

Hello, this video is going to introduce you to the Middle Years Programme and what it looks like at the International School in Genoa.

So first, we're going to start with **research behind the MYP**.

Research shows that students participating in the MYP build confidence in managing their own learning, that they learn by doing, connecting the classroom to the larger world, that they outperform non-IB students in critical academic skills, they consistently have greater success in the IB diploma program examinations, they thrive in positive school cultures where they are engaged and motivated to excel, and they develop an understanding of global challenges and a commitment to act as responsible citizens.

All of this can be accomplished because the **MYP is a holistic learning experience**. There are no core subjects, and it's underpinned by the commitment to international mindedness through ATLs, Key and related concepts, and the global contexts. We're going to look at each of the three of those elements within the MYP in just a moment.

As an overview, the Approaches to Learning help students learn *how* to learn by developing skills for research, critical and creative thinking, communication, collaboration, and self-management. Key and related concepts help students explore big ideas that matter, and global context helps students understand the relevance and importance of their study for understanding their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet.

Approaches to Learning, or ATLs, as they are commonly called, represent general and subject-specific learning skills that the students will develop and apply during the program. They're designed to encourage independent learning, and they make for greater success in transition to the diploma program. So some of these skills include social skills, research skills, thinking skills, communication skills, and of course, self-management skills.

Next, we have **Key and Related Concepts**. Key concepts, as you can see the list of them over here on the left, provide interdisciplinary breadth to the program. They are broad, powerful ideas that have relevance within and across subjects and disciplines, providing connections that can transfer across time and culture. While each subject has four key concepts, any subject can be used for any concept can be used for any subject, which allows for better transfer between disciplines.

Then we have related concepts. Related concepts are grounded in specific disciplines. They explore key concepts in greater detail, providing depth to the program. They emerge from reflection on the nature of specific subjects and disciplines, providing a focus for inquiry and subject specific content.

Next, **Global Contexts** show how learning best takes place in the world such as through identities and relationships, orientation and time and space, globalization and sustainability, fairness and development, personal and cultural expression, and scientific and technical innovation. Learning through global contexts supports the IB's mission to “develop inquiring, knowledgeable, and caring young people who helped to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.” Using global context in planning and teaching helps learners by providing relevance and meaning, which may lead to increased student engagement.

While the Approaches to Learning, Key and Related Concepts, and Global Contexts underpin the MYP, inquiry-based learning forms the foundation of teaching and learning in the MYP.

Inquiry-based learning means students are engaged with challenging situations when their prior knowledge is activated and questions are provoked, so they're really interested in the topic that they're learning. Students then explore, investigate what's going on, and their prior knowledge is challenged, so they have new ideas that are being created. Students are then asked to explain what's going on. So they're learning new things and they want to and they *need* to learn new things in order to explain and to answer those questions. They are then asked to apply their knowledge towards new situations,

which is elaboration, and it allows them to deepen and extend what they know. Finally, they reflect on their knowledge and the learning process through assessment and through general reflections. Students are more engaged with this form of instruction and it helps them to become critical thinkers, problem solvers, and lifelong learners. Students develop the dispositions and skills to pursue meaningful questions about the world around them.

Here are a couple examples of inquiry-based learning at ISG. The example on the left is from an Individuals and Societies class in Grade 10. And the example on the right is from a Grade six Mathematics class. As you can see from this math class, they are using inquiry into the budgets of refugees in Geneva in order to explore percentage change. So this is one way for them to activate prior knowledge about the place where they're living and maybe where some of them are from in order to learn new concepts related to the subject.

Another key aspect of the middle years program is **criteria-based assessment**. In this form of assessment, students are not ranked against others in their class or year group. The MYP assessment emphasizes individual achievement against set criteria in each subject area. Students use the descriptors to guide their learning and to motivate themselves to a higher level of achievement. Assessment should be an integral and continuous part of learning in every school, but criterion based assessment is like giving the students a map to get from A to B, as opposed to simply hoping that they'll find their way. Being able to read the student's map is a skill that will help to ensure success every time. So it's important for students and parents to understand the criteria on which students are being assessed for each of their classes.

Students are assessed on one or more criteria per assessment. In their report cards, they receive a holistic grade based on their attainment by the end of the year. It is not simply an average of all the summative assessments.

For formative assessments, students receive written feedback on ManageBac on how to improve. They do not receive a grade for the criteria, but they are assessed on the same criteria that they will receive a grade on for their summative assessment later in the unit. For summative assessments, students receive written feedback in ManageBac on how to improve *and* a grade for each of the criteria on which they're being assessed from 1-8.

Students and parents can see the details of everything, including formative and summative assessments, the units they're currently studying, homework, and so on, all on ManageBac. Also on ManageBac, you can find things not specific to the MYP curriculum, such as behavior notes and attendance.

The MYP is self-motivated, given the reasons above that we've already talked about; however, it's also important to note that it *does* provide students with the **hard and soft skills needed** to access the DP program. For example, the Personal Project at the end of grade 10 supports students in their extended essay and their IAs in the DP. Also, the MYP subjects we offer feed into the DP subjects. For example, Individuals and Societies in the MYP feeds into Economics, History, and Psychology in the DP. Of course, both programs have deeper, intentional connections as well. The learner and the Learner Profile are the center of all the programs, the Approaches to Teaching and Learning are embedded throughout, and international mindedness underpins it all.

It's important that we are **actively preparing our students throughout the MYP to be ready for the rigors of the DP**. So in Grade 9, teachers, students, and parents start making decisions about course selection. Starting in Grade 9, ISG streamlines students into English A or English B, Italian A or Italian B, and extended or standard math. Also, starting this year, Grades 9 and 10 students have four hours of math instruction, and in Grade 9, students study Biology, Chemistry, and Physics on a trimester rotation, so they can experience all subjects before moving into Grade 10.

In Grade 10, students have the option to choose two of the three science courses, one each semester, or they can take one for the entire year, allowing them to pursue that class at the HL level in the DP. Also in Grade 10, students can choose two of the arts classes: Visual Arts, Music, or Drama. Finally, in order to support our 10th graders with their academic writing,

we've also added an extra hour of English writing instruction that takes place during one of the two advisory periods each week.

Other requirements in the MYP include the Personal Project and Service as Action. All students in Grade 10 will take part in the MYP **Personal Project**. This is a student-directed extended project which holds high importance in the MYP and reflects the student's experience of the program. The project provides an excellent opportunity for students to produce a truly personal and creative piece of work of their choice to demonstrate the skills they have developed in the approaches to learning. Each student will have their own supervisor to oversee the process and all learning is celebrated with an end-of-year personal project exhibition. Not only is this a wonderful way to celebrate the culmination of their learning throughout the MYP and a way to share this with the community via the final exhibition, it also allows students to truly be authors of their own learning, and it sets them up to be a self-actualizing learner in the DP. Think about the courseworks, the IAs that they have to do and how they have to plan their own time and juggle many commitments. The Personal Project supports them in all of those things.

Finally, another aspect of the MYP is **Service as Action**. This is still in development at ISG, but it's a really important part of the MYP and one that we're really excited about. Service learning in the MYP is a dynamic educational approach that empowers students to combine classroom learning with meaningful community service. Service is a fundamental component of the MYP curriculum, fostering holistic development by integrating academics with real world experiences. Our service learning program is strategically designed to offer diverse, age-appropriate opportunities for students in every grade, culminating in a significant project in MYP 5, which is Grade 10. There may be opportunities for service within units of learning or outside of the classroom as well. This is a growing program, and we have recently appointed a service learning director, which is Mr. Dario, who also is heading the grade level trips.

If you'd like to learn more about the NYP at our school, there are some resources linked on the slideshow. And if you have any questions at all, please feel free to reach out to Ms. West, Ms. Pepper, or Ms. Parker at the school. Thank you so much for joining us!