

THE ENGLISH SCHOOL IN ÄLMHULT, SWEDEN



Individual Development Plan

Our Mission Statement

The English School in Älmhult provides a high quality education for students from various countries. The school has programmes designed to meet the needs of its international students based on the International Baccalaureate guidelines, and also meeting the requirements of the Swedish National Curriculum. The language of instruction is English, but all students have the opportunity to learn Swedish as well. We maintain a low student-to-teacher ratio and emphasise the importance of meeting the individual needs of each student in a safe and friendly atmosphere. Our school aims to produce students who are enthusiastic about life and learning, who are independent thinkers and open to new ideas, who are responsible and self-confident and who are imbued with a sense of service to others.

The educational philosophy of the International Baccalaureate Organisation (IBO) is found in its mission statement adopted in 1996 and revised in 2004:

"The International Baccalaureate Organisation 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 IBO works with schools, governments and international organisations 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 difference, can also be right."

The school holds this philosophy at the forefront in its planning of the curriculum and assessment of its students at all levels of learning.

How Do Our Students Learn?

The school seeks to provide an all-round education of the whole individual, academically, morally and physically. Every student is provided with an opportunity to develop, through both learning and experience, to the fullness of his/her ability. The student is expected to have an awareness of responsibility to the society of which he/she is a part. For students in the Middle Years Programme (MYP), they are encouraged to become effective communicators in a foreign language. The education offered at the school enables students to take up academic programmes at a comparable level elsewhere in the world.

The MYP enables students to transfer either to a secondary school elsewhere in Sweden or to go on to read the IBO Diploma Programme and thus complete the full IBO education.

Individual Awareness and Self-development within our Community

Students are encouraged to value and respect the unique differences of all individuals. This includes working co-operatively with others, respecting the privacy and property of others and resolving disputes peacefully. These values are fundamental to the development and fulfilment of self and others.

Our Guidelines

1. Treat all people fairly and as you would like to be treated.
2. Respect people's opinions and differences.
3. Be polite in all situations.
4. If you are feeling unhappy about something, go to an adult.
5. Resolve all conflicts peacefully.
6. Co-operate with others.
7. Always be honest.
8. Walk in an orderly way at all times.
9. Act sensibly and respect the equipment and materials in the school.
10. During school times, stay inside the school boundaries.

These simple guidelines allow us to focus on guiding your development within the school both socially and academically. We therefore ask you to respect and uphold them.

How your child develops following an individual development plan

At the English School we believe that an important ingredient in any student's success is that students, teachers and parents should all work together as a team. The purpose of this guide is to give students and parents information both about the Primary Years Programme and the Middle Years Programme. From the very beginning of the school's development certain aims are set aside each year from within the school's strategic plan that ensure that the development of the individual lies at the heart of the process of learning within the school.

The school has a well-established policy of professional development for its teachers. This enables them to meet the needs of each programme within the school as well as the needs of each individual child. As an accredited PYP school we are constantly developing our implementation process of this programme within the school. The strong links between all the PYP classes will in general be strengthened. Emphasis will be placed on freer learning opportunities for the individual allowing for the different learning styles of the students to be met, whilst at the same time meeting the prescribed standards of the programme. Within the MYP the use of guiding questions to explore sections of the curriculum will allow considerable individual freedom and flexibility in all of the compulsory subject groups.

The education of each individual is the responsibility of both the school and the parents. This means that all parties involved should be aware of the essential aims and content of our curriculum and of assessment and reporting procedures in school.

Learn About the Middle Years Programme (MYP)

The MYP is a course designed for students aged between 11 and 16 years. The driving philosophy behind the MYP is to offer an education in which academic learning is coupled with active and responsible citizenship in an international environment. The fundamental objectives of the MYP are to promote intercultural awareness and to stimulate each student's intellectual and social development according to his/her circumstances. The MYP emphasises the interrelationship between various disciplines in order for students to achieve a holistic view of knowledge.

The curriculum model of the MYP is illustrated in the form of an octagon (below). The student is placed at the centre of this octagon and is surrounded by the 8 subject groups, which are obligatory to the programme. The MYP requires these 8 subjects to be taught in an integrated way and that they embrace the five Areas of Interaction, which are common themes, building up the core of the octagon.

Subjects taught at the English School

The MYP curriculum requires eight compulsory subjects to be taught. At the English School subjects are taught individually as well as in combination with other subjects, all depending on the topic. However, an additional aim of the school this year is to begin to teach and encompass the Areas of Interaction. During the summer, staff attended MYP workshops and additional training will be given on site to the teachers working within this section of the school. The students have already begun to learn about the programme and have been encouraged to develop a keen interest in Community Service and the other Areas of Interaction.

Language A	<p>This is usually defined as the language of instruction at the school. The language of instruction at the English School is English.</p> <p>Swedish is also taught as Language A to pupils who are native speakers.</p>
Language B	<p>Language B is the modern language that the students study. At the English School students study Swedish and have the choice of studying French, German or Spanish as Language B.</p>
Humanities	<p>The Humanities include History and Geography.</p> <p>These subjects intend to teach students to transport themselves in time and place. The purpose is to lead students from their immediate environment to an appreciation and understanding of life and society in other regions and other times.</p> <p>These subjects should also help students to have a better understanding of their own environment as well as their own place in the order of events.</p>
Sciences	<p>The Sciences aim to teach students to understand the interrelation between specific concepts and the course of events in the world. Furthermore, to provide students with a body of knowledge through which they can understand and solve scientific problems. In MYP 1 Science is studied as an integrated subject and in MYP 2 - MYP 5 the Sciences are divided into Physics, Chemistry and Biology, which are studied as separate areas.</p>
Mathematics	<p>Mathematics acquaints students with mathematical reasoning and concepts. Students are encouraged to develop awareness of problem solving through the application of mathematical processes as well as to</p>

Technology	<p>develop flexible strategies for problems in which solutions are not so obvious.</p> <p>Technology consists of Computer Technology and Home Economics. Technology is organised into 3 main branches: information, materials and systems. Technology aims to familiarise students with practical solutions human beings have found over time. Students are introduced to technological concepts and made aware of the positive and negative effects technology brings to their environment and the world as a whole. Students are also encouraged to develop their own solutions to technological subjects and to create their own technological constructions. Woodwork and Needlework are part of the Swedish national requirements which we are in the process of implementing into the IB curriculum.</p>
Arts	<p>The Arts consist of Drama, Art and Music. These subjects encourage the creative and aesthetic genius of the students and also play a very important social part in the students' interactions with each other. The work done in the Arts is most often aimed towards a certain goal, e.g. a school performance. Working towards an established goal gives the students the impression of doing something "real" and that the work they put into these subjects leads somewhere.</p>
Physical Education	<p>Physical Education aims to promote the physical, emotional and social development of the student. Students are encouraged to make physical activity and fitness part of their everyday life. The programme also involves discussing healthy living and hygiene. Teamwork, supporting each other and sportsmanship are further issues that are emphasised at the school.</p>

The MYP curriculum allows schools the flexibility of adding subjects to the eight compulsory subject groups. Apart from these, the students at the English School study Religion, Social Studies, Woodwork and Needlework in order to meet the Swedish curriculum. Together with the compulsory subjects and the five Areas of Interaction, we feel that these subjects give our students a holistic education that prepares them for further studies, but most importantly, for life.

The Areas of Interaction

The MYP stresses the importance of students seeing the interrelationship between subjects and the applications of various disciplines in the world outside the classroom. By emphasising a combination of knowledge, skills, experience and critical thinking, the MYP offers students an education that educates the "whole person" in preparation for life. The traditional academic subjects are therefore accompanied by five Areas of Interaction that serve as links between the student, the academic subject and the potential applications within these five areas.

- *Approaches to Learning* - deals with learning how to learn. Study problems often have to do with poor study skills and most students have never been taught how to develop good study techniques. Approaches to Learning (ATL) helps students to recognise their own strengths and weaknesses and to build confidence. ATL is also concerned with the student's ability to work methodically and with the appropriate level of effort and self-discipline. Taking responsibility for your education and learning, acquiring the ability to work in a team as well as individually and developing a critical judgement of various ways of thinking are central themes to ATL. By working with ATL in every subject, the school hopes that every students will be able to reach their individual goals.
- *Community Service* - encourages students to look at the world around them with a sense of "We" rather than a sense of "I". It enables the students to increase their awareness of the world around them by giving them first-hand experience. An important element of Community Service (CS) is to encourage students to respond to or initiate behaviour that benefits the community and society as a whole. At the English School the students have already begun their first tasks of serving a community, that of the school community itself. Other CS activities will take place throughout the school year.
- *Health and Social Education* - deals with the physical and social welfare of the students. This Area of Interaction (AoI) will be dealt with in every subject and is always of immediate interest. It deals with physical and mental health, consumer aspects, sex education, interpersonal relations and life in society. It is also concerned with the social climate in the school and relations between students, teachers and classes. A part of the Physical Education programme will also take up issues relevant to this AoI.
- *Environment* - concerns the student's awareness of the environment in their immediate surroundings as well as the global environment. This involves acquiring an understanding of man's influence on nature on both a local and global scale. Students need to learn how to investigate environmental issues and how to contribute to possible solutions to an environmental problem. Students also need to understand the relationships between environmental, economical and socio-political problems. The study of environmental issues is also dealt with in the subject areas, especially Science and Humanities.

- *Human Ingenuity* - "Man the Maker" encourages the students to see the relationships between sciences, aesthetics, technology and ethics. It involves studying the creative and inventive genius of man and the impact this genius can have on society and on the human mind, be it positive or negative. Human Ingenuity (HI) as an AoI intends to develop opportunities for students to appreciate the human capacity and drive to invent and furthermore, to see the consequences that this capacity can sometimes have. All subject areas at the English School embrace Human Ingenuity.

Assessment

All schools following MYP guidelines are responsible for organising their own assessment and reporting procedures. The teachers assess student work with guidance from the IBO according to prescribed, published criteria that state final levels of achievement in each discipline. As the school works towards full implementation of this programme such criteria will also be applied. The programme places special emphasis on formative assessment, which is used at different stages of the learning process to measure the progress of the student. The students are also involved in formative self-assessment of their own work and they reflect on their own approaches to learning.

Assessment Guidelines for the Middle Years Programme

Teachers at The English School keep in mind the following principles when considering assessment of student work according to the objectives and assessment criteria in each subject group, and in year five of the programme the personal project.

- Assessment in the MYP is criterion referenced, measuring attainment against specified criteria rather than against other individuals in the class.
- Assessment should be an integral and continuous part of the learning process; it should be co-ordinated with the curriculum; it should gather information from a variety of contexts, using a range of methods according to the needs of the subject and the nature of what is being assessed. The nature of the tasks and the levels of achievement expected should be appropriate to the age group and reflect the development of the students within the subject.
- Assessment procedures should demonstrate a balance between formative assessment (helping students to understand their progress and how they could improve) and summative assessment (judgement at the end of a learning period about a student's achievement in relation to the objectives of the course). The purpose of each assessment should be explicit to the students and feedback given either at the time or as soon as possible afterwards.

- Students should be involved in the assessment of their work: they should be aware of the criteria against which they are assessed, be provided with clear markers of expected achievement and be given the chance to reflect regularly on their own work.
- Without compromising standards, assessment should take into account the requirements of students with special educational needs as well as those of students whose first language is not the language of instruction.
- Assessment procedures must be manageable for the teacher, in terms of both classroom operation and time involved in implementation, marking and record keeping.

The IBO specify to IB schools the final criteria for the last and final year of the programme, MYP 5. Our school has devised a set of student friendly assessment criteria for each of the subject groups. The aim of these is to assist the student in understanding what assessment markers the teacher is using for various assessment tasks that are given. Appropriate simplifications have been added to these criteria to assist student understanding.

In addition to these criteria descriptors exist for specific tasks: for example, for the assessment of a lab report, oral presentations, essay writing and book reports. Various systems of marking student work are used in school during their courses, for example, point scores.

In accordance with state law reporting of student grades begins in MYP 3 and onwards. The students receive 2 report cards: an international report card reporting IBO grades from 1 - 7 (see sheet *General Grade Descriptors*) and a Swedish report card reporting grades IG-MVG (see sheet *Swedish Grade Descriptors*). Report cards are posted home from the school office on the last day of the school term.

General Grade Descriptors

Grade	Descriptors
Grade 1 (Very poor)	Minimal achievement in terms of the objectives.
Grade 2 (Poor)	Very limited achievement against all the objectives. The student has difficulty in understanding the required knowledge and skills, and is unable to apply them fully in normal situations, even with support.
Grade 3 (Mediocre)	Limited achievement against most of the objectives, or clear difficulties in some areas. The student demonstrates a limited understanding of the required knowledge and skills and is only able to apply them fully

	in normal situations with support.
Grade 4 (Satisfactory)	A good general understanding of the required knowledge and skills, and the ability to apply them effectively in normal situations. There is occasional evidence of the skills of analysis, synthesis and evaluation.
Grade 5 (Good)	A consistent and thorough understanding of the required knowledge and skills, and the ability to apply them in a variety of situations. The student generally shows evidence of analysis, synthesis and evaluation where appropriate and occasionally demonstrates originality and insight.
Grade 6 (Very good)	A consistent and thorough understanding of the required knowledge and skills, and the ability to apply them in a wide variety of situations. There is consistent evidence of analysis, synthesis and evaluation where appropriate. The student generally demonstrates originality and insight.
Grade 7 (Excellent)	A consistent and thorough understanding of the required knowledge and skills, and the ability to apply them almost faultlessly in a wide variety of situations. There is consistent evidence of analysis, synthesis and evaluation where appropriate. The student consistently demonstrates originality and insight and always produces work of high quality.

Reference:

(IBO official General Grade Descriptors)

Swedish Grade Descriptors

Grade	Descriptor
IG	Fail in the subject
G	Pass in the subject
VG	Good pass in the subject
MVG	Very good pass in the subject

The Swedish Grade System is followed according to the Teaching Plan for Compulsory School in Sweden, 1994 (Lpo 94). This grade system is used in MYP 3, MYP 4 and MYP 5.

In MYP 4 all students have to take three national tests, these are: English, Mathematics and Swedish or Swedish as a Second Language. The National Tests are a compulsory part of the school system in this country.