RAMALLAH
FRIENDS SCHOOL

IB Middle Years Programme
MYP Handbook
2025 - 2026

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FOUNDED IN 1869

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Some illustrations in this handbook were created using ChatGPT (OpenAI, 2026). The diagrams were reviewed and adapted by the author for educational purposes.

Friends School Mission Statement

The Ramallah Friends School strives to be a leading educational institution in the Palestinian community. The Lower School (FGS) and the Upper School (FBS) were founded in 1869 and 1901 respectively, for the purpose of offering Palestinian youth a rigorous program guided by principles of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers). Central to Quaker education is a vitality which comes from being a living expression of a religious life. A Friends School education seeks to promote a constant search for God to all human situations, and to cultivate ethical, moral and spiritual values.

The Friends School is committed to:

Excellence in education

Quaker education calls for high academic standards and a willingness to experiment with new methodology and curricula.

Developing the whole person

Quaker education is committed to helping each member of the school community realize his or her physical, mental, spiritual, and social potential. It recognizes that every person is different, with varying abilities which must be developed to the full extent possible.

Helping each person recognize her or his responsibility to society Quaker education is committed to helping each person recognize her or his responsibility as a caring member of the school, community, nation and global family where "each live for the other and all live for God." The Friends School is committed to nurturing character traits such as integrity, simplicity, honesty, cooperation and compassion. The school believes in and encourages freedom of thought and expression. They expect, however, that this freedom be enjoyed with a full sense of responsibility. Quaker education advocates non-violence as a viable option for resolving conflict in every aspect of life. These values are best learned through examples and practice as students, teachers, parents, workers and administrators interact with each other.

Equality

Quaker education believes that all people are equal before God regardless of gender, creed, culture, color or social status. Quaker education in Palestine has focused from the beginning on the education of women to develop their potential and realize their opportunity to be equal members of their community. Quaker education is built on the belief that "all are children of God" and that within each person "there is that of God to be nurtured."

It is upon this foundation that Friends Schools' students grow to be strong and sensitive members of their families, their community and the world in which they live.

IB Mission Statement

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.

These 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.

MYP Fundamental Concepts

Intercultural Awareness

MYP believes in the importance of education as a way of fostering understanding among young people from around the world by encouraging them to consider issues from multiple perspectives. MYP aims to develop student's attitudes, knowledge, and skills as they learn about their own and others' social, national and ethnic cultures. In this way, intercultural awareness can build understanding and respect.

Holistic Learning

While the MYP insists on a thorough study of eight subject groups, it also highlights the interrelatedness of the subjects and so encourages students to develop a holistic view of learning. Students become aware of these links through carefully planned units of work between subjects; thus, they learn to recognize relationships between school subjects and real-world issues so that students will learn to see knowledge as an interrelated whole. interrelated whole.

Communication

The MYP stresses the fundamental importance of communication, verbal and non-verbal, in realizing the aims of the programme. A good command of expression in all its forms is fundamental to learning. In most MYP subject groups, communication is both an objective and an assessment criterion, as it supports understanding and allows student reflection and expression.

Welcome to Our MYP Community

Welcome to the Middle Years Programme (MYP). We are proud to offer an internationally recognized programme that supports students aged 11–16 in becoming **inquirer**, **confident**, **reflective**, and **responsible** learners.

The MYP encourages students to make connections between their studies and the real world. Our goal is not only academic success, but also the development of character, curiosity, and global awareness.

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MYP Curriculum Structure

The International Baccalaureate (IB) Middle Years Programme (MYP 1-5) is designed to help students develop critical thinking skills, creativity, and independence. Students study a broad and balanced curriculum while learning how to research, analyze information, communicate effectively, and reflect on their growth.
The programme is built around inquiry-based learning, meaning students explore big ideas, ask meaningful questions, and apply their knowledge in real-life contexts.

- **Students study eight subject groups:**

Subject groups	MYP Years 1 – 3 Grades 6 – 8	MYP Years 4 – 5 Grades 9 – 10
Language & Literature	Arabic Language	
Language Acquisition	English, Spanish	English
Individuals & Societies	Geography, History Religions	
Sciences	Science	Biology, Chemistry, Physics
Mathematics	Mathematics	
Arts	Visual Art, Drama	Visual Art
Physical & Health Education	Physical & Health Education	
Design	Digital Design / Computer	

This broad curriculum ensures students develop academically while also nurturing creativity, physical wellbeing, and problem-solving skills.

- **Interdisciplinary Learning**
- Students also participate in **Service as Action** activities, where they apply their learning to serve their community.

In the MYP, teachers guide students through inquiry and concept-based learning. Lessons focus on understanding ideas deeply rather than memorizing facts.
Students develop Approaches to Learning (ATL) skills, including communication, research, collaboration, organization, and reflection.
We believe learning should be challenging, supportive, and engaging.

Objectives

The objectives of any MYP subject group state the specific targets that are set for learning in that subject. They define what the student will be able to accomplish as a result of studying the subject.

Each objective is elaborated by a number of strands; a strand is an aspect or indicator of the learning expectation.

These objectives relate directly to the assessment criteria.

	A	B	C	D
Language & Literature	Analysing	Organizing	Producing Text	Using Language
Language Acquisition	Listening	Reading	Speaking	Writing
Individuals & Societies	Knowing & Understanding	Investigating	Communicating	Thinking Critically
Sciences	Knowing & Understanding	Inquiring & Designing	Processing & Evaluating	Reflecting on the impacts of science
Mathematics	Knowing & Understanding	Investigating Patterns	Communicating	Applying Mathematics in Real-life
Arts	Investigating	Developing	Creating/ Performing	Evaluating
Physical & Health Education	Knowing & Understanding	Planning for Performance	Applying & Performing	Reflecting & Improving Performance
Design	Inquiring & Analysing	Developing Ideas	Creating the Solution	Evaluating

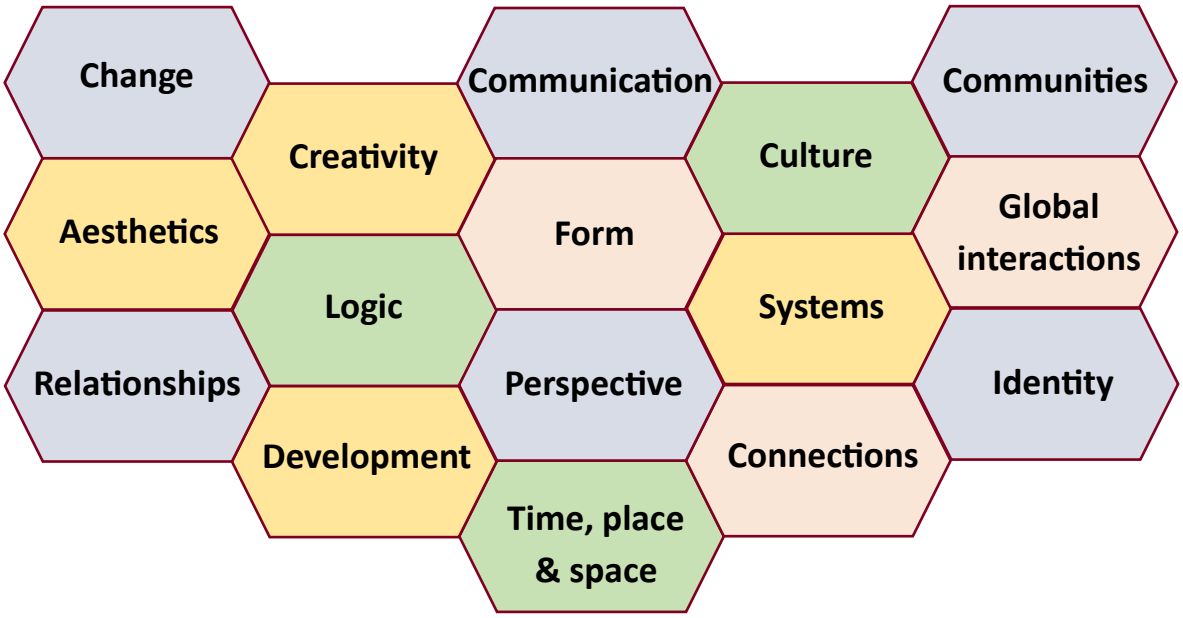
The MYP Framework

Concepts

In the MYP, learning goes beyond memorizing facts. We use a concept-based approach to help students understand ideas deeply and apply their learning in meaningful ways. This approach helps students:

Through this model, students do not just learn what to think, they learn **how to think.**

Key Concepts



MYP Global Contexts (GC)

Teaching and learning in the MYP involves understanding concepts in context. Global contexts provide a common language for powerful contextual learning, identifying specific settings, events or circumstances that provide more concrete perspectives for teaching and learning. When teachers select a global context for learning, they answer the following questions:

- Why are we engaged in this inquiry?
- Why are these concepts important?
- Why is it important for me to understand?
- Why do people care about this topic?

MYP Global Contexts provide common points of entry for inquiries into what it means to be internationally minded, framing a curriculum that promotes multilingualism, intercultural understanding and global engagement. These contexts build on the powerful themes of global significance that structure teaching and learning in the PYP, creating relevance for adolescent learners.

Approaches to Learning Skills (ATL)

Through ATL in IB programmes, students develop skills that have relevance across the curriculum that help them “learn how to learn”. ATL skills can be learned and taught, improved with practice and developed incrementally. They provide a solid foundation for learning independently and with others. ATL skills help students prepare for, and demonstrate learning through, meaningful assessment. They provide a common language that students and teachers can use to reflect on, and articulate on, the process of learning.

IB programmes identify five ATL skill categories, expanded into developmentally appropriate skill clusters IB programmes identify five ATL skill categories, expanded into developmentally appropriate skill clusters

ATL skill categories	MYP ATL skill clusters
Communication	I. Communication
Social	II. Collaboration
Self-management	III. Organization
	IV. Affective
	V. Reflection
Research	VI. Information literacy
	VII. Media literacy
Thinking	VIII. Critical thinking
	IX. Creative thinking
	X. Transfer

IB Learner Profile

The IB Learner strives to be:

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.

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.

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

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

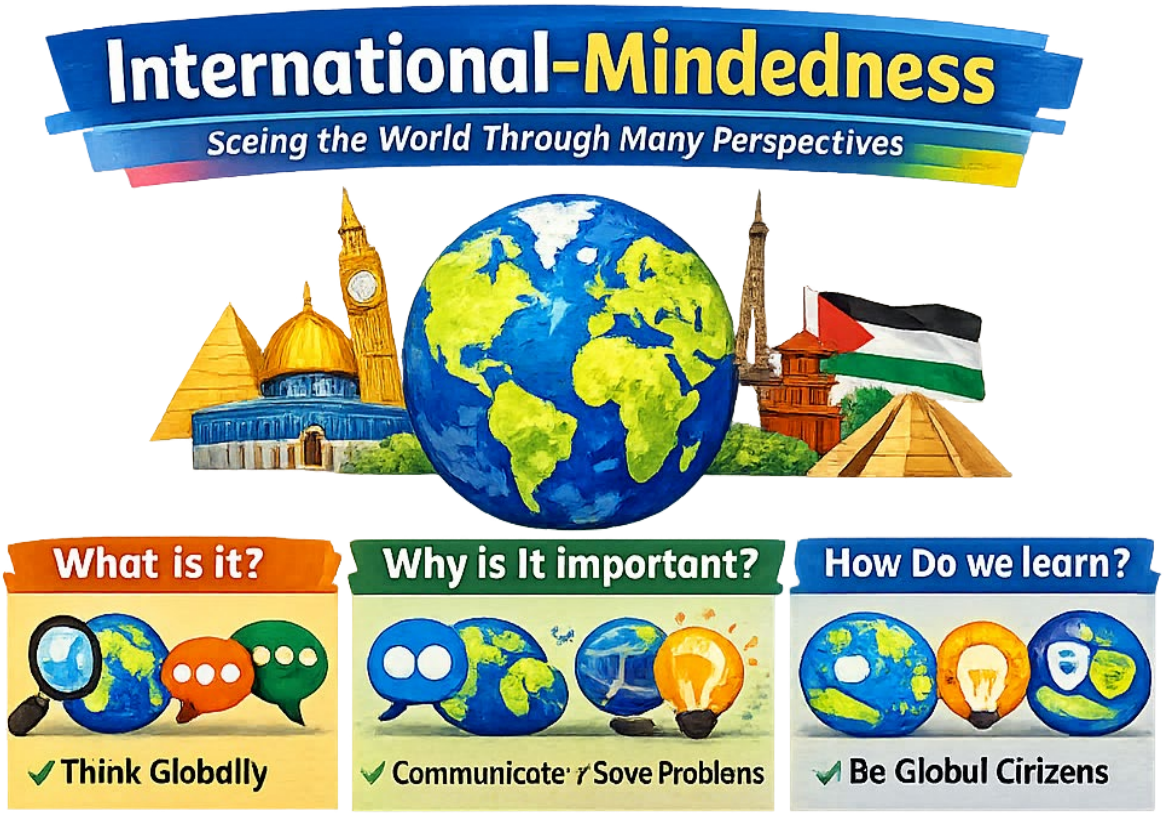
They understand the importance of intellectual, physical and emotional balance to achieve personal well-being for themselves and others.

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.

International Mindedness

Three dimensions of being internationally minded:

1. **Intercultural understanding:** appreciating own perspective (values, beliefs, experiences, and ways of knowing) while respecting others.
2. **Multilinguistic:** communicating in a variety of ways and in more than one language is central to intercultural understanding.
3. **Global engagement:** a commitment to become globally conscious in order to address humanities greatest challenges in the classroom and beyond.



Inquiry-based Learning Approach

At our school, learning is driven by an Inquiry-Based Learning (IBL) approach, which means students are not passive recipients of information, they are active thinkers, questioners, and problem-solvers. In the IB Middle Years Programme (MYP), inquiry can take different forms depending on students' readiness and the learning goals. Teachers may use **structured inquiry**, where questions and procedures are carefully guided; **guided inquiry**, where students investigate teacher-framed questions with increasing independence; and **open inquiry**, where students design their own questions and approaches. This gradual release of responsibility helps students build confidence, independence, and strong Approaches to Learning (ATL) skills such as critical thinking, research, collaboration, and communication.

Our inquiry process follows a clear five-step cycle to ensure depth and rigor. Students begin by **asking meaningful questions**, then move to **investigating and gathering evidence** from reliable sources. Next, they **analyze and interpret their findings**, before **drawing conclusions or creating products** that demonstrate their understanding. The cycle concludes with **reflection and action**, where students evaluate their learning and consider how it connects to real-world contexts. Throughout all stages, teachers provide intentional guidance, feedback, and challenge. This structured yet dynamic process ensures that learning is purposeful, concept-driven, and aligned with the MYP's commitment to developing thoughtful, internationally minded learners.

The MYP Personal Project (MYP 5)

The Personal Project is the culminating experience of the Middle Years Programme and provides students with an opportunity to explore a topic that is personally meaningful to them. Through independent inquiry, students set a learning goal based on their interests and create a product that demonstrates what they have learned. This process encourages students to take ownership of their learning while developing essential Approaches to Learning (ATL) skills such as research, communication, organization, critical thinking and reflection.

Throughout the project, students work closely with a supervisor who guides them through the stages of planning, applying skills and reflecting. They develop clear success criteria, follow an action plan, document their progress and evaluate the impact of their project on themselves or their community, then present their learning in a Personal Project Exhibition. The Personal Project not only strengthens academic skills and integrity, but also fosters independence, resilience and confidence, preparing students for future academic challenges and lifelong learning.

Personal Project Objectives

Objective A: Planning
Maximum: 8

i. State a learning goal for the project and explain how a personal interest led to that goal.
ii. State an intended product and develop appropriate success criteria for the product.
iii. Present a clear, detailed plan for achieving the product and its associated success criteria.

Objective B: Applying skills
Maximum: 8

i. Explain how the ATL skill(s) was/were applied to help achieve their learning goal.
ii. Explain how the ATL skill(s) was/were applied to help achieve their product.

Objective C: Reflecting
Maximum: 8

i. Explain the impact of the project on themselves or their learning.
ii. Evaluate the product based on the success criteria.

Service as Action

Service as Action is a core component of the IB Middle Years Programme and reflects the belief that learning is most powerful when students apply it in real-life contexts. In the MYP, students are encouraged to move beyond understanding ideas in the classroom and take meaningful action in their communities. Through service, students develop empathy, responsibility, and initiative as they engage with authentic needs locally and globally. Service is not about simply completing hours; it is about thoughtful action connected to sustained inquiry and reflection, helping students grow as caring, principled, and internationally minded individuals.

At Ramallah Friends School, Service as Action is closely connected to classroom learning and guided by clear learning outcomes. Students may engage in direct service, indirect service, or advocacy, and they are encouraged to plan, reflect, collaborate, and consider the ethical impact of their actions. As students progress through the MYP, they take increasing ownership of their projects, developing confidence, perseverance, and a deeper sense of social responsibility. Through Service as Action, students do not only learn about the world, but they also learn how to contribute positively to it.

Yearbook **Open Day** **Olive Season**

Modern Dance **Planting Trees** **Gardening (Kaykab)**

Drama & Theater **Sport activities** **White Gifts**

Student Government **Reading to the Elderly**

Quaker Day Care Visits & Activities

Various Clean Up Campaign

Model United Nations Club

Assessment & Reporting in the MYP Program

Ramallah Friends School has developed a comprehensive assessment policy that reflects both our educational philosophy and the principles of the IB Middle Years Programme. Assessment in the MYP is criterion-related, meaning that students are evaluated against clearly defined standards rather than being compared to one another. This approach promotes fairness, transparency and meaningful feedback, allowing students to understand their progress in relation to established learning goals.

Each subject group is assessed using four specific criteria (A–D). These criteria are applied consistently across all tasks, and student achievement is measured on a scale from 1 to 8 for each criterion. Throughout the year, students engage in a balanced range of formative assessments (to support learning and provide feedback) and summative assessments (to evaluate achievement). Assessment criteria are shared with students in advance, ensuring clarity about expectations and enabling them to take responsibility for improving their work.

Example from Language Acquisition

Task	Criterion A Listening	Criterion B Reading	Criterion C Speaking	Criterion D Writing
Task 1	4	8	5	6
Task 2	6	7	–	5
Task 3	5	7	5	6
Best fit	**5**	**7**	**5**	**6**

Students' overall achievement in each subject is determined by adding together their best-fit levels of achievement in each of the four criteria. This total "raw mark" is then converted into a final grade from 1 to 7 according to the official MYP grade boundaries published by the IB. Parents receive regular progress updates and report cards to ensure ongoing communication about their child's academic development and growth.

RFS Academic Integrity Policy

Ramallah Friends School (RFS) values personal and academic integrity. RFS upholds academic integrity as an expression of Quaker values and International Baccalaureate (IB) principles that promote personal integrity, teaching, learning, and assessment. We expect all community members to uphold the core IB values of trust, respect, fairness, honesty, and responsibility. The staff and administration of RFS recognize the significance of students learning about academic integrity and comprehending the consequences that arise when it is not followed.

We expect students to act with honesty and responsibility in all academic work.
Students are taught how to reference sources properly and use technology responsibly. Misconduct such as plagiarism or misuse of ***AI*** tools is addressed through clear procedures that emphasize learning and growth.

School Policies

- Admission & Withdrawal Policy
- Language Policy
- Professional Development Policy
- Access & Inclusion Policy
- Academic Integrity Policy
- IBMYP & IBDP Assessment Policy
- Grievance Handling Policy
- Student Publication Policy
- Social Media Policy

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