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# PRIMARY SCHOOL PARENT HANDBOOK

## 2023 - 2024

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# PART 1: INTRODUCTION

## Welcome

Dear Community Members,

Welcome to the 2023-2024 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 (MEF IS), our mission is at the heart of everything we do, framing our policies, procedures and day to day practices. Our mission at MEF IS 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**  
Head of School

**Brett Warfield**  
Primary School Principal

# Our Founder

## Biography of our Founder, Dr. Ibrahim ARIKAN,

Born in 1941 in the village of Salur in the province of Yozgat, Dr. Ibrahim ARIKAN was accepted on the basis of an examination into the Mimar Sinan Elementary School Teachers School, pursuing his goal to become an elementary school teacher. Following his academic success, he was selected to attend Ankara Teachers College. He graduated from the Faculty of Science, Department of Physics and Mathematics at Ankara Teachers College in 1968. Over the period 1968-1971, Ibrahim ARIKAN worked as an assistant in the Physics Department of Yıldız Technical University.

In 1972, he founded the MEF (Modern Eğitim Fen / Modern Education & Science) Tutoring School. In 1982, ARIKAN established Turkey's first cargo company, Yurtiçi Kargo Inc. and then in 1996, founded MEF Schools, an international educational complex that encompasses pre-school, elementary school and high school levels. On February 11, 1996, ARIKAN collected all of his companies under the umbrella of the holding company, ARIKANLI Holding Inc., ARIKANLI Holding investments focus on the areas of "Education-Communication-Energy", "Transport-Logistics" and "Industry-Construction." As of 2011, the Holding boasted 23 companies.



On May 14, 2011, Ibrahim ARIKAN was awarded an Honorary Doctoral Degree in Business and Science by unanimous vote of the European University of Lefke Senate in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus for "his adherence as an educator to the principles and reforms of Atatürk, his contributions to educating 200,000 students, and his entrepreneuring insight and leadership in various industrial and service sectors."

He was presented with a "Leadership Honorary Award" on April 16, 2009 for "the companies he established and their contributions to the business community, the system he has established, and the brands that he has created." He was granted an honorary doctorate in humanities on May 22, 2009 by one of the prestigious universities in the U.S., Roger Williams University, for his successful business career and for making a solid contribution to the world of education with MEF Schools, which he established on the basis of a new vision of education.

Ibrahim ARIKAN is the author of 10 books ( *Modern Fizik-Modern Physics*; *Biz Bize-Just Between Us*; *Orijinal Fikir Üretme ve Yaratıcılık-Producing Original Ideas and Creativity*; *Kurum Başarısı İçin-For the Success of the Organization*; *Yöneticiye Mektup-A Letter to the Manager*; *Her Durumda Başarmak-Achieving under All Circumstances*; *Kriz Önce Haber Verir Sonra Kapıyı Çalar-The Crisis First Lets You Know It's Here Before It Knocks on Your Door*; *Tarih Ekonomiyi, Ekonomi Tarihi Oluşturur-History Shapes Economy While Economy Shapes History*; *Ya Yenilenirsin Ya da Yenilirsin - Renovate or Evaporate*; *Öğreten Öğretmen Öğrenen Öğrenci-Teaching Teacher, Learning Student* and has written many articles published in various magazines and newspapers. He also devotes time to working on social and cultural content.

Dr. İbrahim Arıkan passed away on February 2, 2016. He was the father of three children, named Ümit, Ebru and Eda. A respected teacher devoting his entire life to education, an entrepreneur, environmentalist and scientist, Dr. İbrahim Arıkan succeeded in being a good human under all conditions, and he believed that the world needed goodness more than anything. Dr. İbrahim Arıkan will always be remembered with yearning and respect for the pioneering institutions and organizations he founded in our country, his innovative ideas and the value he gave to education and to humans.

*P.S.: You can obtain his books from our library if you wish to understand his approach to education.*

# History

**The foundation of MEF Schools was completed in more than eight years of study by going through the following stages.**

## **Stage One - Examining the Education Systems of Various Countries:**

Eight different countries were visited by our Founder Dr. Arikan and his team consisting of academicians and the educational system were observed and examined in the place. These countries were the USA, the UK, Germany, Finland, the Netherlands, Denmark, France and Japan. During these examination visits, information was collected from the educational scientists of the countries on curriculum taught according to the school types and the teaching methods they followed.

## **Stage Two - Evaluating the Educational Systems of the Different Countries:**

A “Science Committee” consisting of university lecturers and educational experts was formed in order to evaluate the information gathered. This committee compared the educational systems of these countries with each other and with the educational system in Turkey by working with its more than 30 members within its body for more than two years. The data and the important examples obtained during the studies conducted in those countries were also evaluated by the Committee. As a result of the evaluation, it was found that the difference was in the teaching methods only, the subjects taught in Turkey do not differ greatly from the basic courses and basic subjects taught in the same type of schools in these countries. After completing these evaluations, the educational style of MEF Schools, curriculum, education language, teaching programs, after-school activities and physical plannings of the school were determined.

## **Stage Three - Preparing the Curriculum:**

At this stage, the “Curriculum Preparation Committees” were formed. These committees prepared the syllabus to be taught in their fields, taking into account the most accepted developmental theories of the time, various program models applied in Turkey and in the world, and the aspects that can be applied to the Turkish Education System.

## **Starting Education:**

MEF Schools started education on September 1, 1996 in its Istanbul Ulus Campus, with Kindergarten, Primary School, Middle School and High School.

MEF International School opened in 1998 on the same campus.

In 2004, MEF International School Izmir campus was opened to serve the children of foreign families living in Izmir.

**Today, MEF Schools** continue its educational services with its National Schools in Istanbul-Ulus & Bahçeşehir Campuses and its International Schools in Istanbul/Ulus & Izmir Campuses.

## **MEF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS CHRONOLOGICALLY...**

- ★ 1996-1997 MEF Schools (Istanbul-Ulus Campus)
- ★ 1998-1999 MEF International School (Istanbul-Ulus Campus)
- ★ 2004-2005 MEF International School (Izmir Campus)
- ★ 2011-2012 MEF Schools (Istanbul-Bahçeşehir Campus)
- ★ 2014-2015 MEF University (Istanbul-Maslak Campus)

# MEF IS Guiding Statements

Our guiding statements are not just words on a page, they truly guide our school each and every day in everything that we do.

These guiding statements are aligned across both our campuses, Istanbul and Izmir.

We review our guiding statements together with our teachers, parents and students to ensure that they still hold true and state our purpose and our aspirations every three years.

The guiding statements below were revised and approved by the Executive Board at the end of the 2017- 2018 academic year. The definitions for learning and internationalism have been created by our faculty.

## Definition of Internationalism

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.

### MOTTO

*Building Bridges between Countries and Cultures.*

### MISSION STATEMENT (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.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

### MEF International School...

- ★ 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 relationships 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'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 reactions and they must learn to proactively pursue a lifestyle that ensures both positive results in the classroom and in the local, national, and global community 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.



## PART 2: EDUCATION

### Educational Program Overview

**Primary Years Program:** MEF International school is authorised by the International Baccalaureate Organisation (IBO) to offer their Primary Years Programme (PYP). This programme is offered in many quality schools worldwide. It offers high quality education, enabling students to become lifelong learners and global citizens. It draws on international educational research to provide a framework of what the students need to learn and how they learn. In common with all IB programmes, the focus is on personal and academic achievement, challenging students to excel in their studies and in their personal development. Some of the information below has been sourced from the International Baccalaureate Organization publications.

#### THE PYP FRAMEWORK

**Learner Profile:** The PYP programme, as with all IB programmes is centered on students developing the attributes of the IB learner profile. The Learner Profile is a set of values, which collectively describe the qualities of internationally-minded people.

These values form the culture and ethos of our school and apply not only to our students but to our whole school community. The learner profile attributes are; inquirers, knowledgeable, thinkers, communicators, principled, open-minded, caring, risk-takers, balanced, reflective.

#### What do students learn?

- ★ **Knowledge:** Significant relevant content that we wish students to know about.
- ★ **Concepts:** Understanding powerful ideas.
- ★ **Skills:** To enable students to succeed in a changing challenging world.
- ★ **Attitudes:** Approaches to learning and the world around them that support them as enthusiastic lifelong learners
- ★ **Action:** Understanding and experiencing that everyone can make a difference.

#### How do they learn?

Most learning is approached through guided inquiry. Teachers provide carefully considered learning experiences in transdisciplinary units of inquiry and within traditional subject areas. Students are encouraged and supported to apply and extend their own learning, developing questions that are relevant to the theme and their own interests. Children frequently learn through experiential learning, including field trips.

#### How do we know they have learned?

Assessment is an important component of the PYP. Teachers carry out a wide range of frequent assessments to find out what students need to learn (formative assessment) and what they have learnt (summative assessment). Assessments may include written assessments and also other activities. Results of assessments are often shared with students and parents.

One very important opportunity for assessment is the Grade 5 exhibition. Students develop their own inquiries into an area of particular interest to them. They are expected to show their PYP knowledge, understanding and skills and develop some sort of action from their inquiries.

**The Units of Inquiry:** Each class studies units of inquiry. Our Early Childhood Centre classes explore four units of inquiry in Preschool, four units of inquiry in Pre Kindergarten and six units of inquiry in Kindergarten. Allowing time for extended units and emerging inquiries coming from the children's own interests. Grade One to Grade five classes explore six units of inquiry.

**The Transdisciplinary Themes:** Knowledge is described in the six transdisciplinary themes and in the individual subject areas. The most significant and distinctive feature of the IB Primary Years Programme is the six transdisciplinary themes. These themes are about issues that have meaning for, and are important to, all of us. The six themes of global significance create a transdisciplinary framework that allows students to “step up” beyond the confines of learning within subject areas.

**The six transdisciplinary themes are:**

**Who we are:** An inquiry into the nature of self; beliefs and values; personal, physical, mental, social and spiritual health, human relationships including families, friends, communities and cultures; rights and responsibilities; what it means to be human.

**Where we are in time and place:** An inquiry into orientation in time and place; personal histories; homes and journeys; the discoveries, explorations and migrations of humankind; the relationships between and the interconnectedness of individuals, from local and global perspectives.

**How we express ourselves:** An inquiry into the ways in which we discover and express ideas, feelings, nature, culture, beliefs and values; the ways in which we reflect on, extend and enjoy our creativity; our appreciation of the aesthetic.

**How the world works:** An inquiry into the natural world and its laws; the interaction between the natural world (physical and biological) and human societies; how humans use their understanding of scientific principles; the impact of scientific and technological advances on society and on the environment.

**How we organise ourselves:** An inquiry into the interconnectedness of human-made systems and communities; the structure and function of organizations; societal decision-making; economic activities and their impact on humankind and the environment.

**Sharing the planet:** An inquiry into rights and responsibilities in the struggle to share finite resources with other people and with other living things; communities and the relationships within and between them; access to equal opportunities; peace and conflict resolution.

**The Subject Areas:** Students study six subject areas. Social studies and Science are taught within the units of inquiry. The other subject areas are taught as stand alone subjects as well as being integrated into the units of inquiry.

The subject areas are:

- ★ Language
- ★ Social Studies
- ★ Mathematics
- ★ The Arts (Music and The Visual Arts)
- ★ Science
- ★ Personal, Social and Physical Education

**The Essential Elements:** In an IB PYP school a balance is sought between the acquisition of essential knowledge and skills, development of conceptual understanding, demonstration of positive attitudes, and taking of responsible action. Collectively these form the five essential elements of the PYP. These elements are outlined in detail below.

**Concepts:** A set of eight concepts and subsequent questions enable students to explore ideas within and across subject areas. These concepts are:

- ★ Form – What is it like?
- ★ Function – How does it work?
- ★ Causation – Why is it like it is?
- ★ Change – How is it changing?
- ★ Connection – How is it connected to other things?

- ★ Perspective – What are the points of view?
- ★ Responsibility – What is our responsibility?
- ★ Reflection – How do we know?

**The Transdisciplinary Skills:** Students acquire and apply a set of transdisciplinary skills. These skills are valuable, not only in school for learning within the units of inquiry and the specific subject areas, but also for learning about life outside the school. Therefore, these skills are not taught in isolation, but are developed throughout the programme.

**These skills are:**

- ★ Form – Thinking skills
- ★ Function – Self-management skills
- ★ Causation – Research skills
- ★ Change – Social skills
- ★ Connection – Communication skills

**Attitudes:** Students acquire and apply a set of transdisciplinary skills. These skills are valuable, not only in school for learning within the units of inquiry and the specific subject areas, but also for learning about life outside the school. Therefore, these skills are not taught in isolation, but are developed throughout the programme.

**These attitudes are:**

- ★ Appreciation
- ★ Commitment
- ★ Confidence
- ★ Cooperation
- ★ Creativity
- ★ Curiosity
- ★ Empathy
- ★ Enthusiasm
- ★ Independence
- ★ Integrity
- ★ Respect
- ★ Tolerance

**Action:** In the PYP it is believed that education must extend beyond the intellectual to include not only socially responsible attitudes but also thoughtful and appropriate action. The action component of the PYP can involve service in the widest sense of the word: service to fellow students, and to the larger community, both in and outside the school. Through such service, students are able to grow both personally and socially, developing skills such as cooperation, problem solving, conflict resolution, and creative and critical thinking. Actions that students take are in themselves evidence of learning.

The transdisciplinary themes, individual subject areas and essential elements outline the International Baccalaureate Primary Years programme.

# 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.

Diverse and dynamic assessment is essential to understanding and supporting a student's learning. 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 of 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:** twice a year at the end of Semesters 1 & 2
- ★ **Toddle:** Ongoing and regular feedback about your child's learning will be shared through this digital portfolio.
- ★ **Student-Led Conference:** held once per year.
- ★ **3-way conferences:** held once per year.

If you would like to know about your child's learning, you are always welcome to make an appointment with your child's homeroom teacher.

## 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:

- ★ Requests for documentation should be made directly to the School Principal
- ★ 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.
- ★ Staff cannot process requests for report cards for Semester 2 before the last day of school, when all Semester 2 report cards are distributed.
- ★ All requests will be processed as rapidly as possible but please allow up to 5 business days for documentation requests.
- ★ 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.

# Homework

## The Purpose of Homework

The purpose of homework is to provide opportunities for students to practice and review skills, concepts, and content learned in class. Homework may also support students in developing and strengthening self-management skills: goal setting, time-management, and study skills. It also supports the school-home relationship through connecting families with the learning of their children. Homework should be limited in scope and time in order to be beneficial. Excessive amounts of homework has a negative impact on achievement and attitudes towards learning.

## Homework should:

- ★ deepen, complement, and reinforce classroom learning through revising and practicing previously learned concepts and skills
- ★ support the development of the student's independence as a learner
- ★ further the partnership between school and home
- ★ allow time for family, play, and cultural pursuits
- ★ be clearly relevant, show variety, and be balance across learning areas
- ★ be capable of being completed independently with limited resources
- ★ receive timely feedback

## Frequency and duration of homework

Research emphasizes the importance of balancing homework with the needs of young learners to have a balanced lifestyle that includes plenty of time for family and play. Excessive amounts of homework has a negative impact on achievement and attitudes towards learning. Regular, limited levels of homework may reinforce learning and increase student self-management skills.

The following is a research-based breakdown of the maximum daily time that should be spent on daily homework:

- |                |               |
|----------------|---------------|
| ★ Kindergarten | 10 minutes    |
| ★ Grade 1 - 2  | 10-20 minutes |
| ★ Grade 3 - 4  | 30-40 minutes |
| ★ Grade 4 - 5  | 40-50 minutes |

# Library

The library staff welcome all members of the MEF IS community to visit 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.

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):

- ★ ECC 1 to Grade 1: 1 book
- ★ Grade 2: 2 books
- ★ Grade 3: 3 books
- ★ Grade 4: 4 books
- ★ Grade 5: 5 books

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

**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.

**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 8:00 - 17:00
- ★ Thursday to Friday 8:00 - 15:45

**Library Staff:**

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

**Lost Textbooks**

Lost textbooks must be replaced by families at cost plus shipping and handling. The library processes the replacement of textbooks

# Extracurricular Activities

## Clubs

MEF IS Primary School Teachers facilitate a variety of different 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, free of charge, and parents are required to pick up students afterwards on time. Kindly take note that if your child is picked up late twice, they will no longer be able to join our after-school activity programs. 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.



## PART 3: STUDENTS

### Positive Behavior

MEF International School is committed to maintaining a safe, responsible, and respectful learning environment in order to inspire, nurture, and challenge our learners to realize their unique potential. All in our community are expected to reflect these values along with the IB Learner Profile attributes. These standards are ensured through a collaborative effort involving families, teachers and administrators. The principles of safety, respect and responsibility are integral to the standards required of students. The best way to cultivate positive student behavior is to exemplify and encourage it. Positive student behavior is stimulated by modeling IB Learner Profile Traits and Attitudes, appropriate behavior and by utilizing praise and verbal recognition. To this end, students are also involved in decisions that affect them.

#### Restorative Practices

In order to maintain positive behavior, the school emphasizes restorative practices. A restorative approach sees conflict or misbehavior as an opportunity to learn about the impacts of their actions, develop empathy for others, and make amends to strengthen the bonds that may have been damaged.

*The essence of restorative practices is disarmingly simple: that human beings are happier, more productive and more likely to make positive changes in their behavior when those in positions of authority do things **with** them, rather than **to** them or **for** them.*

*adapted from Wachtel 2004*

#### It's all about relationships

Building, enhancing and restoring relationships in the school is absolutely essential for a strongly connected, empathetic, functioning community.

## General School Expectations from the Students

### Expectations for Learning

- ★ Be at school on time
- ★ 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.
- ★ Put your hand up in class to speak.
- ★ Respect the school and personal property.

### 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.

### Expectations for Play

- ★ Share equipment and play areas with others.
- ★ Play in a friendly, inclusive, and positive manner.
- ★ Be responsible and play safely in the play area.
- ★ Run only in safe, open spaces.
- ★ Keep our school clean and litter free.
- ★ Line up in a quiet and timely manner.

### Expectations for Wet Weather Breaks

- ★ Use the activities and equipment set by your teacher.
- ★ Play in your designated wet weather area.
- ★ Speak in a quiet voice as others may be working.
- ★ Always walk indoors and move safely.
- ★ Balls, running and throwing games are to be kept outdoors.
- ★ Respect and cooperate with teacher decisions.
- ★ Share the responsibility for cleaning up your play area.

### Expectations for Attendance and Punctuality

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

### Expectations for Electronic Devices

- ★ Cell phones are not to be used during the school day.
- ★ If children need to phone their parents they may ask to use the PS Assistant's phone.
- ★ Students with iPads will have their devices safely stored when they are not being used in class.

- ★ School breaks are to be iPad free.
- ★ Electronic devices are used for academic purposes while at school.

### **Expectation for Riding the Bus**

- ★ Remain seated at all times on the bus.
- ★ Wear a seatbelt while on the bus.
- ★ Sit in the seat allocated by the hostess / duty teacher.
- ★ Get off the bus only at your own address unless approved prior.
- ★ Heat, cooling, windows and music are regulated by the driver and hostess.
- ★ Listen to the instructions and follow the directions of the driver and hostess.
- ★ No food or chewing gum (only provided by the hostess in an emergency situation).
- ★ Ask for water if needed.
- ★ Put any rubbish into the bins provided.
- ★ Respect other passengers by not disturbing them by being too loud.
- ★ Be ready and on time at all times.
- ★ Respect the belongings, rights and property of other passengers and the bus.

### **Dress Code for Students**

- ★ Students are expected to wear appropriate clothing for a school environment.
- ★ Clothing should respect the attitudes and expectations of the host culture.
- ★ A change of clothes may be brought for Physical Education classes.
- ★ Students may wear hats and use sunscreen when outdoors.
- ★ 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 sun hats and sunscreen etc

# Academic Integrity

To ensure a culture of academic integrity, MEF IS has established clear guidelines and expectations for all members of the school community. Academic integrity is a fundamental value that promotes honesty, trust, and responsibility in the creation and presentation of scholarly work. Our school emphasizes the use of one's own original ideas and materials in demonstrating knowledge and the proper citation of any utilized sources.

To support this, MEF IS follows the MLA citation format, as outlined in "[The IB Programme Continuum of International Education: Effective Citing and Referencing](#)" document. It is the responsibility of all students, teachers, administrators, and parents to familiarize themselves with this document and to uphold the principles of academic integrity. Any violation of this policy will result in consequences, as outlined in the policy, in order to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty and ethical behavior.

Academic integrity is defined as:

- "The use of one's own thoughts and materials in the demonstration of knowledge and the proper citation of any utilized sources" (Academic integrity, 2007)

## Student Responsibilities

Academic integrity is an important value that underpins all academic work. As Primary School students progress through their schooling, they are expected to demonstrate an increasing understanding of academic integrity, misconduct, and its consequences. Primary School students are expected to produce legitimate, authentic, and honest academic work (Academic integrity guidelines, 2019). The IB Learner Profile attributes are an integral part of academic integrity and guide students towards responsible and ethical behavior in their academic work.

Academic Integrity Guidelines for Grades 1-3:

- Be honest: Tell the truth and act with integrity. (Principled)
- Do your best: Strive to do your best work and take pride in your accomplishments. (Reflective)
- Use your own words: Create your own ideas and use your own words when completing assignments. (Thinker)
- Share ideas respectfully: Give credit to others for their ideas and work. (Caring)
- Ask for help: If you are having trouble completing an assignment, ask your teacher for help. (Communicator)

Academic Integrity Guidelines for Grades 4-5:

- Be honest: Always tell the truth and act with integrity. (Principled)
- Do your best: Strive to do your best work and take pride in your accomplishments. (Reflective)
- Use your own words: Create your own ideas and use your own words when completing assignments. (Thinker)
- Cite your sources: Give credit to others for their ideas and work by citing your sources properly using in-text citations and a works cited page including author and source location (Knowledgeable)
- Ask for help: If you are having trouble completing an assignment, ask your teacher for help. (Communicator)
- Take responsibility for your actions: Take responsibility for your academic work and the consequences of your actions. (Principled)

### **Teacher Responsibilities:**

- Consistently model and teach academic integrity in accordance with MLA guidelines.
- Monitor academic integrity within their classrooms and address any violations.
- Provide guidance and support to students who may have questions about academic integrity.
- Collaborate with the librarian to ensure academic integrity is taught across the curriculum.
- Report any violations of academic integrity to the administration.
- Encourage students to take pride in their own work and avoid cheating or plagiarism.

### **Librarian Responsibilities:**

- Support teachers and students in understanding academic integrity and misconduct.
- Provide guidance and support to teachers in preparing lessons on academic integrity.
- Collaborate with teachers to ensure academic integrity is taught across the curriculum.
- Encourage students to use proper citation methods and avoid plagiarism.

### **Administration Responsibilities:**

- Model and monitor academic integrity in accordance with school procedures.
- Ensure that both students and teachers understand and follow procedures associated with academic integrity and misconduct.
- Provide training for teachers on how to promote academic integrity in the classroom.
- Address any violations of academic integrity in a fair and consistent manner.

### **Parent Responsibilities:**

- Support their children in upholding academic integrity.
- Encourage honesty and integrity in their children's work.
- Help their children understand the importance of proper citation methods and avoiding plagiarism.
- Report any concerns about academic integrity to the school administration.

### **Academic Misconduct**

In accordance with IBO guidelines, MEF IS focuses on the positive quality of academic integrity, but also recognizes the need to illustrate what constitutes academic misconduct. Academic misconduct is a behaviour that results in, or may result in, the student or any other student gaining an unfair advantage in one or more assessment components. Examples of academic misconduct include: plagiarism, collusion, duplication of work, copying, examination, paraphrasing (without acknowledging resources).

- **Plagiarism** is the act of using someone else's ideas, words, or work without giving proper credit or acknowledgement, whether done intentionally or unintentionally. It also includes the use of translated materials without proper citation.
- **Collusion** is when a student supports academic misconduct by another student, such as allowing their work to be copied or submitted for assessment.
- **Duplication of work** refers to presenting the same work for multiple assessment components or curriculum requirements, without creating new or original work.
- **Copying** is taking someone else's work, with or without their knowledge, and submitting it as one's own.

- **Cheating** is any behavior that gives a student an unfair advantage, such as communicating with another student during an assessment, bringing unauthorized materials into an examination room, or consulting such materials during an examination.
- **Paraphrasing** without acknowledging sources is the act of rephrasing something written or spoken in one's own words without giving proper credit or attribution to the original source.

*Adapted from The IB Diploma Programme publication “Academic integrity” (2019) and “The IB programme continuum of international education Effective Citing and Referencing” (2022)*

### **Academic Misconduct Procedure**

1. **Restorative conversation:** The teacher will engage in a restorative conversation with the student, encouraging the student to take responsibility for their actions, discuss the impact of their actions on others and the community, and identify ways to repair the harm caused.
2. **Parent/Guardian Communication:** The teacher will inform the parents/guardians of the situation and invite them to participate in the restorative process.
3. **Redo the assignment:** The student will be required to redo the assignment with guidance and support to ensure the work is original and authentic. The teacher will provide further instruction and feedback to help the student understand and avoid academic misconduct.
4. **Reinforce Academic Integrity:** The teacher will reinforce/re-teach academic integrity by providing further guidance and instruction to the student and the class.
5. **Documentation:** The incident will be documented in the student’s academic file, including a description of the misconduct, the steps taken to address it, and any follow-up actions.
6. **Repeated or Serious Misconduct:** In cases of repeated or serious academic misconduct, the administration will be notified and may take further action in consultation with the teacher and parents/guardians.

# Student Attendance

Punctuality and regular attendance is important for students and 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. In accordance with the school's policy, students are not to miss more than 30 school days, whether excused or unexcused. Students who miss more than 30 days may not be offered re-enrolment for the coming academic year or be asked to repeat the grade level.

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 an email 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, attendance at a funeral, religious holidays, legal matters, and other emergencies or unusual circumstances as approved by the school's administration upon the family's written request.
- ★ **Unexcused absences** include illness without a medical note for absences longer than 2 days, 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 written email, including the reason for early dismissal. Phone calls are not accepted.

***Permission to leave early from school must be received before 13:00 so that arrangements for permission and the service bus company (if necessary) can be arranged.***

Students need to collect a signed note from their school leadership team giving them permission to leave. This note is needed to show security at the gate. Acceptable reasons for early departure include illness, an urgent appointment, or an emergency.

## Punctuality

Lateness 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.

## Students after School

- ★ Students may not stay after school for a planned activity or event without permission.



- ★ After School Activities (ASA's) and coaching sessions should be permitted by parents.
- ★ Teachers may need to remind students of these activities so that they get there on time.
- ★ Any student staying at school after dismissal needs to be under supervision - either at an ASA/Coaching or directly supervised by a parent or other adult.
- ★ Students may not play on the playground equipment if they are not being directly supervised by a parent or other adult.
- ★ Any unsupervised students need to be placed in the lobby, under the supervision of the receptionist, till a parent collects them.

## Student Council

MEF IS Student Council is a decision making body whose aim is to support the school's mission statement by:

- ★ promoting a culture of collaboration and action throughout the school community
- ★ promoting initiatives that raise an awareness of local and global issues
- ★ providing a democratic forum in which students can address those school related issues which affect their lives
- ★ maintaining open communication between students and school staff
- ★ helping develop school pride and a sense of community through fun, meaningful and spirited activities!

## PART 4: PARENTS

### 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.
- ★ 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 to make choices that may not be aligned with their religious or moral values outside of school.
- ★ Meet 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.

# Communication

Timely and respectful communication between home and school is essential to keep all in our community informed and to support teaching and learning; it is also essential to establishing and maintaining positive and open relationships based on trust and mutual understanding. There are a number of communication channels the school uses including direct contact between individual staff and individual students/families: Toddle, email, telephone, school newsletters, school websites, SMS, meetings, and language ambassadors.

In all areas of concern or query we encourage parents to speak to the person of interest straight away.

The lines of communication are:

- ★ Speak to the teacher or staff member responsible (e.g. class teacher or specialist).
- ★ Speak to the Deputy Principal if you are not satisfied with the answers you got.
- ★ Speak to the Principal if you still have questions or concerns.
- ★ 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 Counselor.

We kindly ask our parents to follow this communication process to ensure clear and consistent dialogue between the school and families.

## Appointments

MEF IS kindly requests that parents make appointments when wishing to meet with staff. Making an appointment ensures staff are available and prepared to address your needs in the meeting. The best way to facilitate an appointment is to send an email directly to the staff member, except in the case of the Principal; for meetings with the Principal, please contact the Principal's Assistant Ms. Sevilay Kizkayasi ([kiskayasis@mefis.k12.tr](mailto:kiskayasis@mefis.k12.tr)) who will gladly help in this process. In the message, please indicate a few suitable dates and times for meeting and convey as specifically as possible the points you wish to discuss.

## Emails:

The Primary and Secondary community will receive regular emails from the leadership and teaching teams regarding student achievement, events and activities.

## Web Resources:

**Website:** The MEF IS website has extensive information on the School and its programs that parents might wish to access from time to time. The direct link to the website is: <https://www.mefis.k12.tr/istanbul/>

## SMS:

MEF IS uses a short message service (SMS) to send announcements to our community. Examples of messages include reminders for important events, school closures due to inclement weather, and emergency or otherwise urgent transmissions. The messages are sent to parents/guardians via text messaging and therefore it is important to share any changes to your mobile number with MEF IS.

**Toddle:**

All parents and teachers need to have access to the Toddle Apps (teacher app or family app) or web version of Toddle. Toddle is the one stop shop for most of the organisation of the Primary School. It is used for:

- ★ Messaging between teachers and parents.
- ★ A weekly newsletter style announcement from the principal every Friday.
- ★ Learning Ahead announcements from teachers each Friday.
- ★ Regular Learning Sharing in the Class Journal from teachers.
- ★ Other important announcements from the principal, deputy principal, PYP coordinator and teachers.
- ★ Curriculum guides and unit overviews from the PYP coordinator and teachers.
- ★ Sharing of Progress Reports at the end of each semester.

**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.

**Social Media:**

MEF IS provides reminders and updates about upcoming events and happenings in the school. If you would like to be informed of MEF IS moments, we make posts to our SM pages most weekdays to share what is happening in our community. Please follow us and keep up to date with our happenings.

- ★ **Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/mefisistanbul>
- ★ **Twitter:** <https://twitter.com/mefisk12tr>
- ★ **Instagram:** <https://www.instagram.com/mefisk12tr/>
- ★ **Linkedin:** <https://www.linkedin.com/company/mefisk12tr/>
- ★ **YouTube:** <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCo6i7FpWntKK9mtjrBR87OQ>

## MEF IS Communication Matrix

Communication	Purpose	From School	From Parents
<b>Toddle</b>	Sharing of information, questions and learning.	Teachers aim to respond within 24 hours during a school week.	We welcome you to contact us.
<b>Emails</b>	Information relating to individual students	Teachers aim to respond within 24 hours during a school week.	We welcome you to contact us.
<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>Parent-Teacher and Three way led conferences</b>	Information about individual student's learning	On 2 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>Language Ambassadors</b>	Parent support	Contact the PR Coordinator	Parent volunteers

# Home Learning

Home learning at MEF IS should be an integral part of the learning experience. The parameters for assigning home learning should be consistently followed by all stakeholders.

- ★ Home learning reinforces the knowledge and skills acquired in school.
- ★ It promotes the development of good independent study habits and effective time management.
- ★ It can be used as an important means to keeping families informed about their children's progress and the school's instructional programmes.

Learning can take place anytime, anywhere. Home learning 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.

- ★ **What?** Home learning may consist of reading, spelling, math or current unit of inquiry work. Teachers, students and parents are partners in learning and lines of communication are always open. Home learning may be tailored to suit individual learning needs.
- ★ **When?** Each homeroom teacher will communicate how home learning will take place.
- ★ **How?** Home learning will be communicated through Toddle and explained to your child during class time.
- ★ **How much?** Home learning duration times given are approximate as all students work at different speeds and will find tasks to be of varying difficulty.

**Toddle:** All Students and parents are encouraged to look at Toddle Learning Portfolios each week and discuss the learning that has been uploaded. This process encourages students to think about their learning, consolidate their understanding and communicate effectively what they have learnt.

**Grade 4 and 5:** Students are expected to read independently for at least 20 minutes each night and engage in Mathematical platforms such as Mathletics to practice times tables or review Maths concepts. Teachers may also assign weekly spelling or occasional UOI tasks.

**Grade 2 and 3:** Students will be encouraged to read each day or be read to for at least 15 minutes. Mathematical platforms such as Mathletics or Zearn should be used regularly to practice basic facts, times tables or review Mathematical concepts. Teachers may also assign weekly spelling or occasional UOI tasks.

**Kindergarten and Grade 1:** Students will be encouraged to read each day or be read to for at least 10 minutes each day. Phonics, spelling and basic facts may be set by Homeroom Teachers each week. Occasional UOI tasks may also be given to support the classroom programme.

**Preschool and Pre-Kindergarten:** Parents will be encouraged to read to their children every night. This reading may also be in the child's home language. Preschool and Pre-Kindergarten classes are not given home learning. The class teacher will keep parents informed about the learning happening in class via Toddle.

# Parent-Teacher Associations (PTA)

MEF IS has an active Parent Teacher Association (PTA) whose aim is to foster a strong sense of community, positive relationships, and school involvement. The PTA plans fundraising events for charities and non-profits, provides useful services for the school community, contributes to planned school events, and promotes open communication between families and the school.

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).

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.



## PART 5: TECHNOLOGY

### 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 2 use a bank of iPads provided by the school, and our Grade 3 to 5 students bring their own so we have a one-to-one ratio.

### Responsible Use of Technology

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.

#### 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 home learning, 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 the 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.

# Electronic Device Rules

- ★ iPads may only be used during a lesson when a teacher is assigning an activity or work
- ★ Students may not use their iPads during break times or lunch.
- ★ Students may not use them to play video games or for social media during school hours.
- ★ Cell phones must stay in their lockers and are not to be used during the school day.
- ★ If a teacher sees a student misusing their iPad or cell phone, they will give it to the Deputy Principal

# Expectations for Student iPad Use

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

- ★ Always follow teacher instructions regarding the use of the iPads. This could be your classroom teacher, or even another teacher in the corridor.
- ★ 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.
- ★ Keep the iPad on mute. Unless your teacher gives you permission, keep your iPad on mute. You may bring earbud headphones if you wish.
- ★ 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.
- ★ You need to come to school with your iPad fully charged.
- ★ Take photo / video footage with the permission of the people involved.
- ★ You will not be using your iPad for every class, every day. Take out your iPad when asked to do so by your teacher.
- ★ 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!
- ★ Be responsible and use the iPad for learning. You are not permitted to use your iPad during 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 to 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. Students can only send and receive email within the community of MEF IS between grades PS to Grade 5 and are not allowed to send or receive any emails 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.

## Toddle

The student online learning platform is Toddle. Students can receive learning tasks on Toddle, complete and upload learning, have their learning assessed and if online learning is taking place, join a google meet for each class via Toddle.

## PART 6: 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. It is the responsibility of all teachers to make sure that each student is exposed to teaching and learning that reaches them as individual learners (Learning diversity and inclusion in IB Programmes, 2016).

The Student Support Department consists of two support focuses: Literacy Support (LS) and Counseling. The specialists from these areas work with teachers and students to provide the most effective learning environment for all students. Our school also has an English Language Learning (ELL) Department, which supports students' needs in developing their abilities in learning English as an additional language.

### Learning Support

The Student 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 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 student support team works closely with classroom teachers, and is skilled in differentiation to meet the students' learning needs.

### Counseling Support

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

The **Counselor** 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, Social and Health Education (PSHE) classes. The counsellor also works with individual children who may need personal or social support, and is a member of the school Student Support Team.

# English Language Learning

During the admissions process, the English proficiency of incoming students is assessed to determine whether they may access the curriculum effectively. Students who are determined to be English Language Learners receive support from English language specialists from Kindergarten to Grade 5. Specialists use a variety of methodologies prioritizing in-class support when possible. ELL teachers work in the classroom with individuals or small groups depending on circumstances in the classroom. All homeroom teachers and specialists are also viewed as ELL specialists, who are able to differentiate communication.

## PART 7: HEALTH AND SAFETY

### Health Services

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. b

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.

### 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.

## PART 8: MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

### Food and Catering

MEF IS provides food for students throughout the school day. Students are offered 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, or dried fruit, sushi, baked goods, or cheese and crackers. We are a no nut school due to nut allergies with some of our students. Importantly we are a healthy school that promotes a healthy learning environment, therefore we do not allow chips, candy, or other sweets at our school. We also do not allow food sharing between students.

### School Bus Service

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 IS' 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 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.
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 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 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.



## Driving on Campus

Families and staff 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 children to school we encourage our families to “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.

## Arrival and Dismissal Information

### Arrival Information

To ensure a smooth arrival process, please adhere to the following guidelines:

- Students arriving by car and bus should enter through the lower gate and proceed up the hill to the MEF IS building for drop-off.
- Students arriving on foot should be dropped off at the top gate where a teacher is on duty.
- Please note that students arriving by car must not be dropped off at the top gate as this creates a safety hazard.
- The drop-off time is between 7:30 and 7:50, with school beginning promptly at 7:50. We expect students to be at school on time for registration and to have had breakfast at home before coming to school. Upon arriving between 7:30-7:50, all students are to go to the lower ECC playground where they will be supervised and taken to their homerooms at 7:50.

### Dismissal Information

At the end of the school day, please follow these guidelines for pick-up:

- School finishes at 2:50 pm, and teachers will take the students to the parent pick-up area by 3:00 pm.
- Parents should park their cars in the lower car park, walk up, and wait at the stairs between the national Middle and Primary school.
- Students who walk home are escorted by a teacher to the top gate, from where parents can collect them.
- Bus students are assisted by teachers and will leave school at 3:00 pm.

### Changes in Dismissal Plans

If you need to change your child's dismissal plans, please inform Reception at [reception@mefis.k12.tr](mailto:reception@mefis.k12.tr) before 1:00 PM. Any requests received after this time cannot be accommodated to ensure systematic processes and the safety of our students. Please note that students are not permitted to take other buses. If a child is requested to go home with another family, both families must share this agreement with Reception.

## Lost and Found

Please see the Principal's Assistant Ms. Sevilay Kizkayasi ([kizkayasis@mefis.k12.tr](mailto:kizkayasis@mefis.k12.tr)) about any lost or found items. The school is not responsible for lost or damaged student property.

## PART 9: APPENDIX

### Primary Daily Timetable 2023-24

Purpose	Begins	Ends
Morning Drop-Off	07:30	07:50
Registration	07:50	08:00
Period 1	08:00	08:40
Period 2	08:45	09:25
Period 3	09:30	10:10
Breakfast	10:10	10:40
Period 4	10:40	11:20
Period 5	11:25	12:05
Period 6	12:10	12:50
Period 6	12:50	13:30
Period 7	13:30	14:10
Period 8	14:15	14:50
Dismissal / Pick-up	14:50	15:00
Buses Depart	15:00	

# Academic Calendar 2023-24



**MEF International School**  
180 School Days

	Teacher Days
	Special Days
	Holidays

AUGUST - 3 Days						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

**Aug 1** Administration begins  
**Aug 7** New Teacher Orientation begins  
**Aug 14** Returning Teachers begin  
**Aug 24-25** IB Student Days  
**Aug 25** Family Orientation  
**Aug 28** First Day of School  
**Aug 30** Victory Day

SEPTEMBER - 20 Days						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

**Sep 7** PTA Back to School Night  
**Sep 29** PD Day - No School

OCTOBER - 17 Days						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

**Oct 18-19** Parent-Teacher Conferences  
**Oct 23-27** Autumn Break  
**Oct 29** Republic Day

NOVEMBER - 22 Days						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

DECEMBER - 11 Days						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

**Dec 18-29** Winter Break

JANUARY - 22 Days						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

**Jan 1** Winter Break Continues  
**Jan 15** Semester 2 begins

FEBRUARY - 16 Days						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29			

**Feb 19-23** MEF IS Holiday

MARCH - 21 Days						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

**Mar 11-22** IB2 Mock Exams  
**Mar 25-29** Accreditation Visit

APRIL - 16 Days						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

**Apr 3-4** Parent-Teacher Conferences  
**Apr 8-12** Spring Break  
**Apr 10-12** Ramazan Bayram  
**Apr 23** Children's Day

MAY - 22 Days						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

**May 1** Labour Day  
**May 19** Youth and Sports Day

JUNE - 10 Days						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

**June 1** Fun Day  
**June 14** Last Day / Final Reports Cards  
**June 16-19** Kurban Bayram  
**June 21** Last Day for Teachers  
**June 28** Last Day for Administration

# Events Calendar 2023-24

*\*DRAFT - All dates are subject to change.*

MONTH	EVENT	RESPONSIBLE
<b>August</b>	<b>1</b> Admin begins	Admin
	<b>7</b> New Teacher Orientation begins	Admin
	<b>14</b> Returning Teachers begin	Admin
	<b>25</b> Family Orientation	Admin and Teachers
	<b>28</b> First day of school	Everyone
	<b>30</b> Victory Day - no school	N/A
	<b>31</b> PS Club Selections	Deputy Principal
<b>September</b>	<b>4-26</b> Baseline Assessment Window	PYP Coordinator
	<b>5</b> Season 1 Clubs Begins	Deputy Principal
	<b>8</b> Curriculum Guides sent to parents	PYP Coordinator
	<b>8</b> PTA Back-to-school evening	PTA
	<b>11</b> Student Council Elections	Deputy Principal
	<b>13</b> House Day 1	House Captains
	<b>18</b> PYP Open House 1	PYP Coordinator
	<b>21-22</b> Grade 5 Camp	Deputy Principal
	<b>26</b> Grade 4 Assembly	Grade 4
	<b>27</b> Coffee Morning 1	Principal
	<b>29-30</b> PD Day	Admin

<b>October</b>	<b>4</b> PTA General Assembly	PTA
	<b>9-13</b> UN Day	Events Committee
	<b>18-19</b> Parent Teacher Conferences	PYP Coordinator & Deputy Principal
	<b>17-19</b> Class and Individual Photos	SLT
	<b>23-27</b> Autumn Break	No School
	<b>31</b> Halloween	Student Council
<b>November</b>	<b>6-10</b> Hour of Code Week	ICT Teacher
	<b>7</b> PYP Talk 1	PYP Coordinator
	<b>13-17</b> Spirit Week	Student Council
	<b>15</b> Grade 5 Assembly	Grade 5
	<b>17</b> House Day 2	House Captains
	<b>21</b> Season 2 Clubs Begins	Deputy Principal
	<b>24</b> Teacher Appreciation Day	Student Council & PTA
	<b>29</b> Coffee Morning 2	Principal
<b>December</b>	<b>13</b> Winter Concert & Bazaar	PA teacher & PTA (Bazaar)
	<b>15</b> Early closure (12:00pm)	Admin
	<b>18- Jan 1</b> Winter Break	No School
<b>January</b>	<b>1-2</b> Winter Break cont.	No School
	<b>2-19</b> Report card writing	PYP Coordinator
	<b>11</b> STEAM Fair	School Counselor
	<b>15</b> Semester 2 begins	N/A
	<b>19</b> Talent Show	PYP Coordinator

	<b>23</b> Season 3 Clubs Begins	Deputy Principal
	<b>24</b> Report Cards sent home	Admin
	<b>30</b> House Day 3	House Captains
<b>February</b>	<b>6</b> Safer Internet Day	ICT Teacher
	<b>6</b> PYP Open House 2	PYP Coordinator
	<b>9</b> International Day / Mother tongue day	MFL
	<b>14</b> Grade 3 Assembly	Grade 3
	<b>19-23</b> MEF IS Holiday	No School
<b>March</b>		
	<b>5</b> Coffee Morning 3	Principal
	<b>8</b> Yearbook Deadline	All staff
	<b>12</b> Grade 2 Assembly	Grade 2
	<b>14</b> World Mathematics Day	?
	<b>15</b> House Day 4	House Captains
	<b>22</b> PYP Talk 2	PYP Coordinator
	<b>23-29</b> IB/CIS/NEASC Visit	Principal & PYP Coordinator
	<b>28-29</b> Art Exhibition	Arts Teacher
	<b>29</b> School Production	Performing Arts Teacher
<b>April</b>	<b>3-4</b> Student-led conferences	PYP Coordinator & Deputy Principal
	<b>8-12</b> Spring Break	No School
	<b>16</b> Season 4 Clubs Begins	Deputy Principal
	<b>17-18</b> Graduation Photos	Admin

	<b>19</b> Earth Day / Unplugged Day	Student Council & Homeroom teachers
	<b>23</b> Children's Day	No School
	<b>22-26</b> Reading Week	Literacy Specialist
<b>May</b>	<b>1</b> Labour Day	No School
	<b>2-16</b> End of Year Benchmark Window	PYP Coordinator
	<b>7-10</b> Space Camp (G4)	Deputy Principal
	<b>10</b> Grade 1 Assembly	Grade 1
	<b>13-31</b> Report Card Writing	Admin
	<b>17</b> House Day 5 (Sports Day)	House Captains
	<b>19</b> Youth and Sports Day	
<b>June</b>	<b>2</b> Fun Day (Sunday)	Admin
	<b>6</b> PYP Exhibition	Grade 5 Teachers & PYP Coordinator
	<b>7</b> Kindergarten Graduation and Grade 5 Graduation	Deputy Principal & Kylee
	<b>11</b> Grade 5 Taster Day	Admin
	<b>11</b> KG Parent transition meeting	KG & Grade 1 Teachers
	<b>13</b> PS Picnic (Polonezkoy)	Deputy Principal
	<b>14</b> Last day for students (12:00pm)	Admin
	<b>16-19</b> Kurban Bayram	N/A
	<b>21</b> Last day for teachers	All staff
	<b>28</b> Last day for Admin	Admin