



## 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. Link Lite is also school wide and it goes out weekly.
- 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.)
- Curriculum OnLine: Access to curriculum documents is available on the ISK website (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.

3.

### **Contact Information:** **International School of Kenya**

PO Box 14103  
00800 Nairobi, Kenya  
+254-020-209-1309/8  
(+254) 0720-639363  
(+254) 0733-639343  
[www.isk.ac.ke](http://www.isk.ac.ke)



|                                       |                   |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Director:                             | Extension 341     |
| ES Principal:                         | Extension 111     |
| ES Counselor:                         | Extension 115/116 |
| Registrar:                            | Extension 323     |
| Director of<br>Teaching and Learning: | Extension 322     |

# International School of Kenya



**Parent Guide  
to the  
ISK Curriculum**

**GRADE 1  
“Explorers”**

# 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 globally minded students who actively learn, create, solve and engage in the world.



Empowering students to create solutions for tomorrow's challenges

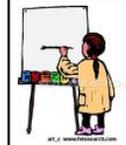
## Special Classes



**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 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.**



## Language Arts

The World around is a curious place and Grade 1 children are full of curiosity about the World around them. In Grade 1 ISK harnesses this excitement to learn more through the exploration of various topics. This will help them on their education adventure igniting their passion for learning.

### “Exploring Literacy”

Literacy is the foundation for all learning. The goal of ISK’s literacy program is to inspire and nurture students to become independent, lifelong, readers, writers, listeners and speakers in the language of instruction.

The Language Arts program as ISK is integrated into the Units of Study and focuses on a balanced approach to Literacy including:

|                        |                        |                    |
|------------------------|------------------------|--------------------|
| Reading                | Writing                | Word Study/Phonics |
| Speaking and Listening | Technology Integration |                    |

### Features of the Grade 1 Language Arts program:

The unique nature of Grade 1 students and their development focuses strongly on the ability to communicate and read effectively. At ISK, students in Grade 1 are exposed to a language rich environment that allows them to learn at their own pace through guided literacy practises. ISK believes : Community wide partnerships are essential to the evolution of literacy proficiency. This is definitely the case for language learning in Grade 1. In Grade 1 developing lifelong learning habits such as building in routines which enhance conversations and times to read together at home are opportunities not to be missed and will be beneficial throughout a child’s education.

In school the following strategies are used to deepen their literary skills:

Reading Instruction - A variety of whole class, group and individual guided reading sessions focused on decoding and comprehension strategies based on personalised skill level.

### Areas of Focus

|                                   |                         |                          |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| Decoding skills - Sounding out    | “Tricky word” knowledge | Comprehension strategies |
| Organization of non-fiction books | Summarising             | Fluency and expression   |

**Writing Workshops** - Students explore a variety of different genres throughout the course of the year. Some of which are linked directly to the Unit of Study to communicate their understanding. Other sessions are dedicated to Literacy learning in isolation. The acquisition of writing skills is targeted to individual needs.

### Areas of Focus

|  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <b>Ideas</b> - Central idea, adding details  | <b>Organisation</b> - Beginning, Middle and end, transition words        | <b>Voice</b> - Engaging the reader                                  |
| <b>Word Choice</b> - Nouns, adjectives and verbs   | <b>Sentence Fluency</b> - simple and compound sentences                  | <b>Conventions</b> - handwriting, punctuation, grammar and spelling |
| <b>Genre Writing</b> - Fiction and Nonfiction  | <b>Story Writing</b> - Author study, rewriting stories, Creative writing | <b>Poetry</b> - List poems, acrostic poems, rhyming, appreciation   |
| <b>The Writing Process</b> - Plan, Draft, Revise, Edit, Publish (Technology Integration) |  |   |

**Word Study/Phonics** - Word sessions include the learning of ‘Tricky Words’, topic words and phonemic awareness. Students are expected to learn the Grade 1 ‘Tricky Words’ and use these correctly during independent writing by the end of Grade 1. Word Strategies such as sounding out, word meaning, rhyming, letter patterns and word endings are also a focus, as we explore how words are spelt, read and pronounced.

**Speaking and Listening** - Students are given instruction throughout the year on how to articulate their understanding through various media. Developing confidence to share in front of an audience or within groups is the primary focus of the Speaking and Listening program. Students are given opportunity to give presentations, read aloud their work and carry out simple role plays.

## Exploring Maths



The focus in the ISK Grade 1 Math Program is to build a strong mathematical foundation for all students. The program requires students to persevere as they solve rich, authentic tasks where they must; reason, make sense of and apply mathematical concepts.

### Features of the Grade 1 Math Program

The Math program as ISK is integrated into the Units of Study where appropriate as well as through discrete math sessions. Students abilities are assessed formatively throughout the unit and individual adjustments made to support their needs. Guidance for parents is sent home at the beginning of each units to offer support at home.

The following concept strands and associated critical areas are embedded into the maths program:

|   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <b>Numbers in the base ten system</b> - reading and writing numbers, place value to 120 | <b>Geometry</b> - recognising basic 3D and 2D shapes and identifying attributes  | <b>Operations and Algebraic thinking</b> - the relationship between addition and subtraction to 20, |
| <b>Measurement and data-</b> length, time, surveys, graphing                            | <b>Mathematical practises</b> - word problem solving, reasoning skills, modeling | <b>Number fluency</b> - decomposing numbers, addition and subtraction facts, speed of computation   |

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 online 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

## “Exploring the World Around Us”

### Science and Social Studies

Science and Social Studies is taught through Integrated Units of Study. An Inquiry based approach linked to the local environment and culture allows students in Grade 1 to explore the underpinning concepts and enduring understandings identified in each topic. Literacy, mathematics, research, the design cycle and technology are woven into the units to give more authentic opportunities to acquire skills and knowledge.



### Units of Study

#### “Nature Explorers”

#### **Enduring Understanding:**

Plants and animals use their external parts to help them survive.  
Plants and animals of the same species have similar features to each other and their young.  
Many animal parents help their offspring to survive.  
People use plants and animals to create products for their well being.

Students learn more about how animals behave and have adapted to meet their needs. The students find out how humans have used their knowledge of the structures of plants and animals to solve real life problems.



#### “Exploring Light and Sound in the Universe”

#### **Enduring Understanding:**

Sound and light travel from a source in different ways.  
Humans can use light and sound in various ways.  
The World is part of a spinning Universe with the Sun at its centre.

Students carry out simple light and sound investigations to uncover scientific phenomena. During this unit they create their own musical instrument and learn how to use the design cycle to create new products through ‘Makerspace’ activities. They also learn about the relationship between the Sun, Moon and Earth and its effects on Earth through simple observations and experiments.

#### “Kenyan Explorers”

#### **Enduring Understanding:**

What is culture?  
What is special about Kenyan culture?

In this unit the students learn to define culture. They identify the aspects of society that are used to identify a countries heritage and culture. Students use the research cycle to find out about an aspect of Kenyan culture and create their own museum.

### “Exploreres are out of this world”

#### **Enduring Understanding:**

Who are some of the World’s famous explorers?  
What would the future look like? Why do we need to explore space?  
How has exploration affected our goods and service routes around the world today?  
How do maps work?

The students explore the possibility of living in space. They research the problem and build solutions to create a city. They have to think about goods/ services and rules that the new citizens will need to live in harmony.

#### **Grade 1 Service Learning**

The Service Learning opportunities in Grade 1 centres around “Environmental Conservation” and is related to our “Nature Explorers Unit”. Each class will identify a way in which we can enhance the habitat, protect or communicate the need to support the ecosystem in ISK. Previous projects have included, composting, tree planting and water collection, but these vary based on the classes own concerns and learning.

#### **Assessment**

Students undertake, whole school, end and begin of year assessments in math, reading and writing each year. In all areas of the curriculum, students perform a variety of informal assessments that allow teachers to amend their program at a class, group or individual level. These take place throughout the year. Parents are informed of the progress of their children through parents meetings, student led conferences and end of semester written report cards. A parent can enquire about the progress of their child at any point throughout the school year.



## 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 ELL (English 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.