

Play English / Bilingual School of Monza

Curriculum Guide

**Preschool 1 and 2 / Scuola Materna
2009 - 2010**

Learning in the Early Years

Welcome to our Early Years program! Preschool children are viewed as unique individuals who possess many strengths, innovative ideas, curiosity, and personal desires. They learn in a happy, secure and stimulating setting. The needs of the whole child are nurtured, including social-emotional, language and communication, and cognitive and physical development.

The preschool classroom is equipped with materials that meet children's developmental needs, promote play, and support socialization. Children learn through extended periods of time and wide use of space as they investigate and interact with materials and each other. Through these experiences, they use materials in imaginative ways, make discoveries, and construct theories of how the world works. The Daily Routine is structured, and yet responsive to the needs of children, providing them opportunities for decision-making, problem-solving, and independence. It includes a greeting and circle time, planning for the day, work time, tidy-up time, recall and reflection, snack, circle time, small-group work, and outdoor play. A mixture of teacher-directed and child-directed activities gives teachers and children ownership, respect and equality in the classroom. Pre-academic exposure is informal and based on the individual needs, interests, and development of each child.



Play is essential to the development of young children. Through play, children interact with their world, reflect on their actions, and construct meaning about their world and their place in it. They learn to communicate their ideas, negotiate and resolve conflicts, use problem-solving strategies, and take on others' perspectives. Play gives children the ability to identify their own feelings and empathize with the feelings of others. They learn to respect and value the rights of others. During play, children participate in activities that develop their hand and eye coordination and whole body movement.

The International Baccalaureate Program Primary Years Program (PYP)

We aim to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world. Our learners strive to be each of these attributes:

<p>Caring I care for other people. I try to help others. I want people around me to be happy and I am sensitive to their needs.</p>	<p>Communicator I talk about my ideas. I am able to express myself in more than one language. I can also communicate using mathematical language, symbols and drawings.</p>	<p>Risk Taker I have the courage to try new things. I'm not afraid to give it a go even if I feel shy. I try to solve problems in a lot of ways</p>	<p>Principled I always try to do what is right. I am fair and follow our agreements. I am honest with myself and with others.</p>	<p>Inquirer I ask questions. I like to learn and discover new things about the world. I am curious I will carry this love of learning with me throughout life.</p>
<p>Reflective I think about what I have learned, what I am good at and what I can improve the next time. I take the time to think about my actions and their effects.</p>	<p>Open Minded I know that not everyone will think and act like me and that's fine. I listen and try to understand others.</p>	<p>Balanced I eat healthy food and I exercise. I like to learn about different things. I understand it is important to have a balance of work and play.</p>	<p>Knowledgeable I have learned many things. I can tell you about or show you these things. I can use this information to solve problems in life.</p>	<p>Thinker I am thoughtful. I try to solve problems and make good decisions. I do this by thinking about things and by learning from my mistakes.</p>

The PYP Curriculum

Our Educational framework is based on the philosophy of the **Primary Years Program** which was developed by the International Baccalaureate Organization. This international education program is designed to foster the development of the whole child, ages three to twelve.

The PYP embraces a teaching philosophy which recognizes that children are naturally curious and wish to experiment, explore, and make sense of their world. It emphasizes the growth of children's inquiry, creativity, curiosity and imagination, while the development of basic skills is carefully nurtured. It engages children actively in their own learning.

The **Written Curriculum** consists of five essential elements:

Knowledge	Concepts	Skills	Attitudes	Action
An in-depth understanding of significant ideas, not merely the acquisition of facts and skills	form function change causation connection perspective responsibility reflection	thinking communication social research self-management	tolerance respect integrity independence enthusiasm empathy curiosity creativity cooperation confidence commitment appreciation	reflect make choice act

Six **transdisciplinary themes** (Units of Inquiry) are the focus of studies across the ages and topics of the curriculum. They have global significance, and are supported and balanced by six disciplines: language, mathematics, social studies, arts, science and technology, and personal-social-physical education. The transdisciplinary themes are:

- Who We Are
- Where We Are in Space and Time
- How We Express Ourselves
- How the World Works
- How We Organize Ourselves
- Sharing the Planet

Approximate Dates	Sept 28 – Nov 27	Dec 1 – Feb 12	Feb 22 – April 23	April 26 – June 18
Units of Inquiry	Learn to Play, Play to Learn	My Family and Friends	Guardami, Ascolatami, Parlami	Natural Wonders
Theme	How we organize ourselves	Who we are	How we express ourselves	How the world works
Central Ideas	We learn in different ways and in different places.	Family and friends help to make us who we are.	We express ourselves in different ways.	The soil is home to many living things.
Lines of Inquiry	Children plan their play We have rules and routines Reasons behind rules The importance of sharing materials	RELATIONSHIPS Who are our family and friends? How are families and friends similar and different? How do we help each other? Why are families and friends important?	FEELINGS Ways we show and share what we feel, know, and think Different ways we say and show the same thing How we communicate through different languages “Good” communication versus “bad” communication	RESPECTING NATURE Living things under the soil Life cycle of frog and butterfly Effects people have on the environment
Language Concepts	Determine areas using signs and objects, in both English & Italian Express themselves during individual & group play Initiate drawing / writing / painting	Roles in the family – who’s who? Different types of friends & families (cultures, animals, extended family) Recognize peers’ names using symbols / names / letters	Use our eyes, ears, and mouths to communicate Use multiple ways to communicate an idea through different languages, signals, pictures, play, art works	Increase vocabulary by learning the names of different creatures Describe differences between creatures and their habitats
Mathematics & Science Concepts	Follow routines / predict what will come next Attendance - who is here?	Components of family determine size Different types of foods families eat Addition / subtraction Bigger / smaller	Explore the senses: hearing, seeing, touch, taste, smell Correlate our (human body) physical appearance by describing the similarities / differences (ex: symmetry)	Discover the world under the soil Weather Observe the habitats of creatures and respect their space
Disciplinary Focus	Social Studies and Science Italian: <u>Studi sociali:</u> pone domande su situazioni e diversità culturali; dialoga, discute e progetta confrontando ipotesi e procedure, gioca e lavora in modo costruttivo e creativo con gli altri bambini	Language, Social Studies, PSE, Maths Italian: <u>Lingua:</u> sviluppo di fiducia e motivazione nel comunicare la propria esperienza personale	Language, PSE, Arts, Social Studies Italian: <u>Lingua:</u> racconta, inventa, ascolta e comprende aspetti del proprio vissuto e di quello degli altri; sviluppa un repertorio linguistico adeguato alle proprie esperienze	Science, Social Studies, Language, Arts <u>Studi sociali:</u> the impact of people on the environment

Approximate Dates	Sept 28 – Nov 27	Dec 1 – Feb 12	Feb 22 – April 23	April 26 – June 18
Units of Inquiry	Io / Me	Come Stai? / How Are You?	Autunno, Inverno, Primavera, Estate / Autumn, Winter, Spring, Summer	Re Mida / King Midas
Theme	Who we are	How we express ourselves	How the world works	Sharing the planet
Central Ideas	Un'indagine su me stesso. Learning about myself.	Le nostre emozioni ci fanno agire in modi diversi. Our feelings make us act in different ways.	La natura cambia in ogni stagione Nature changes with every season.	Le cose si possono usare di nuovo o trasformare in qualcosa d'altro. Things can be used again and transformed into other things.
Language Concepts	Personal pronouns Body parts Verbs Concepts of past, present, future Reading—searching for information Language / vocabulary development Making connections analyzing	Adjectives Opposites Personal expression & discussion Descriptive language Problem solving Reflection Visual language—presenting / viewing Questioning strategies	Adjectives Sequencing – language Comparative language Concepts of time Prepositions	Scientific vocabulary Problem solving Questioning strategies Verbs – what actions do we take
Mathematics and Science Concepts	Collecting data Charting data Analyzing data Measuring Number Time Weight	Data handling Number Space / environment	Sequence Data handling Time Multiplication (patterns) Shape (in nature) Temperature Classification	Number Space / organization, classification Addition / combinations Multiplication / patterns Fractions / quantity Weight Conservation
Disciplinary Focus	Language, PSE, Social Studies	Arts, Science, Social Studies	Social Studies, Math, Language, Science	Social Studies, Math, Art, PSE PE, Music

The Taught Curriculum: Inquiry in the Classroom

In our classrooms, you will find children actively involved in and taking responsibility for their own learning, an approach which is usually called the Inquiry Approach. This is a way of learning that may be new to us as adults. It is a process that is initiated by the children or by the teacher. It moves the children from what they already understand to a new and deeper understanding.

In the classroom, inquiry has many appearances. For example, you might see children doing any of these:

- Exploring, wondering and questioning
- Experimenting and playing with possibilities
- Making connections between previous learning and current learning
- Collecting data and reporting findings
- Clarifying existing ideas and reconsidering perceptions
- Deepening understanding through active investigation or testing
- Making and testing theories
- Researching and seeking information
- Taking and defending a position
- Solving problems in a variety of ways

The intent of the inquiry approach is to make children's learning meaningful and relevant to their lives. They investigate significant issues by formulating their own questions, designing their own inquiries, and proceeding with research, experimentation, observation, and analysis that help them find

their own meaning and ideas. Inquiry takes on different appearances, depending on the ages of the children and their development.

The Learned Curriculum is measured by various forms of assessment. Assessment of the processes of inquiry is an important aspect of the program. When collecting data on individual children's progress, teachers consider whether:

- The nature of the child's inquiry develops over in time, such as whether he or she is asking questions of more depth
- The children are becoming aware that real problems require real solutions
- The children are integrating knowledge and skills that spans and connects several disciplines, enabling them to conduct successful inquiries and find solutions to problems
- The children are demonstrating both independence and an ability to work collaboratively.

DISCIPLINARY LEARNING

LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

During early childhood, children are often enthusiastic and curious about books and reading. They enjoy listening to books and may have favorites. Children focus mostly on illustrations as they talk about the story. They love songs and books with rhythm, repetition, and rhyme. They participate in reading when adults read aloud, and often enjoy hearing the same stories read aloud over and over. Children play, experiment, talk about, and make connections to a variety of media.

Young children rely on their drawings to show meaning. They often pretend to write by using scribble writing. Children sometimes make random letters and numbers to represent words. Some children add "words" to their pictures to share meaning. They often tell stories about their pictures.

The strands of language and literacy include:

- Oral communication: listening and speaking
- Written communication: reading and writing
- Visual communication: viewing and presenting

MATHEMATICS

Mathematics in the Early Years is experiential. Children develop an understanding of basic math concepts by manipulating, comparing, counting, and sorting objects. They develop an understanding of whole numbers as symbols for counting. Children learn about mathematics in their environment, such as the calendar, and explore patterns all around them.

The strands of mathematics include:

- Data handling
- Measurement
- Shape and space
- Pattern and function
- Number

Children investigate five content strands in mathematics:

- Number
- Measurement
- Space and Shape
- Pattern and Function
- Data Handling

They use the five thinking processes of mathematicians:

- Problem-solving
- Communication
- Representation
- Connections
- Reasoning and Proof

VISUAL ART

Children investigate art materials, techniques, and processes, and learn to communicate their ideas through art. They reflect on how the use of certain materials and techniques can express different ideas in art, and develop problem-solving skills.

Strands of the visual arts curriculum include:

- Creative processes
- Elements of art and design
- Visual arts in society
- Reflection and appreciation

SOCIAL STUDIES

In this age range, children gain an understanding of people and their lives, and focus on themselves, their families and friends, and their immediate environment. They begin to gain an awareness of themselves within various groups, a sense of place, and a sense of time and change. The strands of the social studies perspective include:

- History
- Geography
- Society

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Science is a way of looking at the world. Preschool children use their senses to gather and record information, and use their observations to find simple patterns, make predictions, and discuss their ideas.

Investigations are organized in four content strands:

- Forces and Energy
- Materials and Matter
- Living Things
- Earth and Space

MUSIC

Music is the study and exploration of sound and the expressive use of musical elements through singing and playing instruments. It is an important vehicle for developing children's language. We provide a program for children to learn about music and movement through experimentation. Strands of the music curriculum include:

- Singing
- Playing instruments
- Creating and composing
- Notation
- Listening and appreciation

PERSONAL , SOCIAL and PHYSICAL EDUCATION

This aspect of the curriculum focuses on attributes, dispositions, and attitudes of learners. It is taught within the transdisciplinary themes (e.g., who we are, where we are in time and place, how we express ourselves, how the world works, how we organize ourselves, and sharing the planet). Strands of the Personal-Social curriculum include:

- Self-concept
- Health and safety
- Interaction with others
- Organization for learning

Physical Education is important to various aspects of human development: physical, social, personal and emotional. Children learn *about* movement and *through* movement. They experience a wide variety of physical activities to help develop their movement skills, which can increase their confidence and cooperative skills. They develop an understanding of a healthy lifestyle, including how to make informed choices, and the cultural significance of physical activities for communities and individuals.

LIBRARY

We encourage children to become lovers of books and reading. Our overall goal is for them to become confident and thoughtful readers who are enthusiastic about reading. They have opportunities to enjoy books in many languages and from a wide variety of perspectives. Our library is an integral part of the PYP and of each unit of inquiry across the school. Important aspects of the library curriculum include:

- Respectful handling and use of books
- Use of the library
- Development of research skills
- Transfer of research skills and attitudes to classroom and non-school situations

Linking the ITALIAN CURRICULUM and the PYP:

Italian and English teachers plan their lessons following the same curriculum objectives. Where there are overlapping Italian and English learning objectives, content is integrated, so as to enrich children's understanding.

English learning objectives are derived primarily from PYP documents. The PYP identifies objectives for each discipline, which are then modified by each school, according to the needs of the children and the school.

