



British International School
of Ljubljana
an Orbital Education School



EARLY YEARS CURRICULUM GUIDE 2023 - 2024

EXCELLENCE · RESPECT · RESPONSIBILITY · INTEGRITY · COMPASSION

Introduction

Welcome to the BISL Early Years Curriculum Guide. This document is intended to support parents' understanding of our approach to education in the Early Years Foundation Stage for children aged 2 - 5. Please refer to the **Primary Student Handbook** for more information about general school routines and policies.

This version of the Handbook is dated **19th July 2023**.

Please check [online](#) for the latest version, as it may be updated periodically throughout the year. Printed copies will *not* be issued by the school, and in the interests of environmental sustainability, please think twice before you click "Print" at home.

Our Vision

We aim to inspire **lifelong learners** and caring global citizens, in a **community** where everyone feels encouraged, supported and challenged.

Our Mission

We provide a **high quality British style international education** in English, balancing tradition and innovation.

We aim to be the internationally recognised, **outstanding educational choice** for families in the region.

Our passion is creating a **positive, safe and nurturing learning environment** in which everyone is valued as individuals, empowering them to be versatile, motivated and caring people.

We will endeavour to **create opportunities** to develop creativity, collaboration and critical thinking skills through an **inclusive and personalised experience**.

Our Values

EXCELLENCE

We are ambitious, developing resilience, independence and a life long love of learning.

RESPECT

We celebrate diversity, encouraging a respect for the people and the world around us.

RESPONSIBILITY

We are engaged, promoting actions and behaviours that support a sustainable future.

INTEGRITY

We are transparent, honest and ethical in all our relationships.

COMPASSION

We are kind and caring, encouraging everyone to succeed.



Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS): Framework

Learning in EYFS for children aged 3 - 5 is based on the English National Curriculum Early Years Foundation Stage framework with a topic-based approach, enhanced by free-flow learning.

This exciting and challenging curriculum based on the observation of the children's needs, interests and stages of development across seven areas of learning to enable the children to achieve and exceed their Early Learning Goals.

Our Pedagogical Approach: Free Flow Learning



A successful Free Flow environment offers a rich play and learning experience for children. It allows them to progress at their own individual pace, and practice in choosing and in dealing with the consequences of their choices.

It also encourages a more flexible and open-ended use of the group's resources both indoors and outside.

The outstanding Free Flow provision at BISL affords children the opportunity to extend their learning experience by immediately being able to take it from the indoor environment to the outdoor one, where it takes on additional meaning, enhanced context and above all, brings the natural elements of the world around them into their learning experience.

Early Years Practice: Overarching Principles

Four guiding principles shape practice in our Early Years. These are:

- every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured
- children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**
- children learn and develop well in **enabling environments**, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs, with a strong partnership between home and school
- children develop and learn **in different ways** and **at different rates**.



The EYFS Framework: Areas of Learning

The 7 Areas of Learning covered by the EYFS framework are broken down into 3 Prime Areas and 4 Specific Areas of Learning:

Prime Areas:

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Specific Areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Creative Development (Expressive Arts & Design)

These areas are, of course, interlinked and overlapping, and are enhanced by our Free-Flow learning approach.

Prime Areas of Learning: Communication and Language

Communication and language development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations



How it's linked

Here are a few examples of how Communication and Language connects to other prime areas of learning.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

A child who can communicate feelings, needs and ideas develops a strong sense of self and is increasingly able to relate to others in rewarding and appropriate ways.

Physical Development

Through describing actions (which increases conscious control) and through talking about health and the factors which influence it.

Prime Areas of Learning: Physical Development

Physical development involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their coordination, control, and movement. Children must also be supported to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food for example.

How it's linked

Here are a few examples of how Physical Development connects to other prime areas of learning.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Increasing physical control provides children with an experience of the self as an active agent in the environment, promoting growth in confidence and awareness of control.

Communication and Language

A child who can effectively use the large movements and gestures, as well as the fine movements involved in speech, is able to convey messages to others.



Prime Areas of Learning: Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Personal, social and emotional development involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop a respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.

How it's linked

Here are a few examples of how Personal, Social and Emotional Development connects to other prime areas of learning.

Physical Development

A child who feels secure and safe is confident to expand the boundaries of exploration and is motivated to reach, move and test physical capacities.

Communication and Language

Communication and language within relationships that establish turn-taking or joint activity, develops a desire to communicate and builds an understanding of shared meanings of words.

Specific Areas of Learning: Literacy

Literacy development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write.



Children learn how to read and comprehend simple sentences, using phonic knowledge. As they advance, they will be able to understand some of the more commonly used irregular words and to converse with others about what they are reading.

Using phonic knowledge, children should learn how to write down words based on the sound of the word when it is spoken, including some irregular words. They work towards writing simple sentences that can be understood and read out.

At BISL, we use Letters and Sounds to learn the sounds of the alphabet and move on to digraphs, which are two letters together which make a sound, such as 'ai'.

Children are given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest. Each week children take home a reading book to share with adults at home.

Specific Areas of Learning: Mathematics

Mathematics involves providing children with opportunities to develop their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems, and describing shapes, spaces, and measure.

Under the framework, children will be able to count from 1 to 20 and beyond and carry out basic addition and subtraction.

When looking at shape, space and measures, children should be able to problem solve and compare quantities using measurements such as size, weight, capacity, position, distance, time and money.

Children will also develop their understanding of different patterns.

Specific Areas of Learning: Understanding the World



Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.

As such, there are three segments to this section:

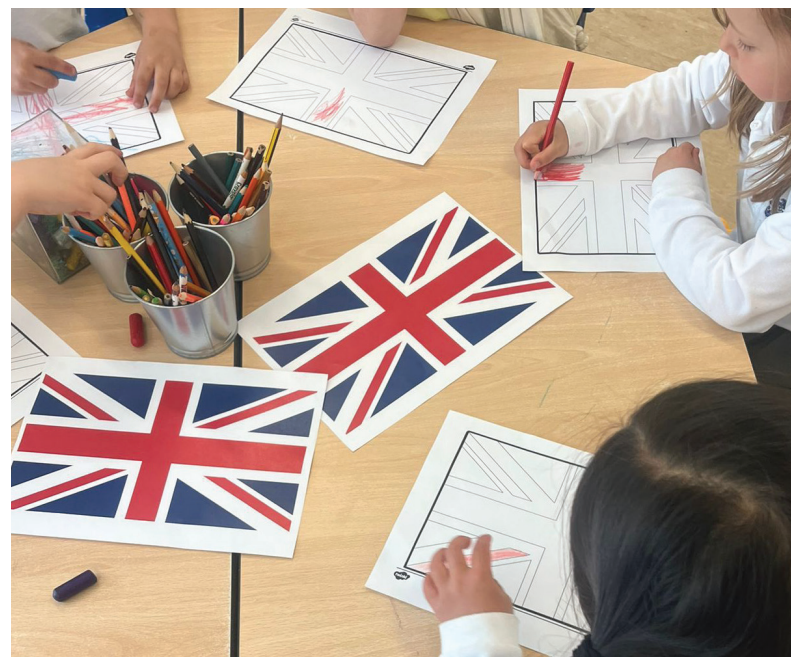
- **Past and Present** – children will be able to talk about similarities between the past and present and relate to these through stories and their current environment.
- **People, Cultures and Communities** – talking about events in their lives, children will be able to describe things that have happened to themselves and family members and recognise that there can be differences in what other people enjoy doing, including different traditions.
- **The Natural World** – children will be able to recognise similarities and differences in their own living environment and that of others, whether place, object, material or living things, such as plants and animals.

Specific Areas of Learning: Creative Development (Expressive Arts & Design)

Expressive arts and design involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for the sharing of thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

Whilst exploring and using different media, children will sing, make music and dance, as well as use different materials, tools and techniques to experiment with colour, design, texture, form and function.

Being imaginative is also very important. Children are encouraged to represent their own ideas, thoughts and feelings using media and materials through creative activities such as art and design, music, dance, role play and storytelling.



Progress & Development: Early Learning Goals

The Early Learning Goals are the goals or targets for children to achieve at the end of their EYFS Reception year. They will be working towards these goals throughout their time in Early Years.

EYFS outcomes are the result of ongoing observations and assessments of individual children, ensuring that they are developing at the rate expected and spotting any areas where the child may need further support.

Area	Aspect	Early Learning Goal
Personal, Social and Emotional Development	Self-Regulation	Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly. Set and work towards simple goals, being able to wait for what they want and control their immediate impulses when appropriate. Give focused attention to what the teacher says, responding appropriately even when engaged in activity, and show an ability to follow instructions involving several ideas or actions.
	Managing Self	Be confident to try new activities and show independence, resilience and perseverance in the face of challenge. Explain the reasons for rules, know right from wrong and try to behave accordingly. Manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs, including dressing, going to the toilet and understanding the importance of healthy food choices
	Building Relationships	Work and play cooperatively and take turns with others. Form positive attachments to adults and friendships with peers. Show sensitivity to their own and to others' needs.
Communication and Language	Listening, Attention and Understanding	Listen attentively and respond to what they hear with relevant questions, comments and actions when being read to and during whole class discussions and small group interactions. Make comments about what they have heard and ask questions to clarify their understanding. Hold conversation when engaged in back-and-forth exchanges with their teacher and peers.
	Speaking	Participate in small group, class and one-to-one discussions, offering their own ideas, using recently introduced vocabulary. Offer explanations for why things might happen, making use of recently introduced vocabulary from stories, nonfiction, rhymes and poems when appropriate. Express their ideas and feelings about their experiences using full sentences, including use of past, present and future tenses and making use of conjunctions, with modelling and support from their teacher.
Physical Development	Gross Motor Skills	Negotiate space and obstacles safely, with consideration for themselves and others. Demonstrate strength, balance and coordination when playing. Move energetically, such as running, jumping, dancing, hopping, skipping and climbing.
	Fine Motor Skills	Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using the tripod grip in almost all cases. Use a range of small tools, including scissors, paintbrushes and cutlery. Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing.
Literacy	Comprehension	Demonstrate understanding of what has been read to them by retelling stories and narratives using their own words and recently introduced vocabulary. Anticipate (where appropriate) key events in stories. Use and understand recently introduced vocabulary during discussions about stories, nonfiction, rhymes, poems and during role play.
	Word Reading	Say a sound for each letter in the alphabet and at least 10 digraphs. Read words consistent with their phonic knowledge by sound-blending. Read aloud simple sentences and books that are consistent with their phonic knowledge, including some common exception words.
	Writing	Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed. Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters. Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others.
Mathematics	Number	Have a deep understanding of number to 10, including the composition of each number. Subitise (recognise quantities without counting) up to 5. Automatically recall (without reference to rhymes, counting or other aids) number bonds up to 5 (including subtraction facts) and some number bonds to 10, including double facts
	Numerical Patterns	Verbally count beyond 20, recognising the pattern of the counting system. Compare quantities up to 10 in different contexts, recognising when one quantity is greater than, less than or the same as the other quantity. Explore and represent patterns within numbers up to 10, including evens and odds, double facts and how quantities can be distributed equally
Understanding the World	Past and Present	Talk about the lives of the people around them and their roles in society. Know some similarities and differences between things in the past and now, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class. Understand the past through settings, characters and events encountered in books read in class and storytelling.
	People, Culture and Communities	Describe their immediate environment using knowledge from observation, discussion, stories, non-fiction texts and maps. Know some similarities and differences between different religious and cultural communities in this country, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class. Explain some similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries, drawing on knowledge from stories, non-fiction texts and (when appropriate) maps.
	The Natural World	Explore the natural world around them, making observations and drawing pictures of animals and plants. Know some similarities and differences between the natural world around them and contrasting environments, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class. Understand some important processes and changes in the natural world around them, including the seasons and changing states of matter.
Creative Development	Creating with Materials	Safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques, experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function. Share their creations, explaining the process they have used. Make use of props and materials when role playing characters in narratives and stories
	Being Imaginative and Expressive	Invent, adapt and recount narratives and stories with peers and their teacher. Sing a range of well-known nursery rhymes and songs. Perform songs, rhymes, poems and stories with others, and (when appropriate) try to move in time with music

At BISL we use an online learning journal to document your child's development through their time in Early Years. We do this through [Tapestry Online Journal](#).

Each child has an individual learning journal where observations of their learning are documented and shared with parents. Staff make comments based on their observations of your child and these are used to inform our planning and our assessment.

On Tapestry all information is stored on a highly secure server which is monitored closely. Parents will have a secure username and a unique personal password to access their child's journal once the 'Tapestry Online school agreement' has been signed.



Our School Day: Timetable

During the school day, the children will participate in a variety of timetabled activities to guide their learning, spending as much time outdoors as possible.

	7:50 - 8:05	8:05 - 8:45	8:45 - 9:25	9:25 - 10:05	10:05 - 10:45	10:45 - 11:25	11:25 - 12:05	12:05 - 12:45	12:45 - 13:25	13:25 - 14:05	14:05 - 14:45	14:45 - 14:55
MONDAY		PE		Phonics	Free Flow	Maths		Sleep / Reading	Free Flow	Outdoor Learning		
TUESDAY		Phonics		Performing Arts	Slovene	Maths		Sleep / Reading	Free Flow	Outdoor Learning		
WEDNESDAY	Registration	Performing Arts	Snack	PE	Slovene	Maths	Lunch	Sleep / Reading	Free Flow	Outdoor Learning		Registration
THURSDAY		Phonics		Free Flow	Maths		Sleep / Reading	Free Flow	Outdoor Learning			
FRIDAY		PE		Slovene	Assembly	Phonics		Sleep / Reading	Free Flow	Outdoor Learning		

*please note that this is a sample timetable only, to give you an idea of the structure of the day. Parents receive a copy of the current timetable at the start of each academic year / upon enrolment.

Healthy Eating: School Lunch & Snacks

Lunches are prepared by an external catering company, [SuperCatering d.o.o.](#) The menu for each month is sent out by the 26th of the previous month.

Packed lunches may also be brought in from home each day, labelled with the student's name.

Fresh fruit is available for students daily. We encourage children to bring a healthy snack with them, as well as a water bottle, labelled with their name.

Snacks might include:

- Sandwiches
 - Cubes of cheese
 - Fruit
 - Cereal bars
- Savoury biscuits
 - Small pieces of cooked meat
 - Cut-up carrots/cucumber/cherry tomatoes
 - Small plain cake
 - Small tubs of yogurt (better just in cooler weather)
 - Fresh juice or water

Please **do not** pack any:

- Sweets (candy) or chocolate.
- Food that needs to be reheated or refrigerated.
- Drinks in cans or glass bottles for safety reasons.
- PEANUTS because of allergies of other students.
- Sugary or energy drinks, e.g. Red Bull, Coke.



OUR SCHOOL AT A GLANCE

Exams offered -
IGCSE & A LEVEL

(Cambridge/AQA)



English
National
Curriculum



300+

Number
of students



Languages
taught

- English
- Slovene
- French

3-18 Current
age range



40+

Nationalities

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