



IPS Pre-K Program

FOR STUDENTS AGED 3-4



LAYING THE FOUNDATION

Experiences during the early years lay the foundation for all future learning. A rapid rate of development during the early years occurs in the physical, emotional, social and cognitive domains. The brain and body develop faster than at any other point in a child's life. The PYP transdisciplinary framework is highly relevant for all learners during this period. It offers authentic opportunities to focus on the key developmental abilities that are acquired during this crucial time and that support young students to be self-regulating learners.

Six transdisciplinary themes offer authentic contexts for students to learn increasingly complex ideas about themselves and the world around them. For example, central ideas related to themes such as "who we are" support young children to learn about identity, relationships, well-being and what it means to be part of a community. Another theme, "how we express ourselves," relates to discovery, creativity and the expression of ideas and feelings.



EARLY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Young children's development proceeds in a complex, and often non-linear, trajectory where individual children follow different pathways simultaneously. Through play, young children develop approaches to learning and connect with key domains of their development.

Teachers create learning environments and experiences that are both adaptable and appropriate to young students, valuing these early years in their own right, as a time in which play is the primary driver for inquiry. Teachers also support children in developing social-emotional competence because this connects to children's emotional well-being and their ability to adapt in new environments and to form successful relationships throughout life (National Scientific Council on the Developing Child 2004). For example, by positioning play as central to children's development, teachers are creating a non-threatening environment for children to learn about the world at their own pace (Rushton, Juola-Rushton 2010).



CENTRAL FEATURES

The processes of learning and teaching are crafted to support students' individual and emergent pathways of development.

Teachers support learning by:

- planning uninterrupted time for play
- building strong relationships with students and their families
- creating and maintaining responsive spaces for play
- offering many opportunities for symbolic exploration and expression.

Each of these elements are mutually supportive and are interwoven with the others in both theory and practice.

Teachers create safe, stimulating and inviting learning spaces by:

- offering a range of open-ended materials
- arranging and rearranging materials as invitations for learning
- creating areas for role play, block play, mark-making, expression through the arts, and so on
- considering a range of choices and opportunities for group and individual play
- involving students in the design and construction of play areas
- creating displays that reflect the process of students' learning.

