



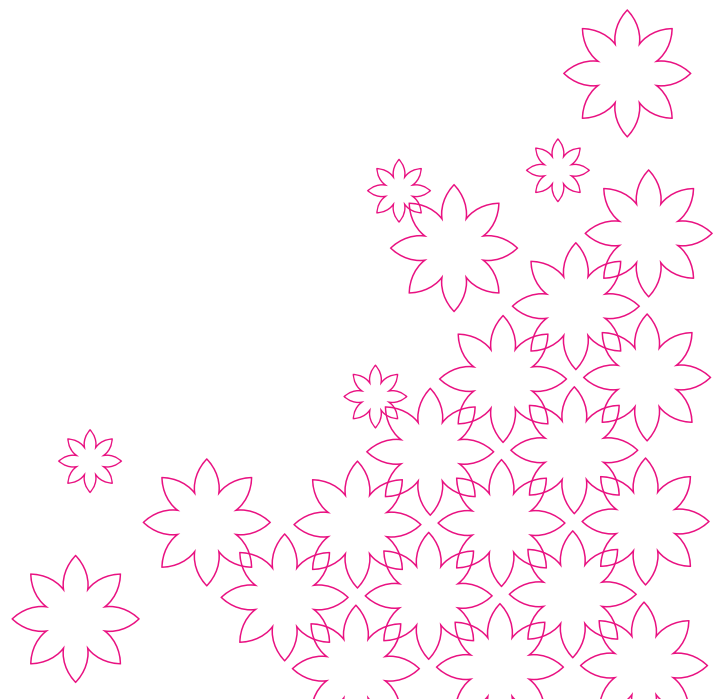
KG/Primary CURRICULUM GUIDE

APPROACHES TO LEARNING AT PRIMARY/KINDERGARTEN



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Our Vision

Empowering the next generation of leaders.

Our Mission

We seek to empower future leaders to:

- Think critically
- Display empathy
- Act with integrity

To achieve this we will:

- Provide a safe, secure and academically stimulating environment
- Support learner outcomes focusing on inquiry, collaboration, play and personal development
- Provide a holistic environment with a focus on students' physical, intellectual and social/emotional development
- Immerse students in an educational community that develops the essential qualities of passion, gratitude and humanity
- Offer a curriculum that encourages learners to engage the world as global citizens valuing international mindedness and an appreciation for diverse points of view
- Cultivate bilingualism focusing on English and Vietnamese language acquisition
- Develop within students the ability to work independently and collaboratively, think critically, analyze data then make informed decisions
- Encourage a deep sense of service and responsibility to protect the rights of all people and the environment
- Innovate with technology to enhance learning
- Inspire creativity through active problem solving and the fine arts

Our Curriculum

In the Primary school, we follow the International Primary Curriculum (IPC), which is taught in English and is based on the latest approaches to teaching and learning. It follows a child centred thematic approach which is relevant, challenging and engaging for today’s learners with rigorous assessment ensuring that each child attains the highest possible standard.

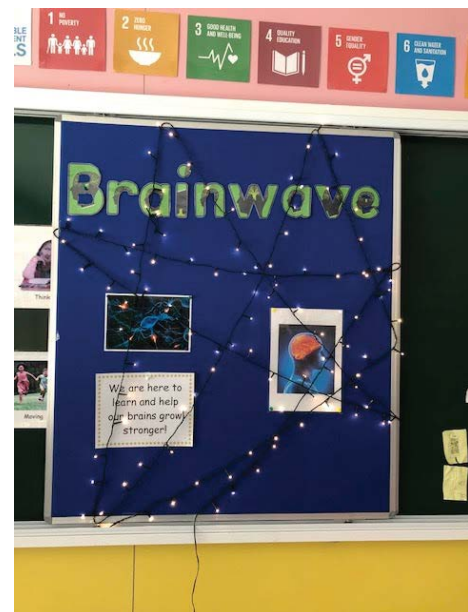
For Maths and English we follow the expectations set in the National Curriculum for England. These provide a progressive structure and breadth of learning which is recognised across the world and prepares our students for further study at Secondary School level. Appendix 1 has the schemes of work for Literacy and Maths.

The International Primary Curriculum

1. A clear focus on learning:

As a Primary division we have agreed that “learning is a continuous spiral or process that integrates knowledge, skills and understanding with the real world application of this process, allowing us to act with integrity in an interdependent world.”

This means we believe that learning needs to help students get better at things which matter in their lives and help support them once they have left school. What we teach students has to relate to the real world and involves practice in applying what they have learned to new scenarios. The world is an ever smaller place to live in and it is important that our students appreciate their place within this world and how by working together we can have a positive impact on its development.



2. A vision about the kinds of children we are helping to develop:

The following personal goals underpin those individual qualities and learning dispositions that we believe children will find essential throughout the first half of the 21st Century.

There are eight Personal Goals. We want our learners to be...

- Empathetic
- Resilient
- Ethical
- Communicators
- Reflective thinkers
- Collaborators
- Respectful
- Adaptable



Personal goal	Definition
Adaptable	I can cope with change.
Reflective thinker	I am curious about why things are the way they are, and want to find out the answers. I can reflect on my learning to learn more.
Communicator	I can express my emotions and thoughts to others clearly in a variety of different ways.
Resilient	I keep trying even when things are difficult.
Respectful	I treat others and the world the way I want myself and the world to be treated.
Ethical	I can act with integrity in an interdependent world.
Empathetic	I can think about what I've learned and how it affects my life and the lives of others. I can demonstrate fairness and kindness in words and deeds.
Collaborator	I can work with others to achieve a common goal.

Our Mascot for the personal goals is called **Thaddeus** who was named by the children. He is the manifestation of all the personal goals and core outcomes. The Personal goals are made explicit to the students. The turtle is important in Vietnamese mythology and the following story outlines its significance.

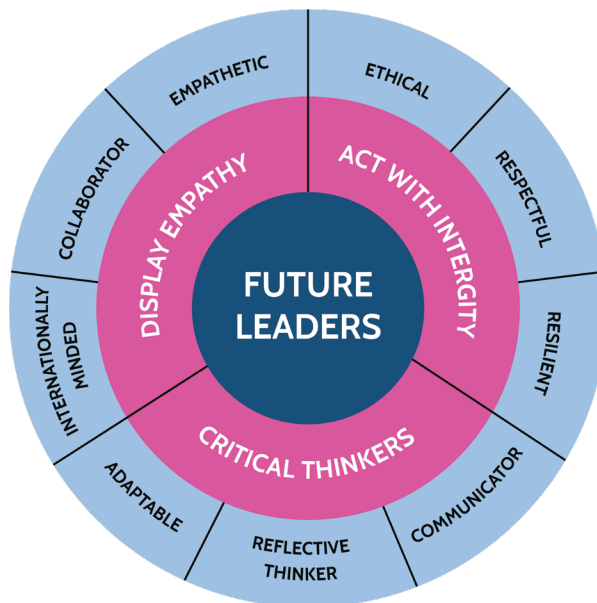
Stories of the Hoàn Kiếm turtle began in the fifteenth century with Lê Lợi, who became an emperor of Vietnam and founder of the L Dynasty. According to legend, Lê Lợi had the sword named Heaven's Will given to him by the Golden Turtle God, Kim Qui.

One day, not long after the war and the Chinese had accepted Vietnam's independence, Lê Lợi was out boating on the lake. Suddenly the Golden Turtle God surfaced, prompting Lê Lợi to return Heaven's Will and thank the divine turtle for its help. The Golden Turtle God took back the sword and disappeared into the depths of the lake. Lê Lợi then renamed the lake Hoàn Kiếm Lake, meaning "The Lake of the Returned Sword". (Wikipedia). Hoàn Kiếm Lake is the lake in the centre of Hanoi!



By their nature, the Personal Goals are not age-specific. They apply to students – and adults - and could be reinforced at home.

The following diagram shows how our personal goals support our vision and mission for our learners:



3. Our classroom practices which help us achieve our vision:

Here are a selection of some of the practices we employ in class to help us achieve our vision:

Personal goal	Example classroom practices
Adaptable	Differentiation - tailoring instruction to meet individual need.
	Gallery walk - students are actively engaged as they walk throughout the classroom. They work together in small groups to share ideas and respond to questions, documents, images, problem-solving situations or texts.
Reflective thinker	Reflective learning journals - where students reflect on what they have learned.
	Exit ticket - The exit ticket is simply a question that is posed to all students prior to class ending. Students write their answer on a card or piece of paper and hand it in as they exit (hence exit pass).
Communicator	Presentations - students prepare a presentation on a topic to demonstrate their knowledge skills and understanding (powerpoint; exit point; drama).
	Student led conferences - Students lead parents through a discussion of their work and established academic and social goals.

Resilient	Setting and reviewing goals - Paired coaching - working together to reflect on current practices; expand, refine, and build new skills; share ideas; teach one another.
	Developing reading stamina - daily individual reading at school and at home.
Respectful	Flexible grouping - students will learn through a variety of groupings - mixed ability, ability, working with different students within the class or grade.
	Partner Talk, or the “turn and talk” strategy, is a simple learning strategy in which students pair up and learn by discussing and sharing their thoughts and ideas on the material.
Ethical	Peer assessment - two stars and a wish - Two Stars are areas where the student’s work excelled – and one Wish is where there can be some level of improvement.
	Scaffolding - supporting every student by breaking learning up into chunks and providing a concrete structure for each.
Empathetic	Choosing to do the right thing- adhering to the ethics behind out personal goals as a guide to life and learning.
	Linking learning with our location, our home country and globally. Through the IPC units students will develop an understanding of issues locally and also globally and will be guided to respond with due care and consideration to others.
Collaborator	Think Pair Share - a collaborative learning strategy where students work together to solve a problem or answer a question about an assigned reading. This strategy requires students to (1) think individually about a topic or answer to a question; and (2) share ideas with classmates. Discussing with a partner maximizes participation, focuses attention and engages students in comprehending the reading material.
	Jigsaw - Each group member is assigned a different piece of information. Group members then join with members of other groups assigned the same piece of information, and research and/or share ideas about the information. Eventually, students return to their original groups to try to "piece together" a clear picture of the topic at hand.

4. International mindedness:

As our mission and learning definition suggest, we want children to act with integrity in an interdependent world. To encourage this, our International Curriculum explores links to the wider community through every unit of learning and our personal goals help to develop integrity as an ongoing aim.

The IPC is unique in defining International Learning Goals that help young children begin the move towards an increasingly sophisticated national, international, global and intercultural perspective and develop a sense of international-mindedness.



Each IPC unit has embedded within it, across the different subjects, learning-focused activities that help children start developing a global awareness and gain an increasing sense of themselves, their community and the world around them, as well as inspiring positive action and engagement with global issues.

In addition to this, each thematic IPC unit of learning includes specific tasks related to International as a subject in its own right, as well as encouraging schools to explore the unit from the perspectives of Hanoi, Vietnam and the world.

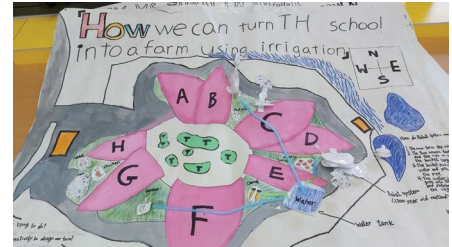
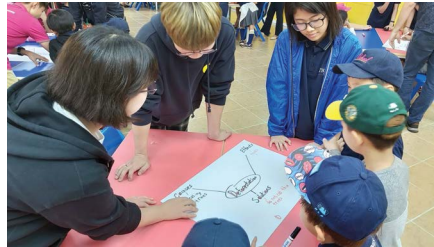
For our youngest children, international mindedness starts with developing a secure sense of who they are and we use units of learning such as “This is me” to help them discover more about themselves. By learning through play and in small groups the children start to develop a sense of others. They play alongside others initially and then start to interact with others which leads to learning with others and then collaboration as they move through the school.

Through the IPC units of learning we encourage children to progressively look at themselves, their family, their school, their community and their country from their own context and that of other children and people living in another part of the world.



Our Grade 5s helped to make a community play area more attractive by painting Ocean themed pictures. We asked artists from the University to come and help us (SDG 11,14,17).

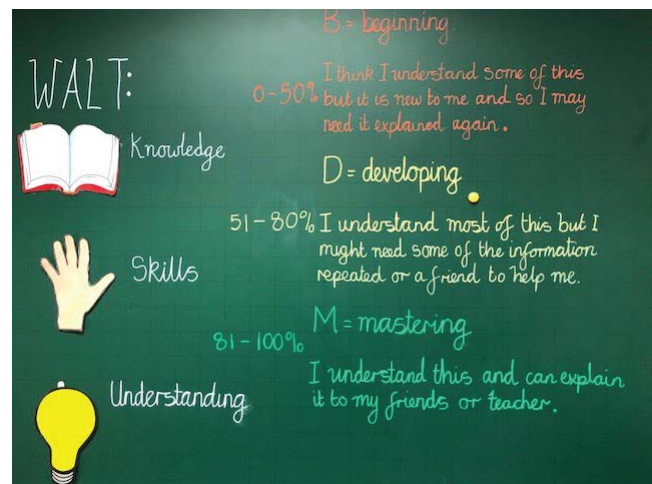
Our Grade 2s visited TH School in Hoa Lac and experienced first hand the impact of deforestation. They planned with the Secondary students on how they could improve the environment by making the Hoa Lac campus into a farm.



5. Knowledge, skills and understanding:

The IPC **Subject Learning Goals** are the foundation on which the IPC was built. The learning goals cover the knowledge, skills and the understanding that children will develop in the different subjects, including Science, History, Geography, Music, Art, ICT and Computing, Technology, PE, Society and International. The goals for each subject are arranged around the things we want the students to **know**, the things we want them to **be able to do** and the things we want them to **understand**.

The subject learning in the IPC is organised around carefully selected themes. Themes (such as 'Chocolate') reflect the interests of children in this age range. It motivates them and drives them to want to find out more.



Each area has its own subject goals which are developed over a 2 year period. Here is a sample from the Science subject goals:

Grades	Science subject goal
KG3 and Grade 1	1.01 - Know that scientific inquiry involves asking questions, collecting evidence through observation and measurement 1.02 - Be able to pose simple scientific questions 1.12 - Understand that different locations support different living things
Grades 2 and 3	2.06 - Know about processes and conditions that have an effect on living things 2.01a - Be able to carry out a simple scientific investigation 2.04 - Understand some of the effects of what they learn on people's lives

<p>Grades 3 and 4</p>	<p>3.01 - Know that the study of science is concerned with investigating and understanding the animate and inanimate world around them</p> <p>3.02 - Be able to conduct scientific investigations posing scientific questions</p> <p>3.05 - Understand the importance of using evidence to test scientific ideas/lives</p>
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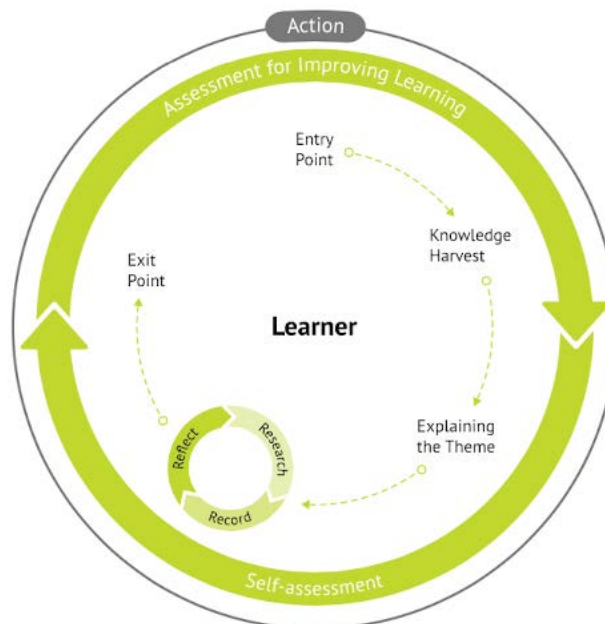
6. Rigorous learning:

Our learners are supported by adjusting the curriculum to individual needs. This means that teachers will mould the learning so that everyone can access the work regardless of their ability or language. Children are challenged at their level of learning and extended. Our classroom strategies help to provide an array of activities which provide choice and challenge in their learning.

Children who are new to English may receive additional support from our specialist English language acquisition teachers. They will support the children with activities to help them learn English as quickly as possible so that they can access learning within the classroom.

7. The process of learning:

Across the course of a year, the students will enjoy learning from a diverse set of topics which are chosen to ensure a broad and balanced exposure to learning in all subjects. Within each topic of learning, the students follow a process of learning designed to support them.



ENTRY POINT

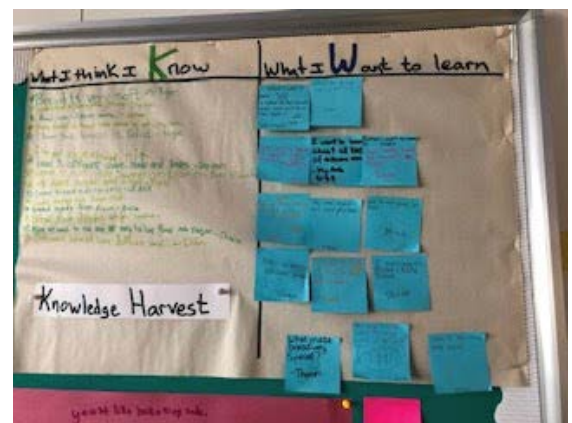
The entry point is an activity for children that begins each unit of work and provides an exciting introduction to the work that is to follow.

Here you can see G2 visiting a local wet market to purchase food for their unit of “Healthy Eating” and KG2 visiting the Aquarium to start off their topic on “Ocean Treasures”.



KNOWLEDGE HARVEST

The knowledge harvest takes place in the early stages of each unit and provides an opportunity for children to reveal what they already know about the themes they are studying. This bank of knowledge can then be added to, developed and even challenged by the teacher, throughout the course of the unit.

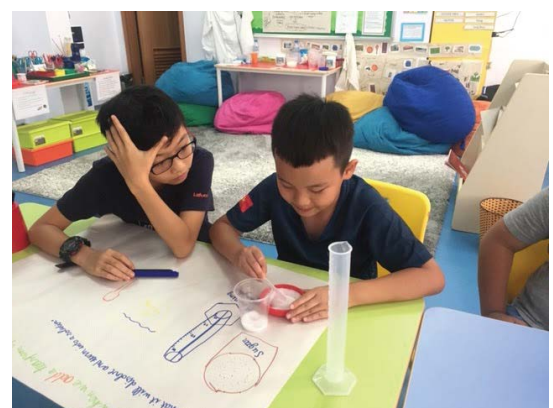


EXPLAINING THE THEME

This activity involves the teacher helping the children to see the 'big idea' of the unit of work before embarking on the subject learning.

RESEARCH ACTIVITY

Each IPC unit has a research activity and a recording activity. Research activities always precede the recording activities. During research activities, children use a variety of methods and work in different group sizes to find out a range of information.



RECORDING AND REFLECTING ACTIVITIES

During the recording activities, children interpret the learning they have researched and have the opportunity to demonstrate, share and explain their learning in different ways. They reflect on what they have learned to help them understand key concepts or the overarching question for the unit.



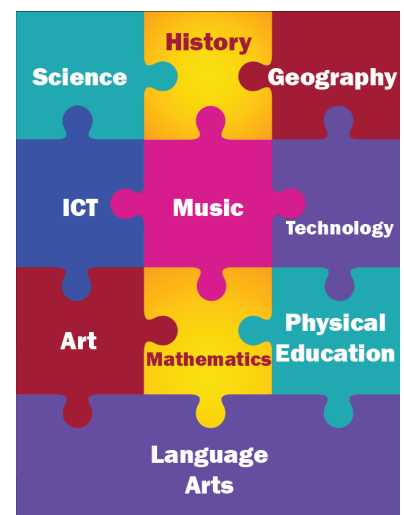
EXIT POINT

The exit point has two main purposes. First, to help children pull together their learning from the unit and second, to celebrate the learning that has taken place. Students may share what they have learned with other students or parents.

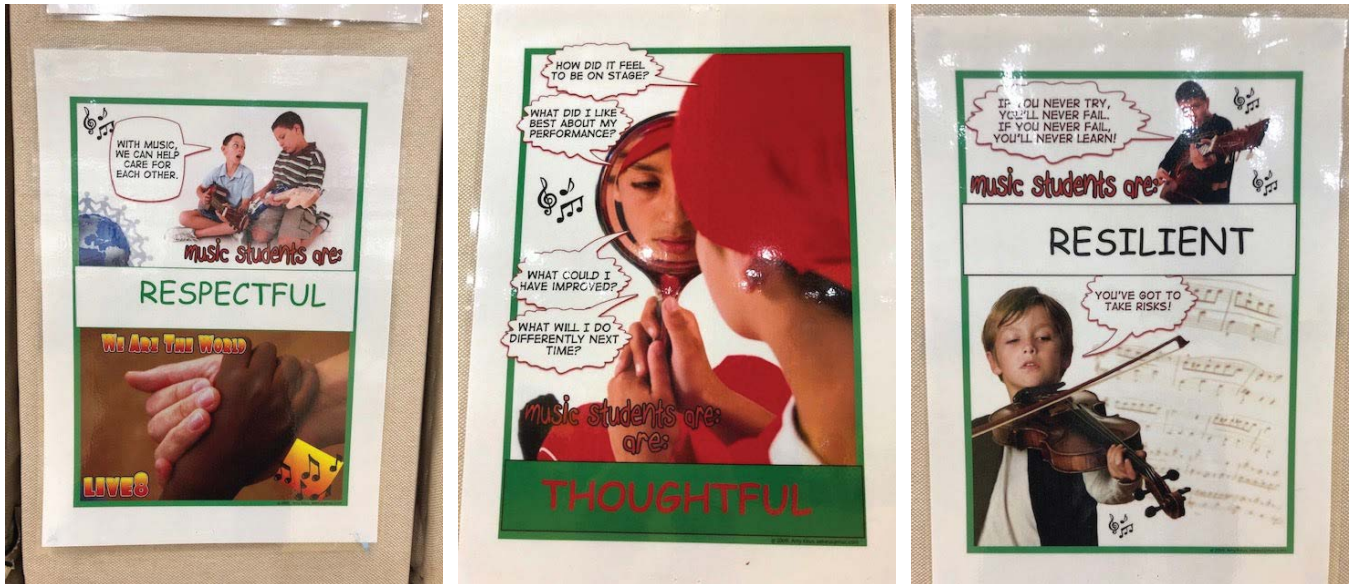


8. Independent yet interdependent subjects:

Our units are organised around a theme which helps children to see how subjects are both independent and interdependent enabling them to see the big picture of their learning, make connections through and across different subjects and talk about the theme from multiple perspectives.

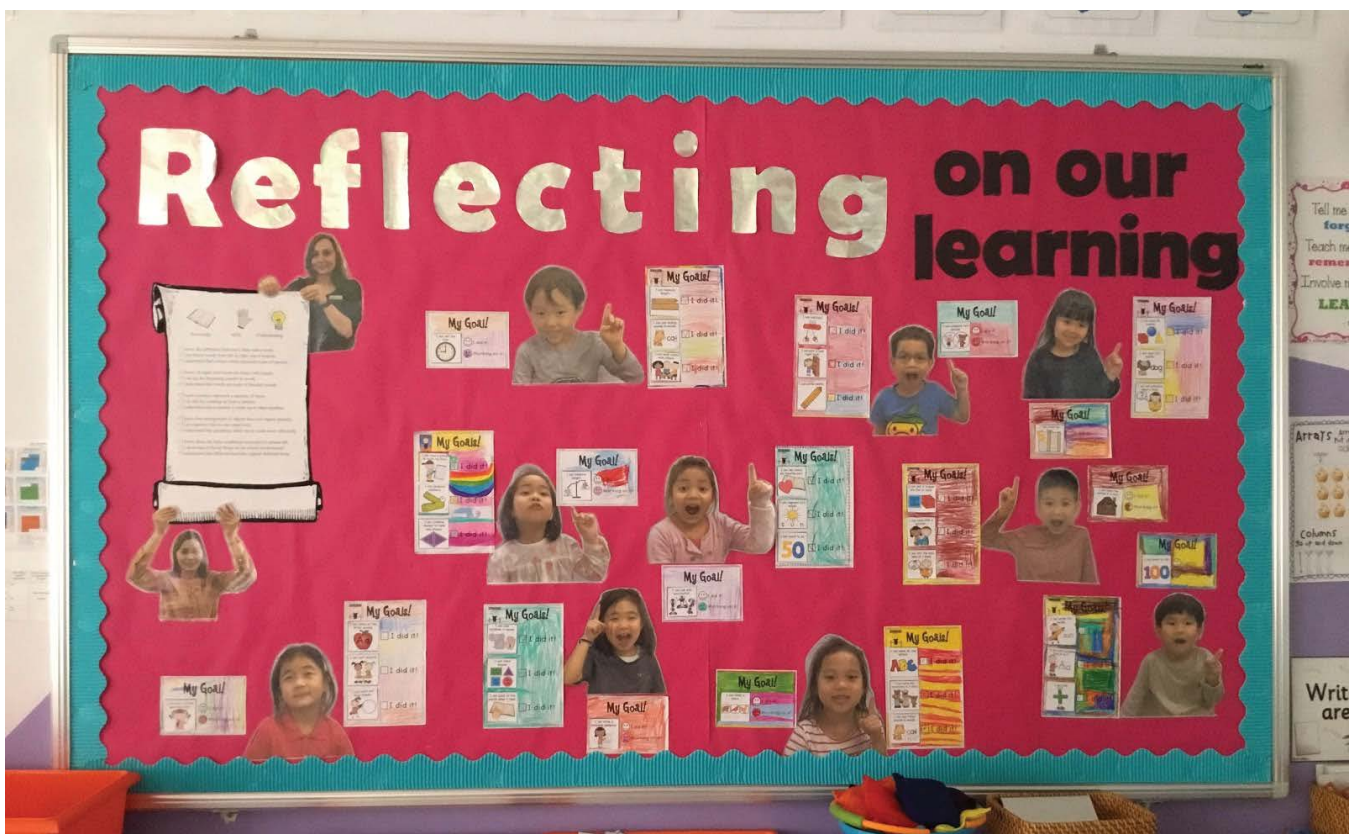


Our specialist teachers in PE, Music and Art will make cross curricular links to the IPC unit where appropriate. Our language arts programme will complement the IPC unit where appropriate. Children also learn that the personal goals support them in all areas of learning.



9. Assessment that improves learning:

As teachers we are assessing all the time! In the daily learning schedules of the classroom, we are constantly adapting learning activities to ensure all students understand, supporting those children who need to be further challenged or who need additional support to master concepts.



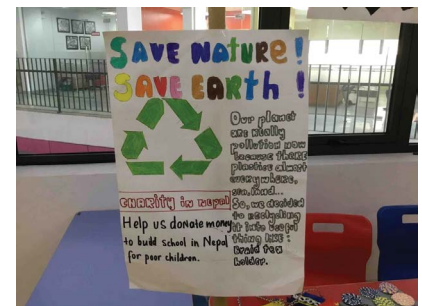
By acquiring knowledge and skills and then applying these to real world scenarios helps our children to understand and the importance this understanding has within the world we live. Therefore it is important for us to assess knowledge, skills and understanding and we report these findings to you as parents twice a year.

Our assessments may vary depending on how we are assessing. It could be a simple test to see if children know something. It could be through observation of how your child develops a skill over time and this may be a joint assessment with your child reflecting on their own learning and setting goals. To really see what your child understands about the concepts we teach, he or she may be asked to create something or be presented with a challenge which pools together all that they have learnt over the course of the topic.

For example, our Grade 5 children were asked to design a house that would be suitable for a village in Bangladesh which suffers from flooding. This followed a topic on “What a wonderful world” which linked looks at natural forces and how they shape our land and what we can do to live in harmony with these.

Another example was with our Grade 4s when they learned about setting up businesses in their unit on Young Entrepreneurs. Inspired by Hamro Mahila’s women’s group in Nepal, who use waste plastic to create and sell new things, our budding entrepreneurs set up their own stalls selling recycled plastic gifts.

Here our Grade 1s are preparing healthy sandwiches based on what they have learned about food groups and healthy eating.





KG/PRIMARY

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