

A photograph of several books standing upright on a shelf. The books are slightly out of focus, with the foreground book being sharper than the others. The colors of the book spines are muted, including shades of blue, orange, and white.

PYP Assessment Policy

Matija Gubec International School

Last reviewed: May 2025

Introduction

This *Assessment Policy* represents a model of effective assessment practices developed by PYP team of Matija Gubec International School.

In this document, we will present our *mission, philosophy assessment strategies, tools and examples of good practice* that we use in PYP which reflects the PYP policy of supporting learners and teachers and collaborating to the mutual benefit of these groups and the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO). Assessment at the school is integral with planning, teaching, and learning (see *Programme standards and practices*, 2018).

Our main goal and approach to assessment is *continuous development of assessment procedures and methods* of reporting to parents and students which reflect the philosophy and objectives of the programme. The use of assessment is to judge the effectiveness of both teaching and learning processes. It allows teachers and children to identify their strengths and weaknesses and the effectiveness of the programme. As Zhang & Burry-Stock (2003) state, assessment is the feedback mechanism for improving classroom learning. By applying the variety of assessment strategies outlined in this policy, teachers can more effectively guide their instruction while also empowering students to take a more active role in their own learning. The purpose and means of assessment will be clearly explained to the children.

The PYP defines curriculum as the total experience of learning and teaching in schools. It is made up of three closely interrelated components.

The written curriculum or *Why do we want to learn?*

The concepts, skills, knowledge, attitudes, and actions identified in the written curriculum are known as the five essential elements.

The taught curriculum or *How best will we learn?*

The teaching strategies which will best support the types of learning that the programme seeks to promote.

The learned curriculum or *How will we know what we have learned?*

Approaches to assessment, recording and reporting.

This policy helps us to clarify our approaches to each of these important areas.

It also provides clear guidelines and practical support for teachers faced with the challenging task of answering the question: *How will we know what we have learned?*

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.

Matija Gubec International School Mission Statement

Matija Gubec International School empowers students to reach their full potential in a supportive and challenging learning environment preparing them to be confident, caring, respectful and internationally minded lifelong learners and global citizens ready to change the world for the better.

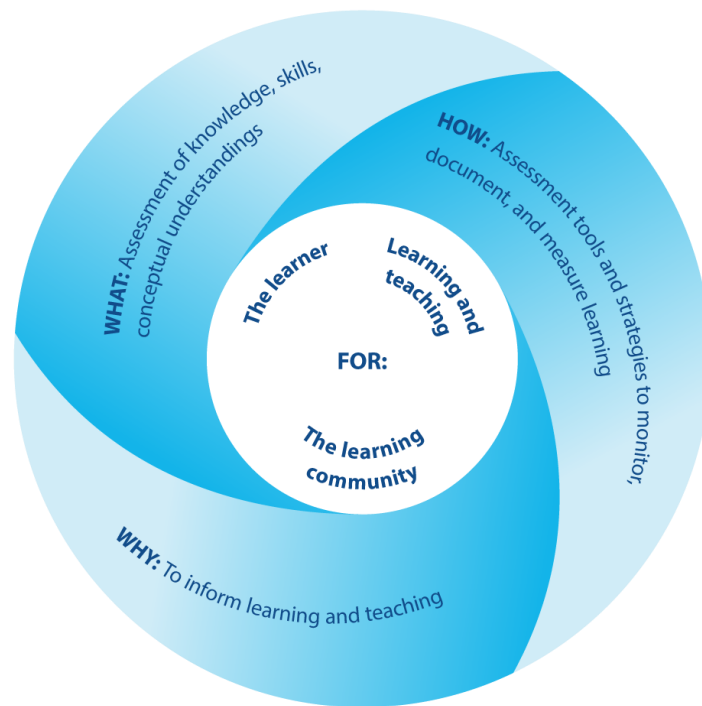
PHILOSOPHY AND PRINCIPLES OF ASSESSMENT

Assessment is the collection and analysis of information regarding student performance. It identifies what students know, understand, can achieve, and enables them to reflect at different stages in the learning process.

Matija Gubec International School is committed to educating the *whole child*, in an academically challenging and child-centred environment. We emphasize freedom of expression, independent thinking, and positive personal values and qualities while maintaining a sense of responsibility to others through respect and cooperation. *Individual circumstances* must be taken into account if the assessment is to help learning and to encourage the learner. The educational framework of Matija Gubec International School represents a balance between the learning processes and the product in line with the goals of teaching and learning.

The curriculum is based not only on the acquisition of knowledge but also on the development of problem-solving and critical-thinking skills. Using a broad, inquiry-based curriculum we emphasize literacy; written and oral communication; the creative process of the arts and music; the acquisition and mastery of multiple languages; reasoning in the sciences and mathematics; the pursuit of a physically active and healthy lifestyle; and technology to enhance the learning

and discovery process. As future, fully contributing members of society, our students develop into socially and morally responsible individuals, demonstrating this through their understanding, respect for others, and service to the community. Matija Gubec International School develops each student's self-worth, confidence, and pride by providing programmes that make the most of our multicultural school community.



Integrating Assessment (IB, 2018)

Perspective on assessment

Assessment is integral to all teaching and learning. It is central to the PYP's goal of thoughtfully and effectively guiding children through the five essential elements of learning: *the understanding of concepts, the acquisition of knowledge, the mastering of skills, the development of attitudes and the decision to take responsible action.*

Everyone concerned with assessment - children, teachers, parents, administrators, and board members have a clear understanding of the reasons for the assessment, what is being assessed, the criteria for success and the method by which the assessment is made.

Both children and teachers are actively engaged in assessing student progress as part of the development of their wider critical thinking and self-evaluation skills. Teachers are also concerned with evaluating the efficacy of the programme.

The PYP describes the taught curriculum as the written curriculum in action. Using the written curriculum, and in collaboration with colleagues and children, the teacher generates questions which guide structured inquiry and instruction. These questions address the eight key concepts which help lead to productive lines of inquiry. *Assessment focuses on the quality of student*

learning during the process of inquiry and instruction and on the quality of the products of that learning. Assessment is, therefore, integral to the taught curriculum.

It is how we analyse student learning and the effectiveness of our teaching and acts as a foundation on which to base our future planning and practice. It is central to our goal of guiding the child, from novice to expert, through the learning process.

WHY TO ASSESS?

Purposes of assessment

The purposes of assessment are to promote student learning, to provide information about student learning and to contribute to the efficacy of the programme.

Student learning is promoted through:

- assessing the students' prior knowledge and experience brought to the topic or task
- planning the teaching and learning in order to meet individual or group needs
- building a profile of students' understanding
- engaging students in reflection on their learning and in the assessment of their work and the work of others

Programme evaluation uses a variety of student assessments to:

- assess *students' performance* in relation to the general and specific expectations of the programme
- assess *group performance* in relation to other classes or groups both internally and externally
- *inform others*, including children, colleagues and parents

Principles of assessment

Effective assessments allow the child to:

- have *criteria* that are known and understood in advance
- *analyse* their learning and understand what needs to be improved
- *demonstrate* the range of their conceptual understandings, their knowledge and their skills
- *synthesize* and *apply* their learning, not merely recall facts

- base their learning on *real-life experiences* that can lead to other questions to ask or problems to solve
- focus on producing a quality *product or performance*
- highlight their *strengths* and demonstrate mastery and expertise
- express *different points of view* and interpretations
- promote *reflection*, self- and peer-evaluation

Effective assessments allow the teacher to:

- *plan them and build them* into the learning, not add them after the fact
- *identify* what is worth knowing and assess it
- include *collaboration* between the child and the teacher or among children
- take into account *different cultural contexts* and different ways of learning and knowing
- *produce evidence* that can be reported and understood by children, parents, teachers, administrators, and board members
- *inform every stage* of the learning and teaching process
- *plan further activities* which address areas of interest for the teacher and the children

In the earliest stages of curriculum planning, good assessment practice requires the teacher to ensure the assessment tasks are linked to the central idea of either the stand-alone unit of instruction or the transdisciplinary unit. With these central ideas and assessment tasks in mind, activities and resources are selected.

Continuous assessment in MG PYP programme provides insights into children's understanding, knowledge, skills and attitudes. It is also a means of exploring the learning styles and individual differences of the children in order to differentiate instruction. Assessment feedback supports the continuous improvement of the overall programme.

According to the principles and purposes that IB recommends, Matija Gubec International School delivers assessment which aims to:

- inform and involve students, parents, teachers and administrators
- involve students to be an active part of the learning process through reflection and demonstration of their understanding
- support and encourage student learning by providing feedback on the learning process
- enhance and improve the teaching process
- provide opportunity for students to exhibit transfer of skills across disciplines, such as in interdisciplinary unit assessments
- allow teachers to guide their instruction and to communicate progress with students and families
- promote positive student attitudes towards learning
- promote a deep understanding of subject content by supporting students in their inquiries set in real-world contexts
- promote the development of critical-and creative-thinking skills

- reflect the international-mindedness of the programme by allowing assessments to be set in a variety of cultural and linguistic contexts
- support the holistic nature of the programme by including its model principles that take account of the development of the whole student
- allow parents to see evidence of their child’s learning and development, while supporting and celebrating their child’s learning

WHAT TO ASSESS?

The PYP provides the opportunity for learners to construct meaning, principally through **structured inquiry**, and emphasizes the *connections between subject-specific knowledge and transdisciplinary skills and themes*, through the programme of inquiry.

The **transdisciplinary themes** that structure this programme are *Who we are, Where we are in place and time, How we express ourselves, How the world works, How we organize ourselves and Sharing the planet*.

They provide a **focus for child inquiry**, while literacy and numeracy provide the tools for inquiry. Therefore, feedback should be given on child progress and performance in *each of these areas*.

Additionally, feedback should be provided on the attributes listed in the **PYP student profile**. This profile serves to increase the students' awareness of, and sensitivity to, the experiences of others beyond the local or national community, thereby promoting an understanding that there is a commonality of human experience.

We also to assess progress and performance in each of the six subject domains - language, mathematics, social studies, the arts, science, and personal, social and physical education.

WHEN AND HOW TO ASSESS?

When to assess?

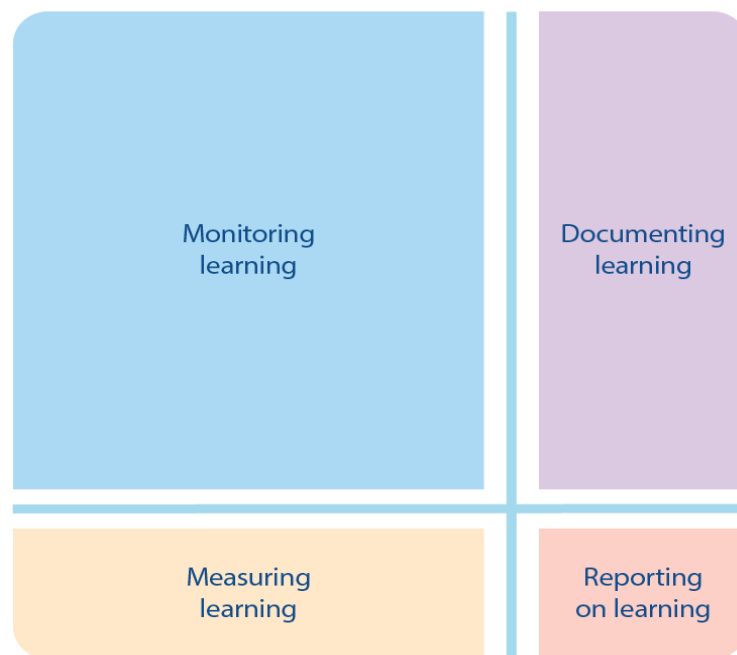
Each assessment tool contributes valuable insights into the broader picture of student progress and achievement, therefore it is essential that our assessments are reliable, efficient, and applied consistently to support meaningful learning and development. The measurement of learning takes place at planned intervals throughout the academic year, guided by our Assessment Calendar. This ensures that formal assessments are appropriately spaced and mindful of student wellbeing.

IB external summative assessment is not required in the PYP.

How to assess?

How do we discover what students have learned? How do we evaluate their knowledge, skills, concepts, attitudes, and actions?

“Student learning is promoted through planning and refining the teaching and learning process to meet individual or group needs. Assessing the students’ prior knowledge and experience as well as monitoring their achievement during the teaching period will enable teachers to plan and refine their teaching accordingly. Teachers should bear in mind that a well-designed learning experience will provide data on students’ knowledge, skills and conceptual understanding, and is consequently a vehicle for summative or formative assessment” (Making the PYP Happen, 2009).



Assessment to inform learning and teaching (IB, 2018)

The assessment component in Matija Gubec International School’s curriculum can itself be subdivided into four dimensions of assessment: Monitoring learning, Documenting learning, Measuring learning, and Reporting on learning.

Monitoring learning	Monitoring learning is an ongoing process that helps track student progress against personal learning goals and success criteria. It takes place daily through strategies such as observation, questioning, reflection, peer and teacher discussions, and timely feedback that guides students through the learning process.
Documenting learning	Documenting learning involves gathering and organizing evidence that shows what has been learned. This documentation can take either physical or digital forms and may be presented through

	different types of media. Sharing this documentation helps make the learning process clear and visible to others. It offers insights into the learning journey and creates opportunities to revisit learning goals and success criteria. Both students and teachers can use a range of formats to capture learning goals, questions, reflections, and proof of progress.
Measuring learning	Measuring learning is used to capture what a student has understood or accomplished at a specific point in time. Not all learning can be, or needs to be, measured. The data collected through various measuring tools helps build a more complete picture of student progress.
Reporting on learning	Reporting is a means of giving feedback from assessment. It describes the progress of student's learning, identifies areas for growth, and contributes to the consolidation of the entire school community. Assessment without feedback merely serves as judgment; feedback is the component of assessment that lets us make sense of judgment and improve our work. Our school culture encourages both assessment and feedback.

Types of assessment

Diagnostic Assessment

Diagnostic or pre-assessment is assessment prior to teaching that helps teachers and students find out what the students already know and can do before a unit starts. This helps them know where they are and where they need to go.

Formative Assessment

Formative assessment is interwoven with the daily learning and helps teachers and children find out what the children already know in order to plan the next stage of learning. Formative assessment and teaching are directly linked; neither can function effectively or purposefully without the other.

Summative Assessment

Summative assessment takes place at the end of the teaching and learning processes and gives the children opportunities to demonstrate what has been learned. Summative assessments may include any of, and any combination of, the following: acquisition of data, synthesis of information, application of knowledge and processes.

The PYP Exhibition

The PYP Exhibition is an example of a summative assessment. It is a culmination of the entire Primary Years Programme. It happens in the final year of the Primary Years – PYP 4 which aims to celebrate and share students’ learning with the whole community. The exhibition provides a culminating experience of the learner’s engagement with PYP. It marks a rite of passage, both symbolic and actual, from the PYP to the Middle Years Programme (MYP). All pieces of work taken in the PYP Exhibition are selected by the students and include an exhibition reflection. The PYP 4 grade students are expected to develop and present their own collaborative unit of inquiry that showcases the five essential elements of the PYP (knowledge, skills, concepts, attitudes and action). This is an opportunity for the students to exhibit the attributes of the learner profile which they have been developing throughout the Primary Years Programme.

Differentiation

Differentiation has been defined as ‘an approach to teaching that attempts to ensure that all students learn well, despite their many differences’ or as ‘the process by which differences between learners are accommodated so that all students in a group have the best possible chance of learning’. (Tomlinson, 23). Differentiation is guided by three characteristics:

- *Differentiation by readiness* where the teachers follow the main principles: concrete to abstract, simple to complex, slow to fast, structured to open-ended, dependent to independent.
- *Differentiation by interest* where teachers follow the main principles: develop efficient ways of sharing interest-based findings, create open invitations for student interest, keep an open eye and open mind for students with a serious passion and link interest-based exploration with key components of the curriculum. Our teachers use different strategies that support interest differentiation.
- *Differentiation by learning profile* principles remind us that some, but not all students share learning preferences - helping students to reflect on their own preferences, use both teacher structured and student-choice avenues to the learning-profile differentiation. The teachers are aware of learning style, intelligence, culture-influenced and gender-based preference factors. Teachers use different strategies that support learning-profile differentiation.

Teachers also differentiate content and resources, process and products.

The IB's principles of good practice for differentiated learning

According to Learning diversity and inclusion in IB programmes, 2016, p. 6, the IB has identified four principles of good practice that promote equal access to the curriculum for all learners across the continuum:

Affirming identity and building self-esteem	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• promoting a class and school environment that welcomes and embraces the diversity of learners• by valuing and using the diversity of cultural perspectives to enhance learning• by liaising with parents to establish understanding of how best to collaborate to achieve shared goals
Valuing prior knowledge	<p>New learning and understanding are constructed on previous experiences. If new information cannot be understood, it cannot be linked to prior knowledge and become part of deeper learning. Therefore, teachers should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• explicitly activate students' prior understanding• use their knowledge of students' prior understanding to differentiate tasks and activities• record information in learning profiles that will support planning for future differentiation• consider the time and the strategies necessary for activating and building up background knowledge when planning a unit of work or lesson.
Scaffolding	<p>Scaffolding is a temporary strategy that enables students to accomplish a task that would otherwise be impossible or much more difficult to accomplish. Scaffolding strategies are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the use of graphic organizers to develop a piece of written research• visual aids• demonstrations• dramatization• small, structured collaborative groups• teacher language• use of home language or best language to develop ideas and initial plans• using templates for particular tasks, with quite a large amount of detail where key terms and phrases are given in a graphic organizer• teacher language

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use of home language or best language to develop ideas and initial plans • using templates for particular tasks, with quite a large amount of detail where key terms and phrases are given in a graphic organizer
Extending learning	<p>As students progress through the years, they are required to read and write increasingly sophisticated texts in the content areas of the curriculum. The academic language of such texts reflects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the complexity and abstraction of the concepts that students are required to understand extended academic language • the increasingly sophisticated grammatical constructions • the use of assistive technology and software

Assessment strategies

The following methods of assessment have been identified as central to the work of primary school teachers. They cover a broad range of approaches, from the more subjective and intuitive to the more objective and scientific. It is essential that they be seen as a package since they have been selected in order to provide a range of approaches and therefore to provide a balanced view of the child.

Approaching assessment as something we do with students—not to students—helps them experience more ownership and voice in the process of assessing and evaluating their learning. Therefore, we use self-evaluation as a part of assessment what helps students to regulate their learning.

The teaching staff at Matija Gubec International School uses and develops a range of assessment strategies. Assessment strategies are selected to provide a range of approaches and therefore to provide a balanced view of the student. Teachers select from several assessment strategies, reflecting student's needs and skills.

Observation	Students are observed regularly with teachers noting the growth and progress of individuals, groups and the whole class.
Selected responses	Tests and quizzes that allow teachers to ask questions that help them see what student understand or where they might be confused. This strategy is particularly useful during the course of a unit, in formative assessment, because it provides important feedback for both students and teachers.

Open-ended tasks	The tasks allow teachers to present students with a stimulus and ask them to communicate an original response that could take many forms, such as a drawing, presentation, composition, diagram or a solution to a problem.
Performance	Students apply what they have learned by completing authentic tasks that have more than one acceptable solution.
Process-focused assessments	Students are observed often and regularly; the observations are recorded by noting the typical as well as non-typical behaviours, collecting multiple observations to enhance reliability, and synthesizing evidence from different contexts to increase validity. Checklists, inventories and narrative descriptions (such as learning logs) are common tools of collecting observations.
Portfolio	Portfolios can be used by students and teachers to record their learning achievements and express their identity. Portfolios are useful ways to involve students in their own learning and the assessment of that learning.
Student reflections	Students are asked to reflect on what they have learned at the end of a lesson/unit.

It is important to consider, in the case of each assessment strategy, **the role of each individual** in the learning partnership of **a child, teachers and parents**. The PYP promotes the view that all three have a significant role to play in student learning.

Taken together, the assessment strategies form the basis of a comprehensive approach to assessment and represent the school's answer to the question *How will we know what we have learned?*

Assessment tools

We aim to give all students the opportunity to be successful and to be able to show what they know, can do, and understand. In order to gather data about students' learning our teachers use a number of tools; quantitative and qualitative tools which refer to both written and oral tasks, group problem solving, performances and demonstrations, portfolios and observations. Samples of tools are rubrics, exemplars, checklists, anecdotal records, continuums, portfolios etc.

During each subject course, different tasks will be assessed, such as project work, class tests of variety of types, course work, group assignments, oral presentations, homework, compositions, practical work, demonstrations and reports according to the specific subject criteria. Using assessment tools we are recording students' progress.

Rubrics	An established set of criteria for rating students in all areas. The descriptors tell the assessor what characteristics or signs to look for in students' work and how to rate that work. Rubrics can be developed by students as well by teachers.
Exemplars	Samples of students' work that serve as concrete standards against which other samples are judged. Generally, there should be at least one example for each achievement level in an assessment rubric. These can then serve as benchmarks for the task.
Checklist	These are lists of information, attributes or elements that should be present in student's work. A mark scheme for an examination is a type of checklist. Checklists are useful when used formatively, as they could be applied by either the teacher or student.
Anecdotal records	Anecdotal records are brief written notes based on observation of students. These records need to be systematically compiled and organised.
Continuums	These are visual representations of developmental stages of learning. They show a progression of achievement or identify where a student is in a process.
Portfolios	Portfolios are a purposeful collection of a student's work that is designed to demonstrate successes, growth, higher-order thinking, creativity and reflection. Portfolios are a cumulative collection of student work that travel with the student from PYP 0 through fourth grade. They are housed in the student's classroom and are accessible to the student and his or her family at any time during the school year. The portfolio is the property of the student and goes with the child upon leaving or graduation from the programme.

Figure 1 shows which assessment strategies are most effective in gathering information about the learner. The check marks indicate the tools likely to be most relevant to each strategy.

Assessment tools	Rubrics	Benchmark/ Exemplars	Checklists	Anecdotal records	Continuums
Assessment strategies					
Observation	√		√	√	√
Performance	√	√		√	√
Process – focused assessments			√	√	√
Selected responses		√	√		√
Open ended tasks	√	√		√	√

Assessment tasks

Teachers schedule the assessment task in the e-Classbook calendar at least two weeks before the submission date/test date. Tasks will be specific to PYP objectives, although various categories of task exist that are broadly represented by the following list:

- compositions - musical, physical, artistic
- creation of solutions or products in response to problems
- essays
- examinations
- questionnaires
- investigations
- research
- performances
- presentations - verbal (oral or written), graphic (through various media)

Assessment tasks must be *authentic* whenever possible – formative, summative, specific, varied, using a range of assessment tools and having real-world applications.

Assessment tasks should take into account the requirements of students with special educational needs (SEN) and students who are learning in a language other than their mother tongue. Where students will not be able to meet PYP objectives, tasks can be differentiated or modified as appropriate, but parents and students need to be informed.

SUBMISSION TO STUDENT WORK

All summative assessments are to be notified as a ‘task’ on the e-Classbook calendar. If a student is absent on the day work is due, they must submit the assessment item the following school day to the teacher.

In-class task

If a student is absent from school on the day an assessment task is to be completed in, teachers organize a time to catch-up on the missed task.

Scheduling for missed assessment tasks

When scheduling a time to complete a missed task, the teacher will take into account a student’s circumstances (e.g. recovery from a sickness) during their preparation time. In some cases, an alternative task may be given. Each case will be reviewed individually before a decision is made.

Extensions

A student may be approved for an extension prior to the due date if they have a valid reason. If approved, a new date will be set for submission. Students with special educational needs will be given an extension to complete the work on time.

Reporting student achievement

Reporting at MG PYP:

- involves teachers, children and parents as partners
- reflects what the school community values
- is clear and understandable to all parties
- is comprehensive, honest, fair and reliable
- allows teachers to incorporate what they learn during the reporting process into their future
- connects teaching and assessment practice

e-Classbook	The school communicates student’s achievement in each subject group to parents at regular intervals. Teachers are required to continuously record the progress of students on the e-Classbook online system (e-Dnevnik). It enables insight into the student’s school grades at any moment. It communicates student’s achievement against all PYP assessment criteria in all PYP subjects, descriptive grades and teacher’s notes about student’s progress.
Individual Meetings	During one school year, the homeroom teacher organizes individual meetings with every parent of the class to report student’s progress on four occasions. Parents are invited to meet with their son’s/daughter’s teachers to discuss academic progress to date.

Teacher-Student Conferences	During school year, teachers give feedback to students so they can reflect on their work and further refine and develop their skills. It is important for the teacher to take the time to organize these individual conferences to support and encourage students' learning. Teachers are giving analytical feedback to students or when they find it necessary during classes.
Teacher-parent(s) Conferences	During school year, teachers give the parent(s) information about the child's progress and needs, and about the school's programme. Teachers are using this opportunity to answer the parents' questions, their concerns and help them to define their role in the learning process. The parents should usually use this opportunity to provide the teacher with the cultural context of their child's learning. We organize four conferences during the school year. Students and parents should not hesitate to contact the teachers in order to discuss progress and achievements at any time.
The Written Report	At the end of every school year, students receive their final (written) report cards . Final report cards consist of a set of documents which show student's achievements and continuous progress. They include final grades of all attended core and optional subjects and comments from the homeroom teacher and other teachers who were involved in the child's education that school year. The teachers address the student and give forward strategies based on performance to date that include student targets for improvement with a clear indication of how they may be achieved. Report cards are handed out at the end of second term.

The written reports have a summative grade based on the Croatian Curriculum Achievement Standards, 1 to 5 scale. Final report cards include a 1-5 grade for each subject in the grade levels PYP 1-4. Each subject will be assessed according to the following criteria:

1 - Insufficient	The student shows insufficient and very limited adoption of educational outcomes expected for a given year of learning and teaching the subject.
2 – Sufficient	The student shows limited adoption of educational outcomes expected for a particular year of learning and teaching the subject.
3 – Good	The student shows a good adoption of educational outcomes expected for a particular year of learning and teaching the subject.
4 – Very good	The student shows a very good adoption of educational outcomes that are expected for a particular year of learning and teaching the subject.
5 – Excellent	The student shows the exceptional adoption of educational outcomes expected for a particular year of learning and teaching the subject.

The Assessment Policy is available on the School's websites and shared with parents and students at the beginning of each school year.

REVIEW OF THE ASSESSMENT POLICY

The Assessment Policy will be reviewed and updated bi-annually. The development of our assessment policy has been and continues to be a collaborative process involving all the teachers and the programme coordinator.

- Written, December 2016
- Reviewed and Updated, June - August 2017
- Reviewed and Updated, September 2019
- Reviewed and Updated, September 2020
- Last Updated, May 2025

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