



**PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**PARENT HANDBOOK**

**2019-2020**

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Dear Parents and Caregivers,

Welcome to the 2019-2020 academic year here at MEF IS. We are excited to welcome our new and returning students and families to our community.

Here at MEF International School Istanbul (MEF IS), our policies, procedures and day to day practices reflect the mission of our school. In short, our mission is at the heart of everything we do.

The mission of MEF International Schools is to inspire, nurture and challenge our students to realise their unique potential. We seek to be an open-minded community striving for creativity, innovation and excellence. We therefore promote and cultivate global mindedness and empathy, learning from the perspective of others and striving for continuous improvement. We strive to provide learning experiences that inspire and challenge our students and develop critical, analytical and creative thinking. Our teaching supports individuals' needs, inviting student involvement and voice and fostering curiosity, exploration and experimentation. Technology is integrated to enhance student learning, creativity, collaboration and creating.

To make our mission come alive in a world full of change, where knowledge still equals power but is available at a few swipes of a screen, schools are charged with the important job of going beyond the teaching of content in subject areas. Here at MEF IS, we endeavor to create globally minded students who are curious and inquisitive about the world around them while being critical about the information they receive. We promote intercultural understanding and celebrate the differences that exist between us, identifying them as strengths to learn from and develop ourselves. As a result, our students are caring, open-minded and respectful.

This handbook provides information to ensure every child and family entering MEF IS has a supportive beginning. It also serves as a reference tool throughout the school year for students, parents and community members. We hope that you will find this handbook useful to clarify the procedures of the school. Please let us know if there is additional information you would hope to read in the parent handbook. Thank you for your partnership in ensuring the very best educational experience for your child/ren.

Sincerely,

**Elvan Tongal**  
Assistant General Manager

**Sharlene Carki**  
Primary School Principal



## **Adult Expectations**

At MEF IS we believe that one of the greatest teaching tools we have as adults is the example we provide through our own behavior and actions. We also believe that each member of the community plays a role in ensuring that the school's culture is safe, inclusive, and supportive of learning. As such, we hold all members of our community to standards of positive behavior and have established the Parent Code of Conduct and Parent Expectations.

## **Parent Code of Conduct**

As a parent member and stakeholder of the MEF IS community, I agree to:

- Be an advocate for the MEF IS larger community.
- Read and promote the MEF IS mission.
- Model the MEF IS mission to my children in my day-to-day behaviors.
- Model respect for all MEF IS staff and MEF IS parents in my communication and interactions with them.
- Seek to resolve issues/concerns in a positive way and follow the appropriate lines of communication.
- Only use WhatsApp groups and other social media in a positive and supportive manner
- Not to put other parents, staff, or students in a social situation where they are forced with making choices that may not be aligned with their religious or moral values outside of school.
- Meet my financial obligations in a timely manner.
- Understand that MEF IS is an apolitical, inclusive learning institution that presents a range of political economic, religious, and social ideas without promoting any one.
- Adhere to the policies and guidelines outlined by MEF IS.
- Actively supervise my child at all MEF IS events.

## **Parent Expectations**

- Find ways to actively contribute to a positive atmosphere at school.
- Be an active partner in my child's education by attending school events, parent conferences, and other school activities.
- Follow the rules and laws of the host country.
- Commit to reading information that comes from the school through the school newsletter, class websites and emails, direct email and SMS messages.
- Assume MEF IS has the best interest for your child and the greater community.



## GUIDING STATEMENTS

### **MOTTO**

Building Bridges between Countries and Cultures

### **MISSION (our purpose)**

We inspire, nurture and challenge our students to realise their unique potential.

### **VISION (our aspiration)**

To be an open-minded community striving for creativity, innovation and excellence.

### **LEARNING DEFINITION**

Learning is the ongoing process of constructing new understandings of the world through experiences and interactions. It consists of making connections, reflecting, and expanding on current knowledge through motivation, curiosity, exploration, experimentation, and natural consequences resulting in change in the way we think and perform.

### **DEFINITION FOR INTERNATIONALISM / INTERCULTURALISM**

A dynamic discourse that fosters: knowledge and respect; the search for commonalities and a celebration of differences; international mindedness and a peaceful, ethical and progressive society.

### **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

#### **The MEF International School Community;**

- promotes and cultivates global mindedness, developing an appreciation for individuals, groups, cultures and societies
- is empathetic, striving to understand and learn from the perspective of others
- uses reflective practice, striving for continuous improvement

#### **Where learning...**

- involves making connections, and extending student understandings that result in action and change
- is experiential, fun, authentic, and collaborative
- engages students in critical, analytical and creative thinking

#### **Where teaching...**

- depends on the positive relationship between teachers and learners
- supports individual learners, providing challenge and rigour
- allows for student voice, choice and ownership
- fosters curiosity, exploration and experimentation
- integrates technology to enhance student learning
- is innovative and creative, informed by research concerning educational practice



## **INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE (IB) LEARNER PROFILE**

Central to the International Baccalaureate Organization's philosophy is the IB Learner Profile. It is expected that all members in the MEF IS community strive to exhibit these traits. These traits foster well rounded individuals who are proactive in creating a more harmonious global community and have correlations with academic success.

To acquire each of these traits, it is paramount for IB students to take RESPONSIBILITY not only for their own learning in the class but for their actions outside of the classroom. IB students must understand that all actions have consequences and they must learn to pursue proactively a lifestyle that ensures both positive results in the classroom and in the local, national, and global village in which they share. The aim of all IB programmes is to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world.

As IB learners our MEF IS community members strive to be:

### **Inquirers**

We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.

### **Knowledgeable**

We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.

### **Thinkers**

We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyse and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.

### **Communicators**

We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.

### **Principled**

We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.

**Open-minded**

We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.

**Caring**

We show empathy, compassion and respect. We have a commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.

**Risk-takers**

We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.

**Balanced**

We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives – intellectual, physical, and emotional – to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.

**Reflective**

We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.

\*\*\*Please note that much of the information explained above pertaining to the IB Learners Profile is taken from [www.ibo.org](http://www.ibo.org)



## **EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

MEF International School Istanbul Primary school is authorised to offer the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (IB PYP). The IB provides an international curriculum framework, which meets the needs of diverse student populations. Learning at MEF IS, as an IB school, is centred on the student, reflecting their background and interests and encouraging their development as future world citizens and lifelong learners.

### **What do students learn?**

The IB has identified key knowledge, understandings, skills and attitudes that students should develop. These include mathematics, language, science, social studies, the arts, and physical, personal and social education. You will find details about each of these, related to your child's grade, in the Grade curriculum guide. Students are also expected to put their learning into action, using what they have learnt in their everyday lives and the world around them.

### **How do students learn?**

Students learn both within the individual subject areas and through transdisciplinary units of inquiry. Students learn through guided inquiry, supplemented by more traditional teaching methods where necessary. Guided by their teachers, students are expected to be active as learners and take responsibility as learners. You can find out more about the learning activities taking place in the classroom by looking at the class website.

### **How do we know what students have learnt?**

Careful assessments are carried out:

- before the students start a unit of learning, to find out what they already know
- while a unit of learning is taking place, to find out how they are making progress
- at the end of a unit of learning, to find out what they have learnt.

Clear expectations are set and explained to the students. Students are assessed using these expectations rather than their ranking or position in the class. These assessments may take many forms, making sure all students have the opportunity to show what they know, understand and can do. Teachers use the information from assessments to plan the next learning experiences. The class teacher will regularly share the results of assessments with you and you are welcome to contact the class teacher with any questions you may have.





## ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING

Students at MEF IS are formally assessed by the class teacher throughout the various units of learning to help inform teachers about what their students already know and what they need to learn, and so that students can take responsibility for their own learning at an age appropriate level (we call this formative assessment). These are in Reading, Spelling, Math pre and post tests, Unit of Inquiry knowledge, skills and understandings, written language pieces, and specialist tasks.

### **External Assessment**

Students will participate in external tests during the course of the academic year. MEF IS will use the International Schools Assessment in Grades 3, 4 and 5. The results of the testing will be shared with parents but also will act as a tool to analyse the curriculum and improve teaching and learning. These assessments are in Mathematics, Reading and Writing.

### **Other Assessment Methods**

Diverse and dynamic assessment is essential to understanding and supporting a student's learning. In addition to the above methods, MEF IS Primary teachers also employ a variety of informal assessment tools. For example, teachers regularly assess how students respond to questions and prompts about their understanding and tailor their teaching accordingly. Teachers also employ check-ins when students are working independently or in groups. The variety of tools used allows for more authentic assessment of student progress.

### **Reporting Student Progress**

Regular and informative reporting is essential to student progress. At MEF IS, we use multiple feedback mechanisms to ensure students and families receive timely and substantive information about student progress.

**Parent teacher meetings:** these can be requested by either party whenever the need arises

**Semester reports:** biannually at the end of Semesters 1 & 2

**End of Unit Reporting:** at the end of each unit of inquiry assessment rubrics will be sent home

**Parent teacher conferences:** held three times per year in a variety of different formats (on Saturday)

**Portfolios:** these are a collection of work done by the student representing a snapshot of the learning for that student and are shared with parents at conferences, then sent home at the end of the school year.



## HOMEWORK

Homework is an integral part of the learning process at MEF IS. Homework allows students to practice newly acquired skills and to develop their study habits. Students who miss school for an unplanned absence (e.g., illness, emergency) should check in with their teacher upon returning to find out what work they missed. Questions about homework should be addressed directly to the teacher who gave the assignment.

**What?** Homework may consist of language, math and current unit of inquiry work. Both students and teachers can be involved in the correction and marking of homework. Teachers will keep a record of what homework students have and have not done. Teachers will first speak to the student if they are forgetting or not doing homework. Then teachers will communicate with parents via email or the communication book if they feel there is an ongoing issue with a student forgetting or failing to complete homework.

**When?** Teachers will assign homework each day from Monday to Thursday. No homework will be given on a Friday or over a holiday; however, students who are working on longer term assignments may decide to use these days to complete those assignments.

**How?** Homework will be explained on the class website once a week. The teacher or student may also use the homework communication book. Specialist teachers may assign homework for students only in grades 2 to 5, and the class teacher must be informed.

**How much?** Homework duration times given are approximate as all students work at different speeds and will find tasks to be of varying difficulty.

**Grade 4 and 5:** Homework should last approximately 40 minutes to an hour each day; however, the students in Grade 5 may need to work longer during the Exhibition process or during summative tasks. Both students and teachers may be involved in the assessment of homework. In addition to any other homework, students are expected to read independently for 20 minutes each night.

**Grade 2 and 3:** Homework should last on average 30 to 40 minutes each evening. In addition, students will be encouraged to read each day or be read to for at least 15 minutes. Homework may consist of a balance of language, math and current unit of inquiry work.

**Kindergarten and Grade 1:** Homework should last on average between 10 and 20 minutes each day. Kindergarten and Grade 1 students will not receive specialist homework. Homework will



usually be assigned to reinforce learning in class and will not normally involve new learning. In addition, students will be encouraged to read each day or be read to for at least 15 minutes.

**Preschool and Pre-Kindergarten:** Preschool and Pre-Kindergarten classes are not given homework. The class teacher will keep parents informed about the learning happening in class and make suggestions about how this can be supported at home. Parents will be encouraged to read every night to their children. This reading can also be in the child's mother tongue.



## **ACADEMIC DOCUMENTATION**

At the end of each term (i.e., Semester 1, Semester 2), MEF IS students receive progress reports detailing their accomplishments during the given term. The Principal's office also provides upon request student verification and leaving letters.

Parents requesting academic documentation should be aware of the following guidelines:

1. Requests for documentation should be made directly to the Primary School Principal
2. Original progress reports can only be issued once (these are provided to students at the end of each term); copies can be provided upon request
3. Staff cannot process requests for report cards for Semester 2 before the last day of school, when all Semester 2 report cards are distributed.
4. All requests will be processed as rapidly as possible but please allow up to 5 business days for documentation requests
5. All official academic records require an officially authorized administrator's signature and therefore requests made during the holidays might be delayed; it is best, wherever possible, to make requests during the term to avoid delays
6. Upon request, MEF IS will provide 5 official copies of academic records; additional official copies may be requested at a surcharge of 10 TL per copy.



### ISTANBUL - DAILY SCHEDULE 2019-2020

<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Begins</b>	<b>Ends</b>	<b>Duration</b>
Registration	08:20	08:25	00:05
Passing Break	08:25	08:30	00:05
Period 1	08:30	09:10	00:40
Passing Break	09:10	09:15	00:05
Period 2	09:15	09:55	00:40
Passing Break	09:55	10:00	00:05
Period 3	10:00	10:40	00:40
Recess/Snack	10:40	11:05	00:25
Period 4	11:05	11:45	00:40
Passing Break	11:45	11:50	00:05
Period 5	11:50	12:30	00:40
Lunch	12:30	13:10	00:40
Period 6	13:10	13:50	00:40
Passing Break	13:50	13:55	00:05
Period 7	13:55	14:35	00:40
Passing Break	14:35	14:40	00:05
Period 8	14:40	15:15	00:35
Afternoon snack	15:15	15:25	00:10
Dismissal	15:25		
Buses Depart	15:35		

The Primary School's Club Period is Tuesday Period 6.  
The monthly Primary School Assembly Period is Friday Period 1.



## MEF IS EVENTS CALENDAR

<b>MEF IS 2019–2020 Whole School Events Calendar</b>			
<b>Semester One</b>		<b>Semester Two</b>	
<b><u>August</u></b>	<b>1</b> Administration begins <b>10-14</b> Kurban Bayram Holiday <b>19</b> New teachers begin Orientation <b>26</b> Returning teachers begin <b>30</b> Victory Day (School closed)	<b><u>February</u></b>	<b>5</b> Report Cards sent home <b>8</b> Three-Way Conferences <b>10–14</b> ISA Testing: Grades 3-5 (dates tentative) <b>14</b> Teacher Professional Development Day (School closed to students) <b>17-21</b> Primary Home Language Exhibition Week <b>21</b> Grade 3 Assembly
<b><u>September</u></b>	<b>2</b> Family Orientation day <b>3</b> First Day of School <b>24</b> PTA General Meeting <b>26-27</b> Teacher Professional Development (School closed to students)	<b><u>March</u></b>	<b>13</b> Grade 1 Assembly <b>23–27</b> Spring Break <b>31-3 April</b> Grade 4 Space Camp
<b><u>October</u></b>	<b>4</b> Sports Day <b>12</b> Whole School Parent/Teacher Conferences <b>18</b> Grade 4 Assembly <b>24</b> UN Day <b>28 -31st</b> Fall Break (School closed)	<b><u>April</u></b>	<b>1-3</b> Grade 4 Space Camp (cont.) <b>3</b> Grade 2 Assembly <b>15</b> International Day of Art <b>23</b> Children's Day (No school) <b>24</b> MEF IS Holiday (No school) <b>29</b> 6th Grade Taster Day <b>30</b> 6th Grade Transition Night
<b><u>November</u></b>	<b>1</b> Fall Break cont. <b>15</b> Grade 5 Assembly	<b><u>May</u></b>	<b>1</b> Labor Day (No school) <b>7</b> Primary Spring Concert with art exhibition (Grades 1-5) <b>8</b> ECC Music Concert <b>9</b> Student Led Conference <b>18</b> MEF IS Holiday <b>19</b> Youth Sports Day (No school) <b>24-26</b> Ramazan Bayram (School closed) PYP G5 Exhibition (TBC)



<b><u>December</u></b>	<b>12</b> Primary Winter Concert (Grades 1-5) <b>13</b> ECC Winter Concert <b>20</b> Early Closure <b>22–Jan 3</b> Winter Break	<b><u>June</u></b>	<b>3</b> Swim Gala in the swimming pool <b>6</b> Fun Day <b>10</b> Kindergarten Commencement <b>11</b> Grade 5 Commencement <b>18</b> Polonezkoy Picnic <b>19</b> Last Day for student & early closure <b>26</b> Last Day for Teachers
<b><u>January</u></b>	<b>1–3</b> Winter Break (cont'd) <b>6</b> School resumes <b>17</b> Talent Show <b>20</b> Semester 2 begins <b>27–31</b> Reading Week		

*Please note: The above dates are subject to change. Modifications and additions (including details for athletic events, field trips) will be shared via email, newsletters, and/or the MEF IS website (<http://www.mefschoools.com/aboutus/news/calendar.asp>)*

## COMMUNICATION BETWEEN HOME AND SCHOOL

**Dealing with matters when they are small:** In all areas of concern or query we encourage parents to speak to the person of interest straight away while matters are small.

The lines of communication are:

1st speak to the teacher or staff member responsible eg. class teacher or specialist

2nd speak to the deputy principal if you are not satisfied with the answers you got

3rd speak to the principal if you still have questions or concerns

Lastly involve the Assistant General Manager if all other avenues have proven unsatisfactory.

The PYP Coordinator will answer questions relating to curriculum - please do come to the parent workshops offered throughout the year for further information too.

Pastoral matters can be addressed through either our deputy principal or school counsellor.

<b>Communication</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>From School</b>	<b>From Parents</b>
<b>Emails</b>	Information relating to individual students	Teachers aim to respond within 24 hours during a school week.	We welcome you contacting us.
<b>Class Websites</b>	Information about Class learning and events	Link shared by classroom teachers. Updated regularly.	Please check regularly, For your child's online safety and security, access requires a MEF IS account and password.
<b>End of unit sharing sessions</b>	Students share their learning from the current unit	At the end of units of inquiry, our students share their learning.	Parents welcome to attend
<b>End of unit assessments for Mathematics, English language and UOI learning</b>	Information about individual students' level of learning	These will be shared with parents throughout the year.	Please give us feedback on your child's learning journey.
<b>Parent teacher, Three way and Student led conferences</b>	Information about individual student's learning	On 3 dates over the school year. See the school events calendar on the school website for dates.	Parents requested to attend
<b>Concerts and Exhibitions</b>	Showcasing learning	See the school events calendar on the school website for dates.	Parents welcome to attend
<b>Curriculum information sessions</b>	Information about Primary school Curriculum	To be arranged	Please send any requests for subjects to the PYP coordinator



<b>School Website</b>	Whole school information	<a href="http://www.mefis.k12.tr">http://www.mefis.k12.tr</a>	
<b>School Newsletter</b>	Current whole school information	Sent by email every week	
<b>School SMS</b>	Emergency information, important reminders, school closures	When required	Please inform the school of your current mobile phone number
<b>Facebook</b>	Communicate special MEF IS moments to our community	Daily weekday posts regarding MEF IS activities	If you have a Facebook page please like us
<b>Twitter</b>	Provide reminders to our school community about events	Posts to remind of upcoming events through Twitter	If you have a Twitter account then please follow us
<b>Language Ambassadors</b>	Parent support	Contact the PR Coordinator	Parent volunteers

### Language Ambassadors

**MEF IS maintains a list of volunteers from the community who** provide a point of contact for parents with limited English. Language Ambassadors have volunteered to assist with the following:

- Acting as a point of contact for parents who speak the same language who wish to seek clarification or support for school related events or matters
- Translating **short** communications (written or oral) requested by the school administration or PTA
- Offering to be a point of support for new parents

The list of Language Ambassadors and languages supported will be shared with families in the autumn.



## EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS

### **Arrival and Dismissal Information**

School begins at 8.20am. Students are expected to be at school on time for registration and should have eaten breakfast at home before heading to school. Students are supervised before school in the ECC lower playground and should make their way there when they arrive at school. Students enter school at 8.10am after dismissal by the morning duty teacher.

School is dismissed at 15.25 (3.25pm). Last period concludes at 15.15 and students make their way to the Pickup areas or their bus group. Preschool, Pre-K and Kindergarten students may be picked up from their ECC classrooms. Grade 1 to Grade 5 can be picked up from the lower ground floor. A snack is offered to students towards the end of the day before they head home.

### **Attendance**

Punctuality and regular attendance are important for students as part of their learning. It is the responsibility of the school to keep accurate attendance records and to comply with related regulations. It is the responsibility of parents/caregivers to ensure their children attend school.

Parents of Primary School students should notify the school's Receptionist and Deputy Principal of any absences. If a parent fails to inform the school of their child's absence, then the receptionist will contact the parents for information.

All absences must be communicated by parents to the class teacher via a signed note indicating the reason for the absence, or by phone message to the school receptionist. If a student is ill for more than two days, then the child should bring a medical report upon returning to school.

**Excused absences** are only for illness, injury, death in the immediate family, attendance at a funeral if deemed necessary by the student's family, religious holidays, legal matters, and other emergencies or unusual circumstances as approved by the school's administration upon the receipt of a family's signed written request.

**Unexcused absences** include illness without a medical note (for absences longer than 2 days), family reasons, trips during the school semester, etc. Ministry of Education guidelines state that a student may have up to **10 unexcused** and **20 excused** absences in a year.

### **Leaving During the School Day**

Students are expected to stay at MEF IS for the duration of their school day. If a parent/guardian collects their children during regular school hours or gives permission for their child to leave the campus, they must provide a signed note, including the reason for early dismissal. Students in the



primary school must be picked up by an adult if leaving early. ***Permission to leave early from school must be received before 13:00 so that arrangements for permission and the service bus company (if the service is used) can be arranged.***

A scanned note on e-mail is acceptable. Phone calls are not accepted. Students need to collect a signed note from a school administrator of the appropriate school giving them permission to leave the school grounds to show at the security gate. Signed notes which do not state reasons or are inappropriate will not be approved by the school's administration and students with such notes will be unable to receive permission to exit the premises. Acceptable reasons for early departure include illness, an urgent appointment, or an emergency.

### **Punctuality**

**Tardiness** is when a student does not arrive on time to school. Tardiness impacts a student's learning as s/he misses instruction and disrupts the learning of classmates. Therefore MEF IS expects students to arrive on time for their registration period and subsequently to get to class in a timely manner for each lesson. Students who are late to school in the first period will be marked late. Students who arrive late during periods 2 - 4 will be counted as having a half day of absence and those arriving late during 5th period or afterwards will be given a full day of absence.



## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

### **1. Expectations for Attendance and Punctuality**

- Arrive to school on time and maintain good attendance.
- Arrive to each class promptly with appropriate learning materials.

### **2. Expectations for Student Learning**

- Listen carefully and follow instructions.
- Stay on task and work respectfully around others.
- Seek help when you need it.
- Try your best with all school tasks.
- Respect the school and personal property.

### **3. Expectations for Dealing with Others**

- Model the IB Learner Profile.
- Be kind, polite and caring to others.
- Use appropriate and respectful language.
- Be a good speaker and listener.
- Be responsible for your belongings.
- Respect the rights, thoughts and feelings of others.
- Respect the personal space of others

### **4. Expectations for School Clothing**

- Inappropriate clothing can be a health and safety issue.
- Clothing should respect the attitudes and expectations of the host culture.
- A change of clothes is expected for Physical Education classes.
- Students are encouraged to wear hats and use sunscreen when outdoors.
- Dress according to the climate and time of the year.
- Students will be sent outside to play during recess unless it is raining hard, and should therefore have appropriate clothing for whatever the weather eg. warm coats, hats, raincoats, or sunhats and sunscreen etc

Please note: At the beginning of the year, students and parents sign a student dress code.



### **5. Expectations for Activities and Break Times**

- Interact in a friendly, positive and inclusive manner.
- Be responsible.
- Be safe.
- Keep the school clean and litter free.

### **6. Expectations for Electronic Devices**

- Cell phones are not to be sent to school with Primary School students. If children need to phone their parents then they may ask to use the phone in the PS Assistant's office.
- Grade 4 and 5 students with iPads will have their devices locked in the teacher's cupboard when they are not being used in class. School breaks are to be iPad free.
- Limit use of electronic devices for academic purposes while at school.



## **LIBRARY**

The library staff invites MEF IS community to visit the library for their academic and recreational reading and research needs. The MEF IS library provides extensive curriculum support through its ever-expanding collections, both on premises and online. Please refer to the library page of the school website for more detailed information.

Primary students are encouraged to browse the new Primary Library for fiction selections and the Whole School Library for non-fiction titles. Library classes for MEF IS primary school students will be held in both libraries depending on the type of lesson.

The up-to-date online library resources are also offered to assist students and parents with study and research skills as well as to encourage a love of reading and enjoyment of books. The Follett Destiny Library Catalog (<https://mefis.follettdestiny.com>) can be accessed at any time, from any internet accessible location. Contact MEF IS library staff to activate your personal login details.

Circulation Limits (borrowing is for 2 weeks with a maximum of 3 renewals):

PS to Grade 1 - 2 books

Grade 2 and 3 - 3 books

Grade 4 and 5 - 4 books

Parents as Library Patrons:

Parents are invited to register as library patrons and may check out 10 books at a time. Circulation rules for students also apply to parents.

To encourage variety in reading selections and to share popular books the following borrowing rules apply:

- if more than one book is checked out, they must be written by different authors
- only one book in a series can be checked out for each loan period
- variety in selection is encouraged e.g. 1 fiction, 1 nonfiction
- if a Graphic Media book is checked out, the student must also have a fiction chapter book on loan

Although late fees are not charged, students who have lost a library book will need to pay for the book to be replaced including the actual cost and shipping fees.

### **Hours of operation:**

The MEF IS Library hours have been extended to accommodate families before and after school. We encourage parents to come by and visit. Please do not hesitate to contact us if help is needed.



Monday to Wednesday: 08:00 - 17:00  
Thursday Friday: 08:00 - 15:45.

**Library Staff:**

Teacher Librarian – Ms. Goldie Abaee [abaee@mefis.k12.tr](mailto:abaee@mefis.k12.tr)

Ph: 0212 287 6900 Whole School Library - Ext 1356 / Primary School Library - Ext 1362

**Volunteering:**

Parents are encouraged to volunteer in the library with circulation and cataloguing projects and during special events, such as MEF IS Reading Week.



## **TECHNOLOGY AT MEF IS**

Here at MEF IS we seek to keep up to date with the latest advances in technology use in the classroom, and to teach our students how to use the various technologies available to them wisely and productively. As part of this strategy we are using iPads with students to enable the growth of blended learning in the classroom. Our ECC students up to Grade 3 use a bank of iPads provided by the school, and our Grade 4 and 5 students bring their own so we have a one-to-one ratio.

We are using iPads to: communicate, collaborate and create; to showcase and demonstrate learning; and to access and use information responsibly. The focus is to use iPads for learning. Therefore we have some clear expectations from our students for their appropriate use of these devices.

### **EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT iPad USE**

**Here are the rules that are shared with each student using an iPad at school:**

1. Always follow teacher instructions regarding the use of the iPads. This could be your classroom teacher, or even another teacher in the corridor.
2. Stick with the class. Be in the right place at the right time on your iPad. Follow the learning in the classroom and what is being asked of you.
3. Keep the iPad on mute. Unless your teacher gives you permission, keep your iPad on mute. You may bring earbud headphones if you wish.
4. Keep your iPad safe. Use a case to protect your iPad. When you are not using your iPad the teacher will keep it locked up in the cupboard in the classroom. Carry your iPad with both hands. Do not use your iPad when walking between classrooms! Don't put your iPad in your school bag where it could get crushed. Keep your iPad away from liquids.
5. You need to come to school with your iPad fully charged.
6. Take photo / video footage with the permission of the people involved.
7. You will not be using your iPad for every class, every day. Take out your iPad when asked to do so by your teacher.
8. Be aware of Academic honesty - ensure this is your own work. Do not copy and paste. Even when you say something in your own words, quote the source!
9. Be responsible and use the iPad for learning. You are not permitted to use your iPad during breakfast, lunch or break times.





### **Updating Apps**

You may be aware that from time to time your device will send you update requests for the apps on your device. Students are asked not update the apps on their device without checking with their teacher first. Students are also not to make any in app purchases without the permission of their parents. This means while they are in a particular app, it may ask the user if they want to buy a character, or other add on feature. The student is reminded not to purchase anything without permission.

### **Google School**

MEF IS is a Google School, this means that we use GMail and Google Apps for Education within the school community. Our students are given google user ID's for use within the school domain. For students from Preschool to Grade 3, the user ID's and passwords will be shared with parents. Students are expected to log on the system with their parent's supervision at home for extended study. A parental consent form is requested for each student from grades 4 through 8. Students can only send and receive email within the community of MEF IS between these grades and are not allowed to send or receive any mails outside the school community, that is, with any mail without the mefis.k12.tr extension. There are no restrictions for high school students. When a student leaves the school, their MEF IS accounts, including Google Apps, are disabled upon termination of their relationship with the school.



## **RESPONSIBLE USE OF TECHNOLOGY**

Use of technology, network, internet and all electronic resources are provided to support the educational objectives of MEF International School. Use of these technologies is a privilege tied to responsibilities. Therefore each member of the school community must honor the following guidelines in using technology in a responsible and ethical manner. MEF International School retains the right to change and update the terms and conditions at any time based on the requirements.

### **1. Purpose**

I will only use the school's network and internet services for educational and academic purposes.

### **2. Guidelines**

I will follow the specific instructions from school staff when using the computers and computer services

### **3. Communication**

- a. I will use school-appropriate language when submitting homework, participating in online forums and working in teams with classmates.
- b. I will think before posting anything online or sending messages to someone else and will be thoughtful and mindful about the language I use.
- c. I will not use any language that is offensive to anyone and think about how my words will be interpreted by others before posting anything online.

### **4. Honesty & Safety**

- a. I will represent myself honestly.
- b. I will not access the network using an account other than my own.
- c. I will seek help if I feel unsafe, bullied or witness unkind behavior.
- d. I will only communicate with people I know.
- e. I will follow safety guidelines posted to sites to which I subscribe or I am a member.
- f. I will not share my personal details (name, surname, address, phone number) on public websites.

### **5. Learning**

- a. I will have a positive attitude and will be willing to explore different technologies.
- b. I understand that everything online is not true and I will search and check the validity of information presented online.



- c. I agree to document and properly cite all information taken from online sources including but not limited to images, videos and music.

**6. Respect for Self and Others**

- a. I will not upload or publish personal information, private communications or photos of other people without permission.
- b. I will respond thoughtfully to the opinions, ideas and values of others.
- c. I will not send or share mean, harmful or inappropriate emails or texts.

**7. Respect for school and personal property**

- a. I will take care of all equipment on campus.
- b. I will report misuse and/or inappropriate content to my teachers and adults.
- c. I will use the computers on campus for school related purposes only.
- d. I understand that I will be completely responsible for following the guidelines in using school owned devices and will be responsible for any damages caused by negligence or misuse.

Please note: At the beginning of the year, students and parents sign a responsible use contract.



## **ACADEMIC HONESTY**

Academic honesty underpins all of the school's educational efforts as students can only demonstrate their mastery of a subject and teachers can only assess their mastery when students present their own work.

Academic honesty is defined as: The use of one's own thoughts and materials in the demonstration of knowledge (e.g., homework, projects, essays, examinations, etc.). The proper citation of any utilized sources (print, digital, etc.).

*Adapted from The IB Diploma Programme publication "Academic Honesty" (2007)*

Primary students learn how to distinguish between their own and others' work and cite their sources. They understand the principles behind academic honesty, misconduct and possible consequences.

Grade 5 students cite their sources in text using author name, and create a works cited page including author and source location. They are expected to demonstrate that they understand the principles behind academic honesty, misconduct and the consequences.

Teachers are expected to model, instruct and monitor academic honesty and academic misconduct in accordance with the grade level procedures of the students they are working with. Parents are expected to support their students and the school in carrying out the academic honesty procedure.



## **DISCIPLINE**

At MEF IS we have high expectations for our students' behaviour. Teachers expect from and model to students the IB Learner Profile attributes, and are explicit in their expectations for behaviour throughout the school. Classes spend the beginning of the year forming agreements for class codes of conduct, and in discussing the school expectations for behaviour in shared spaces. These basically follow the code of conduct listed above and include movement around the school being quiet and orderly and voice levels being appropriate for the place.

Children are expected to follow the agreed code of conduct. Failure to do so will be followed up with consequences. Most minor student behaviour will be dealt with by the class teacher or the duty teacher at the time. For more serious or repeated misbehaviour students may be asked to fill in a reflection sheet after their discussion with the class teacher, and bring it home to be read and signed by one of the student's parents.

Communication between the school and parent is welcome and recommended at any stage. For serious breaches of the code of conduct students may need to see the deputy principal for discipline and restorative conversations. The final level of intervention involves the school principal and some form of family meeting. The school counselor may be involved in student support and discipline at any level.



## **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

### **Clubs**

MEF IS Primary School Teachers facilitate a variety of different Tuesday afternoon clubs. We value the importance of developing the whole child through varied activities including sports, arts and crafts, drama, and/or community service clubs. The clubs change each semester and run for 40 minutes.

### **Field Trips**

Field trips are an integral part of the personal development of each student and the school's curriculum, therefore all students are expected to participate. Field trips provide opportunities for cultural enrichment, social interaction and the extension of learning skills and will be used wherever possible to work towards these educational goals.

### **After School Activities**

After school activities are offered for Primary students as a means of developing the whole child. The aim is to provide varied offerings to attend to various interests and abilities. These activities are led by our own teachers or outside organizations or agencies and are filled based on demand and may differ between semesters. After school activities are optional, fee-based, and parents are required to pick up students afterwards. You will receive an email with the contact information in due time.

### **Athletics**

MEF International School offers a variety of extracurricular athletic activities designed to stimulate and develop the interests of every participant. The emphasis for athletics is on maximum participation, where effort and enthusiasm are rewarded alongside physical talent. Students are encouraged to develop a lifelong enjoyment of team and individual sports and to build an understanding of how sports play a critical role in the bigger picture of living a healthy and balanced lifestyle, involving physical, social and emotional aspects. There may also be opportunities for students also compete against other international schools off-campus in various sporting events.



## **HEALTH SERVICES**

### **Medical Records**

On-campus medical services are available to students during school hours. To facilitate the school's provision of health services, families are required to provide detailed medical records about their child/ren, including special medical conditions, medications or treatments required at the time of admission and at any time where there is a change to their child's health status. Information regarding a child's medical record will be shared only with relevant professional staff, and then used solely for supervision, monitoring and safety purposes.

### **Student Illness**

Students who are ill should remain at home until well to aid their recovery and to prevent the spread of illness. If the doctor determines that a child is ill during the school day and recommends that s/he needs to go home, then the family will need to arrange for the child to return home.

In the case of more serious illness or injury, if the doctor decides that more immediate and involved treatment is needed, he or she will use professional discretion to provide whatever care and treatment is required. Families will also be notified immediately of such conditions and outcomes.

In the case of an emergency, an ambulance or school vehicle will immediately transport the sick or injured student to the nearest hospital. The family will be notified as soon as possible.

In serious but less urgent cases, if a student needs to be taken to the hospital, the Deputy Principal or Principal will contact the child's parent to request permission for the student to be transferred to the hospital or determine if the parent wishes to transport the child themselves. If the parent cannot be reached, the school will take the student to the nearest hospital.



## STUDENT SUPPORT

At MEF IS teaching is tailored to meet all learning styles, interests, and needs. In accordance with this practice, we aim to deliver a variety of academic resources in order to support the varying levels of our students.

The Student Support Department consists of three support foci: Learning Support (LS), English Language Learner support (ELL), and Counseling. The support staff from these areas work with teachers and students to provide the most effective learning environment for all students.

### Learning Support

The Learning Support program at MEF IS aims to support students in acquiring the necessary skills to reach their full potential. This support is offered by certified learning support teachers.

The program is designed for students who have been diagnosed with a specific learning disability or other difficulty supported by a psycho-educational assessment. At MEF IS we support students by providing:

- Additional direct instruction with subject matter content either working in-class or in a withdrawal situation
- Instruction in study and organizational skills
- Instruction in self-regulatory and self-advocacy skills
- Accommodations based on student characteristics. Accommodations are in for aspects such as presentation, response, setting, timing and/or scheduling in regards to instruction
- Consultation with student, teacher, parent, counselor, administrator

A continuum of learning services is provided to include itinerant services, inclusion and/or resource class time. The learning support team works closely with classroom teachers, and is skilled in differentiation to meet the students learning needs.

### Counselling Support

MEF IS Primary School has a trained **Counsellor** who provides general pastoral and guidance support.

The **Counsellor** is a professional educator with a pastoral orientation who understands and responds to the various challenges presented to our diverse student population. The counsellor's role is to work with our students both in the classroom delivering Personal and Social Education (PSE) classes, and also with the Student Council to develop their leadership and community service





skills and capabilities. The counsellor also works with individual children who may need personal or social support, and is a member of the school Learning Support Team.



## **SCHOOL SERVICE BUS**

MEF IS provides access to a school service bus for the convenience of families. Busing is optional, fee-based, and provided by an external company. In line with MEF International School's behavioral expectations, the school asks students to abide by the following guidelines:

1. Be on time for both morning and afternoon designated pick-up locations.
2. Remain seated at all the times on the bus, whether it is moving or not. Always sit facing forward.
3. Wear a seatbelt while on the bus.
4. Sit in the seat allocated by the hostess or duty teacher.
5. Get off the bus only at your own address, unless approved previously. Please inform a deputy principal if you are changing routes before 12:00 o'clock. These changes must be a written request with a parent's signature and date.
6. Accept that heat, air conditioning, windows and music are regulated by the driver or hostess only.
7. Listen to the instructions and follow the directions of the driver and hostess at all times. Be respectful to the driver, the hostess, and fellow passengers.
8. Not eat food or chew gum (in emergency situations food will be provided by the hostess).
9. Ask for water if needed.
10. Put rubbish into the bins provided.
11. Respect other passengers. Do not disturb others by being loud. Avoid using slang or swearing.
12. Respect members of the public. Do not yell out of the windows or make gestures at people outside of the bus. For this reason and for your safety do not stick your heads, arms, legs out of the window



13. Always be ready and on time for your bus. The bus will not wait for late students. The bus will leave at the scheduled time. Students who miss the buses will have to arrange their own transportation.
14. Respect the belongings, rights and property of other passengers and the bus.
15. Students registered for the bus service who wish to use another bus to travel to or from school must contact the Bus Management at least the day before the desired change. Confirmation if space is available will be granted at the discretion of the Bus Management.

Students and parents/guardians sign an agreement with the school at the beginning of each year acknowledging understanding of the above items. Students who do not follow the behavior expectations will be subject to disciplinary action and, for very serious breaches, may be excluded from the bus service without a refund.



## **MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS**

### **LOST AND FOUND**

We ask that all items coming to school are labeled clearly with the student's name to enable ease of return if they are left somewhere or misplaced. The Lost and Found cupboard can be found at the left rear of the Ground Floor space.

### **DRIVING ON CAMPUS**

Families that wish to drive on campus need to have a MEF IS sticker on their vehicle(s); the sticker is available for pick up from the receptionist. You may not be permitted onto the campus with your car if you do not have this sticker on your vehicle.

For our families who drive their child/ren to school we encourage our families "drop and go" or "pick - up and go" during the start and end of the school day because there can be significant congestion on campus at those times. Our aim is to keep traffic flowing as much as possible to avoid congestion.

Please note that vehicle entrance through gates into the campus area is forbidden from 10.40 - 11:05 and 11:55 - 13:10. This precaution was put in place to increase security measures on campus.

In the morning and the afternoon the campus will flow in one direction only - that is cars will be able to enter from the bottom entrance, and leave through the top entrance. Service buses will leave the campus from both the top and bottom entrance in the mornings and afternoons. During the course of the school day, traffic will flow in both directions.

Because there are over 2000 people on the campus during the course of the school day, traffic and congestion are obvious challenges - we ask all those who drive on the campus to be extra patient with and considerate of others. Please do park with consideration to others, in other words park within the lines provided, and in a way that does not block the flow of traffic or movement of others. Please do pay attention and follow the directions given by officials of the school or security personnel who direct the traffic on the campus.

### **FOOD AND CATERING**

MEF IS provides food for students throughout the school day. Students may have morning snack, lunch, and an afternoon snack while at school. Parents may choose to provide a healthy snack from home for their children to eat at morning interval time. Examples of appropriate snacks are fresh fruit or vegetables cut up for ease of eating, muesli bar, dried fruit or nuts (not peanuts please due to nut allergies with some of our students), sushi, muffin or baked goods, cheese and crackers. Please do not send chippies or candy or other processed food.



## **SAFETY**

The school seeks to provide an environment which protects the health and safety of all faculty members, students, families and visitors to the campus. Faculty, students, families and visitors are similarly afforded a safe learning environment on educational excursions and during special events. In line with this objective, MEF IS regularly reviews and practices its safety protocols in a number of drills throughout the academic year. These include fire drill, earthquake drill and campus lockdown drill. MEF IS has collaborated with local authorities, non-governmental agencies, and consular services in developing its emergency procedures. MEF IS will continue to review and seek input from authorities on its emergency procedures in line with best practices.



## **HOW TO GET INVOLVED AT MEF IS**

### **Parent Teacher Association**

MEF IS has an active Parent Teacher Association (PTA) that exists to foster positive relationships in the community, to discuss teaching and learning and to fundraise in support of charities, nonprofits, and approved schools. The association consists of a General Committee comprised of administrators, teachers, and parents; an Executive Board of elected parent representatives; and an Auditing Committee made up of one parent and two teachers (one Primary, one Secondary). The PTA plays a very important role in the MEF IS community by organizing events and fundraisers throughout the year and by supporting the school in the broader Istanbul community.

MEF IS convenes a General Committee Meeting at the beginning of each school year to review the previous school year and to hold elections for a new General Committee, among other things. All parents and guardians are highly encouraged to attend this important initial meeting and to participate actively in the MEF IS PTA and its community events and initiatives.

### **Room Parents**

Room Parents are members of the MEF IS community who volunteer their time to coordinate and share information among parents and guardians with children in the same grade levels and classes. These individuals play a vital role in building community and dialogue in the community. Individuals interested in volunteering as room parents should attend the General Committee Meeting of the PTA to connect with existing room parents and to learn more about the process and commitment. A list of room parents will be shared with the community at the beginning of the school year.

## CONTACTS

Administration		
Name	Position	Email address
Elvan Tongal	Head of School	tongale@mefis.k12.tr
Sharlene Carki	Primary Principal	carkis@mefis.k12.tr
Kate Birch	Deputy Principal	birchk@mefis.k12.tr
Mihaela Morello	PYP Coordinator/DP	morellom@mefis.k12.tr

Early Childhood Center		
Name	Position	Email address
Goksem Ceviz	Pre-School	cevizg@mefis.k12.tr
Sule Akohen	Pre-School Teaching Assistant	akohens@mefis.k12.tr
Jianne Han	Pre-Kindergarten A	hanj@mefis.k12.tr
Meryem Yildirim	Pre-KA Teaching Assistant	yildirizm@mefis.k12.tr
Janeen Turner	Pre-Kindergarten B	turnerj@mefis.k12.tr
Nursemin Topkara	Pre-KB Teaching Assistant	sonmezn@mefis.k12.tr
Victoria Cerdas	Kindergarten A	cerdasv@mefis.k12.tr
Şeyda Yakaryıldırım	Kindergarten A Teaching Assistant	yakaryildirims@mefis.k12.tr

<b>Primary School</b>		
<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Email address</b>
Karen Newman	Homeroom Teacher for 1A	newmank@mefis.k12.tr
Perrin Gürkan	Grade 1A Teaching Assistant	gurkanp@mefis.k12.tr
Katrina Jones	Homeroom Teacher for 1B	jonesk@mefis.k12.tr
Gokce Cimen	Grade 1B Teaching Assistant	cimeng@mefis.k12.tr
Jessica Ream	Homeroom Teacher for 2A	reamj@mefis.k12.tr
Kathryn Winson	Homeroom Teacher for 2B	winsonk@mefis.k12.tr
Jason de Roma	Homeroom Teacher for 3A	deromaj@mefis.k12.tr
Isla McLeod	Homeroom Teacher for 3B	mcleodi@mefis.k12.tr
Darren Richardson	Homeroom Teacher for 4A	richardsond@mefis.k12.tr
Meral Sheta	Homeroom Teacher for 4B	shetam@mefis.k12.tr
Craig Wheeldon	Homeroom Teacher for 5A	wheeldonc@mefis.k12.tr
Katie Klinger	Homeroom Teacher for 5B	klingerk@mefis.k12.tr
Heather Nord	Reading Specialist	nordh@mefis.k12.tr
Elif Cesar	Learning Support	cesare@mefis.k12.tr
Simon Johnson	English Language Support	johnsonsimon@mefis.k12.tr
Marzhan Abenova	English Language Support	abenovam@mefis.k12.tr
Pelin Uster	School Counselor	usterp@mefis.k12.tr
Donna Scott	Visual Arts PreS-G4	scottd@mefis.k12.tr
Alisa Blundon	Visual Arts G5	blundona@mefis.k12.tr
Dennis Dapal	Music K- G4	dapald@mefis.k12.tr
Dr Ben Sims	Music G5	simsb@mefis.k12.tr
Steven Morello	Physical Education PreS-G6	morellos@mefis.k12.tr



Goldie Abaee	Librarian	abaee@mefis.k12.tr
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<b>Primary School (continued)</b>		
<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Email address</b>
Lale Kohen	French	kohenl@mefis.k12.tr
Valeria Ramirez	Spanish	ramirezv@mefis.k12.tr
Eda Yavuz	ICT K-G5	yavuze@mefis.k12.tr
Elif Ulas	Library Assistant	ulase@mefis.k12.tr
Demet Gulam	Host Country Studies	gulamd@mefis.k12.tr
Gursah Cekic	Turkish Language Teacher	cekicg@mefis.k12.tr

<b>Support Staff</b>		
<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Email address</b>
Selin Medina	Primary Principal's Assistant	medinas@mefis.k12.tr
Aysegul Esmer	Admissions Officer	esmera@mefis.k12.tr
Derya Sevil	Admissions Officer	sevild@mefis.k12.tr
Sevilay Kizkayasi	Receptionist (please inform absences)	reception@mefis.k12.tr