



AARHUS
INTERNATIONAL
SCHOOL



EVALUERING AF ARBEJDET MED DEN PÆDAGOGISKE LÆREPLAN 2025

EVALUATION OF WORK WITH THE PEDAGOGICAL CURRICULUM 2025





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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

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 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 (dagtilbudsloven) 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.

A Culture of Evaluation

"Lederen af dagtilbuddet er ansvarlig for at etablere en evalueringskultur i dagtilbuddet, som skal udvikle og kvalificere det pædagogiske læringsmiljø."

"Med evalueringskultur i dagtilbuddet forstås, at lederen har ansvar for, at det pædagogiske personale og ledelsen løbende forholder sig reflektivt til, hvordan de pædagogiske læringsmiljøer understøtter børnegruppens trivsel, læring, udvikling og dannelse."

Den styrkede pædagogiske læreplan, Rammer og indhold, s. 50-51

"The leader of the day care is responsible for establishing an evaluation culture in the day care center to develop and qualify the pedagogical learning environment."

"With the evaluation culture in the day care offer, it is understood that the leader is responsible for the fact that the pedagogical personnel and management continuously relate reflexively to how the pedagogical learning environments support the well-being, learning, development and formation of the children's group."

The Strengthened Pedagogical Curriculum, Framework and Content, pgs. 50-51

At Aarhus International School, to be Reflective is one of the IB Learner Profile qualities that we admire most as an IB World School; this is a mindset and practice which we implement in our daily work. As such, the Early Years Team regularly meets to reflect upon and adjust practice and curriculum outcomes in accordance with the needs of the children in the programme.

In practice, the written Pedagogical Curriculum Plan, and all documentation published by Aarhus International School, are living practices. We reflect, evaluate, and adjust our teaching and learning on an ongoing basis to reflect the latest best practice in the field of early childhood education and with the International Baccalaureate, while at the same time striving to meet requirements set forth under Danish law. 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. In September 2025, AIS successfully completed the most recent evaluation of its Primary Years Programme and whole-school programme, maintaining our status as an internationally recognised IB World School.

The Kindergarten Leader is responsible for maintaining, updating, and implementing a formal evaluation process for the Danish Pedagogical Curriculum, in alignment with local and national expectations and laws.

The IB Primary Years Programme Coordinator is in place to 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. The documentation in relation to the evaluation of the Pedagogical Curriculum is expanded upon below.

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:

<i>Our Mission</i>	<i>Our Values</i>
<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

Evaluation of the Pedagogical Curriculum

What parts of our pedagogical learning environment have we particularly focused on over the last 2 years?

Over the past two years, Aarhus International School (AIS) has continued to grow and develop as an internationally recognised IB World School. Within the Early Years Programme, we have had several key areas of pedagogical focus that have guided our practice and supported the holistic development of our young learners.

Throughout the last two years, the Early Years team has maintained a particular emphasis on developing the IB Approaches to Learning (ATL) skills. These foundational skills remain a central focus for our pedagogical staff, supporting each child's ability to thrive, learn, and grow in their everyday experiences. Our learning environments and pedagogical strategies are continuously designed and refined to promote children's personal development through Self-Management Skills, Social development through Social Skills, and Communication and language development through Communication Skills. In addition, we actively nurture Thinking Skills by encouraging curiosity, problem-solving, and reflection, and Research Skills by supporting children in exploring, questioning, and investigating the world around them through hands-on, inquiry-based experiences.

Continuing to remain a point of particular interest has been our ever-expanding practices within the area of Inclusion. At the Early Years Programme, we have young students who have challenges or special learning needs, who need further support in order to develop and grow within our Early Years Programme setting and access the IB PYP curriculum. While some students receive additional financial support from the Municipality, others do not. Recognising this imbalance, the school has made significant efforts to provide supplementary support to bridge the gap. We continue to explore new initiatives that enhance inclusion for both students and staff in the Early Years Programme. Inclusion remains a core principle in our educational philosophy and practice. Our Inclusion Policy, which also addresses the Early Years context, is available on the school's website.

We are proud that our long-planned One Campus Project became a reality in August 2024. The Early Years Campus moved to our new facilities on Dalgas Avenue, uniting the whole school on one campus. This transition has opened new opportunities for developing and enriching our pedagogical learning environment.

Following our move, we implemented a new system called Free Flow, developed collaboratively by our former curriculum coordinator, Early Years leader and the pedagogical staff. This system enhances learner agency by allowing children to move freely between carefully designed learning spaces, each offering varied materials and opportunities for play and exploration (børneinitieret leg). This approach enables children to make choices about where and how they learn, promotes social interaction and supports friendships across groups (børnefællesskaber). These learning spaces are continually planned, reflected upon, and adjusted through weekly team collaboration. This new system was created with a deliberate effort to respect and recognise that we are an international school grounded in Scandinavian values and committed to adhering to the requirements of the pedagogical curriculum plan in accordance with the provisions of the Day Care Services Act (Dagtilbudsloven). Alongside its implementation, we focused on establishing new daily routines that prioritise children's needs, reducing unnecessary transitions, ensuring smooth daily rhythms, providing ample time for rest, free play, and teacher-led learning invitations.

To further support children's well-being and development, we have introduced several new pedagogical programmes, including Second Step, a social-emotional learning and well-being

programme; White Rose Education, a play-based mathematics programme, and FFT, a phonics-based literacy and early reading programme.

We have also continued to enhance our outdoor learning environments, including the purchase of more bicycles and the creation of an outdoor group room offering sensory and exploratory activities that promote engagement with nature and physical development.

As our facilities and student numbers have expanded, we recognised the need to further develop our After School Activity (ASA) programme. The ASA continues the pedagogical approach from the school day, providing continuity for the children. We have appointed an ASA Coordinator and additional staff to ensure effective planning, scheduling, and delivery of an engaging and developmentally appropriate ASA programme.

The new campus setting has allowed for a smoother and more structured transition from Kindergarten (PYP3) to the Primary School (PYP4)/børnehave til skole. In September 2025, we hosted our first transition meeting for all PYP3 parents, led by the Head of School and the PYP3 and PYP4 Homeroom Teachers. This process will be complemented by visits between PYP3 and PYP4 classes, helping children become familiar with their new teachers and their upcoming new learning environment in a natural and reassuring way.

The Dalgas Avenue location has created new opportunities to engage with the local community and surrounding nature. Our Early Years groups have explored nearby areas such as the forest, beach, and weekly market, enriching children's understanding of their environment through hands-on experiences.

Our new campus proximity has also facilitated closer collaboration with the International Day Nursery, from which many of our PYP1 students' transition. Together, we have developed a smoother and more consistent transition process, ensuring that children experience a sense of continuity and security as they move into our Early Years Programme. For example, as part of the transition process, the international nursery children who will move up to our PYP1 class are invited for visits to get to know our facilities and to play with the teachers they will be with.

How have we organised our culture of evaluation?

At AIS, a culture of evaluation is a natural part of the way we approach teaching and learning at all levels. In the Early Years Programme, there are ongoing and regular collaborative meetings which focus on reflecting on our day-to-day practice, planning and improving learning spaces (inside and outside), along with the overarching school curriculum and policies. We use known frameworks for collaborative discussion, and we regularly look for opportunities to strengthen and develop our practice, and ultimately our work with the students.

The Early Years leadership has been undergoing changes and continues to do so. During this period, the Head of School is stepping in to assume the role of Early Years leader, with support from the Curriculum Coordinator and EY homeroom teachers. Especially during this transition, we recognize the increased importance of holding regular meetings across all staff groups, including homeroom teachers, teaching assistants, After School Activities (ASA) instructors, and one-to-one (OTO) support staff, to ensure effective communication and collaboration. As a part of these meetings, there is ongoing reflection about the organization and flow of our day-to-day life in the Early Years Programme. Every Wednesday, formal curriculum collaboration meetings are held with the PYP Coordinator to more closely reflect on and evaluate the progress of the written curriculum, both from an IB perspective, as well as with respect to the Danish pedagogical curriculum. In planning of our written curriculum, teachers use the Toddle platform for ongoing development and documentation. As a whole school, we meet frequently throughout the course of an academic year to discuss, debate, and reflect upon our practices across the areas of teaching and learning. This ongoing forum for reflection drives the

development of our school as a whole and allows us to address important issues such as inclusion, differentiation, Universal Design for Learning, assessment, language development, policies etc. At Aarhus International School, a culture of reflection and evaluation lies at the core of the way we operate, and therefore is a natural part of our practice.

How have we involved the kindergarten/day care board in the work with the pedagogical curriculum?

The local written curriculum document has been presented to a variety of stakeholders including the Pedagogical Leadership Team and the Early Years staff groups; it has also been made available to AIS parents at all levels. As such, the AIS School Board (bestyrelsen) and all its members have had the opportunity to review the pedagogical curriculum. At School Board Meetings every second month, an update for each part of the AIS programme (Early Years, PYP4-8, MYP), is shared in detail – both in writing and in discussion.

Our Early Years Parent Council (forældrerådet) remains firmly established and active, and has even adopted a formal constitution, which has been approved by the board. Parents from each group within the Early Years Campus are engaged in the council, ensuring broad and holistic representation across the entire EY program. The council consists of both parent and staff representatives from the Early Years school community, who regularly participate in formal parent meetings. Each school year, elections are held at the start of the term to form the Early Years Parent Council. One of their tasks is to be familiarized with the status of the pedagogical curriculum and also provide an open forum in which the process and development of this documentation is reviewed and reflected on. Since we share a campus with the rest of the school, the Early Years Parent Council has had greater opportunities to collaborate with the school's PTA (Parent-Teacher Association). This closer proximity enables easier communication, more frequent meetings, and better joint organization. As a result, it fosters stronger connections between the different school departments and enhances parental engagement in their children's daily experiences across the entire school, creating a shared understanding and sense of community.

Evaluation & Documentation of the Pedagogical Learning Environment

At the Early Years Programme at AIS, we employ a variety of methods and platforms to document our work with students across all curriculum areas. We use the Toddle platform for parent communication and for planning the written IB curriculum, including the Units of Inquiry. Additionally, Toddle serves as a digital portfolio where we share student photos, videos, learning experiences, and work samples. The student portfolio and related documentation is a key component of our assessment strategy and documents the growth and learning over time of each individual student. We have also placed greater emphasis on creating meaningful displays throughout the kindergarten to showcase the children's learning and creations. These displays serve as a tool to engage children in meaningful conversations about their work. Additionally, families receive a classroom newsletter every two weeks from the homeroom teacher, providing updates on classroom activities and the development of the Units of Inquiry.

As a part of our culture of evaluation, we prioritise parent collaboration and offer a variety of regular meetings including the settling-in meeting six weeks after a child joins AIS, the Parent/Teacher Conferences twice per year and the Student-Led Portfolio Conference where the child shares their learning with agency, in their own voice, language and unique style. At the conclusion of each Unit of Inquiry, parents receive a written report which details their child's development across academic areas of the programme, and also in the areas of the Approaches to Learning (ATL) – social skills, communication skills, self-management skills, etc. We are always willing to take on extra parent meetings, if necessary and as needed. Students often participate in EY-wide assemblies, where they

share songs, stories, and performances to highlight their learning in class; parents are included and invited to attend when appropriate.

At AIS, student development (børnegruppens trivsel og læring) is at the forefront of our work every single day. The core values of the school, along with the IB Learner Profile guide us as we keep our focus on developing young learners who have the tools to contribute to the world around them. Especially for international families who are just settling in Denmark, the Early Years Programme at AIS provides a safe haven, where they know their child will be met with developmentally appropriate care and a well-balanced learning experience.

We also focus on supporting children who are at-risk, in vulnerable situations, and have known or suspected special educational needs (børn i udsatte positioner). Transitioning to a new country, new system, and new language, while at the same time establishing new friendships and relationships can mean that many of our students face extra challenges and stressors, especially during the settling-in period. We have established strong support structures within the school and maintain close collaboration with Aarhus Kommune to ensure that we have the necessary tools to guide families toward additional support systems outside of school, when needed. Since May 2025, the school has further strengthened our approach by consolidating student support into a new Student Wellbeing Department, with increased resources dedicated to this area. This department is led by our School Counsellor and Head of Student Wellbeing, who coordinates collaboration with various external partners, including Aarhus Kommune, PPR, and Familiecentret, among others. The department also provides support to the Early Years community when assistance is needed with students and their families.

All students at Aarhus International School are multi-lingual, and for many students, English is a brand-new language when they step into the building. As such, students are in various stages of the language acquisition process and are supported in this important area of development (tosprogede børns trivsel og læring). 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 home languages from around the world. Many 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 adapt, and eventually thrive, in an English-language environment. Students are also exposed to an increasing amount of the Danish language and Danish home languages students are encouraged to use this language as they feel comfortable, although it is not a formal requirement at AIS that students use Danish as a functional language, until they reach school age where it becomes a required subject area in PYP4.

Every child in the Early Years Programme is seen as a unique learner who is in their own process of development (det enkelte barns trivsel, læring, udvikling og dannelse). Learning experiences and invitations are adapted to the relevant age and development level of each student, and take into consideration the child's language competencies. We strive to see each child on an individual basis and support the many areas of development that are ongoing throughout the early years. We provide individual guidance and ongoing follow-up with students and families to ensure that each student is developing in a well-balanced and healthy way. At AIS, we focus heavily on helping students become internationally-minded and open to new cultural experiences.

In the evaluation of our practices at AIS, we listen closely to feedback from our students, to understand how they are coping and developing as learners. For example, an event like the Student-Led Portfolio Conference, where each child uses agency to share about their growth and learning throughout the

course of the school year, gives us an indication of how the child is relating to elements of the IB PYP curriculum and the pedagogical curriculum.

Next Steps

Which areas of our pedagogical learning environment will we focus more on going forward?

Going forward, we will continue to prioritize collaboration with our parent community. As previously mentioned, our Early Years Parent Council is well-established, and we remain committed to strengthening this partnership. Supporting an active and engaged guiding group for the Early Years programme will remain a key focus to ensure its ongoing growth and development.

We also plan to increase the number of field trips and encourage active community involvement as part of our teaching and learning approach. We recognize these experiences as essential for creating authentic learning opportunities that fully engage our young learners. With the new location of our EY Campus, we are excited to explore the many possibilities it offers. Additionally, we are exploring funding options to purchase multi-seat daycare strollers, which would provide greater flexibility and enhance opportunities for community-based learning experiences.

Furthermore, we will continue to develop our learning environments within the new facilities - expanding existing spaces and creating new ones as financial resources allow. One of our key focus areas will be reviewing the learning spaces on the rooftop playground and making greater use of our planting beds during the upcoming spring season of 2026.

Together with our Curriculum Coordinator and the incoming Early Years leader, we will continue to dedicate time and effort to implementing thoughtful and effective ways to integrate the new teacher-led programs (well-being, math, and literacy) with our Free Flow system. Our goal is to ensure a well-balanced programme that respects and highly values free, uninterrupted, child-initiated play. In line with AIS's approach, all aspects of the programme - including policies, practices, and routines - will be regularly reviewed and adjusted as needed to provide children with enriching and balanced learning experiences.

We also recognize the importance of stabilizing our Early Years department through the hiring of a highly qualified Early Years leader, who will maintain, support, enrich, and further develop our pedagogical learning environment.

We will maintain a continuous focus on language development, regularly reviewing our AIS Language Policy with all teaching team members to ensure its accuracy and effectiveness. At the same time, we will continue to strengthen and refine strategies in our daily work with children to support language development, communication skills, and English language acquisition for non-native speakers - while valuing, respecting, and making space for the use of their mother tongues. In June 2025, our Early Years teachers participated in a refresher professional development course, Language-Based Content Learning, with an emphasis on translanguaging, which has provided valuable insights to enhance our teaching practices.

How will we adjust the organisation of our evaluation culture?

We feel strongly that our reflective approach to evaluation is currently working well. We expect these types of procedures to continue as a regular part of our programming, and to meet the requirements and expectations as an IB World School. This does not mean we are complacent; we will continue to be open to feedback, guidance, and reflections to ensure that we are continuing our forward growth and development as an organization.

On the basis of this evaluation, how have we changed and/or adjusted our written pedagogical curriculum?

The IB's Primary Years Programme (PYP), which includes the Early Years curriculum, was last updated in March 2025. The updates were introduced in April 2025 with a renewed focus on play-based inquiry, learner agency, and symbolic exploration. The updates aim to position Early Years students as active participants in their learning, bridging developmental theory with inquiry pedagogy and international-mindedness. Key areas of focus include a stronger emphasis on symbolic exploration, learner agency, and play as a form of inquiry. These priorities continue to inspire and shape our day-to-day practices at the AIS Early Years Campus and, alongside the Danish Pedagogical Curriculum, serve as guiding frameworks for our Early Years Programme.

We have made adjustments to our Free Flow system and implemented new well-being, mathematics, and literacy programmes. These changes have created greater opportunities for free play, student-initiated experiences, and agency-driven learning both within and across classes.

As we continue to reflect on and evaluate these new initiatives, we recognise that further refinements will be necessary. The experiences collected from our first implementation phase indicate a need to fine-tune the balance between structured programmes and our Free Flow system, ensuring that both complement each other to best support children's holistic development and inquiry learning.

References:

Børne- og Undervisningsministeriet, Danmark. (2018). *Den styrkede pædagogiske læreplan: Rammer og indhold.*

