment at AIS, from the early mornings through to the end of the day. Through play and the IB PYP curriculum framework, our young learners have the opportunity to begin developing their Approaches to Learning skills and to connect with a variety of areas of development, including:

- receptive and cognitive skills (listening, thinking, analyzing, and attention, amongst others),
- representational abilities (using symbolic systems and constructing meaning through language),

- and relational abilities (working together, taking turns, respecting others, and solving conflicts, for example).

*(IBO, "The Learner," 2018)*

At AIS, we recognise that play is highly adaptive, involves choice, promotes agency and provides rigorous opportunities to inquire into important concepts and personal interests. Through play, children actively construct meaning from their interactions with their physical and social worlds. These meanings, models or ideas are revisited and revised in light of new experiences and further learning. In play, children construct, test, confirm or revise these ideas by themselves or with their peers, constantly adapting their personal models of how the world works.

Teachers interact with students while observing, monitoring and documenting their learning through play. During uninterrupted time for play, teachers initiate a range of intentional learning experiences, offering support, feedback and guidance.

Teachers in the PYP Early Years support play through:

- creating and maintaining engaging learning spaces
- scheduling uninterrupted time for play in both indoor and outdoor spaces
- noticing students' emerging thinking processes, interests and theories, and responding in ways that extend learning
- monitoring and documenting students' learning and development during play, and offering appropriate scaffolded learning experiences for individual students and small groups.

*(IBO, "The Learner," 2018)*



At AIS, we also focus on providing a wide range of opportunities for play and learning through play across all of our subject areas - language, math, Unit of Inquiry, Performing Arts, Visual Arts, and PSPE. Sensory play, role play, individual and collaborative play are just a few examples of the types of play we explore through our programme. We use the opportunity to utilise play as a vehicle for learning, and we are always working to find the right balance for our young learners and responding to their unique needs throughout the learning process.

When appropriate, we also look for opportunities to use technology in play and throughout our learning. This helps to nurture natural curiosity, as well as to provide the opportunity for investigating technology through play by touching, seeing, and hearing. Each classroom in the Early Years Programme at AIS is setup with a Smartboard or projection system, which allows teachers to share and expose students to a variety of engaging and age-appropriate online learning resources. Each classroom also has access to a set of class iPads, which can be used for play and in the learning process, when guided by the teacher.

#### 04: Børnefællesskaber - Children's Communities



In the Early Years Programme, the inclusive nature of our learning community is a defining feature of our programme and school. Everyone has the right and the opportunity to be a part of the learning community, and we place significant emphasis on helping the children find their unique place within the group. For some children, this is a natural and easy process, whereas other children need guidance and support. The teachers, teaching assistants and ASA staff are all skilled in observing the development of the play and the learning process. As necessary, teachers and support staff intervene and guide students, but in general we also believe in providing the opportunity and space for each child to have an active voice and role in the development of the larger class and school community. Because of the unique makeup of the community at AIS, we naturally recognise that although we may come from different countries and cultures, and speak different languages, we all have the right to be seen, heard, and valued.

The relationships around each individual child help to define his or her unique place in the world. Children first experience a sense of belonging at home with family, the foundations of which expand significantly when they enter the kindergarten and later when they begin in school. Encouraging and nurturing positive relationships between home, family and school provides a strong basis for learning, behaviour, health and well-being, and is something we value heavily at AIS. The positive development of relationships around the child extends to a happy and harmonious class community, which the child can feel the benefits of each and every day.

Young children experience their world as an environment of relationships; these relationships affect virtually all aspects of their development (National Scientific Council on the Developing Child 2004). The significance of relationships in the early years is a fundamental part of establishing important skills and dispositions that centre on trust, agency and belonging. When the importance of relationships is reinforced, the foundations for an effective learning community are established. (IBO, "The Learner," 2018)



## 05: Det Pædagogisk læringsmiljø - The Pedagogical Learning Environment



The Early Years Programme at AIS offers a unique, internationally-minded and recognisable Early Years curriculum. The framework of the IB Primary Years Programme provides the foundation for a learning environment which focuses on key developmental milestones and abilities of our young learners. At AIS, there is a clear connection between the development of our students and the pedagogical learning environment we offer.

*According to the IB, "Young children's development proceeds in a complex, and often non-linear, trajectory where individual children follow different pathways simultaneously. Teachers create learning environments and experiences that are both adaptable and appropriate to young students, and they understand the important influence of their sociocultural contexts. As a result, teachers adapt learning goals and intended learning experiences accordingly, based on their observations of young students' learning and development" ("The Learner," 2018).*

### The Learning Environment at AIS

A fundamental part of effective education in the PYP early years is the creation of safe, stimulating and inviting learning spaces that promote exploration, wonder, creativity, risk-taking and learning through play. At AIS we sometimes refer to the learning environment as an extra teacher, and we strive to use our available space and resources to create and inspire opportunities for play and for learning. We recognise that students who are emotionally invested stay more engaged in their learning (Rushton, Juola-Rushton 2010). Attention is therefore paid to the structure, purpose and function of these spaces as contexts that support play-based transdisciplinary learning, collaborative learning of knowledge, conceptual understandings and skills, and opportunities to take action.

In practice, and in alignment with IB theory, this means that Early Years Teachers at AIS create safe, stimulating and inviting learning spaces by:

- offering a range of open-ended materials
- arranging and rearranging materials as invitations for learning, often times inspired by the transdisciplinary theme and Unit of Inquiry
- creating areas for role play, block play, mark-making, expression through the arts, and so on
- considering a range of choices and opportunities for group and individual play
- involving students in the design and construction of play areas
- creating displays that reflect the process of students' learning.

We recognise that learning takes place in our outdoor learning spaces as well as in our classrooms, and we often look for opportunities to create and re-create these spaces to meet the needs of our young learners.



The Learning Environment is an important part of our pedagogical approach, not just with respect to inspiring academic learning, but also for promoting opportunities for skill-development, which is extremely important at this developmental stage. From fine and gross motor skill development, to the development of necessary self-management and self-regulation skills, a well-planned and thoughtful learning environment is important to promoting the broader development of the individual learner. Beyond this, an inspiring learning environment also allows opportunities for exploration and development of social and communication skills. In this way, there is a direct connection between the learning environment and the Approaches to Learning.



## 06: Forældresamarbejde - Parent/Guardian Collaboration & Cooperation

Cooperation and collaboration with our community of Early Years parents/guardians is an essential component in promoting the wellbeing and development of our students. Each young learner is surrounded by a network of supports, and at the heart of this are the parents/guardians. Our relationship with parents/guardians is built on a foundation of mutual respect and with the school's values in mind - responsible, caring and respectful. We strive to create an open dialogue with this important stakeholder group, and we believe in the importance of ongoing communication. We strive to be as responsive as possible, and to be honest with parents in regards to both the positive developments we see in our young learners, but also in communicating any concerns or challenges the child might be facing. We expect that parents/guardians of AIS Early Years students participate actively in our learning community and throughout their child's kindergarten years.

### Ongoing Communication: Classroom Communications, Reporting & Conferences

We recognise that our young learners spend a great number of hours with us in the Early Years Programme. Because of the unique population of students at AIS, we also recognise that the English language acquisition process can sometimes interfere with the child being able to talk in great detail at home about what they experience during the day. Each homeroom teacher works to take photos to document student learning and share these with parents/guardians when appropriate and when the relevant media consents are in place. Likewise, every second week a classroom newsletter is shared to provide more detailed information about the curriculum and learning experiences happening in the classroom. It is also through the newsletter where information is shared about field trips, projects, and exciting developments within the class. At AIS we pride ourselves in this level of communication and we are sure that it is an important part of opening the classroom doors for our families to give them a sense of how we are working with our young students. Parents/Guardians are also very welcome to join us at Early Years for a variety of social and cultural events throughout the course of the school year, and many times the parents/guardians are a huge part of organising such events.

There are also more formal reporting structures in place, namely the written reports and Parent/Teacher Conferences. The AIS Assessment Policy (2020) provides a full description of our reporting theory and structures, and a brief overview is presented here:

#### **Reporting on Student Learning Through Conferences**

Purpose: Reporting on student learning informs the learning community and reflects on the question, "How well are we doing?" It describes the progress and achievement of the individual students' learning, identifies areas for growth. Maintaining open communication between the home and school, including the voice of the child and parent/guardian, and the learner and teacher can be a powerful way to report on student learning.

Formal conferences are scheduled twice yearly (October/November and May) at AIS to ensure that there is time and opportunity for these important developmental conversations. There is an optional third conference each spring around March, which can be initiated by either the parents/guardians or the teacher, should an additional conversation be wanted or needed.

### **Reporting on Student Learning Through Written Reports**

Purpose: Reporting on student learning informs the learning community and reflects on the question, “How well are we doing?” It describes the progress and achievement of the individual students’ learning, identifies areas for growth. Maintaining open communication between the home and school, including the voice of the child and parent/guardian, and the learner and teacher can be a powerful way to report on student learning.

Formal written reports are scheduled twice yearly (December and June) at AIS to ensure that there is a written record of student growth and development. These written reports reflect student progress across all of the relevant disciplines, the Learner Profile and the ATL skills.

### **Early Years Class Parents & Parent Council**

Each classroom/group has a volunteer Class Parent who keeps in close contact with the Homeroom Teacher and coordinates activities for the children and events where parents are included. The class parent also sometimes organises media groups, such as a WhatsApp group, to allow for more informal communication between parents/guardians. For many AIS families, this is very valuable as it helps create a support network and family feel, which for many families can otherwise be something that they do not have here in Denmark.

It is our goal that the AIS Parent Council consists of parents who represent different year-groups, culture and classrooms. The parent groups are updated by the AIS Kindergarten Administrator and have close contact with the school's Parent Teacher Association to provide consistency across the whole school community. The Parent Council is represented in the AIS School Board and participates in collaboration with teachers and the kindergarten administrator about focus areas and needs in the kindergarten. The Parent Council meets formally a number of times throughout the school year, and upon request.



### **07: Børn i udsatte positioner - Children in Vulnerable Situations**

At AIS we recognise that no two children are the same, and no two families are the same, but all children have the same equal right to be met and supported in their development. At the AIS Early Years Programme, we have experience with supporting a wide variety of learners. AIS is an inclusive school and we work to identify any potential concerns early and to develop appropriate supports to help young learners who may be met with challenges in their learning or development. In general, the structure of the AIS Early Years Programme and our clear and predictable routines are to the benefit of all students, but especially those who may be at-risk or in vulnerable situations. We regularly use visual schedules and supports, timers, flexible groupings and other appropriate pedagogical strategies which help support all learners.

At AIS we prioritise early intervention and we help connect both international and Danish-national families to the appropriate support systems in Denmark when needed for early intervention to occur. AIS collaborates closely with parents/guardians, PPR, Familiecentret and Social Services at Aarhus Kommune

in relation to children with identified special educational needs, or children in the process of being identified. We are open and supportive of ongoing collaboration and play an active role in supporting our students who are in need of additional supports. In some cases, an Action Plan is developed to detail the specific short-term and long-term goals needed to support student development. In cases of identified student support, we also place focus on ongoing communication and dialogue with the family to ensure a transfer of strategies and supports across settings.

## 08: Sammenhæng med børnehaveklassen - The Transition between the Early Years Programme and the School Programme



One of our essential tasks in working with children aged 3-6 years old, is to ensure that the foundational skills and appropriate prerequisites are in place for the child as they prepare to move into school. Transitioning to any school-aged programme is an important milestone for all children and their families, and we make it a priority at AIS to guide families through this process with as much ease as possible. Our young students at AIS complete their PYP3 year and begin in a variety of school programmes including traditional Danish folkeskole or private schools, and in international settings abroad. Most of our students, however, continue on in the IB programme and join PYP4.

We are aware of the important skills that all of our young learners need to have under development in order to ensure a continued positive growth and progression in school. At AIS we look to the Approaches to Learning Skills as an important part of our wholistic approach, which is particularly relevant when we consider the transition to school. Some of the areas of focus as we prepare students for this transition include:

**Thinking Skills** - developing curiosity, applying rules and strategies, observing and organising information, making connections, asking "what if" questions, being able to reflect, being able to maintain concentration

**Research Skills**- ability to ask relevant questions, using senses to observe and notice details, drawing conclusions, using appropriate and relevant media

**Communication Skills** - listening respectfully, asking for help or clarification when needed, expressing thoughts and opinions both verbally and through mark-making and writing, orally presenting their ideas

**Social Skills**- being able to develop healthy relationships, being respectful and caring, being aware of one's own feelings and the feelings of others, helping others, taking turns



**Self-Management Skills**- being able to follow directions and classroom routines, managing emotions, demonstrating persistence, being able to adjust and work through challenges, being able to take responsibility

*for things like changing clothes and packing up*

Beyond these skills, and others, that we strive to support students in developing academic readiness for the challenges that await them in school. At AIS a core part of our inquiry-based programme is to help students feel connected to and excited about their learning, and these dispositions are important in driving further formal academic learning in school.

At AIS we have a well-developed programme to ensure a balanced and informed transition to school. Below is a brief overview of the transition planning for students moving from PYP3 in the Early Years Programme to PYP4 in the School Programme, as presented in the AIS Transition Processes & Procedures (2020):

*Moving from PYP3 to PYP4 is an important step in the lives of all young learners - the move from kindergarten to school. In Denmark, all students must begin school in the calendar year in which they turn 6\*. At AIS, we recognize that the move from PYP3 to PYP4 and the formal "school start" is a big change with a different, much bigger school building, new teachers, different classrooms, new subject areas and even a new playground. In our experience, it is important that the children, parents and teachers are all a part of making this transition a successful experience.*

*The introduction to this transition to PYP4 begins early as PYP3 students are given the opportunity to visit the Dalgas campus and join in on bigger events, such as the Chinese New Year Assembly.*

*Students also have the opportunity to meet our Head of School & PYP Coordinator, eat their snack and play on the playground, and they will have the chance to take a tour of the school to see their future classrooms. By taking part in these experiences, current PYP3 students will have had the opportunity to "get to know" their new school building and learning environment.*

*During the spring before school start, the Danish A teacher visits the PYP3 class at the Early Years campus to meet them and get an initial evaluation of their competencies in the Danish language, which assists in planning of the Danish lessons and classes in PYP4. The PYP4 homeroom teacher(s) also plan to visit the students at the Early Years campus, join into some of their lessons, and get to know the students in a safe and known environment. A parent meeting is organised in June before the August school start which is led by the PYP Coordinator and PYP4 homeroom teacher(s). This meeting usually focuses on supporting socially/emotionally as students prepare to start school and often helps parents/guardians with practical questions around things like uniform, snack and lunch procedures, etc. More specific curriculum information is shared when the new year begins.*

Further to this, a drop-in visit to the child's new classroom is scheduled in the week before the start of school, and special programming is planned on the first day of school which is traditionally a half-day at AIS. Parents/Guardians are welcomed on the first day and encouraged to join an orientation session in the morning, and to attend the formal Back-to-School Information Session in the first week of school.

For students who are transitioning from the Early Years Programme to another school, in Denmark or abroad, we work closely with the family and receiving school to provide any information necessary in order





to support the best possible transition for the child. In some cases, especially if a child has unique needs, a more formal transition meeting is required. Occasionally, and for a variety of reasons, it can occur that a child is not ready to begin school in the year they turn 6. In these cases, we work with the individual family and guide them through the procedures within Aarhus Kommune to apply for a delayed school start (udsættelse af skolestart), should they so wish.

#### 09: Inddragelse af lokalsamfundet - Involvement in the Local Community



As an IB Programme we place high value on playing an active role in the community, both locally and globally. Although we are an international kindergarten, AIS has found its own unique way to balance the local society and Danish culture with our more international profile. We also believe that learning happens in so many settings, and that our young students deserve the opportunity to see, hear, feel and experience as many learning opportunities as possible. As a regular part of our kindergarten programme, and in alignment with our Units of Inquiry, all children are invited to join in field trips throughout the course of the school year. As the kindergarten is located in Højbjerg, on the outskirts of Aarhus, we have access to so many inspiring places, from the forest to the sea, to trips into the city centre. The older groups have naturally more frequent and longer trips than our younger students, but we consistently look for opportunities to extend our learning beyond the classroom. Places we visit include libraries, museums, theatres, sports clubs, private and public businesses, nature areas, churches, and other local kindergartens, just to name a few. Our students have experienced some really inspiring trips, and we are especially thankful for the participation and support of our parent/guardian community in this effort.

We believe strongly that the Early Years Programme at AIS plays an important role for international families in Aarhus. We have a unique responsibility to support the development of international-mindedness and also to support the transition to a life in Denmark. This aspect is of particular importance for our international children who may have only recently moved to Denmark or to Aarhus. By helping provide opportunities to explore and contribute to our local society, we are also helping students feel more integrated into their immediate surroundings. We also look for as many opportunities as possible to integrate use and understanding of the Danish language into our day-to-day life, as we recognise how important it is for students to be able to not just understand, but also contribute to the world around them. There are usually a few Danish-speaking children and Danish speaking teachers or teaching assistants in each class and we look to their knowledge and experience to help all of our learners understand as much as possible of the Danish language, within relevant context. Further to this, AIS also takes part in important local and national traditions such as Motions Day, Santa Lucia and Fastelavn, to name a few.

#### 10: De fysiske, psykiske og æstetiske børnemiljø - The Physical, Psychological and Aesthetic Environment



In alignment with our beliefs about the learning community and the pedagogical learning environment, we also believe that there are other important aspects which support the development and learning of all children. The physical, mental and aesthetic environments are all areas which are taken into consideration when planning the day-to-day life and routines for the children. In both shared community spaces and the individual classrooms at AIS, we strive to create a safe and inviting environment which encourages and sparks curiosity in our students. We have a variety of developmentally appropriate resources and materials which can be shared between classrooms, as well as shared spaces for Visual Arts, Performing Arts, and for PSPE. Each of the main classrooms are brightly decorated with inspiring visuals and learning

materials. The corridors are colorfully decorated, and student photos and learning experiences are on display at all times. We often involve students in selecting which things they would like to share and display, thus giving them an active role. The physical spaces at the AIS Early Years Programme are bright and allow for flexible movement. There is natural light and although the volume can get high sometimes with so many young children, there is a healthy acoustic environment at the AIS Early Years programme. Each student has their own personal cubby for storing their belongings, and we encourage students as they develop the skills needed to take responsibility for their own things. The facilities have children's toilets and accessible sinks, and all members of the Early Years Programme work together to take responsibility for ensuring cleanliness and hygiene.

Children and adults are met and welcomed with open arms, and one of our defining features is the "family feel." We focus on personal connection, warmth and communication, and we strive to create a happy atmosphere and mood for all. We create a predictable and transparent schedule and routine for all of our young students, and we see that students thrive in response. At the same time, we leave room for flexibility and for listening to and responding to the needs of our young learners.

We support the psychological development of all members of the AIS community, and we make time and space to talk through challenges and emotions. We explore directly with children challenging topics such as conflict and bullying, and we find age- and stage-appropriate ways to guide students as they develop understandings about the world around them. We always involve children as much as possible, giving them the opportunity to use their voice and take appropriate action. We have highly-trained and experienced staff who are ready to respond in the case that a child is in need of further emotional or behavioural support.





## 11: Læring og de seks læreplan temaer - Learning, the Six Curriculum Themes & the IB Primary Years Programme Curriculum

A main focus of the Pedagogical Curriculum Plan is centered around the six curriculum themes identified in the Danish Dagtilbudsloven (§ 8, stk. 2 og 4). These six themes, according to *Den styrkede pædagogiske læreplan: Rammer og indhold*, "are intended to ensure a broad understanding of learning and a focus on various key elements in children's learning and development" (2018, pg. 32). The framework of the IB Primary Years Programme connects naturally to the shared pedagogical goals that are a uniting piece of all Danish kindergarten programmes.

<b>De seks læreplanstemaer - The Six Curriculum Themes</b>	
Alsidig personlig udvikling	Versatile personal development
Sociale udvikling	Social development
Kommunikation og sprog	Communication and language
Krop, sanser og bevægelse	Body, senses and movement
Natur, udeliv og science	Nature, science and outdoor life
Kultur, æstetik og fællesskab	Culture, aesthetics and community

The 6 recognised curriculum themes (de seks læreplanstemaer) relate directly to the six transdisciplinary themes in the IB PYP. The transdisciplinary themes combine to provide the most significant and distinctive feature of the IB Primary Years Programme. These six themes are cognitively and developmentally appropriate for young learners. They have global significance and are supported by the knowledge, concepts and skills from the traditional subject areas. Students inquire into, and learn about, these universally significant issues in the context of Units of Inquiry throughout the programme. Each Unit of Inquiry allows students to take part in an in-depth exploration focused around a central idea relevant to a particular transdisciplinary theme. Students' interests and questions drive the process and students have the opportunity to extend their learning across all subject areas (IBO, 2018).

Below you will find a summary of the six IB transdisciplinary themes, along with their definition and relationship to the six Curriculum Themes that are a part of Danish kindergarten law:

<i>An inquiry into:</i>	<i>An inquiry into:</i>	<i>An inquiry into:</i>	<i>An inquiry into:</i>	<i>An inquiry into:</i>	<i>An inquiry into:</i>
<b>Who we are</b>	<b>Where we are in place and time</b>	<b>How we express ourselves</b>	<b>How the world works</b>	<b>How we organize ourselves</b>	<b>Sharing the planet</b>
<i>An inquiry into the nature of the self; beliefs and values; personal, physical, mental, social and spiritual health; human relationships including families, friends, communities and cultures; rights and responsibilities; what it means to be human.</i>	<i>An inquiry into orientation in place and time; personal histories; homes and journeys; the discoveries, explorations and migrations of humankind; the relationships between and the interconnectedness of individuals and civilizations, from local and global perspectives.</i>	<i>An inquiry into the ways in which we discover and express ideas, feelings, nature, culture, beliefs and values; the ways in which we reflect on, extend and enjoy our creativity; our appreciation of the aesthetic.</i>	<i>An inquiry into the natural world and its laws; the interaction between the natural world (physical and biological) and human societies; how humans use their understanding of scientific principles; the impact of scientific and technological advances on</i>	<i>An inquiry into the interconnectedness of human-made systems and communities; the structure and function of organizations; societal decision-making; economic activities and their impact on humankind and the environment.</i>	<i>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.</i>

			<i>society and on the environment.</i>		
Body, senses and movement (Krop, sanser og bevægelse)  Versatile personal development (Alsidig personlig udvikling)	Social development (Sociale udvikling)  Versatile personal development (Alsidig personlig udvikling)	Culture, aesthetics and community (Kultur, æstetik og fællesskab)	Nature, Science and outdoor life (Natur, udeliv og science)  Social development (Sociale udvikling)	Social development (Sociale udvikling)	Nature, Science and outdoor life (Natur, udeliv og science)
Communication and Language (Kommunikation og sprog)					

Through each of the IB transdisciplinary themes, learners in the PYP explore a variety of relevant subject areas through our conceptually-based programme. At the PYP level, the focus is on laying the foundational skills necessary in order to prepare students for their school years. Our curriculum is concept-driven, and focuses on broad conceptual understandings that are abstract, timeless, universal and transferable. Through the Key Concepts and the Units of Inquiry, our young learners at AIS engage in learning experiences across all of the relevant subject areas in the PYP, which include Language (English), Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Visual Arts, Performing Arts and Physical, Social and Personal Education (PSPE).

An overview of the IB PYP Key Concepts, along with a summary of the written curriculum plan for the PYP1, PYP2, and PYP3 Units of Inquiry are presented below:

### PYP KEY CONCEPTS

<b>FORM</b>	What is it like?
<b>FUNCTION</b>	How does it work?
<b>CAUSATION</b>	Why is it like it is?
<b>CHANGE</b>	How is it transforming?
<b>CONNECTION</b>	How is it linked to other things?
<b>PERSPECTIVE</b>	What are the points of view?
<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>	What are our obligations?

Aarhus International School (AIS)  
Primary Years Programme (PYP)  
Programme of Inquiry (POI)  
2020-2021

Aarhus International School (AIS) Primary Years Programme (PYP) Programme of Inquiry (POI) 2020-2021								
Age/ PYP Year	An inquiry into:		An inquiry into:		An inquiry into:		An inquiry into:	
	<b>Who we are</b>		<b>Where we are in place and time</b>		<b>How we express ourselves</b>		<b>How the world works</b>	
	An inquiry into the nature of the self; beliefs and values; personal, physical, mental, social and spiritual health; human relationships including families, friends, communities and cultures; rights and responsibilities; what it means to be human.		An inquiry into orientation in place and time; personal histories; homes and journeys; the discoveries, explorations and migrations of humankind; the relationships between and the interconnectedness of individuals and civilizations, from local and global perspectives.		An inquiry into the ways in which we discover and express ideas, feelings, nature, culture, beliefs and values; the ways in which we reflect on, extend and enjoy our creativity; our appreciation of the aesthetic.		An inquiry into the natural world and its laws; the interaction between the natural world (physical and biological) and human societies; how humans use their understanding of scientific principles; the impact of scientific and technological advances on society and on the environment.	
<b>How we organize ourselves</b>		<b>Sharing the planet</b>		An inquiry into the interconnectedness of human-made systems and communities; the structure and function of organizations; societal decision-making; economic activities and their impact on humankind and the environment.		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.		
3-4/ PYP 1	<b>Central Idea:</b>	<b>Family is an important part of who we are.</b>		<b>People express ideas and feelings in many different ways.</b>		<b>A community is made up of people and places that provide things we need and want.</b>		<b>People have responsibility to care for the animals around them.</b>
	<b>Key Concepts:</b>	form, responsibility, change		form, function, perspective		form, function, connection		function, causation, responsibility
	<b>Related Concepts:</b>	genetics, similarities and differences, belonging, roles		properties, communication		communities		habitat, animals, classification, needs and wants
	<b>Lines of Inquiry:</b>	Properties of who we are (form) Responsibilities within the family (responsibility) How families influence who we become (change)		Different kinds of feelings (form) The ways feelings and ideas are communicated (function) Through our culture we express ourselves (perspective)		People have different jobs and provide services in a community (form) People visit places to get what they need or want (function) People help and connect with each other in a community (connection)		The different roles that animals play in people's lives (function) The impact shelter, food and nurturing have on animals (causation) Our responsibility for the well-being of animals (responsibility)
4-5/ PYP 2	<b>Central Idea:</b>	<b>Play helps us to connect socially and to develop emotionally.</b>		<b>Through colours we express our creativity.</b>		<b>Decisions about transportation depend on the situation.</b>		<b>Plants have specific needs in order to grow and stay healthy.</b>
	<b>Key Concepts:</b>	form, function, connection		form, function, perspective		form, function, reflection		change, causation, responsibility

	<b>Related Concepts:</b>	friendships, cooperation		communication, imagination		movement, systems, geography	classification, cycles, organisms, plants, adaptations, animals
	<b>Lines of Inquiry:</b>	Awareness of the self (form) Self-regulation during play (function) Ways that play connects us with our community (connection)		Where colours can be found (form) How colours can be used (function) How we express ourselves through colours (perspective)		Properties of transportation systems (form) The purpose of transportation (function) How communities use transportation responsibly (responsibility)	Plant life (change) Initiatives people take to keep plants healthy (responsibility) The consequences of meeting or not meeting a plants needs (causation)
5-6/ PYP 3	<b>Central Idea:</b>	<b>Our senses help us explore, investigate and understand the world around us.</b>	<b>Our history and traditions led us to where we are today.</b>	<b>People use creativity to express themselves.</b>	<b>Light impacts our daily lives.</b>		<b>Meaningful action can change the world.</b>
	<b>Key Concepts:</b>	form, function, perspective	form, connection, perspective	function, form, perspective	form, change, causation		causation, responsibility, change
	<b>Related Concepts:</b>	identity, senses, similarities and differences, well-being, balance, needs, behaviour	history, culture, family, geography, symbols	creativity, movement, expression, imagination, communication	energy, shadow, process, discovery		sustainability, environment, recycling, pollution, voice, choice, impact
	<b>Lines of Inquiry:</b>	Our senses (form) Use of our senses (function) A world without senses (perspective)	Expression of national holidays and traditions (Form) Historical symbols as a way to help us understand the past and present (Connection) Ways in which historical figures inspire us (perspective)	The similarities and differences between various mediums (form) How to creatively communicate a message (function) Reviewing and enhancing a creative product (perspective)	Properties of light (form) Ways light can be produced and changed (change) The use of scientific thinking in our everyday life (causation)		How historical choices about the environment have created the world we live in today (causation) The ways that our choices impact the environment and other living things (responsibility) How many small changes can have a big impact (change)

Each of the six Danish curriculum themes has two specific and relevant goals to guide the implementation of the pedagogical curriculum plan. The foundation of these goals is found in Danish dagtilbudloven and is shared for all kindergartens in Denmark.

### Alsidig personlig udvikling - Versatile personal development

*Pedagogical goals for the curriculum theme: Versatile personal development*

- *The pedagogical learning environment must support that all children unfold, explore and experience themselves and each other in both known and new ways and gain confidence in their own potential. This must be done across, among other things, age, gender and social and cultural background.*
- *The pedagogical learning environment must support interaction and connection between children and the pedagogical staff, and between children. It must be characterized by care, safety and curiosity, so that all children develop commitment, viability, drive and skills to participate in communities. This is also true in situations that require contemplation, perseverance and prioritization.*

Versatile personal development is focused around each individual child's unique and personal development. At AIS we meet each individual child where they are, and we recognise that each child has a unique history and a unique cultural profile. As the child learns and grows, he or she is more able to actively contribute to the learning community along with the outside world.

Through our unique IB curriculum, the transdisciplinary theme "Who We Are" is particularly relevant to this curriculum theme. Through the Who We Are Units of Inquiry in PYP1, 2 and 3, we explore concepts such as family, friends, and how we can use our senses to investigate the world around us. In all areas of our curriculum, our young learners are given a wide variety of opportunities to develop the skills and confidence necessary to share their thoughts, feelings and experiences.

In the organisation of our programme, we look for opportunities to challenge the child in individual, small group and whole class settings to provide opportunities for and exposure to numerous learning situations. The unique nature of AIS also means that students have the opportunity to interact with other children and adults from a wide variety of social, cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Through our regular communication and reporting structures we are also in close communication with parents/guardians around the personal development of each child.

As a part of the IB Learner Profile, we seek inspiration in the idea of being a Risk-Taker. In this spirit, we support and encourage children to take risks, and we encourage and guide them through the learning process. Students develop resilience throughout their time in the Early Years Programme, which is an important competency that will support their future learning and development.

### Sociale udvikling - Social development

*Pedagogical goals for the curriculum theme: Social development*

- *The pedagogical learning environment must support that all children thrive and are part of social communities, and that all children develop empathy and relationships.*

- *The pedagogical learning environment must support communities where diversity is seen as a resource and that contributes to democratic formation.*

A child's social development is rapidly changing during the early childhood years. Being a part of a group and a community is an important foundational experience for all children. The Early Years Homeroom teachers work consistently to ensure a safe, welcoming and inclusive classroom environment, where each child can find his or her unique place. Through our play-based and conceptually-based curriculum, our young learners have the opportunity to explore and experiment with their social development.

Social development is dependent upon ongoing skill-development to support the complex social situations that students will meet across settings. The Social Skills subset of the Approaches to Learning (ATL) Skills guide as we monitor the social skill development of each individual child. Through the ATL Skills we monitor social skill development in areas such as: interpersonal relationships and social and emotional intelligence. Through our regular communication and reporting structures we are also in close communication with parents/guardians about the social skill development of each child.

As a part of the IB Learner Profile, we seek inspiration in the idea of being Caring. This is also one of the core values of AIS. In this spirit, we model, support, and guide children in ways that they can take care and show care to others. Students develop a sense of empathy and emotional awareness, which supports them as they continue developing as human beings.

### Kommunikation og sprog - Communication and language

*Pedagogical goals for the curriculum theme: Communication and language*

- *The pedagogical learning environment must support that all children develop languages that contribute to the children being able to understand themselves, each other and their surroundings.*
- *The pedagogical learning environment must support that all children gain experience in communicating and linguisticizing thoughts, needs and ideas that the children can use in social communities.*

Due to the unique nature of our learning community, communication and language are areas that are near to the heart of all members of the AIS school community. At AIS, the common language of instruction and communication is English, although our community is made up of families from more than 35 different countries, who come to us with mothertongue languages from around the world. Most students in the Early Years Programme join us with little prior exposure to the English language, and therefore are thrown into an immersive process of language acquisition. Teachers and support staff are models in this process, and provide students with the necessary scaffolded supports to be able to survive, and eventually thrive, in an English-language environment. At AIS we prioritise language curriculum resources of high-quality and we expose students to language in all its forms. Students at the Early Years Programme have access to a classroom library and the main school library through a visit from our Library Technician once each week.

At AIS, and in accordance with the AIS Language Policy, we believe that language is an affirming part of identity and language is addressed and explored through all transdisciplinary themes and subject areas. Students are active participants in the language acquisition process, and have a wide variety of opportunities to develop their language and communication skills. At AIS, we have written a systematic Language Scope and Sequence which outlines developmentally appropriate goals for students across the



following conceptual areas: Oral Language (Listening & Speaking), Visual Language (Viewing & Presenting), and Written Language (Reading and Writing). The Approaches to Learning (ATL) Skills have a subset focused on Communication Skills which guide us as we work to support students in the ways that they exchange information, along with symbolic exploration and expression. In both language and the ATL Communication Skills, we are in direct contact with parents about the individual development of their child, through our regular reporting and conferencing structures.

Should we have a child who is in need of more intensive support with their development in this area, we have connections to external support structures within Aarhus Kommune.

One of the IB Learner Profile attributes is to be a Communicator, and as an IB World School, we strive to develop students who competent communicators in more than one language. As we prepare students to begin school in the year they turn six, we are aware that they will formally begin studying Danish, our host-country language, either as an additional language or at the native/mothertongue level. Below is an overview of how we approach and support Danish at the Early Years level.

### **Overview of Danish in the Early Years Programme**

#### **Danish A:**

In Early Years, PYP1-3, Danish A/Danish mother tongue students will begin to grow in their abilities to understand, process and produce language. At this level:

- Danish A students have the opportunity and are encouraged to use Danish through play-based experiences with Danish speaking peers
- Danish A students are encouraged to explore the cultural traditions and inquire into and actively contribute to their local Danish community
- When available, Danish language clubs are also offered where there is a more structured focus on oral language development

Across the strands of Oral Language (Listening & Speaking), Visual Language (Viewing & Presenting), and Written Language (Reading and Writing), students are encouraged to explore and use their mother tongue language of Danish in and outside of school, when appropriate. During these formative language years, both expressive and receptive language skills are developing. Students are encouraged to use both their mother tongue and the school instructional language of English as they strive to develop skills and become competent communicators in more than one language.

From the age of 6, as students transition into the school programme, formal Danish lessons begin.

#### **Danish as an additional Language (Danish B and Danish C)**

In Early Years, PYP1-3, for students who have Danish as an additional language (Danish B or Danish C), students will begin to be aware of and exposed to Danish across a variety of contexts. Students will have the opportunity to expand their awareness of Danish as a language and to make ongoing connections to the community and culture around them. Students who have Danish as an additional language are encouraged to:

- Take part in learning experiences in play with Danish-speaking peers to practice their receptive and expressive language.
- Take part in Danish cultural traditions and experiences and inquire actively into their local community.
- When available, Danish language clubs are also offered where there is a more structured focus on oral language development.

Across the strands of Oral Language (Listening & Speaking) and Visual Language (Viewing and Presenting), students are encouraged to expand their awareness of the Danish language whenever possible. Students are encouraged to use emerging Danish-language skills and competencies in their everyday lives and as they strive to become competent communicators in more than one language.

From the age of 6, as students transition into the school programme, formal Danish lessons begin. Student placement into Danish B or Danish C is dependent upon an evaluation of language acquisition competencies across the relevant phases.

## Krop, sanser og bevægelse - Body, senses and movement

### *Pedagogical goals for the curriculum theme: Body, senses and movement*

- *The pedagogical learning environment must support that all children explore and experiment with many different ways of using the body.*
- *The pedagogical learning environment must support that all children experience the joy of body and movement both in peace and in activity, so that the children become familiar with their body, including bodily sensations, body functions, senses and various forms of movement.*

All children go through unique developmental processes in the early years, which include a developing awareness of their physical being. Through the Units of Inquiry across all transdisciplinary themes, along with the subject areas of PSPE and Performing Arts in particular, we concretely explore ways in which our bodies are growing and changing. Students are supported as they become aware of their bodies, senses, and how they can set boundaries for themselves as they work to develop self-regulation skills. Play and exploration are natural vehicles for the development of awareness around the body, senses and movement. Students in the Early Years Programme dance, sing, run, and jump their way through the day to meet the challenges that await them.

Just as we encourage students to task-risks as they learn more about themselves and their identity, we also encourage students to take risks as they experiment with their physical development. Through sensory play, fine- and gross- motor learning experiences and activities, our young learners have the chance to practice and develop physically. We are in close contact and ongoing dialogue with parents/guardians about these aspects through our regular reporting and conferencing structures.

The IB Learner Profile helps us focus on being Balanced learners. For us this means balance in all things, including being physically well, healthy and mentally happy. We use as much inspiration around us as possible in our efforts to create and maintain balance for our young learners - from the forest to the local playgrounds, from bike courses to yoga we find fun and engaging ways to support learning and development.

Should we have a child who is in need of more intensive support with their development in this area, we have connections to external support structures within Aarhus Kommune.

## Natur, udeliv og science - Nature, science and outdoor life

### *Pedagogical goals for the curriculum theme: Nature, outdoor life and science*

- *The pedagogical learning environment must support that all children gain concrete experiences with nature, which develop their curiosity and desire to explore nature, which give children the opportunity to experience one's connection with nature, and which give children an understanding of the importance of sustainable development.*
- *The pedagogical learning environment must support that all children actively observe and investigate natural phenomena in their surroundings, so that the children gain experience in recognizing and expressing themselves about cause, effect and contexts, including a beginning awareness of mathematics.*

The mission statement of AIS contains an important element - that we strive to develop students who are environmentally responsible citizens. This awareness of our responsibility in caring for the world around us begins early as students learn about their local environment through the playground, outdoor learning spaces, school gardens, and through local walking trails and parks. Young learners are naturally curious about the world around them and at AIS we let students take the lead. We guide students as they observe, draw conclusions, and develop foundational scientific understandings. In general, we use our connection to nature to provide developmentally appropriate opportunities and experiences across many areas of the curriculum.

Throughout the written curriculum, we address a variety of topics and conceptual understandings which help lay the foundation for further scientific investigation. Both the "How the World Works" and "Sharing the Planet" transdisciplinary themes are heavily investigative and focused on exploring nature, science and outdoor life. Through Units in these themes in PYP1, PYP2 and PYP3, students dive into concepts such as light, plants, animals, and how we can take meaningful action to impact the world around us. Through our curriculum we engage in experiments, observe, collect data and communicate our findings with confidence.

Through the IB Learner Profile we develop students who are Inquirers; students who ask relevant and meaningful questions and who have the tools needed to find answers. As students gain confidence in their learning, they are able to apply and extend these skills to subject areas like Math. At AIS we follow our Mathematics Scope & Sequence to ensure that students are developing the prerequisite numeracy skills to be prepared for further learning.

## Kultur, æstetik og fællesskab - Culture, aesthetics, and community

### *Pedagogical goals for the curriculum theme: Culture, aesthetics and community*

- *The pedagogical learning environment must support the participation of all children in equal and different forms of communities, where they experience their own and others' cultural backgrounds, norms, traditions and values.*
- *The pedagogical learning environment must support that all children have many different cultural experiences, both as spectators and active participants, which stimulates the children's commitment, imagination, creativity and curiosity, and that the children gain experience in using different materials, tools and media.*

This curriculum theme centered around culture, aesthetics and community is connected beautifully to the IB Transdisciplinary Theme How We Express Ourselves, and to the subject areas of Visual Arts and Performing Arts. Through the Units of Inquiry in PYP1, PYP2 and PYP3, students explore how we can express our feelings and emotions in a variety of ways and the idea of creativity and expression, for example. Because we have such a wide mix of cultural backgrounds and identities in our school population, students are exposed to both known and unknown traditions, and they have a unique opportunity to expand their understanding of their own norms and values, and the norms and values of others. Through our curriculum, we help students as they gain the skills and confidence to explore a variety of stories and histories, methods of expression, and tools and materials for expressing themselves. Students are provided formal and informal opportunities to share and present their work, which helps them build confidence in presentation skills and gives our young learners an active vocabulary for expressing their thoughts and feelings.

Each year one of the initial activities as the classes get to know each other, is to explore what cultures and countries are represented and to learn more about each other's background. We invite families to play an active role in sharing, and we create a natural expectation that we are all equal. At the same time, we recognise and value the local Danish traditions and norms, and we take responsibility for helping our young learners as they get to know more about Denmark. We focus on creating a democratic environment, where all voices are valued, and where all of our young learners are a part of the community; this is in line with both IB philosophy and also Danish norms.

As an IB learner, and with the Learner Profile in mind, Open-Mindedness is a valued trait and something we emphasise at AIS. Students are exposed to a wide variety of learning experiences to help open their minds and support creativity. Students are supported as they learn about themselves and others, and we take time to recognise similarities and differences. We involve parents/guardians in this process and are in close dialogue about their child's development both within the group dynamic of the class, and also how they are able to express themselves.



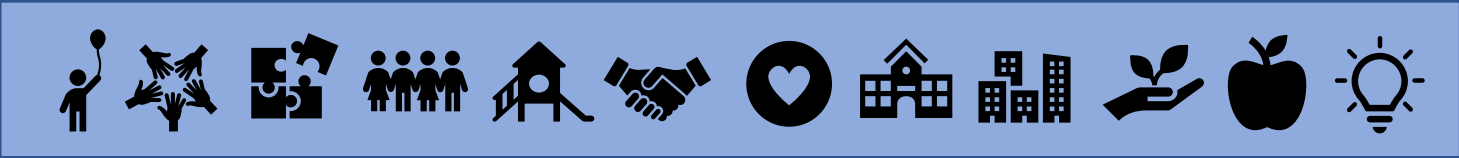
## 12. Ongoing Evaluation and Reflective Practice

To be Reflective is one of the IB Learner Profile qualities that we admire most as an IB World School. We actively encourage all students at Aarhus International School to be able to think back to what they have experienced and engaged in and to think forward to how they can make improvements in their future learning. To expect this of our youngest learners in the Early Years Programme, means that all adults working at AIS must model this process. We verbalise and visualise reflection, we talk through and actively work through processes with our young students, and we build an awareness around the idea that we are all in a constant state of improvement. If you visited any of our Early Years classrooms, you could regularly observe students engaging in reflective activities at an age-appropriate level. The Early Years Team regularly meets to reflect upon and adjust practice and curriculum outcomes in accordance with the needs of the children.

In practice, this written Pedagogical Curriculum Plan, along with all documentation published by Aarhus International School, is a living curriculum document. It will be adjusted and updated on an ongoing basis to reflect the latest best practice in the field of early childhood education and with the International

Baccalaureate. At AIS we are very familiar with an environment focused on reflective practice, and we adhere to the evaluation guidelines and formal evaluation processes of the IB. The Primary Years Programme at AIS successfully completed its most recent evaluation in October 2020, maintaining our status as an internationally-recognised IB World School.

The Kindergarten Leader/Administrator is responsible for maintaining, updating, and following through a formal evaluation process for the Pedagogical Curriculum, in alignment with local and national expectations and laws. The IB Primary Years Programme Coordinator should play a supportive role in this process. At AIS we regularly maintain a wide range of documentation related to the development of both the written curriculum, but also with respect to the individual child. This documentation can be used in relation to the evaluation of the Pedagogical Curriculum, as appropriate. The Kindergarten Leader/Administrator is also responsible for ensuring that all relevant guidelines and requirements from Aarhus Kommune are maintained.



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