

MYP Years 2-4 School Guide

School Year 2026-2027



Middle Years
Programme

**Johan de Witt
scholengroep**

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Johan de Witt Scholengroep – An IB World School

Johan de Witt Scholengroep is an authorised IB World School for the Middle Years Programme (MYP), the Diploma Programme (DP) and the Career-related Programme (CP) of the International Baccalaureate (IB).

Johan de Witt Scholengroep Mission & Vision

Mission

We provide inclusive and opportunity-rich education in a global context through three core pillars:

1. The Johan de Witt Scholengroep creates impact
2. At Johan de Witt Scholengroep, we do it together
3. The Johan de Witt Scholengroep is at the heart of the world

Vision

We educate young people to become well-informed, confident, and socially engaged global citizens.

International Baccalaureate 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.

The IB Programmes at Johan de Witt Scholengroep

Johan de Witt Scholengroep is an inner-city secondary school with locations in the centre of The Hague, the international city of peace and justice. The remarkable diversity of The Hague's inhabitants is reflected in Johan de Witt Scholengroep's student population. Our student body represents over 90 different nationalities and reflects a rich diversity of cultural and socio-economic backgrounds, as well as a wide range of individual interests, needs, and preferences.

We believe that our students deserve the best possible education. Through the Middle Years Programme (MYP), the Career-related Programme (CP) and the Diploma Programme (DP) of the International Baccalaureate (IB), we provide our students with an internationally recognized educational pathway.

At the Johan de Witt Scholengroep, we are authorised to offer all 5 years of the MYP (MYP 1-5) as well as the IB Career-related Programme and the IB Diploma Programme.

MYP 1-ISK is designed for students who may benefit from additional time and support during the transition to secondary education. It serves as a bridge to mainstream secondary education, combining intensive Dutch language support (NT2) with the broader curricular framework of the IB-MYP. This hybrid form of education strengthens students' foundational skills while providing a challenging and engaging academic framework. MYP 1-ISK is specifically designed to give students additional time, support, and the resources they need to address learning gaps, develop confidence, and prepare for a successful future in Dutch education and beyond. After completion of MYP 1-ISK, students may progress to MYP 2 or transition to Dutch secondary education (Kader, MAVO, HAVO, or VWO).

MYP 2-4. The first three years of secondary education are offered in a so-called 'verlengde brugperiode'. This means that students with different school recommendations (schooladvies) for secondary education are placed in the same class for three years.

We aim to guide every student towards the highest-achieving and best-fit secondary education pathway while developing them as globally minded citizens equipped with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to navigate and contribute positively to the challenges and opportunities of an ever-changing society. Students who wish to continue in the MYP and meet the relevant promotion requirements progress to MYP 5 after completing MYP 4.

MYP 5 is the final year of the MYP. MYP 5 serves as a preparatory year for the Diploma Programme (DP) and Career-Related Programme (CP).

The Career-Related Programme (CP) and Diploma Programme (DP) are internationally recognised IB programmes that provide access to higher education (HBO/University), depending on students' chosen subjects, qualifications and individual admission requirements. In both IB programmes, personal and academic development is central, with an emphasis on research skills, critical thinking, and reflection.

The CP combines academic study with career-related learning, providing a more career-oriented pathway. CP students study at least two DP courses (and not more than four) and complement these with the CP core (i.e., Personal and Professional Skills, Community Engagement, Language and Culture, the Reflective Project) and a career-related study (which is a PGP at Johan de Witt Scholengroep).

The DP offers a broad and academically rigorous programme comprising six subject groups, complemented by the three core components (i.e., the Extended Essay, Theory of Knowledge and Creativity, Activity and Service). Students select three subjects at standard level (SL) and 3 at higher level (HL).

Both the CP and DP provide pathways to higher education. In general, the CP is particularly suited to students planning to pursue applied sciences (HBO), while the DP is often more closely aligned with academic university study (WO). However, admission requirements vary by institution and programme, and specific subject choices may be required for entry to certain higher-education programmes.

Students at Johan de Witt Scholengroep can follow multiple pathways (see Figure 1), with different points at which their educational pathway is determined. Further information on this process and the promotion criteria can be found in this policy and on the school website.

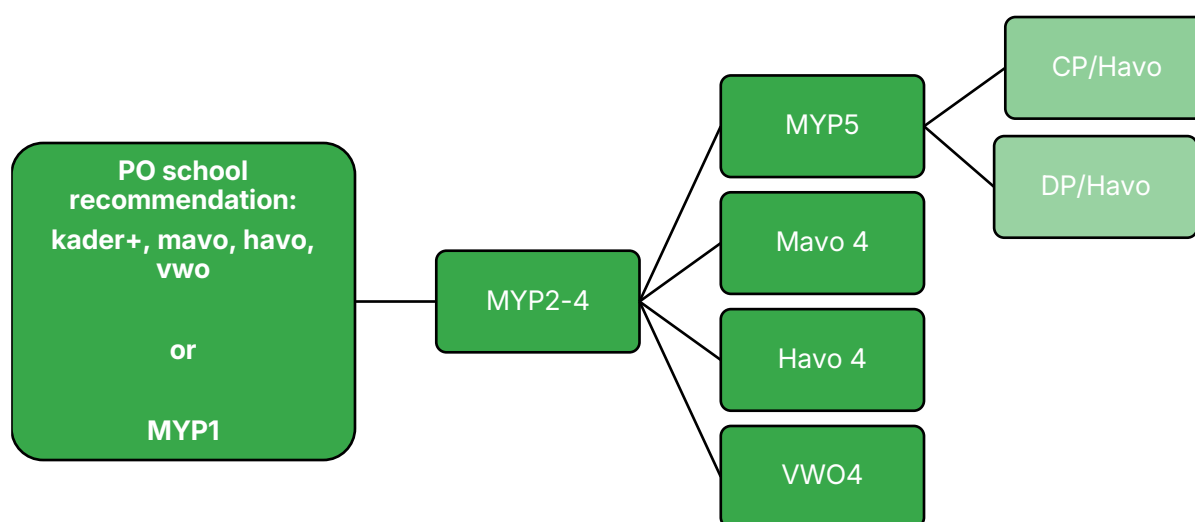


Figure 1: Educational Pathways at Johan de Witt Scholengroep

Middle Years Programme (MYP)

At Johan de Witt Scholengroep, we recognise that students, from MYP 1 to MYP 5, live through a crucial period of personal, social and intellectual development during their teenage years. The MYP programme is designed to support and guide students in their search for a sense of belonging to their natural and social environments through the process of inquiry.

The MYP – An Introduction

The MYP around the World

There are now approximately 1,859 authorised MYP schools in over 127 different countries, with many more implementing the programme and seeking authorisation.

Why do schools adopt the MYP?

- The MYP philosophy is an obvious choice for international and national schools.
- It is seen as liberating schools from outmoded national systems.
- It provides a school with the opportunity to offer a more international perspective within a national school.
- In many regions, the MYP is seen as a higher quality programme, providing quality assurance for parents and students in the middle years of secondary education.
- The MYP is firmly grounded in empirical research and draws on the very latest theories and pedagogical developments emerging from academic educational studies.
- Much of the research into how students learn effectively shows that the MYP philosophy and methodologies are particularly appropriate.
- The MYP is academically rigorous, and its high standards are ensured by the IB.

Main features and advantages of the Middle Years Programme:

The MYP:

- Has a holistic approach that addresses students' intellectual, social, emotional and physical well-being.
- Provides students with opportunities to develop the knowledge, attitudes and skills they need to manage complexity and take responsible action for the future.
- Ensures breadth and depth of understanding through study in eight subject groups.
- Requires the study of at least two languages to support students in understanding their own cultures and those of others.
- Empowers students to participate in service with the community.
- Helps to prepare students for further education, the workplace and a lifetime of learning.

The Fundamental Concepts

Three Fundamental Concepts create the underlying philosophy for the MYP. They are:

- Intercultural Awareness
- Holistic Education
- Communication

Intercultural Awareness

This concept is concerned with developing students' knowledge, understanding, skills, and attitudes as they learn about their own and others' social and national cultures. It not only encourages tolerance and respect, but also leads to empathy and understanding. Students should be conscious of the shared humanity that binds all people together while respecting the variety of cultures and attitudes that make for the richness of life. Students are expected to develop a genuine understanding of their own history and culture, and they are encouraged to appreciate the traditions of other people and other places. Intercultural awareness goes beyond mere tolerance or a polite attitude towards the ideas and artefacts of other cultures. It is a positive, empathetic movement towards others, a readiness to act cooperatively in genuine exchange and shared effort. It should promote the universal values common to civilised societies. Developing intercultural awareness concerns everyone within the school community. At Johan de Witt Scholengroep, we will be constantly evaluating and improving upon policies and practices that facilitate the involvement of students, teachers, administrators and parents in practical activities.

Holistic Education

The MYP requires an approach to teaching and learning which includes and extends beyond traditional school subjects. The programme emphasises the disciplined study of traditional subject groups, whilst the model also provides for developing links between the disciplines, so that students will learn to see knowledge as an interrelated whole. Holistic education helps students realize that most real-world problems require insights gained from a variety of disciplines; they develop the skills of inquiry and understand the similarities and differences between approaches to human knowledge.

Communication

The MYP stresses the vital importance of communication, verbal and non-verbal, as a vehicle to realize the aims of the programme. A good command of expression in all its forms is fundamental to learning and will be essential in the workplace of the future. The IB places particular emphasis on language acquisition, which does more than promote cognitive growth. It is regarded as crucial for maintaining cultural identity, personal development, and intercultural understanding. The ability to communicate one's ideas in an appropriate form is seen as an essential skill for students. Communication is a key expectation for all subject areas.

The Middle Years Programme Curriculum Model

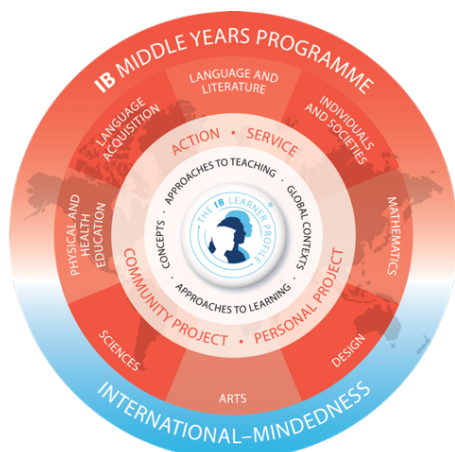


Figure 2: The MYP Curriculum Model "© International Baccalaureate Organization 2024"

The IB Middle Years Programme curriculum model is the same as the Career-related Programme (CP) and Diploma Programme (DP) models in that the innermost component of the model represents the student, because it is the student who is always at the centre of everything we do. The student is represented in a circle with the Learner Profile. This is a set of 10 qualities which MYP schools must proactively work to instil and develop in all learners to ensure their continued success in the world beyond school.

The circle closest to the students contains four elements which form the basis of the Middle Years Programme. These four elements are:

Approaches to Learning (Learning skills):

It is widely known that the development of transdisciplinary skills is just as important in education as learning in specific subjects. The transdisciplinary skills that empower students to be successful in school, education, and beyond are known as the approaches to learning (ATL). There are five broad categories of skills, which can be broken down into ten more specific categories of ATL skills. Some of the key questions to be answered by students with respect to ATL skills include the following:

- What are my present skills in this area and what evidence do I have of my development?
- What skills can I improve?
- What new skills can I learn?

At Johan de Witt Scholengroep, we use **the Klimwijzer** ("climb wiser"), which is our Essential Learning Agreements. The JdW Klimwijzer supports students in developing their attitudes, behaviour, and active participation in class. It helps cultivate good learning habits and strengthens the teacher-student relationship, laying the foundation for a successful school career and lifelong learning.

Approaches to Teaching:

This element emphasises the unique MYP pedagogy, including collaborative, authentic learning through inquiry. Teaching in the MYP is all about being inquiry-focused, student-centred, innovative and engaging. Our MYP teachers use **the Kijkwijzer** ("watch wiser") to enhance their teaching strategies.

Global Contexts:

MYP global contexts provide shared starting points for inquiry into what it means to be internationally minded, framing a curriculum that promotes multilingualism, intercultural understanding and global engagement. These contexts build on the powerful themes of global significance that structure teaching and learning in the IB Middle Years Programme. Global contexts are designed to encourage the students to make worthwhile connections between the real world and classroom learning. Through their learning of subject concepts, students will come to a better understanding of a global context.

When teachers select a global context for learning, they are answering the following questions:

- Why are we engaged in this inquiry?
- Why are these concepts important?
- Why is it important for me to understand?
- Why do people care about this topic?

The six global contexts in the MYP are:

1. Identities and relationships
2. Orientation in space and time
3. Personal and cultural expression
4. Scientific and technical innovation
5. Globalization and sustainability
6. Fairness and development

The global contexts allow for explorations of our common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet. They invite reflection on local, national and global communities, as well as the real-life issues and concerns of 11 to 16-year-old students. Over the course of their study, students will explore all six global contexts on multiple occasions and in different subjects.

The MYP provides a thorough study of the various disciplines whilst encouraging a holistic view of learning through interdisciplinary teaching and learning. Students are encouraged to consider issues and find solutions by drawing from the knowledge and understanding of other subjects, allowing them to transfer their skills and to think critically to solve authentic problems. While students investigate real-life issues, opportunities arise which allow them to develop and question their own set of values in a supportive environment.

Teaching in MYP programmes is:

- inquiry-based: provoking curiosity to structure and sustain exploration.
- concept-driven: planning and teaching through concepts that are transferable to new contexts.
- contextualized: reaching beyond the scope of individual subjects to establish relevance to the world we live in.
- collaborative: promoting effective teamwork and purposeful/productive collaboration.
- differentiated: providing access to learning for a diversity of learners.
- informed by assessment: balancing assessment for learning and of learning.

Key and Related Concepts:

The Middle Years Programme is known as a concept-based curriculum. This means that we focus on concepts, principles and generalisations, using related facts and skills as tools to gain deeper understanding of disciplinary content, transdisciplinary themes and interdisciplinary issues, and to facilitate conceptual transfer through time, across cultures and across situations. Inclusion of this element highlights the emphasis that is placed on a concept-based curriculum in the MYP.

Key Concepts:	Related Concepts:
Key concepts are powerful, abstract ideas that have many dimensions and definitions. They have important interconnections and overlapping concerns. Key concepts engage students in higher-order thinking, helping them to connect facts and topics with more complex conceptual understanding. They give breadth to the units of inquiry and the subjects of study.	Related concepts promote depth of learning and add coherence to the understanding of academic subjects and disciplines. They are grounded in specific subjects and disciplines, and they are useful for exploring key concepts in greater detail. They give depth to the units of inquiry and the subjects of study.

The next circle in the MYP Curriculum Model highlights the core components of the MYP curriculum model.

Action:

Inquiry-based learning may result in student-initiated action, which may involve service within the community

Service:

One of the deliberate intentions of the MYP is to ensure that inquiry-based learning results in action, which may in turn be demonstrated by students in the form of service in the community. All students are encouraged to feel that their local and global actions are valuable, and that they can make a difference to the community, no matter how small.

Community Project:

The Community Project is a culminating MYP experience in which students identify a community need, take action to address it, and reflect on the outcomes. It develops skills in research, collaboration, and self-management while applying learning to a real-world issue. Students document their work and are assessed against IB criteria for investigating, planning, acting, and reflecting. The project fosters social responsibility and community engagement. Schools that offer MYP Year 5 have the option, but are not obligated, to implement the Community Project.

Personal Project:

The MYP culminates in the Personal Project, and this is a hugely significant piece of work central to students' experience of the Middle Years Programme. It is a unique opportunity for students in MYP 5 to research and present on a topic which is truly of interest to them. The Personal Project prepares students for the Reflective Project in the CP or the Extended Essay in the DP.

The Final Circle of the MYP Programme Curriculum Model displays the eight subject groups.

Subject groups

The IB values language learning. The first two subject groups in the IB Programme Models are language & literature and language acquisition. At Johan de Witt Scholengroep, we value multilingualism.

Multilingualism at Johan de Witt Scholengroep

In the Netherlands, many students are multilingual, using more than one language in their daily lives. At our school, we see multilingualism as a valuable asset that enriches learning and strengthens the educational experience. Rather than viewing students' linguistic diversity as a barrier or disadvantage, we actively draw on their languages and cultural backgrounds as resources for learning.

By embracing multilingualism, students can build on knowledge and understanding developed in their home languages while continuing to develop their academic language proficiency. Recognising and valuing the languages students bring to school also strengthens language awareness, supports deeper learning, and fosters intercultural understanding and respect.

For MYP 1 to 4, Dutch is the official language of instruction. From MYP 5 onward, we switch to English to better prepare students for the CP or DP. During the MYP 5 school year, students have the opportunity to earn a Cambridge English Certificate as preparation for the CP or DP. For more information on language development at Johan de Witt Scholengroep, see the School's *Language Policy*.

Eight Subject Groups

The MYP organises teaching and learning through eight subject groups: language and literature, language acquisition, individuals and societies, sciences, mathematics, arts, physical and health education, and design.

In many cases, discrete or integrated disciplines may be taught and assessed within a subject group:

for example, history or geography within the individuals and societies subject group; biology, chemistry or physics within the sciences subject group. The distinction between subject groups blurs to indicate the interdisciplinary nature of the MYP.

The subject groups are connected through concepts, global contexts, approaches to learning, and approaches to teaching. The following MYP subjects are offered at Johan de Witt Scholengroep:

Subject Group	School subjects
Language and literature	Dutch
Language acquisition	English, French, German, Spanish
Individuals & societies	Geography, history, philosophy, economics
Sciences	Biology, physics, chemistry
Mathematics	Mathematics
Arts	Visual arts, dance, theatre, film, music
Physical & health education	Physical & Health Education
Design	Product and Digital Design

Assessment

At Johan de Witt Scholengroep, MYP Assessment aligns with the IB philosophy and assessment principles. Students' progress is assessed through the IB-prescribed subject-group objectives and assessment criteria, as well as the Dutch national criteria (SLO kerndoelen) and baseline tests ("referentietoetsen") for Dutch, English and Mathematics.

Formative assessment is used to guide learning and teaching, whilst summative assessment, often at the end of a unit, assesses the student's knowledge, understanding, skills, and/ or attitudes of learning.

Key principles for MYP summative assessment:

- Every criterion has strands (in Roman numerals), and each criterion strand in every subject must be assessed at least twice per school year. The achievement levels for each criterion are from 0 to 8.
- The objectives for the 4 criteria are prescribed for MYP 1, 3, and 5. At Johan de Witt Scholengroep, we use for MYP 2 the Year 1 objectives and for MYP 4 we use the Year 3 objectives.
- All criteria (A, B, C, and D) must be assessed before a final grade on the 1-7 scale can be awarded. The criteria total score is converted to a final grade of 1-7 using the MYP grade boundaries, which are set by the IB (See Appendix B).
- Task-specific rubrics, aligned to the MYP criteria, are shared with students before each assessment so students know beforehand how they will be assessed.

MYP-criteria-based rubrics are holistic and provide general statements describing levels of student achievement. To make the assessment criteria more specific and meaningful for a particular assessment task and age group, teachers develop task-specific clarifications based on the MYP criteria. These clarifications explain how the criterion descriptors apply to the knowledge, understanding, skills, and expectations of the specific task, providing students and teachers with a clearer understanding of what is being assessed.

- A variety of task types is used across the year (e.g., written tasks, oral presentations, laboratory work, practical performances, projects, and tests).
- Group work may be used as a learning activity, but summative assessment always evaluates individual student achievement.
- Summative assessments are planned in the Assessment Calendar before the start of each year and published on Toddle.

Determining the Final MYP Grade (Best-Fit Method)

At the end of each term, teachers use the best-fit method to determine a final criterion level for each student. The teacher reviews all summative evidence gathered for a given criterion and selects the level that most accurately represents the student's demonstrated ability. Teachers may also consider the highest sustained level of achievement where a student has shown consistent performance at a particular level.

When the teacher has collected enough summative task results for all 4 criteria, the four criterion levels are added together. The resulting total score is converted to a final grade of 1–7 using the IB MYP grade boundaries:

Total Score	1–5	6–9	10–14	15–18	19–23	24–27	28–32
Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Figure 3: MYP Grade Boundaries

Where a student has not been assessed in all criteria (due to time in the school year, new enrolment, extended absence, or other verified circumstances), a grade of N/A (Not Assessed) will appear on the report. Teachers include a written comment explaining the reason.

For more information, see our *Assessment and Promotion Policy*.

MYP Years 2 to 4 and the Dutch Education System

As Johan de Witt Scholengroep is not an international school, we comply with Dutch legislation on secondary education.

In MYP 2–4, all lower secondary core objectives (kerndoelen) are covered, and the national reference framework is followed. Upon completing MYP 4, students will have the same knowledge and skills as students enrolled in the Dutch lower secondary curriculum. In MYP 5, we prepare students for the external IB exam programmes (CP or DP). After MYP 5, students can still transfer to a final exam year (HAVO 5 sprint) or a pre-exam year (VWO 5) in the Dutch system (see Figure 1).

At the end of period 2 in MYP 4, students receive binding advice (determinatie) for their upper secondary pathway (see Figure 1). This determines whether a student continues into MYP 5 or transfers to a Dutch pathway option. MYP 5 is the preparatory year for the CP and DP. For more information about binding advice, see our *Assessment and Promotion Policy*.

Why We Offer the Middle Years Programme

Our neighbourhood

Several “De Haagse Scholen” schools offer the PYP (Startpunt International, Springbok International, Anne Frank Wereldschool en het Galjoen of which are located in our vicinity. As a community school, we are committed to supporting children in our area to continue their IB education.

Promoting Educational Equity

Educational inequity is growing in the Netherlands, partly because selection into school types happens early, typically around age twelve or Group 8, compared with around 15- or 16-year-old children in many other countries. Research shows that early selection disadvantages students from low socio-economic backgrounds, late bloomers, and those born early in the school year, who are less likely to end up at the education level that best fits them. The Education Council has noted that early selection gives students insufficient opportunity to pursue an education aligning with their capabilities and development. The MYP promotes educational equity, allowing students aged 11 to 16 to attend the same programme

At Johan de Witt Scholengroep, we believe that all students should have the chance to do well no matter their background. Therefore, we offer the MYP so that students with different primary school recommendations are in the same class and receive the same education, giving them more time to develop and grow before their next school/ programme pathway is determined. The MYP's knowledge-rich approach supports this: research shows that building broad knowledge of the world is essential to closing learning gaps, whereas an overly narrow focus on skills, language, and mathematics has produced knowledge-poor education and left many students with gaps they cannot overcome. Addressing this requires a well-integrated curriculum with targeted language support.

Preparing (Global) Citizens

Citizenship is a central focus of Dutch education. With the enactment of *The Clarification of the Citizenship Assignment to Schools in Primary and Secondary Education* law on 1 August 2021, schools are required to provide a goal-oriented and coherent citizenship curriculum. The IB-MYP offers considerable scope and attention for developing citizenship skills; not only within the Dutch context, but across borders. Students explore what it means to be part of a globalised society, and learn how they can contribute to building a better world.

Supporting Newcomers

In The Hague, the number of newcomer students entering primary education is growing rapidly. For many of these students, the transition to secondary education comes too soon, as they have not yet had sufficient time to develop the language proficiency and academic skills needed to succeed in mainstream secondary education. At Johan de Witt Scholengroep, the MYP 1-ISK (International Schakelklas) provides these students with an additional year in which they can strengthen their language and academic skills within the MYP framework. The programme supports students in working towards the required Dutch language and numeracy reference levels, including 1F/2F and 1S, at an accelerated pace, enabling them to make a well-prepared transition into the regular MYP programme.

MYP 2-4 also promote the integration and success of newcomers, enabling them to participate fully in, and contribute to, society.

Lesson Allocation in MYP 2-4

Johan de Witt Scholengroep follows the subject groups as defined by the IB. Students will see these subject groups reflected in their timetables. Where a subject group comprises several traditional school subjects, the emphasis or approach may vary from lesson to lesson. For example, in Individuals and Societies (geography, history, philosophy, and economics), we take an integrated approach to help students understand the interconnectedness of a complex world.

The lesson allocation overview below shows the number of hours taught per week in each subject group during the 2026–2027 school year. Each lesson lasts 70 minutes.

Subject Group	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3
Language and literature Dutch	2	2	2
Language acquisition English	2	2	2
Language and acquisition French	1	1	1
Language and acquisition German	1	1	1
Language and acquisition Spanish	1	1	1
Individuals and societies	3	3	3

Personal Project	1	1	1
Physical and health education	2	2	2
Mathematics	2	2	2
Sciences	1	2	1
Individuals and societies	3	3	3
Arts	1	1	1
Physical and health education	2	2	2
Community project	1	1	1
Design	1	1	1

Learning Environments

We have a permanent classroom reserved for MYP 1-ISK classes, where most lessons take place. The classroom layout reflects the teaching style used within the MYP. For subject groups such as Sciences (Science Lab), Design (Design Lab), and Arts (Arts Lab), students may need to move to other locations. Learning therefore takes place across a range of environments, each suited to its subject.

Toddle

We use Toddle, an online platform for learning and teaching, focused entirely on IB education. Students use Toddle to track and update their progress, build their portfolios, collaborate with peers, and access their learning materials. Teachers use Toddle to create lesson plans, collaborate with colleagues, give feedback, and track and monitor student progress. Parents also use Toddle to follow information about their child's progress in their preferred language.

Parent Afternoons and Project Afternoons

Parents of MYP students are invited to school several times a year. The purpose of these afternoons varies: sometimes they focus on discussing students' progress, and sometimes on an MYP-related theme, such as how to use Toddle, assessment, multilingualism, or the Community Project.

In addition, a Project afternoon is held after each period (i.e., three times per school year), during which students share what they have been working on and what they have learned during the terms. Families are invited to attend to learn about their children's progress and to make the learning authentic for our students.

For more information about the MYP, please visit the IB website (www.ibo.org) or contact the school's MYP Coordinator. For more information about MYP assessment and promotion criteria from MYP1-ISK to MYP 2, see our *Assessment and Promotion Policy*.