

# ISD

**INTERNATIONAL  
SCHOOL OF  
DÜSSELDORF**

**SINCE 1968**

**Elementary  
School**

**A world-class  
education, for  
whatever your  
child may do**





## **Welcome to the ISD Elementary School**

### **Re-imagining education in a fast-moving world**

Historically, standardised education prepared students to become productive workers for an industrialised society. Today, we live in exponentially changing times where diversity and creativity are highly valued. We cannot predict what the future holds for our students, but we expect that they will live in a very different world; a world that is digitally connected, where all knowledge is available within seconds. Schools must re-evaluate what they do to ensure they remain relevant to the needs of all students. Our goal at ISD is to inspire our students to become self-directed learners, creative thinkers, and compassionate global citizens, who can flourish in a dynamic world.

On the following pages, you will find examples of our students experiencing the richness of learning found in our elementary school. They represent only a small sample of what takes place at ISD every day, but we hope they will begin to show you the ISD difference. We look forward to welcoming you and your family to our community.

### **Frank Tschan**

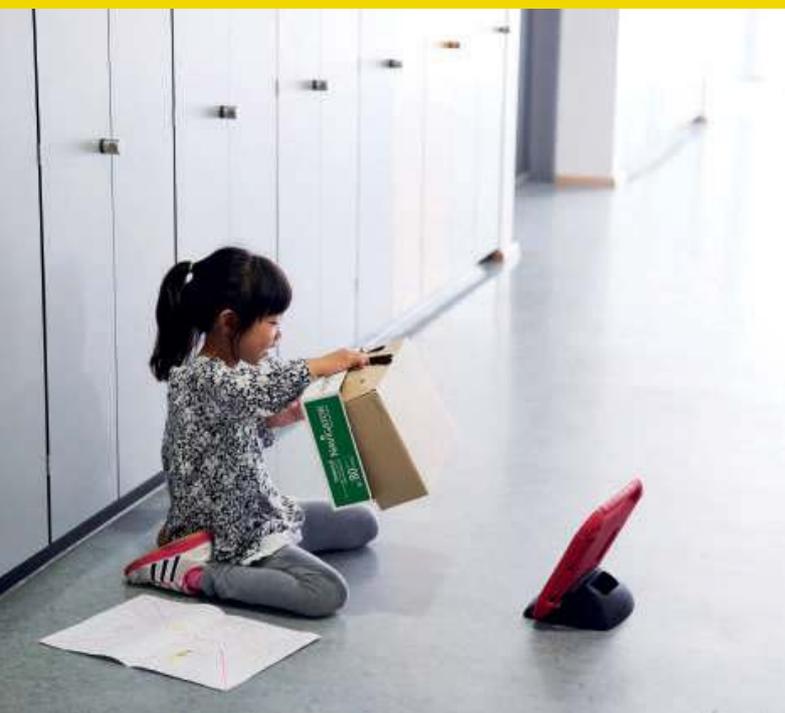
Director



## Meet Yulha

### A glimpse into grade 1

In first grade at ISD, Yulha and her classmates spent a day at the Wild Park in Grafenberger Wald where they visited animals in their natural habitats. Back at school, Yulha chose to learn more about owls. She wrote and illustrated a book titled 'All About Owls', and used Puppet Pals software to create an animated video from her book. She then recorded a podcast about owls, and narrated a webcast for her class to explain podcasts to families of first graders.





### Exploring interests

Yulha talks about her projects in an excited rush of words, and is keen to pull out her book and iPad to show her work. She's thrilled to share all she has learned about owls and their habitats. Having choices in school makes her learning engaging and fun.

### Digging deeper

Yulha's projects were part of her PYP Unit of Inquiry called 'Sharing the Planet'. Units of Inquiry allow ISD students to explore concepts in-depth over time and across traditional school subjects. They challenge children, helping them naturally build critical skills in research, writing, illustration and presentation, while providing opportunities for independent and collaborative work.



### Fostering skills and confidence

Creating computer animations, podcasts and webcasts integrates technology into the school curriculum in practical ways.

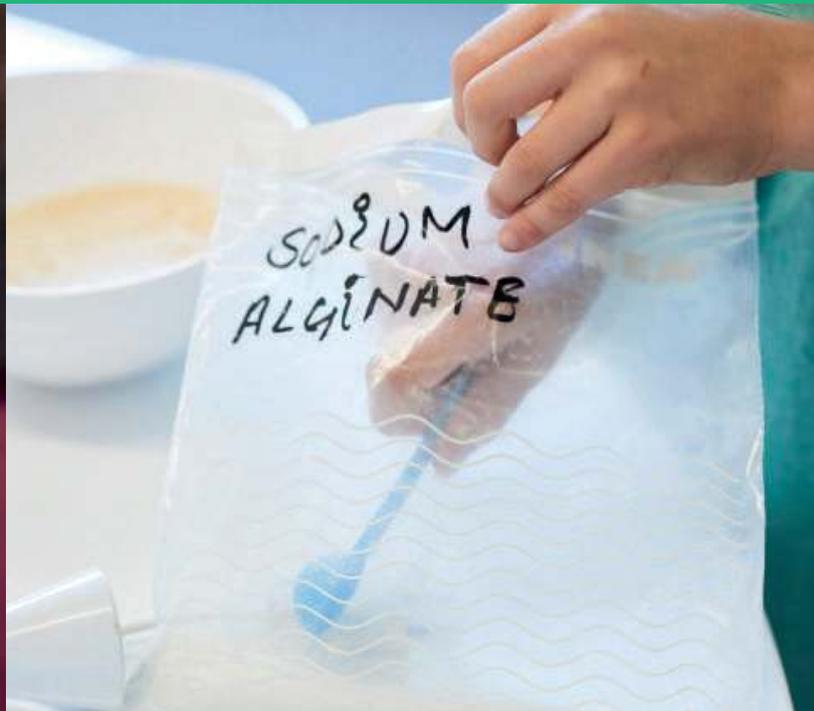
Yulha's teachers construct her activities very thoughtfully, using progressive methods and technologies.

But Yulha doesn't really think about all that. School is lots of fun, she says, and she just loves being in first grade!

## Meet Lotta, Kumail and Elena

### Ideas bubbling up through teamwork

In grade 4 at ISD, students study how access to resources determines opportunities. Through a PYP Unit of Inquiry, they explore the availability and distribution of water; stakeholders' power to create change; the conflicts around water as a resource; and how access to usable water affects lives. One activity is 'The Water Project', in which teams choose a water-connected issue and design and execute a project for an exhibition.





### Edible water bubbles

Lotta, Kumail and Elena's team chose an issue affecting humans and animals. "People use too much plastic and it gets into oceans," Lotta says. "Billions of plastic bottles each year, and it's very dangerous for sea animals." They decided to research environmentally friendly alternatives to plastic packaging. Kumail learned of edible water bubbles, blob-like water containers made from sodium alginate gel, a seaweed extract.

### Hands-on inquiry

"We researched recipes and ordered the ingredients online," Kumail explains. The team, after several attempts, was able to create bubbles that held water. Elena says, "they're all edible because on the outside they're gel and in the inside is water. But they didn't taste so good." Lotta laughs. "When we showed them to eighth grade, everyone spat them out. Apple juice was better."



### Making connections

The team is optimistic that the idea can eventually succeed, and perhaps reduce the amount of plastic going into the world's seas. It is very important, they have concluded from their inquiries, to remember animals and the environment as well as people when considering the issues around global access to water.

## The Grade 5 Experience

At ISD, the final year of elementary school offers plenty to get excited about.

In the fifth grade learning community, students and teachers work collaboratively in a purpose-built, flexible learning environment. Through collaborative planning, instruction and assessment, all teachers facilitate the learning of all students. Students experience the tangible benefits of co-teaching, and they love being part of a dynamic community and working with a team of caring adults with varied perspectives and styles.

The curriculum in fifth grade at ISD is exciting too. As students near the end of the IB Primary Years Programme, their inquiries and investigations grow more sophisticated, and their opportunities for autonomy and choice expand.

The PYP Exhibition is a special opportunity for students to make a sophisticated in-depth exploration of a topic of their choice, practising transdisciplinary skills while taking their learning in individual directions.

Many ISD students say that the freedom to explore their passions is their favorite aspect of fifth grade. Let's meet three of them and hear what they chose to explore.

## Ethan Man on the Moon

"I watched the movie Apollo 13, and became interested in space. I researched how the Apollo project worked and gave a presentation called 'Missions, Rockets and Infrastructure: How humans put men on the moon'. I made my presentation and built a rocket. I liked working on something I cared about."



## Ananya Rhine River Flooding

"I chose this because it was local, and the flooding affected many people. I learned how floods happen. It's not just rain; it's global warming, snow melting in the Alps, and clearing trees from the river-bank. Making my video took me a long time and was very complicated. I'm really proud of myself."



## Avidan Passion for Fashion

"I'm very interested in fashion and celebrities. I showed how celebrities like Lady Gaga change the world of fashion. I used all my skills, like researching skills and self-management skills. One of my favorite parts was creating my displays. I like that we have so much choice of what we're learning and we can work with so many people."



## What to expect at the ISD Elementary School

The belief that every child should be supported to flourish, whatever their abilities, interests or needs may be, is at the heart of everything we do at ISD. We prepare our students to become self-directed, lifelong learners, who demonstrate respect for individualism and diversity and behave as compassionate global citizens. At the same time, we recognise that children learn most effectively when they are free to be imaginative and encouraged to connect with their passions. These values are central to the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (PYP), which serves as our curriculum framework. No matter what it is your child loves, or how they prefer to learn, they will discover a caring, supportive and exciting learning environment at ISD.



**Steve Barratt**  
Principal

### Why are non-standardised approaches to teaching and learning favoured at ISD?

Standardised approaches to teaching and learning reduce differences rather than enhance individual human talents. At ISD we do not think 'one size fits all' and we believe every child is unique and learns differently. ISD is a school that nurtures individual differences and empowers every student to learn in a way that best works for them. This often involves working as a team to provide multiple approaches to learning.

### What are the objectives of collaborative teaching and learning?

Effective collaboration is an essential part of today's society. Education is a social endeavour involving the exchange and elaboration of ideas and understanding – it requires social interaction. We firmly believe that by working together, we can achieve more than we can alone, as everyone benefits from sharing inquiries, experiences, and providing constructive feedback. The goal of co-teaching is to use the shared expertise of teams of teachers to create innovative, inclusive and flexible learning programmes that identify and address the individual needs of all students.



### **How does flexible use of time and space help students gain more from their learning?**

There can be no doubt that our environment can affect our behaviour. Today we need spaces that are able to respond flexibly to the different needs of learners whilst inspiring them to be creative and collaborative.

Walking around the ISD elementary school, you won't find yesterday's rigid classrooms and rows of fixed desks with all students occupied with identical tasks. You will find instead thoughtfully planned spaces that encourage flexibility. Easily

configurable furniture. Walls and tables for teams to write on. Collaboration spaces and quiet spaces.

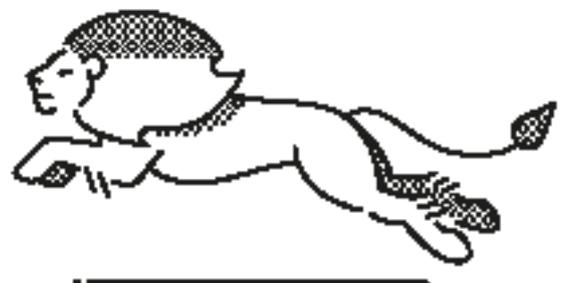
Our teachers use these spaces and flexible scheduling to support children's different styles of learning and provide choices in the ways learners interact with each other.

## Outdoor Learning Environments (OLE)

At ISD, we're passionate about outdoor learning. The gardens are flexible learning spaces with tunnels, hills, quiet corners and open spaces. Outdoor learning extends learning beyond the classroom walls, offering children an alternative environment free of traditional boundaries.

The outdoor learning program at ISD has been developing over the last ten years, and our extensive outdoor environments have been designed with the same care and attention paid to indoor environments to provide rich, diverse, multi-sensory experiences. We are the only international school in Europe to have developed outdoor learning to such an extent.





# The IB Primary Years Programme

## A curriculum framework for students aged 3 to 12

The PYP transdisciplinary framework focuses on the development of the whole child as an inquirer, both at school and beyond. Informed by research into how students learn, how educators teach, and the principles and practice of effective assessment, the programme places a powerful emphasis on inquiry-based learning.

Schools offering the PYP framework develop students' academic, social and emotional wellbeing, focusing on international-mindedness and strong personal values. The PYP nurtures independent learning skills, encouraging every student to take responsibility for their learning. The programme incorporates local and global issues into the curriculum, asking students to look at six related, transdisciplinary themes and to consider the links between them. The themes include 'who we are', 'where we are in place and time' and 'how the world works'.

The PYP aims to help students develop the skills, knowledge and attitudes they need to excel not only in their studies, but also in their personal growth. PYP students are well prepared for the next stage of education, including participation in the IB Middle Years Programme (MYP).

“The PYP and the International School of Düsseldorf share the belief that every child has the potential to learn, as an individual and as part of a learning community. The beauty of the PYP is that it is designed to meet the various needs, interests and abilities of different children.”

**Christopher Coker**  
Teacher and PYP Coordinator

Source: [www.ibo.org](http://www.ibo.org)



# We are ISD Elementary School



## School Day

- 3-year-old programme from 8:40 to 15:00
- Reception from 8:40 to 15:00
- Preparatory, grades 1–5 from 8:40 to 15:45

## Curriculum

- International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (PYP)
- 9-day scheduling cycle
- Block scheduling: Language, Maths, Units of Inquiry, German, Music, Art, PE, Outdoor Learning
- Integrated use of technology – one-to-one iPad programme

## Home-School Connections

- Technology-enabled continuous communication – Book Creator, Class Blogs
- Year-long feedback cycle: Getting-to-know-you meetings, Student-Led Conferences, Progress Conferences, ES Reports
- Parent Consultative Group

## Special Services

- Onsite health services
- Access to personal counseling for all students
- Individualised learning support to help students meet their potential
- English as an Additional Language (EAL) support to acquire linguistic competence

## Extracurricular Programmes

- Student Council – grades 3, 4 and 5
- After school activities
- Competitive sporting organisations
- Private music lessons
- Mother tongue language programmes
- Grades 2–5 choirs
- Bands and string ensembles
- Elementary theatre production

## Nationalities





We inspire our students to be confident, creative and critical thinkers. We work together to challenge and support our students to be successful and responsible in an evolving world. We are an international community of learners.

**International School  
of Düsseldorf e.V.**

Niederrheinstraße 336  
40489 Düsseldorf, Germany  
info@isdedu.de  
T +49 (0) 211 94 06-6  
www.isdedu.de

Accreditation:  
Council of International Schools  
International Baccalaureate Organization  
New England Association of Schools & Colleges  
State of North Rhine-Westphalia,  
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