

## **7.0 INSTRUCTION**

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## **7.10 Instructional Goals and Objectives**

The purpose of this policy is to state the philosophy underlying the instructional goals and objectives of The International School Aberdeen. This policy affects the Board of Trustees, Administration and staff. These goals and objectives directly affect the students.

ISA is locally and internationally recognised for providing excellence in education and exceptional care for every child.

ISA's mission is to deliver excellence in education through a safe and caring learning environment. Our students are challenged to reach their maximum potential through academic success and personal growth, becoming learners for life and socially responsible, active global citizens.

We provide students with a comprehensive university preparatory education utilising best practices in education from around the world. We serve our internationally diverse student body through a partnership of excellent staff, committed parents, and an involved community.

ISA'S Values

### **RESPECT**

We respect ourselves and others' rights, property, opinions and diverse ways of life

### **EXCELLENCE**

We strive to challenge ourselves as individuals and in collaboration with others

### **DIVERSITY**

We celebrate our diversity and believe that each person is unique, valuable, and worthy of respect

### **COMMUNITY**

We care for and embrace the "ISA family".

We recognise our responsibility to promote wellbeing and an environmentally-friendly lifestyle

### **INTEGRITY**

We strive to be honest and truthful in our actions.

We encourage and nurture each other.

### **SERVICE**

We strive to instil a sense of responsibility to our school, local, and global communities

CROSS REFERENCE:           1.20 School Vision, Mission and Values  
  1.20.1 Learning Expectations  
  7.50 Basic Curriculum Design (and sub-codes)

### 7.10.1 Academic Freedom

The Board of Trustees supports the concept of academic freedom for the instructional staff. 'Academic freedom' may be defined as the right of qualified scholars, in their own field of expertise, to pursue the search for truth in its many forms, and to make public their methods and findings. In a school setting, academic freedom also means the right of classroom teachers to encourage freedom of discussion of controversial questions in the classroom and to develop in students a love of knowledge and a desire to search for truth. Teachers should keep in mind that academic freedom is not a guaranteed political right, but rather a necessary condition for the successful practice of scholarship in a free society. Teachers should also keep in mind the relative maturity level of their students, the diverse cultures in our community and the need for guidance in studying the issues and arriving at balanced views.

Although ISA intends to protect teachers from outside 'censorship' or restraints that would interfere with their obligation to pursue truth in learning, the School also expects controversial issues to be presented in a fair and unbiased manner; the maturity and intellectual levels of the students must be taken into account. 'Academic freedom' is not absolute, and must be subject to the following constraints:

- (a) Academic freedom for a given teacher can only extend to questions and discussions within the area of the teacher's own experience and expertise;
- (b) The question of academic freedom does not extend beyond accepted norms of inclusion, good taste and behaviour or conflict with a global perspective;
- (c) The exercise of such freedom must not violate the laws or regulations of our host country.

It may be necessary, from time to time, for the Principal or the Head of School to ask a teacher to desist from further instruction in or discussions about subjects which the Principal or the Head of School perceive to be contrary to the students' best interests, or which conflict with the constraints mentioned under (a), (b) or (c) above.

CROSS REFERENCE:        7.50.5 Religious Instruction  
                                  7.50.6.1 Teaching about Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)  
                                  7.50.8 Teaching about Controversial Issues

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### **7.10.2 Cross-Cultural Learning Opportunities**

ISA is based on a university-preparatory education based on the best educational practices from around the world. The School is international not only in enrolment and teaching staff, but also in its outlook and goals, one of which is to foster in young people an attitude of pride in and respect for one's own country whilst developing an open-minded understanding of the cultures of others.

ISA's teaching methods and materials are chosen to achieve this goal. Instruction in English is provided to pupils who do not speak English when they enter the School; French or Spanish is taught to pupils from Pre-School through Grade 12. Dutch and French mother tongue programmes are also part of the ISA curriculum.

The School recognises the exceptional opportunities for learning and growth that young people gain from living in an international setting such as the one provided by Aberdeen and its surroundings. Every reasonable effort will be made to take advantage of these opportunities, academically as well as socially and culturally. However, ISA's primary task is to prepare its pupils with an excellent academic foundation and a varied cultural experience for a smooth transition to further schooling in their home countries or at the post-secondary level.

## **7.20 Schools and Levels of Instruction**

ISA consists of a Pre-School, Elementary School, Middle School, and High School on a combined campus, with after-school care provided by a third party.

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### 7.30 Curriculum Development

Facilitated by curriculum co-ordinators, the faculty reviews curriculum annually. All subject areas have existing curricula that guide teachers as to what is needed to teach in their content areas. The process of reviewing curriculum involves the introspective look at each area of focus for a given year to reflect the school's expectations, successful and proven trends in educational practices around the world, current research, attention to vertical alignment, and the recommendations from professional educational organisations.

During the review process, the teachers follow a clearly delineated plan. The recommendations from professional educational organisations lead us in meeting content and process standards in the specific disciplines. We take into consideration our student body, internal and external feedback, what we expect our students to know at the end of each grade level, and the standards for grade level outcomes as well.

The Board of Trustees will not normally be involved in minor changes and adjustments to the instructional programme that remain within the framework of the ISA's overall educational philosophy and instructional goals. The final approval for major curriculum change is to be decided by the Board of Trustees upon the proposal of the Head of School or his/her designate with the advice of the Principal(s) whose School(s) is/are affected.

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## **7.40 Evaluation of Instructional Programme**

The evaluation and updating of the school programme is an on-going process. The Head of School or his/her designate and the Principals will supervise and co-ordinate all curriculum evaluation and development work in the schools.

Periodically, at least once a year, the Head of School will present the results of these evaluations to the Board of Trustees to enable them to review programmes that improve or maintain ISA's high standards.

The evaluation of the programme will include quantitative and qualitative benchmarks, in addition to the accreditation process.

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## 7.50 Basic Curriculum Design

ISA, according to its educational philosophy and instructional goals, is committed to excellence and exists to provide the best possible all-around education for *all* its students, *providing every child with every opportunity*.

The programme of studies has been developed to meet the needs of our student body by utilising the best practices from around the world. However, in order to achieve our goals of developing well-rounded, self-disciplined, creative and responsible persons with a sense of international citizenship, ISA's efforts are towards a balance in education. For this reason, curriculum should not be regarded simply as a rigid set of prescribed course outlines. Teachers, curriculum co-ordinators, and Principals - under the direction of the Head of School or his/her designate - are encouraged to work together to develop a curriculum. It should reflect the belief that all students should have access to a challenging, engaging curriculum which incorporates the most current understanding of both how humans learn, as well as the most effective practices found in today's successful schools. The curriculum should address academic excellence, social, emotional, physical, personal, and ethical development whilst not losing sight of ISA's duty to prepare students for further study in their home countries or their next academic experience.

The Board of Trustees assigns to the Head of School or his/her designee the responsibility for preparing and recommending the course of studies; however, the instructional staff, instructional support staff, and the parents may be requested to assist in the development and revision of the curriculum as a continuing process.

Proposed curricular changes should be accompanied by a cost analysis.

CROSS REFERENCE:        1.20.1 Learning Expectations

**7.50.1 Curriculum Guides**

The curriculum shall include: the purpose and an outline of the content of each course, class, or programme; assessment criteria and strategies which have been carefully designed to leave room for unanticipated learning; it shall include a developmental scope and sequence which shows articulation with related courses, classes, programmes, and activities. This information shall be expressed clearly for the use of parents, for effective academic counselling, and for efficient planning for a student's individual needs, and to support their Individualised Educational Plan (IEP). Textbooks to be used and supplied by ISA, and books and materials to be used and supplied by the students, shall be indicated where appropriate.

### **7.50.2 Bilingual Programmes**

It is a policy of the Board of Trustees that the basic language of instruction shall be English. In order to help students who do not have an adequate working knowledge of English, the School will assume a facilitating role in establishing bilingual and multilingual assistance. When staff members are not available to provide such assistance, parents or other persons in the community who are fluent in English and in another language may be asked to serve as resource persons. Parents will normally assume any financial responsibility for this additional tuition.

**7.50.3 English as an Additional Language**

Following the policy that the basic language of instruction shall be English and in order to help students who do not have an adequate working knowledge of English, ISA will provide appropriate English as an Additional Language instruction. When staff members are not available to provide assistance, parents or other persons in the community who are fluent in English and in another language may be asked to serve as resource persons.

#### **7.50.4 Career Education**

The Board of Trustees supports events in the curriculum such as a guest speaker, Careers in Our Community event, and maintains a staff position as Counsellor who has the role of assisting and guiding the students in:

- Subsequent International School transfers
- College/University selection
- College/University application
- Career Counselling

In addition to the Counsellor, the School also provides additional career counselling, interest surveys, and assistance with university applications through services provided by FutureWise (a highly regarded third party provider). Some services are at an additional cost to parents.

### **7.50.5 Religious Instruction**

Religious education is not a formal part of ISA's curriculum, but all religious beliefs are respected.

In the teaching of every subject, especially in the Middle and High Schools, there are frequent opportunities - which teachers are encouraged to use - to enable pupils to build and reinforce their individual patterns of beliefs and values. ISA believes that it is the responsibility of parents to teach their religious beliefs and what they wish for their children's religious beliefs. ISA will treat the study of religion as one of the many aspects of human knowledge that are part of our curriculum, and to answer questions in a general atmosphere of respect and serious inquiry, so that pupils will gradually, and with the guidance of their parents, begin to make their own assessment of the values and beliefs involved in human societies and relationships.

CROSS REFERENCE:       1.20 School Vision, Mission and Values

**7.50.6 Family Life/Sex Education**

Recognising the importance of sex education, the School will provide education in this area aligned with currently accepted practice.

Parents are notified by the Health teacher prior to sex education, and they may elect not to have their children participate in this instruction.

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**7.50.6.1 Teaching about Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)**

ISA shall maintain an ongoing system to review the School's K-12 Health programme to ensure that during general health and sex education classes adequate STI information is provided to students at all levels, in a form suitable for the respective age level and grade. Formal instruction on this topic may begin at the Middle School level.

Instruction shall aim at fostering in the student a respect for human sexuality and an awareness of the responsibility that human sexuality requires, both towards one's self and towards others, including an understanding of consent. At the same time, every effort should be made to create a climate among the students that is devoid of unreasonable fear, anxiety or prejudice.

CROSS REFERENCE: 8.60.2 Communicable Diseases

### **7.50.7 Teaching about Tobacco, Alcohol and Other Drugs**

It is the responsibility of ISA to safeguard the health, character, and development of its students. The Board of Trustees and the Administration recognise that the illegal and/or inappropriate use of alcohol or drugs constitutes a great danger to people's lives; the use of tobacco, which has been shown to be an insidious danger to public health, should be and is discouraged for the same reason. The ISA campus is a non-smoking campus, and this includes e-cigarettes and vaping.

Therefore, ISA will be concerned with educating all students in the consequences of alcohol and other drug and tobacco use, and to provide staff with the necessary information and in-service training to accomplish this. Wherever possible, ISA will encourage and support student-run prevention and education programmes, and will encourage and support staff in creating a school climate in which students will feel free to seek information and/or help related to alcohol, drug and tobacco abuse.

Although the principle of trust and confidentiality between a student and his/her teacher or counsellor is to be treated with great seriousness, there are, at times, overriding considerations that make it necessary for the School to take action to protect a student who may be placing him/herself and others in danger of breaking host country laws which may place extremely heavy penalties on drug possession and use. Faculty members will, therefore, have the responsibility of discussing with the Principal(s) any instances of suspected substance abuse, so that the Principal may, as necessary, in consultation with the Head of School, contact the parents and take any other action deemed to be in the best interests of the student(s) involved and, indeed, of the school community itself.

CROSS REFERENCE:

- 5.20.5 Use of Tobacco on Campus
- 8.40.2.4 Controlled Substances Policy - Tobacco
- 8.40.2.5 Controlled Substances Policy – Alcoholic Beverages
- 8.40.2.6 Controlled Substances Policy – Drugs and Associated Paraphernalia

### **7.50.8 Teaching about Controversial Issues**

Controversial issues are important proposals or policies, concerning which people hold different points of view. The Board of Trustees is firmly committed to the belief that free interchange of ideas concerning controversial issues is less damaging to our society and more likely to produce maturity and responsibility in its future citizens than narrow restraint and that free discussion of controversial issues is the heart of the democratic process.

The following rights of the pupil shall be recognised:

1. The right to study any controversial issue which has political, economic, or social significance and concerning which he/she should begin to have an opinion;
2. The right to have free access to all relevant information, including materials that circulate freely in the community and fall within the constraints of the current Acceptable Use Policy with regard to technology;
3. The right to study under competent instruction in an atmosphere free from bias and prejudice;
4. The right to form and express his/her own opinions on controversial issues without thereby jeopardising his/her relations with the teachers or the School.

The teacher shall refrain from using his/her classroom privilege and prestige to promote a partisan point of view.

CROSS REFERENCE: 7.10.1 Academic Freedom

### **7.50.9 Experimental Programmes and Pilot Projects**

The Board of Trustees recognises that certain experimental programmes and pilot projects assist in the development of the School and its programmes.

The Head of School must approve all such programmes prior to their enactment and notify the Board of Trustees of the particulars.

### 7.50.10 Differentiated Instruction

The Board of Trustees recognises that students have different educational needs. Within the limitations of its resources and programmes, the School makes every effort to meet those needs by differentiating instruction.

Differentiated instruction is a response to the diverse student needs found in inclusive, mixed-ability classrooms. A differentiated approach to instruction may offer learning options designed to tap into different readiness levels, interests, and learning profiles.

Five characteristics shape teaching and learning in an effective differentiated environment:

1. Instruction is concept-focused and principle-driven. All students have the opportunity to explore and apply the key concepts of the subject being studied. All students come to understand the key principles on which the study is based. Such instruction enables struggling learners to grasp and use powerful ideas and, at the same time, encourages advanced learners to expand their understanding and application of the key concepts and principles;
2. Ongoing assessment of student readiness and growth are built into the curriculum;
3. Flexible grouping is often used;
4. Students are active explorers guided by the teacher;
5. Students take responsibility for their learning.

The School also realises that, in some instances, it simply is not adequately staffed or equipped to meet certain special needs. In such instances, it is the responsibility of the Head of School to review the application for admission or the condition of continued enrolment of the student and to then decide on the appropriate action. Parents will be notified in writing of this decision.

Students will not be allowed entry into the School if their learning difference requires more than 20% of school time in a tutorial classroom setting being taught by a learning support teacher. Students must be capable of being mainstreamed with regular students for 80% of the instructional time. Admission to the Learning Support programme is based on need and available space in Learning Support.

At the primary level this support may consist of an IEP, modified curriculum and individual or group assistance from a Learning Support Team member. At the Middle and High School level the student will receive support through an IEP, programme accommodations (i.e. additional time for exam-taking, notes photocopied from classroom board) rather than programme modifications, as well as instruction in learning strategies and homework support. A Middle or High School student must be able to cope with the curriculum with individual or group support from a Learning Support Team member.

No pupil will be placed in Support Services without prior agreement of the parents and without the parents being fully informed of any fees that might have to be charged. Whenever possible, the teacher, the pupil, the parents, and the Student Support Team (SST) will work together as a team to devise the best possible instructional programme for the child within the limits of the School's and the family's resources.

The School Administration will determine the eligibility of each case based on the 80/20 requirement. Parents are required to disclose all information regarding their children's learning

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differences. Students who are identified as having needs which exceed this 80/20 requirement during any school year will be allowed to continue through that school year only at the discretion of the Head of School. Should removal of the student be required, proportional tuition may be refunded at the discretion of the Head of School.

CROSS REFERENCE:      7.70.4    Standardised and Placement Assessment  
                                 8.10      Responsive and Fair Educational Opportunities  
                                 8.20      Admission and Placement of Students

**7.50.11 Independent Study in Support of Students who require Long-Term Absence**

The Board of Trustees recognises that there may be a need for a student, due to illness, unavoidable travel or absence for any other reason, to be directed in a programme of independent study.

The Head of School will judge cases needing such support on individual merit, practical resource staffing and cost.

In the event the parent/student procures a tutor, ISA will maintain open communication with the tutor.

**7.50.12 Co-operative Programmes with Host Country Schools**

The Board of Trustees maintains the option to review the need for co-operative programmes with Host Country Schools.

Any such programmes will be developed and administrated by the Head of School and must offer a benefit to ISA.

CROSS REFERENCE:       7.50.13 Adult Education

**7.50.13 Adult Education**

The Board of Trustees maintains the option to review the need for Adult Education Programmes.

Any such programmes will be developed and administrated by the Head of School and must offer a benefit to ISA.

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## 7.60 Extra-Curricular and Athletic Programmes

The Board of Trustees believes that extra-curricular activities add value to the educational experience. Responsibility for the administration of the extra-curricular programme lies mainly with the Principals and/or the Athletic Director. The Board of Trustees requires evidence of due diligence in the supervision of extra-curricular activities, particularly with regard to safety.

Within the limitations of reasonable financial expectations, the Board of Trustees shall provide budgetary support to the extra-curricular programme in order to support a balance of extra-curricular programmes. Examples of such programmes include but are not limited to:

- Basketball
- Baseball
- Soccer/Football
- Eco-Schools
- Environmental Club
- Band
- Model United Nations
- Language Clubs
- Volleyball
- Student Council

## **7.70 Instructional Arrangements**

### **7.70.1 Class Size**

The class size policy at ISA does everything possible to ensure a student/teacher ratio that is in the best interests of all concerned. The policy enforces the Mission Statement and Educational Philosophy of ISA and reflects the key financial assumptions by which the School operates. When a class exceeds the recommended number, six points of consideration will be used in order to determine an appropriate course of action. The final decision rests with the Board of Trustees.

#### **Maximum Recommended Class Size**

Pre-School: A maximum of 60 students with an 8:1 student-teacher ratio

Kindergarten through Second Grade: 18 students per teacher (an aide is routinely used in Kindergarten and additional aides are used as appropriate when class sizes are at or near maximum.)

Third through Twelfth Grade: A maximum of 25 students, with a target of 22.

#### **Points of Consideration**

1. Student needs:
  - A. Limited English
  - B. Academic needs
  - C. Social and emotional maturity
2. Space available
3. Scheduling and availability of specialist teachers
4. Time of year
5. Aide support
6. Budgetary impact

### **7.70.2 Instructional and Library Materials Selection**

Instructional material selection is the function of the administrative and instructional staff, and will be co-ordinated through the Administration.

Published materials must be compatible with available finances and the existing or proposed curriculum of the School or grade level(s) for which the materials are selected.

#### Library Materials:

Librarians, assisted by the School's professional staff and Administrators as appropriate, will make their recommendations via the Head of School or his/her designate.

The School provides students with textbooks and allows them to borrow library materials. Because instructional and library materials - textbooks, library books, and other materials used by students - represent a large investment on the part of the School, charges will be made to students who lose or damage these.

CROSS REFERENCE:       3.80   Disposal of School Property  
                              8.90   Student Records  
                              9.50   Community and Parent Complaints and Grievances

### 7.70.3 Field Trips and Excursions

The Board of Trustees authorises and encourages fields trips for educational purposes, provided such trips are properly planned and have been approved by the Head of School and/or his/her designate.

A field trip is defined as an educational activity that meets the following criteria:

- a. it involves a specific class or classes;
- b. it is intended for all students in the class(es);
- c. it takes the class away from the classroom;
- d. it has an identifiable educational objective within current curricula;
- e. it includes preparing the students for the activity, and follow-up evaluation after the trip.

Parental permission is required for all field trips. A risk assessment is required for all field trips.

School transportation vehicles, if available, will be used for school trips. No students will be transported in unauthorised vehicles; the School is only responsible for students who travel in authorised vehicles going to and from school-approved events. The School's maximum liability is that which is covered by the School's current liability insurance.

An 'authorised vehicle' is a vehicle of which the Head of School and/or his/her designate has approved the following features:

- a. the specific vehicle;
- b. the driver;
- c. the capacity;
- d. the date(s) of use;
- e. any other factors deemed relevant by the Head of School and/or his/her designate.

On all School-sponsored trips involving students, provision must be made for proper supervision by school employees. Parents are permitted and encouraged to assist school staff in such supervision.

CROSS REFERENCE: 4.30 Student Transportation, and sub-codes

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#### **7.70.4 Standardised and Placement Assessment**

Currently, ISA utilises standardised tests from grades three to twelve. Grades three to nine students sit the International Schools Assessment; students in Grade 10 may make arrangements to sit the PSAT 10 and IGCSE; students in Grade 11 may sit the PSAT/NMSQT. ISA also offers the SAT Reasoning Test, SAT Subject Tests, and the American College Test (ACT), and appropriate International Baccalaureate (IB) tests for enrolled students.

ISA administers language tests for non-native English speakers and placement tests when appropriate.

Academic assessment may be given by Learning Support Staff as appropriate. Psychological and psycho-educational assessments are undertaken by local professionals at the parents' expense.

**7.70.5 Ceremonies and Observances**

The Head of School and/or his/her designate will invite the Board of Trustees or its representative to appropriate ceremonies, festivities, golf outings, and observances.

## 7.80 Academic Achievement

The assessment of student achievement should be regarded as one component of the overall programme of educational planning in the School. Its relationship to educational goals, to the curriculum, to the professional development of staff, and to the reporting of student progress to parents must be integrated into a well-designed and documented process. The overall goals of that process are the improvement of instruction, and positive reinforcement for every student.

The Principal, in consultation with the staff, is responsible for overseeing the overall assessment programme and reporting of student achievement, consistent with the Board of Trustees' policy guidelines. Teachers will effectively administer formative and summative assessments.

Our assessment programme evaluates:

- (a) the general level of learning within the School, and
- (b) the progress of individual students.

The evaluation of individual students' progress in the curriculum, to be used in part for reporting to parents and in part for final attainment and graduation, has two major elements: achievement testing during a student's school career, and teacher designed evaluation instruments.

With respect to the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme, which is primarily externally assessed, ISA has an open enrolment policy. In keeping with our philosophy that each student is unique and valuable, students are encouraged and supported to pursue personal challenges and strive to reach their maximum potential. Thus, the Board of Trustees recognises that the IB opportunity must be inclusive in nature. Consequently, achieving at or above a set international standard is not the primary goal for all students enrolled in the IB Programme at ISA.

1. Achievement Testing - The School will undertake a programme of annual assessments of student achievement in certain subjects and at certain grade levels, for use in curriculum and professional development and for use by teachers to select appropriate materials and methods. The Board of Trustees may ask for benchmarks and/or a progressive report. These tests may also be locally developed. In any case, the results are meant to be used by teachers for student evaluation.
2. Teacher Designed Evaluation Instruments – Summative evaluations or final tests or examinations, when given, should be considered and used as part of the overall programme for collecting information on student achievement, and not as the sole basis for measuring an individual student's attainment.

External Examinations - The School will also prepare students who wish to follow a particular course of study for a variety of external IGCSE or International Baccalaureate examinations. It shall be the policy of the Board of Trustees that the Head of School provides the required level of instructional and resource support for students preparing for such examinations, and to liaise with the institutions administering these to ensure that the School's staff and students are kept informed of their requirements.

### 7.80.1 Principles and Guidelines

The implementation of student assessment policies should follow these principles and guidelines.

1. The assessment of student achievement is essential to improvement of learning.
2. All assessment should be directed toward meeting the School's educational goals of academic excellence as described in the Strategic Plan.
3. A programme of assessment should provide for reporting to teachers and individual students to encourage and lead to self-evaluation and improvement.
4. Teachers, Administrators and parents should be consulted in Board of Trustees' decisions regarding student assessment programmes and benchmarking.
5. The evaluation of individual student achievement should be made in the School, and not be based solely on external assessment.
6. The results of School-wide assessments of overall student achievement should be publicly reported only on a broad basis. Individual student results are not publicly available.
7. The methods and content of assessment devices should be compatible with the methods and content of instructions, and are not limited to pencil and paper tests. Oral, practical, projects, performance, and on-going assessment will be taken into account.
8. Prior to implementation of an assessment programme, the persons concerned should be informed about the reasons for assessment, what is to be measured, how assessment is to be administered, scored, and interpreted, and what reporting and feedback procedures will be followed.
9. In cases where the assessment of particular students would cause an unintended hardship, students may be exempted, under the decision of the Head of School, from school level assessments. Other means of assessment will be devised as appropriate.
10. Assessment results are to be interpreted and reported in a manner most suitable to the decisions for which they are intended.
11. School and external assessments should be co-ordinated to avoid redundancy and over-testing.
12. School level and individual student assessment practices will be reviewed annually.

## 7.80.2 Grading Systems/Report Cards and Conferences

### Elementary School

Elementary School students receive progress reports in October, January and March. A final report card is sent at the end of the school year.

In the Elementary School, student performance will be evaluated according to both personal effort and academic progress in each of the skill areas. Grades will be determined using a range of assessment strategies that are on-going and both informal and formal. Assessment will be a non-threatening and enlightening process that informs teaching, learning and goal setting.

Student assessment will be focused on what students can do and know and how they are progressing against a set of standards, rather than how they are performing compared to their peers.

Key to Evaluation:

#### **VLP – very limited progress –**

The student has an elementary knowledge and understanding in few areas of the content and has achieved very limited competence in some of the processes and skills.

#### **LP – limited progress -**

The student has a basic knowledge and understanding of the content and has achieved a limited level of competence in the processes and skills.

#### **SP – some progress –**

The student has increasing knowledge and understanding of the main areas of content and has made progress towards achieving an adequate level of competence in the processes and skills.

#### **GP – good progress –**

The student has a sound knowledge and understanding of the main areas of content and has achieved an adequate level of competence in the processes and skills.

#### **EP – excellent progress –**

The student has a thorough knowledge and understanding of the content and a high level of competence in the processes and skills. In addition, the student is able to apply this knowledge and these skills to most situations.

### Middle & High Schools

Middle and High School students will receive one progress report during the semester and a final report card at the end of each semester. One parent-teacher conference will also take place each semester. In the interim, families have access to the shared electronic gradebook and when students score below their capabilities, parents will be notified.

Student achievement against each standard in MS, or subject in HS, will be evaluated as follows:

<b>MS Grade</b>	<b>Performance Level</b>
4	Exemplary
3	Proficient
2	Developing
1	Limited Progress or Insufficient Evidence

<b>HS Grade</b>	<b>Performance Level</b>
7	Excellent
6	Very Good
5	Good
4	Satisfactory
3	Mediocre
2	Poor
1	Very Poor
IE	Insufficient Evidence

The following Learning Habits will be reported on using a **Consistently, Mostly, Sometimes, Rarely** Scale;

#### **Responsibility**

The student is well prepared for class, submits quality work that meets deadlines and organizes their time effectively. The student seeks support and guidance when needed.

#### **Engagement**

The student is focused and on task in class, ensuring a high level of effort and perseverance. The student takes risks with their thinking and willingly participates in discussions.

#### **Collaboration**

The student works constructively with others and is an effective communicator; listening respectfully to ideas and feedback from both teachers and students.

High School students will take semester exams twice a year. Semester exams will cover the work of the entire semester and be weighted at a maximum of 20% of the final grade.

The teacher shall explain testing and grading procedures for each class at the beginning of each semester.

A Grade of 1 at High School on a final report equates to no credit for that subject for that semester

### 7.80.3 Graduation Requirements

The Board of Trustees supports establishing clear standards of achievement to award a diploma.

'Graduation' from the School means that the student has been enrolled as a full-time student and satisfactorily completed the prescribed course of study.

To earn an ISA High School Diploma, students must earn a minimum of 24 credits in the following areas:

English-4; Social Studies-3; Mathematics-3; Science-3; Modern Language-2; Fine/Performing Arts-1; Computers-1 (or proven competency); Physical Education-2 (to include 0.5 Health); Electives-5.

One credit is given for passing each full-year course (exceptions: one-half credit is given per year for Theory of Knowledge and Teacher's Assistant).

The ISA Honours Diploma is granted to students who complete the IB Diploma Programme and meet the graduation requirements stated above. Alternatively, students must meet the following criteria:

- An average grade of 5.5 across the first 3 semesters of Grade 11 and 12;
- Completion of 4 IB courses or 3 IB courses and the extended essay;
- Completion of the CAS requirement for IB or an equivalent approved programme.

For students transferring into ISA, advanced level, externally assessed courses (such as AP) could be considered for approval as a substitute for IB courses.

#### POLICY:

1. The normal requirements for graduation are delineated in the High School Student/Parent Handbook as part of the Course of Studies section. The Head of School shall approve any exceptions to the normal graduation requirements. The High School Principal shall bring proposals for changes to the Graduation Requirements to the Head of School. The Head of School will then propose these to the Board of Trustees. It is ultimately the responsibility of the Board of Trustees to set Graduation Requirements.
2. A unit of credit will be given upon successful completion of each class meeting the equivalent of five class periods per week for a full academic year. A half credit may be given for successful completion of a class meeting fewer than the equivalent of five class periods per week for a full academic year. A repeated course will not be sanctioned with a second credit.
3. Academic accomplishments at other schools shall be converted to equivalent credits.
4. The Head of School shall be the final authority for granting credits.

#### **7.80.4 Early Graduation**

A student may graduate upon completion of the graduation requirements set by the Board of Trustees.

Students permitted to (and choosing to) graduate at mid-year will receive diploma certification of their graduation

The following guidelines must be followed for a student to graduate in less than four years of High School:

1. The Counsellor must be notified before the first day of the student's last academic year in which the student wishes to graduate.
2. The parents must send a letter to the Head of School, requesting early graduation for the student and stating the reasons for the request.
3. The Counsellor and the student must confer; the Counsellor will check records and transcripts.
4. A meeting must be scheduled between the parents, the student, and the Counsellor.
5. The student must have spent at least one year at the School.
6. The student must meet the minimum credit requirements for graduation.

If the Counsellor recommends that the student be permitted to graduate early, that recommendation must go to the Head of School for review and confirmation. If permission for early graduation is granted, it will remain subject to continued satisfactory performance of the student whilst he/she is at the School.

**CROSS REFERENCE:**        7.80.3 Graduation Requirements