

# Oxford's IB Middle Years Programme: A Guide

*A Five-Year Programme*

*Offered in Partnership*

*Oxford Middle School and Oxford High School*

*Grades 6-10*



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Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to the Middle Years Programme! The Middle Years Programme (referred to as MYP) begins in 6<sup>th</sup> grade at Oxford Middle School and runs through 10<sup>th</sup> grade at Oxford High School. The programme is part of the pre-k through 12 grade continuum that Oxford Schools offers.

This guide should help you have a better understanding of the MYP Programme. However, if you need additional information about MYP, contact me directly or visit the school's website and click on the International Baccalaureate link.

Thanks for your interest in the Programme,

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## **Mission Statements**

### Oxford Community Schools:

Provide a world-class education that challenges all students to achieve their maximum potential and prepares them to succeed in a global society.

### Oxford Middle School and High School have a shared vision:

Oxford Secondary Schools work together with local and global communities to educate learners with rigorous coursework, while fostering skills relevant to each individual and enhancing cooperative relationships. We prepare learners for success in a world community where they are invested in the process of making principled decisions.

### International Baccalaureate Mission Statement

International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment.

The programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

## What is the International Baccalaureate Organization?

The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment.

The International Baccalaureate offers three programmes of education for students.

**The Primary Years Programme (PYP)** for pupils aged 3 to 12 focuses on the development of the whole child in the classroom and in the world outside. Every elementary school in Oxford offers a k-5 PYP education.

**The Middle Years Programme (MYP)** for students aged 11 to 16 provides a framework of academic challenge and life skills through embracing and transcending traditional school subjects. Oxford Middle School and Oxford High School offer a coordinated MYP education to all students in 6-10 grades.

**The Diploma Programme (DP)** for students aged 16 to 19 is a demanding two-year curriculum that meets the needs of highly motivated students, and leads to a qualification that is recognized by leading universities around the world. Oxford High School offers the DP for interested students in years 11th and 12th. Students can also take individual Diploma Programme courses of their interest.

## What is MYP?

The MYP is part of the International Baccalaureate programme covering grades 6-10. At Oxford Schools, all students are MYP students, as every class offered for 6<sup>th</sup> -10<sup>th</sup> grade at OMS and OHS is structured after the MYP framework.

The MYP framework requires students to study in eight subject groups:

- Language and Literature (student's first language)
- Language Acquisition (an additional language lasting all 5 years of the programme)
- Individuals and Societies (Social Studies)
- Sciences
- Mathematics
- Arts
- Physical Education and Health
- Design (technology)

While students in the first three years of the programme take all 8 subjects, students in the last two years of the programme only have to take 6 of the eight subject areas each year; however, student must take Language and Literature, Language Acquisition, Individuals and Societies, Science, and Mathematics as 5 of those 6. Oxford Schools has termed this as the 5 Core classes. Students then elect a sixth subject-area group from the remaining areas: Arts, Physical Education and Health, and Design. Additionally, since Oxford High School offers 7 class periods, students have an elective of choice to add in their schedule. Oxford High School counselling will help direct students so that they are also completing the state requirements needed for high school graduation.

The MYP framework also consists of **three fundamental concepts**. Thus rather than having students look at the world through only their eyes, students are given international and cultural perspectives that are guided by these IB concepts:

- communication (valuing language acquisition in at least two languages)
- holistic learning (finding the connections across and within the subjects and grade levels)
- intercultural awareness (a growing understanding of a student's own culture coupled with an understanding and appreciation of other cultures)

Additionally, the framework provides an academic challenge that encourages students to embrace and understand the connections between traditional subjects and the real world, and become critical and reflective thinkers. Taken as a whole, the curriculum provides a balanced education that will equip young people for effective participation in the modern world.

Curriculum planning under the MYP framework considers the written, assessed, and taught curriculum equally as each impact the other. What is learned is driven by the state or national standards or benchmarks.

### **What will my child learn?**

While the IB provides a framework for learning, the content within each subject area is driven by state and national standards that each subject area must adhere to. Therefore, Oxford teachers integrate the MYP philosophy with the state and local curriculums to create the units of study.

### **International Mindedness**

The attributes for International Mindedness are defined in the Learner Profile (see below). Education for international mindedness values the world as the broadest context for learning, develops conceptual understanding across a range of subjects and offers opportunities to inquire, act, and reflect. This process begins with encouraging each student to consider the point of view of someone else in the same class. By sharing experiences in the classroom setting and beyond, students can develop their awareness of, and sensitivity to, the experiences of others beyond the local or national community.

Using International Mindedness as the scope of an educational experience allows students to see beyond their own lives and gives them a better perspective of how they can be a contributing member of the global community. By doing so through all eight subject areas, students are able to see how what is studied today is relevant to tomorrow. Inquiry, action, and reflection allow students to capitalize on their strengths and work on their weaknesses.

## **IB Learner Profile**

The aim of all IB programmes is to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing our common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet to help create a better and more peaceful world. IB learners strive to be:

### *Inquirers*

They develop their natural curiosity. They acquire the skills necessary to conduct inquiry and research and show independence in learning. They actively enjoy learning and this love of learning will be sustained throughout their lives.

### *Knowledgeable*

They explore concepts, ideas and issues that have local and global significance. In so doing, they acquire in-depth knowledge and develop understanding across a broad and balanced range of disciplines.

### *Thinkers*

They exercise initiative in applying thinking skills critically and creatively to recognize and approach complex problems, and make reasoned, ethical decisions.

### *Communicators*

They understand and express ideas and information confidently and creatively in more than one language and in a variety of modes of communication. They work effectively and willingly in collaboration with others.

### *Principled*

They act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness, justice and respect for the dignity of the individual, groups and communities. They take responsibility for their own actions and the consequences that accompany them.

### *Open-minded*

They understand and appreciate their own cultures and personal histories, and are open to the perspectives, values and traditions of other individuals and communities. They are accustomed to seeking and evaluating a range of points of view, and are willing to grow from the experience.

### *Caring*

They show empathy, compassion and respect towards the needs and feelings of others. They have a personal commitment to service, and act to make a positive difference to the lives of others and to the environment.

### *Risk-takers*

They approach unfamiliar situations and uncertainty with courage and forethought, and have the independence of spirit to explore new roles, ideas and strategies. They are brave and articulate in defending their beliefs.

### *Balanced*

They understand the importance of intellectual, physical and emotional balance to achieve personal well-being for themselves and others.

### *Reflective*

They give thoughtful consideration to their own learning and experience. They are able to assess and understand their strengths and limitations in order to support their learning and personal development.

## Global Contexts

In the MYP, teaching and learning is modeled, as much as possible, through authentic world settings, events and circumstances. Contexts for learning in the MYP are chosen from global contexts to encourage international mindedness and global engagement within the programme. For students coming from the elementary Primary Years Programme, they are familiar with the Global Contexts. As elementary students the Global Contexts are known as Transdisciplinary Themes.

<i>PYP transdisciplinary theme</i>	<i>MYP Global Context</i>
<p><b>Who we are</b> An inquiry into the nature of the self; beliefs and values; personal, physical, mental, social, and spiritual health; human relationships including families, friends, communities and cultures; rights and responsibilities; what it means to be human.</p>	<p><b>Identities and Relationships</b></p>
<p><b>Where we are in place and time</b> An inquiry into orientation in place and time; personal histories; homes and journeys; the discoveries, explorations and migrations of humankind; the relationships between, and the interconnectedness of, individuals and civilizations, from local and global perspectives.</p>	<p><b>Orientation in Space and Time</b></p>
<p><b>How we express ourselves</b> An inquiry into 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.</p>	<p><b>Personal and Cultural Expression</b></p>
<p><b>How the world works</b> An inquiry into 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.</p>	<p><b>Scientific and Technological Innovation</b></p>
<p><b>How we organize ourselves</b> An inquiry into the interconnectedness of human-made systems and communities; the structure and function of organizations; societal decision-making; economic activities and their impact on humankind and the environment.</p>	<p><b>Globalization and Sustainability</b></p>
<p><b>Sharing the planet</b> An inquiry into the rights and responsibilities in the struggle to share finite resources with other people and with other living things; communities and the relationships within and between them; access to equal opportunities; peace and conflict resolution.</p>	<p><b>Fairness and Development</b></p>

Teachers in the MPY recognize that students learn best when their experiences have a context and are connected to their lives or the world they have experienced. Teachers at Oxford strive to make learning meaningful and relevant to keep students engaged in their studies. Using the Global Contexts, teachers can help answer the question: “Why are we learning this?”

## **Approaches to Learning (ATL)**

ATLs represent general and subject-specific learning skills that the student will develop and apply during the programme and beyond. For students coming from the PYP, these skills are known as Transdisciplinary Skills. Another common term for ATL skills is soft skills. The focus of this area is on teaching students how to learn and on helping students find out about themselves as learners so that they can develop learning skills.

There are five skill categories that expand into individualized skills appropriate for students at each year of the programme.

- Communication
- Social (collaboration)
- Self-Management (organization, affective, reflective)
- Research (information literacy, media literacy)
- Thinking (critical thinking, creative thinking, transfer)

\*All subject-area in the MYP are responsible for teaching ATL skills.

## **Assessment**

The IB believes that assessment is integral to all teaching and learning and should support the principles of the MYP through the encouragement of best practice.

The single most important aim of MYP assessment is to support and encourage student learning. The MYP places an emphasis on assessment processes that involve the gathering and analysis of information about student performance and that provide timely feedback to students on their performance (formative). MYP assessment aims to identify what students know, understand, can do and feel at different stages in the learning process and to provide a basis for practice. Students and teachers will be actively engaged in assessing student progress as part of the development of their wider critical-thinking and self-assessment skills.

Additionally assessment in the MYP aims to:

- support and encourage student learning by providing feedback within the learning process
- inform, enhance, and improve the teaching process
- promote positive student attitudes towards learning
- promote a deep understanding of subject content by supporting students in their inquiries set in real-world applications using the areas of interaction
- promote the development of higher-order cognitive skills by providing rigorous final objectives that value these skills
- reflect the international-mindedness of the programme by allowing for assessments to be set in a variety of cultural and linguistic contexts
- support the holistic nature of the programme by including the development of the whole student.

## **Summative vs. Formative Assessment: What is the difference?**

Formative assessment provides real-time or short-term feedback for teachers and students, allowing teachers to adjust instruction according to the results. This type of assessment gives a clear picture of student skill levels throughout a unit.

Summative Assessments are end-of-unit of evaluations on the content and skills obtained by the student throughout the unit. Summative assessments come in a variety of forms including: open-ended responses, tests, projects, and papers, usually asking students to construct a task. Rather than focusing discrete skills, the summative assessment will show what the student has learned overall and how he can apply that learning.

### **Personal Project**

The Personal Project is completed in year 5 of the programme (10<sup>th</sup> grade). It is a personal and creative work of a students' choosing which is intended to demonstrate the skills they have developed through approaches to learning and based around a topic that motivates and interests the student. Students will be asked to investigate, plan, take action, and reflect during the Personal Project. Beginning in the 2017-18 school year all 10<sup>th</sup> grade students who wish to receive an Oxford MYP Certificate must successfully complete the Personal Project and their course work.

### **Service Component**

As an MYP school, we will provide students with opportunities to participate in community service. Students in all grades are expected to participate in a service component during each year of the programme. By giving students the opportunity to volunteer or contribute to the benefit of others, students learn that their actions and choices can create a positive impact.

### **Why should I be excited that my child is an IB MYP student?**

Life-Long Learners- IB strives to create life-long learners by

- promoting positive student attitudes towards learning
- supporting holistic learning so that students see how subject areas connect to each other and the world in which they live
- developing a set of skills, rather than just content knowledge
- promoting the use of higher-order thinking skills in every subject area

Real-World Application- IB uses assessments to prepare students for a world beyond schooling by

- allowing students to apply their learning skills and course content (as determined by State and National benchmarks) to assessments that simulate real world situations
- giving students opportunities to reflect on their learning to be aware of personal growth
- giving students opportunities to make an impact on their community and explore their natural curiosities
- asking kids to find solutions to problems rather than telling them how to do it

*Additionally*, IB encourages students to focus on more than just learning! MYP also incorporates a type of character building within the community of the classroom and school.

### **What part should students take in their learning?**

- Be autonomous learners by thinking independently, assessing their progress and taking responsibility for deadlines
- Actively participate in formative and summative assessment to support the learning process.
- Analyze, monitor and reflect upon formative and summative assessment data to assist with their progress.
- Be organized with materials and assignments and prepared for class.
- Use an assignment calendar/planner.
- Seek help when they need to better understand a concept or skill.
- Demonstrate a positive attitude, focus and stay on task in class.
- Be willing to grow in the IB Learner Profile.

### **How can parents support their child's learning?**

- Work as partners with students, educators and other members of the education community (counselors, paraprofessionals, administrators, and support staff).
- Recognize their student's current learning strengths and weaknesses.
- Regularly monitor their student's growth and progress.
- Provide an appropriate learning environment and tools at home.
- Openly communicate with their students and educators regarding learning concerns.
- Participate in the learning process through support and reinforcement at home.

### **Parent/Teacher Conferences**

As an MYP school, your child is part of a learning community. Their success can be deepened by their contributions to the community.

What kind of questions should I be asking at conferences?

- Are there any content-area skills that my child should be working on to help him/her in the success of this subject now or in the future?
- Are there any soft skills (those needed in the job market) that my child should be working on to help him/her be successful now or in the future?
- How is my child contributing to the community in the classroom?
- What do you observe my child doing really well on a consistent basis?

## **Protocols**

Through the MYP programme, 4 policies were created by staff: Academic Honesty, Assessment, Language, and Special Needs. Teachers and administration use these policies as a guide to our programme and will consult these policies as situations arise. It should be noted that these policies will be reviewed yearly and updated as the needs of the programme and school evolve.

### Academic Honesty Protocol:

- States the practicing philosophy for teachers and students regarding academic work
- Defines Academic Dishonesty:
  - **Plagiarism**
  - **Collusion**
  - **Duplication**
  - **Invention**
  - **Manipulation**
- States expectations for behavior and gives the penalties for Academic Dishonesty: Student given opportunity to resubmit / Code of Conduct still applies

### Assessment Protocol:

- Explains Oxford's philosophy on assessment and its purposes
- Defines the different types of assessment strategies
- Defines the expectation of the parent, student, and teacher in assessment/academic work
- States the MYP subject-area assessment requirements (prescribed minimum tasks)

### Language Protocol:

- States the Language Philosophy (all teachers are language teachers)
- Identifies Oxford Language Profile (Mother Tongue and Second Language Acquisition)
- Identifies the goals for teaching and learning of primary and secondary languages
- Describes how support is given to students

### Special Needs Protocol:

- Lists the goals of the Special Needs policy
- Defines the expectations of *all* stakeholders (parents, students, administration, MYP staff)
- Describes the population of Special Needs students (Conditions, disorders, and barriers)
- Explains how we identify and service these students

## Typical Course Schedule

Listed below is the sequencing for the MS and HS courses offered.

### Middle School

<i>6<sup>th</sup> grade</i>		<i>7<sup>th</sup> grade</i>		<i>8<sup>th</sup> grade</i>	
Language and Literature course (full year)		Language and Literature course (full year)		Language and Literature course (full year)	
Language Acquisition course (full year)		Language Acquisition course (full year)		Language Acquisition course (full year)	
Individuals and Societies course (full year)		Individuals and Societies course (full year)		Individuals and Societies course (full year)	
Sciences course (full year)		Sciences course (full year)		Sciences course (full year)	
Mathematics course (full year)		Mathematics course (full year)		Mathematics course (full year)	
<b>Music Students</b>	<b>Non-Music Students</b>	<b>Music Students</b>	<b>Non-Music Students</b>	<b>Music Students</b>	<b>Non-Music Students</b>
Full Year: Band, Orchestra, Choir	Full Year: Physical Education	Full Year: Band, Orchestra, Choir	Full Year: Physical Education & Health	Full Year: Band, Orchestra, Choir	Full Year: Physical Education
Semester Each: Design and Physical Ed	Semester Each: Design and Arts	Semester Each: Design and Physical Ed & Health	Semester Each: Design and Arts	Semester Each: Design and Physical Ed	Semester Each: Design and Arts

### High School

<i>9<sup>th</sup> grade</i>	<i>10<sup>th</sup> grade</i>
Language and Literature course (1 credit)	Language and Literature course (1 credit)
Language Acquisition course (1 credit)	Language Acquisition course (1 credit)
Individuals and Societies course (1 credit)	Individuals and Societies course (1 credit)
Sciences course (1 credit)	Sciences course (1 credit)
Math course (1 credit)	Math course (1 credit)
MYP year-long elective (Arts, Design, Physical Education for 1 credit)	MYP year-long elective (Arts, Design, Physical Education for 1 credit)
Elective	Elective

### **What happens after 10<sup>th</sup> grade?**

In the Oxford Community School District, all students in grades K-10 will be in an IB curriculum. Once a student reaches their junior year of high school they may elect to continue on through the Diploma Programme in their final two years.

The IB Diploma Programme is designed as an academically challenging and balanced programme of education with final examinations that prepares students, juniors and seniors, for success at university and life beyond. The programme is taught over two years and has gained recognition and respect from the world's leading universities. This recognition continues to grow in the state of Michigan, and every year individual university policies have moved in a favorable direction for IB students.

For more information on becoming a Diploma Programme candidate, or participating in a DP course, contact Jason Eldridge or Kurt Nuss (see below).

### **Contacts**

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