

International School of Kenya



**Parent Guide
to the
ISK Curriculum**

**GRADE 1
“Communities”**

International School of Kenya

ISK Mission:

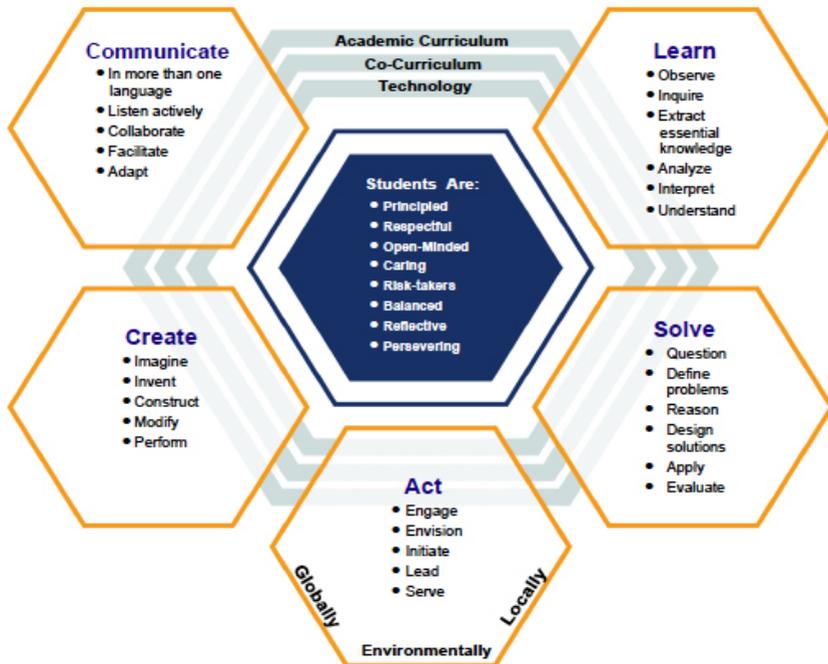
ISK inspires and nurtures passion, creativity and ambition in pursuit of a better world.

ISK Vision:

“Empowering students to create solutions for tomorrow’s challenges”

Educational AIMS:

We strive to develop students of character who learn, create, act and solve in a collaborative and engaging environment.





Communication

The home-school connection is of vital importance to a student's success. Parents are welcome to contact their child's teachers or the elementary office at any time to set up an appointment.

The following publications will provide parents with information about what is happening at ISK:

- The Link: A monthly school wide publication outlining all the major events on campus
- ES Handbook: The handbook outlines all of the policies and procedures related to life in the elementary school (e.g. bus service, canteen service, behaviour expectations, absence policies, etc.)
- Class Moodle sites: Each teacher maintains a Blog with updated information about what is happening in the class. These pages are accessed via the ISK homepage. Your child's teacher will provide additional access information.
- Curriculum OnLine: Access to curriculum documents is available on the ISK webpage (Homepage - Learning - Academics - Curriculum OnLine)
- Home-School agenda: Homework is written in the agenda and the student carries it back and forth to school. There is room for teacher and parent comments/notes.

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Director:	Extension 341
ES Principal:	Extension 111
ES Counselor:	Extension 115/116
Registrar:	Extension 323
Director of Teaching and Learning:	Extension 322



Elementary School Curriculum Overview

ISK's Elementary School is dedicated to providing a challenging learning environment which is child-centered and well-balanced in order to develop the whole child. Our school is a center of inquiry, creativity and joyful learning.

The **curriculum** consists of core subjects (Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies and Science) combined with a specialist program (Modern Language, PE, Art, Music, Technology Integration, Guidance and Library.) Students with limited English may be enrolled in the ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) program, and students with learning needs may receive additional assistance from Learning Support (LS). Field trips are scheduled to coordinate with the curricular area being studied.

Assessment of student learning is a continuous process involving students, teachers and parents. Teachers and students work together to set learning goals. Teachers provide frequent, specific feedback in order to help students meet those goals.

Each child receives a **homework** agenda; grade level guidelines and expectations are clearly outlined.

Student progress is reported to parents regularly throughout the year. Semester reports are sent to parents and scheduled parent/teacher conferences take place in the first semester. Student-led conferences occur in the second semester and your child will share his/her progress towards the learning goals through their portfolios. Each component of assessment should be viewed as part of a whole, which provides comprehensive information about your child's academic progress, personal and social skills and work/study habits.

The ES **Co-Curricular program** features quarterly sessions of after school activities centered around creativity, culture, leadership and action(sport). The elementary school also features a growing **service learning program**. The aim of this program is to develop students who are confident and competent in contributing to and learning from their community. The program provides meaningful opportunities for students to cultivate both personal and community growth, while building recognition of human interdependence. **Grade one students may select only one activity in the first quarter.**

At ISK, parents join with caring, experienced professionals in forming a strong partnership that makes each child's learning – academic and social – the focus of everything that we do.



Language Arts

The Language Arts program challenges students to read, write, listen, and speak effectively in order to communicate with others. There is a strong literacy connection that is embedded in all areas of the curriculum. Students develop reading, writing, and communication skills within all areas of study. The Language Arts program at ISK focuses on a balanced approach to literacy, including:

- **Reading**
shared reading, read alouds, guided reading, and independent reading
- **Writing**
writer's workshop, author study, and genre-based writing instruction
- **Word Study**
spelling patterns, word structure, phonics, handwriting
- **Listening and Speaking: Giving presentations; slides and; sharing work**

Assessment of student progress includes:

- School wide reading assessment (twice a year)
- Regular running records to assess reading growth
- School wide writing prompt (twice a year)
- Writing projects (based on grade level genre studies)
- Grade level spelling assessments
- Oral presentations

Features of the Grade 1 Language Arts program:

- *Guided reading groups:* Reading instruction, including decoding and comprehension strategies, based on individual student need
- *Writing Workshop:* Students work through the writing process to develop their writing skills in a variety of genres and forms.
Areas of focus:
 - We Are Authors! Writing and Illustrating books
 - Traits of Writing: What do good writers do? A major focus is on organization, including 'beginning, middle and end'.
 - Other traits or writing include: idea development, voice, word choice, sentence fluency.
 - Standard English writing skills (sentence structure, punctuation, grammar, and spelling)
 - Genres of writing: Narrative, Non-fiction, Poetry, Author study, Fiction, Traditional tales
- *Word Study:* Phonics, spelling patterns and grade level 'No Excuse' words

Mathematics



The focus in the primary grades is on building a strong mathematical foundation for all students. The ISK mathematics program requires students to persevere as they engage in rich, authentic tasks where they must reason, make sense of, and apply mathematical concepts.

The major **mathematical content strands** embedded in the program are:

- * *Numbers in the Base Ten System*
- * *Geometry*
- * *Operations and Algebraic Thinking*
- * *Measurement and Data*

Equally important are **the mathematical practices** that are part of every unit and lesson:

1. **Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.**
2. **Reason abstractly and quantitatively.**
3. **Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others.**
4. **Model with mathematics.**
5. **Use appropriate tools strategically.**
6. **Attend to precision.**
7. **Look for and make use of structure.**
8. **Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning.**

The critical areas in grade one are:

- (1) developing understanding of addition, subtraction, and strategies for addition and subtraction within 20;
- (2) developing understanding of whole number relationships and place value, including grouping in tens and ones;
- (3) developing understanding of linear measurement and measuring lengths as iterating length units;
- (4) reasoning about attributes of, and composing and decomposing geometric shapes.

At the start of each new unit, parent letters are sent home outlining what is being covered and how you can help your child. Additional on line resources are also included.

Assessment of student progress includes:

- Daily work
- Unit assessments (including skills, concepts, open responses, and self-assessments)
- End of year grade level assessment

Social Studies and Science



Units in Social Studies and Science are designed to engage students' natural curiosity. Teachers begin by laying a foundation of knowledge, and then students' own interests and curiosity help guide the learning. Units regularly integrate library skills, art, music and technology. Units of inquiry in both Social Studies and Science foster students' ability to create their own learning and solutions. All units are centered around an "enduring understanding" or "big idea."

Social Studies units are designed to help children understand cultural diversity and their place in the global community. Units are centered around five general strands: *Social Organization, Culture and Heritage, Place and Environment, Time/Continuity and Change, and Resources and Economics*. Each grade level has a unit focusing on Kenya and Kenyan culture.

First Grade Enduring Understandings (Units of Study):

- Maps can show us where we are in the world (Maps + Kenya)
- Communities on the world map celebrate their cultures in different ways (Communities, Culture and Kenya)



Science is best learned when students are engaged in practicing science through investigations and hands-on experiments. Units are designed around the major strands: Life Sciences, Physical Sciences, Earth and Space, and Environmental Science.

First Grade Enduring Understandings (Units of Study):

- All living things have a life cycle (Life Cycle)
- Animals adapt to their surroundings. (Animal Taxonomy)
- That the Earth moves in space plus how this is monitored. (Earth & Space)
- Sound is made by vibrating objects. (Sound and Light)
- Light travels in waves (Sound and Light)

Assessment in Social Studies and Science includes:

- Use of the ISK Research process
- Common lab reports
- Projects (e.g. oral and visual presentations, integrated technology projects)
- Self-assessments
- Cooperative group work

Special Classes



Modern Language Students attend either Spanish or French, and Kiswahili classes. The primary objective is to develop speaking and listening skills while building a lasting love for language learning. The classroom environment is culture-rich and the learning space allows for students to work collaboratively with each other and the teacher.



Physical Education PE classes focus on age appropriate activities, games, skills, and sports in order to enhance students' physical, social, and emotional development. Good sportsmanship, fair play, doing one's best, and respect for self and others are key components of the program. The swimming program focuses on comfort and safety in the water and stroke development. Students attend two classes of PE and one class of swimming each week. Students need: a PE uniform, sport shoes, hat, water bottle, swimsuit, towel, swim bag, and goggles



Art The ES Art program focuses on four areas: art history and artists, art elements and principles, art production, art criticism. Disciplines include drawing, painting, sculpture, textiles, printmaking, collage, crafts, design and mixed media. There are aprons provided for students to wear during art class. Students attend art class one time per week.



Music The ES Music program provides students with a multitude of opportunities to experience the many forms of music. Classroom activities include: listening, singing alone and with others, playing tuned and untuned percussion instruments and creative movement/dance. The students get to experience music from all parts of the world. Students attend music class twice a week.



Technology Technology is regularly integrated into the curriculum as well as the learning process. Classroom teachers and the Tech Integration Facilitator plan ways to develop students' skills in using technology while also challenging their design thinking capacity and supporting their passions while and creativity.



Library The goal in the library is to enable students to become lifelong readers and learners. In addition to choosing books, students practice research skills, listen to a variety of types of literature and learn to use a library effectively. Students attend library class once a week and need to bring a library bag, as well as their books, each time.



Guidance The ES counselor works with teachers, students and parents to address academic, social and behavioural needs of the students. The counselor works with individuals, small groups and entire classes. Guidance lessons take place twice per month for students of all grade levels.

Assessment in special classes is based on individual grade level curricula. Students receive an effort and an achievement grade in these classes.