



Tokyo International School

Grade Four

Grade Level Guide

We are a truly international community with a student-centered focus,
dedicated to holistic wellbeing and meaningful learning.

**T**RUST**I**NSPIRE**S**UPPORT



Overview

Grade Four (G4) is for students who are nine or ten years of age. In general, G4 students must be nine years of age by August 31 of the academic year in which they enter the grade.

We have two G4 classes. G4 classes each have up to 22 students per class with one homeroom teacher. A maximum of *44 students per grade. G4 students have specialist teachers for Music, Art, Library, Japanese, and Physical Education.

**exceptions can apply*

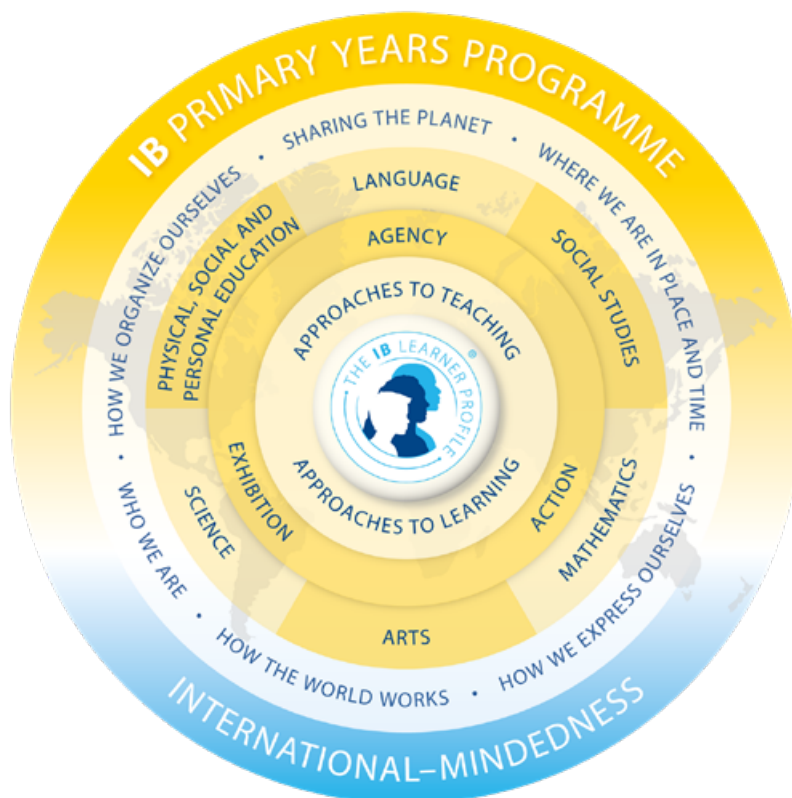
Spaces

Our G4 classrooms are spacious. There is a sliding door between the two classrooms so teachers can team teach. Students move between the classrooms at certain times throughout the day and for certain projects throughout the year. The adjacent classes allow for cross grouping between classes according to interest, projects, and learning readiness.



The International Baccalaureate Organization Primary Years Programme

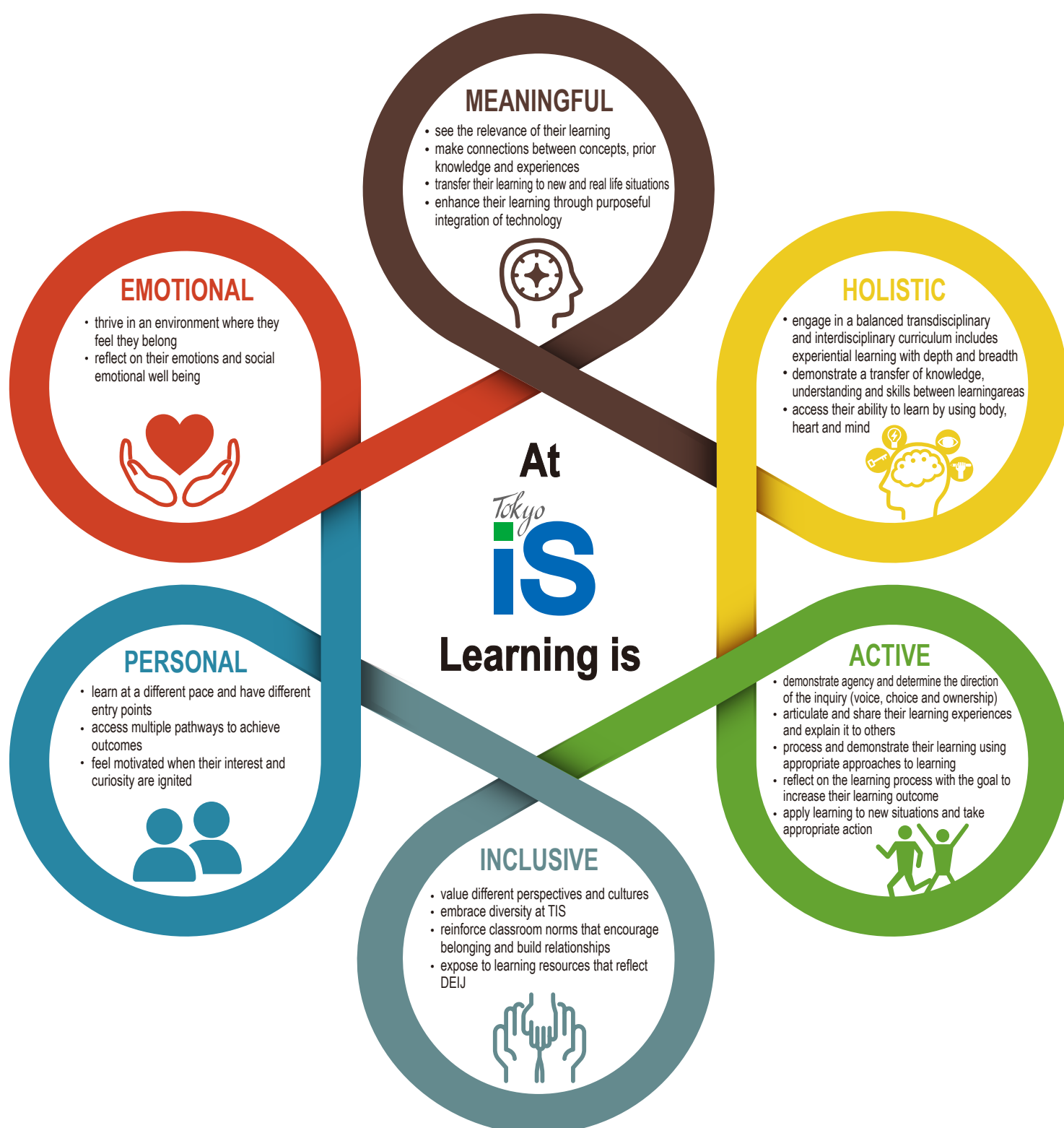
Students follow the philosophy and teaching approaches of the [The IB Primary Years Programme \(IBPYP\)](https://www.ibo.org/Programme-Certificates/Primary-Years-Programme-IBPYP/). The IB PYP at TIS is for students aged 5 - 11. It nurtures and develops young students as caring, active participants in a lifelong journey of learning: www.ibo.org.



Learning



At TIS, learning is a participatory process in which learners construct knowledge and make meaning of the world together with adults and, equally important, other children. We support all learners to develop the capacity to engage thoughtfully in complex, real-world challenges, while at the same time cultivating a deep understanding and awareness of themselves and others. We share a passionate belief in the capability of every individual to learn how to learn and we recognize learning as a lifelong adventure.



Curriculum

Literacy: Tokyo International School is a [Teachers College Advancing Literacy Institute](#) school. Students learn to read and write using the reading and writing workshop approach. Literacy learning focuses on building a repertoire of strategies for reading, writing, and word study. Learning is personalized with students working on their own individualized learning goals. Example G4 outcomes include: previewing to begin figuring out the characters, setting, and main storyline, making predictions based on the sense of how stories tend to go and naturally responding to punctuation with little conscious effort or thought, and grouping information into sections and using paragraphs and sometimes chapters to separate those sections.

Mathematics: Mathematics at TIS is based on the [USA Common Core Standards](#). Students learn mathematics through a workshop approach. Mathematics learning focuses on building a repertoire of strategies for solving problems and emphasizes the development of working flexibly and fluently with numbers and conceptual understanding. Learning is personalized with students working on their own individualized learning goals.

Science & Social Studies: Science and Social Studies are taught through engaging units of inquiry. Additional subjects such as Reading, Writing, The Arts, and Mathematics are often used in context of these units of inquiry. The emphasis of science and social studies at TIS and in G4 is on developing transferable inquiry skills and transferable big ideas about science and social studies which transcend cultures.

International Mindfulness: Students learn to celebrate their own culture and appreciate the similarities and differences of other cultures. This happens through their learning experiences, their peers, and multicultural and multinational resources. Teachers promote and nurture students to consider a range of perspectives and to develop empathy for others. Students learn that other people with their differences can also be right.

Technology: Technology is used as a tool frequently. Students have access to 1:1 iPads on occasion provided by the school. Technology is used in a way which transforms student learning allowing them to communicate, collaborate, and create. The school also provides 20 MacBook laptops per grade. Technology use includes using [Seesaw](#), an online portfolio which allows students to reflect on their learning and self assess their learning and share this with their parents.

Music: Our Music curriculum is drawn and adapted from the [USA Core Arts](#). Each year, students develop their musical understanding through five conceptual lenses: melody, rhythm, harmony, composition, and performance. In order to develop their musicianship, students use their voices and pitched/unpitched percussion instruments to further their understanding. Movement is also a learning tool implemented year-round. All students have an opportunity to showcase their learning for the community in the annual Spring Concert.

Art: Visual Arts curriculum is drawn and adapted from the [USA Core Arts](#) and Harvard Universities [Studio Habits](#). Our young artists explore a rich range of creative drawing, painting, sculpting, printing, and digital tools and media. They engage with creative processes (ideation, exploration, drafting, planning, creation, critique, evolution, and refinement) all the while building upon conceptual understandings, competencies, and artistic mindfulness.

Physical Education: The PE curriculum is drawn and adapted from [the Australian National Curriculum](#). Students enjoy a range of sports including games, adventure challenges, athletics, and gymnastics. Every year students compete in Sports Day.

Social and Emotional Learning: In addition to the daily morning meeting and ongoing social emotional support, students also attend specific Social Thinking lessons approximately once per week. During these times, students investigate social interaction and





social skills. Most conflicts at G4 are resolved with the help of the teachers. However, we do have a full-time counselor for G4 students should the need arise for specialized support.

Japanese: In G4 we offer four levels of Japanese: three levels of Language Acquisition and one level of Language & Literature. Students in Language & Literature class are native or near-native Japanese speakers. To be eligible for Language & Literature, students must be able to use, 'think with,' and access age appropriate, more complex literacy academic language. The focus of this course is learning about the Japanese language and Japanese Literature. Japanese Language & Literature instruction is based on a balanced literacy approach including read-aloud, guided reading, shared reading, independent reading, character

study (Hiragana, Katakana, and Kanji), and handwriting. The focus of the Japanese Language Acquisition programme is functional language for daily, real life application. Teaching and learning focuses on [ACTFL](#) (American Council of Teaching Foreign Languages) proficiency, immersion Japanese, use of the target language, and an emphasis on speaking and listening. Students attend Japanese almost every day.

Learning Support: Learning Support for mild to moderate learning challenges is most often catered for by classroom teachers. Students are supported and challenged according to personalized targets and readiness levels. For students with a specific identified challenge, we also have a Support Team to help. Students may occasionally be pulled out of lessons for specialized support and most often, teachers and student assistants push into classes, assisting groups of students within the classroom.





A Usual School Day

A usual school day begins in the homeroom at 8:10. The morning starts with taking attendance and routines which build learners' self-management and social skills. The mornings are often dedicated to Reading or Writing workshops. During this time, the homeroom teacher works with individuals and small groups, assessing and developing their learning and personalized goals. Time is always set aside for the students to enjoy their snack and to ensure their classroom is tidy. Then they go out to recess.

Depending on the day, students might return for a Mathematics and/or Literacy lesson, then enjoy one of their specialist subjects with a specialist teacher such as Art, Japanese, Music, or Physical Education. Then they go out to recess. Time is made available for the students to enjoy their lunch and to clean up after themselves—including hand hygiene.

After the break, often there is a read-aloud session or students may enjoy another one of their specialist subjects. Then they may investigate one of their units of inquiry. The usual school day ends at 15:20. Students who are attending a co-curricular afternoon activity that day will stay at school until 16:30.



Sample Timetable

Here is an example G4 schedule. You will notice the schedule follows a six day cycle. Students only attend school on weekdays Monday to Friday. For example Monday Day 1, Tuesday Day 2, Wednesday Day 3, Thursday Day 4, Friday Day 5, Monday Day 6 (and so on).

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6
8:10 - 8:20	Homeroom					
8:20 - 9:10	Writing Workshop	Writing Workshop	Art	Writing Workshop	Writing Workshop	Assembly
9:10 - 10:00	Japanese	Japanese	PE*	Reading Workshop	Library	Art
10:00 - 10:20	Recess					
10:20 - 11:10	Reading Workshop	Reading Workshop	Writing Workshop	Math	Math	Music
11:10 - 12:00	Math	Math	Reading Workshop	Reading Workshop	Word Study/ Handwriting	Japanese
12:00 - 12:50	PE	Read Aloud	Math	Art	Read Aloud	Reading Workshop
12:50 - 13:15	Lunch					
13:15 - 13:40	Recess					
13:40 - 14:30	UOI**	Music	Japanese	UOI	Japanese	Social Thinking/ Read Aloud
14:30 - 15:20	UOI	UOI	UOI	UOI	UOI	Social Thinking
15:30 - 16:30	Co-curricular Activities					

* PE - Physical Education ** UOI - Unit of Inquiry

Co-curricular Activities

Primary School students enjoy access to a wide range of after school co-curricular activities. Clubs include Choir, Rock Climbing, Drama Club, Manga Drawing, Volleyball, Ballet, Board Games, Taekwondo, and more. Co-curricular activities are booked through the [SchoolsBuddy](#) system. Places are limited. The system is designed to allocate co-curricular activities fairly. There is no cost for co-curricular activities except for outsourced coaches.

Field and Residential Trips

G4 enjoys several field trips across the academic year. Past day excursions include a Tokyo scavenger hunt and a visit to the National Museum of Modern Art. G4 undertakes rice harvesting in September at a rural paddy field. The grade level also enjoys a residential field trip to natural and culturally rich areas such as the Yamanashi Mt. Fuji area. The focus is on developing team building, self-management, and leadership skills.



Homework

It is important that your child is allocated time to play freely, which is why we limit homework time. Please read to or read with your child including in your own language. Homework in G4 includes reading 20-25 minutes, 4 days per week.

Schoolwear

All schoolwear is purchased through a company called [Top of the Class](#) where both winter and summer options are available. Students wear safe, sturdy school footwear of their choice throughout the day. Sneakers of any color are appropriate. Students must be able to tie their own laces—if not, please supply velcro shoes. Students travel throughout the school including up and down stairs, so sensible shoes are important.

On specialist Physical Education days especially, students should wear clothing and sports shoes suitable for physical activities (e.g. sports trousers or shorts; no skirts or dresses).



Items to be Supplied

- School bag: A suitable-size school backpack for daily use (ideally that A4 paper size can fit in)
- A spill-proof drink bottle that your child can independently open and close (no canned or bottled drinks please)
- 1-set of nutritional, nuts-free lunch (daily item)
- 1-set of healthy, nuts-free snack (morning)
- Own set of cutlery/utensils (for meal times)
- All clothes should be clearly labelled with your child's name.

All students are provided with stationery. This is included in the tuition fees.

Birthday Parties

Children may celebrate their birthday at school. Please talk to your child's teacher at least two weeks in advance regarding a simple party. Summer birthdays may be celebrated in September or in June. Note: Bags with party favors (goodie bags), presents, and/or invitations to private birthday parties will not be accepted at school for distribution. Parents must contact all class parents prior to the date, before bringing cakes to school, to check if any children have allergies. All food must be nut-free.