

OUR PRIMARY YEARS PROGRAMME

Our Primary Years Programme for children aged 5 to 11 generates a stimulating and challenging learning environment that nurtures a child's natural curiosity, creativity and ability to reflect, and helps to develop a lifelong love of learning.

At the heart of the Programme are six themes of global significance that are explored using skills and knowledge acquired from six subject areas, as well as skills that cover a range of disciplines, with a strong emphasis on inquiry.

Overall, we strongly believe that our PYP Programme:

- develops the academic, social and emotional wellbeing of students
- encourages students to become independent and take responsibility for their own learning
- supports students' efforts to gain understanding of the world and function comfortably within it
- helps to establish personal values that support international mindedness.



THE SIX TRANSDISCIPLINARY THEMES OF OUR PYP PROGRAMME

These themes incorporate local and global issues into the curriculum, helping students to see their relevance in the world and how they connect to it. Each engaging and challenging theme is studied for approximately six weeks within each school year.

Who we are

Students explore the nature of the self; beliefs and values; person, physical, mental, social and spiritual health; human relationships including families, friends, communities, and cultures; rights and responsibilities; what it means to be human.

Where we are in place and time

Students explore orientation in place and time; personal histories; homes and journeys; the discoveries, explorations and migrations of humankind; the relationship between and the interconnectedness of individuals and civilizations, from local and global perspectives.

How we express ourselves

Students explore the ways in which we discover and express ideas, feelings, nature, culture, beliefs and values; the ways in which we reflect on, extend and enjoy our creativity; our appreciation of the aesthetic.

How the world works

Students explore the natural world and its laws, the interaction between the natural world (physical and biological) and human societies; how humans use their understanding of scientific principles; the impact of scientific and technological advances on society and on the environment.

How we organise ourselves

Students explore the interconnectedness of human-made systems and communities; the structure and function of organisations; societal decision-making; economic activities and their impact on humankind and the environment

Sharing the planet

Students explore rights and responsibilities in the struggle to share finite resources with other people and other living things; communities and the relationship within and between them; access to equal opportunities; peace and conflict resolution.

THE SIX DISCIPLINE AREAS OF OUR PYP PROGRAMME

Our PYP Programme helps to develop skills in six key subject areas. Our students may study these subjects in separate classes or as part of their inquiries into the six themes of the Programme.

LANGUAGE

Language is integrated into all areas of our PYP curriculum and arranged into three main communication strands:

Oral communication

Listening and speaking – skills that are essential for language development, learning and relating to others.

Written communication

Reading and writing – for enjoyment, instruction and information, and learning to recognise, appreciate, apply and use a variety of literary style genres and structures.

Visual communication

Viewing and presenting – to understand the ways in which images and language interact to convey ideas, values and beliefs.

MATHEMATICS

We teach Mathematics as a separate subject every day, with some aspects covered within the six units of inquiry. Our study of maths is split into four interrelated strands:

Data handling

Recording, organisation and interpretation of statistics and probability.

Measurement & Geometry

Attributes of 2D and 3D shapes, angles tessellation and symmetry. Using a variety of standard and non-standard units to measure with accuracy.

Number and Function

Identifying patterns in the world as a foundation for algebra. Whole numbers, place value, part numbers and computation.

Problem solving, communication, reasoning

The application of mathematical knowledge and understanding to solve problems.

SCIENCE

Science is the exploration of the natural, physical and material worlds. Students use inquiry to investigate and understand the world around them. They will experience what it is to think and act like a scientist.

Science study is split into four main strands which overlap each other; science also connects and overlaps with disciplines including Mathematics, Social Studies and PSPE.

Living things

The study of humans, animals, plants and the environment, and the interactions between them.

Earth and space

The study of the planet Earth and its relationship with the universe.

Materials and matter

The study of the origins, properties and uses of natural and human-made solids, liquids and gases.

Forces and energy

The study of energy, its origins and transfer, and its effects.

SOCIAL STUDIES

In Social Studies, students think about human behaviour realistically, objectively and with sensitivity. They develop a deeper understanding of themselves and others, and their place in an increasingly global society. Social Studies also aims to promote a sense of responsibility towards caring for and protecting the environment.

Areas covered include:

- human systems and economic activity
- social organisation and culture
- continuity and change through time
- human and natural environments
- resources and the environment.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL PHYSICAL, ECONOMIC EDUCATION

PSPEE focuses on the development of knowledge, attitudes and skills in relation to personal, social, emotional and physical wellbeing. This is to help students make healthy relationships and lifestyle choices.

Through PSPEE, students develop their self-identity, use appropriate social skills when interacting with others, and learn to communicate and manage their feelings, emotions and opinions.



“It’s not like a school where they show you what to do. They encourage you to do things yourself; it’s a lot of independent learning. My teachers encourage me to persevere when I find something challenging.”

Quinlan,
Grade 5 student



ARTS

Through studying the Arts, students construct a sense of self by engaging in a creative cycle of experimentation, action and reflection. They also begin to think and articulate their thoughts in new ways and through a variety of media and technologies.

Visual Arts

Students are exposed to a broad range of experiences that illustrate the field of visual arts, including bookmaking, architecture, ceramics, collage, drawing, graphic design, film, illustrations, painting, photography, printmaking, sculpture, textiles and woodwork.

Students are also encouraged to experience the visual arts from all over the world by visiting art galleries, museums, theatres and the cinema. We also invite artists to Southbank to discuss their work.

“I’ve grown by meeting people from new countries. It has taught me that going to an international school can teach you new languages, and you can learn about everybody’s culture, not just your own.”

Nina, Grade 3 student

Music

Our music classes focus on composition, performance and reflection, and expose students to music from different times and places. Collaborative activities are encouraged between students in the same class and other classes; and we offer a range of exciting field trips to concerts and workshops which utilise the many world-class musical resources available in London.

In addition, all students from Kindergarten upwards participate in the Suzuki music programme..



Instrumental music programme

PYP students from the age of five (Kindergarten) learn to play either the violin, viola or the cello through the Suzuki music programme. When they reach Grades 4 and 5, they also have the opportunity to learn guitar or flute.

Once children have progressed to a level of proficiency, they may be invited to play in ensembles or Suzuki Strings. All children can take part in our solo concerts for parents and students, which take place once a term. We also organise a joint primary school summer concert every year, which sees over 350 children playing together in the historic setting of the Central Hall, Westminster.



ADDITIONAL SUBJECTS WE COVER

In addition to our six key subject areas, a PYP student may also develop skills and knowledge in the following specialist subjects. This may occur as part of an inquiry into one of our six key themes or in an independent class.

Spanish

We provide our PYP students with the opportunity to learn Spanish as an additional language; while students whose first language is Spanish may be taught in separate ‘mother tongue’ classes.

Wherever possible, we link the learning of Spanish to our six units of inquiry. Students listen and speak as much as possible, developing confidence as they learn through games, songs and activities designed to capitalise on their natural open mindedness. Over time, we steadily introduce the reading and writing of Spanish as the competency of students increases.

Home Languages

For students whose first language is not English or Spanish, we support the development of their home language, as we believe it’s crucial to a student maintaining cultural identity and emotional stability. This involves us working with their family to encourage the use of a home language in different contexts beyond the home environment, eg when a child visits a park, sporting events, shops, restaurants, etc. We also help students and families access books in their language to develop the vocabulary of younger children and provide older students with engaging fiction and non-fiction texts.

English as an Additional Language (EAL)

The EAL programme is designed to help PYP students to participate fully in the social and academic aspects of our school. The EAL teacher works closely with class teachers to support a student’s oral and written communication. Students in the EAL programme attend EAL lessons while their peers attend Spanish lessons. This ensures that EAL students do not miss out on other lessons. However, students who are new to English may receive extra support from the EAL teacher to assist their language development.

Information Communication Technology

We recognise that today’s students develop and grow as digital natives in an environment rich with technology. As a result, ICT at Southbank is not viewed as a standalone subject area. Instead, it is embedded and integrated in all areas of the curriculum and seen as a tool to enhance and extend our students’ learning. Both the Hampstead and Kensington campuses have a one-to-one device programme. Skills including coding and 3D design are embedded in classroom learning.