



# Parent-Student Handbook

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UNIVERSITY *of* CAMBRIDGE  
International Examinations

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Cambridge International School

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## Introduction and Contacting the School

The purpose of the Parent-Student Handbook is to provide information about the school's guidelines and procedures.

While the information in this Handbook is extensive it does not cover everything that happens in school. Parents and students should ask questions of the teachers or the school office if they are not clear about procedures.

Our office hours are from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. and we can be contacted at the following:

International School of Ulm/Neu-Ulm  
Schwabenstraße 25  
89231 Neu-Ulm  
Germany

Tel. +49 731 / 379 353-0  
Fax +49 731 / 379 353-50  
E-Mail: [info@is-ulm.de](mailto:info@is-ulm.de)  
URL: <http://www.is-ulm.de>

## School Mission and Guiding Philosophy

### Mission

The International School of Ulm/Neu-Ulm aims to provide an inspirational learning environment and educational program which develops its students' individual capabilities to the fullest, prepares them for entry into the leading international universities, and helps them to become responsible world citizens in attitude and action.

### Guiding Philosophy

Teaching and learning at ISU is centered on the principles of the IB Learner Profile, promoting a love of learning and helping our students become globally-minded life-long learners who 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 analyze 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.

*(IBO, 2013. The IB Learner Profile Booklet. Cardiff: International Baccalaureate.)*

<b>Educational Programs</b>
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**Curriculum Overview**

Through the incorporation of the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program (IBPYP) the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) and the Diploma Program (IBDP), ISU offers an international curriculum that focuses on modern practices in education. The table below shows the school's educational program structure.

UPPER SCHOOL	UPPER SCHOOL	IB Diploma (Abitur equivalent)	Grade 12
			Grade 11
		IGCSE (Mittlere Reife equivalent)	Grade 10
	Grade 9		
	MIDDLE SCHOOL		Grade 8
			Grade 7
			Grade 6
LOWER SCHOOL	PRIMARY YEARS PROGRAM		Grade 5
			Grade 4
			Grade 3
			Grade 2
			Grade 1
	EARLY YEARS PROGRAM (Ages 3 to 6)		EYP 3
			EYP 2
			EYP 1

The IB program provide for development of the whole child, through an integrated, inquiry-based approach to learning. The ISU curriculum is uniquely international and is focused on the total growth of the developing child. It encompasses social, physical, emotional, and cultural needs, in addition to academic welfare. The school publishes Program Guides for Parents which list further details about the curriculum.

## **Student Evaluation and Assessment**

Students and parents both need regular feedback on academic and social progress. Report cards and conferences are also a source of future goal setting and a celebration of effort and success. The ISU academic year is divided into two semesters with a written report card issued at the end of each. A formal parent-teacher conference is scheduled in the fall/autumn and a student-led portfolio-based conference is scheduled annually in the Lower School. Details of these events are published on the school's calendar. Results of external standardised tests for students are made available each summer.

## **Field Trips**

An effective educational program incorporates ongoing activities outside the classroom as well as within the immediate bounds of the school. Field Trips are an integral part of the educational experience. For Field Trips within the local community of Neu-Ulm and Ulm you will be asked to sign a general permission slip. For field trips outside of the greater Ulm/Neu-Ulm area, you will receive an informational letter and a field trip permission form which needs to be signed before your child can participate in a trip. Classroom teachers collect the permission slips and the money needed for the excursion. To facilitate this procedure, please provide your child with the exact amount of money in an envelope with your child's name on it. Students failing to return the signed permission slips will not be allowed to participate in a given field trip. Depending on the amount of supervision needed, parent volunteers may be requested to accompany the children on field trips.

Field trips are chosen with careful consideration of the educational program and do serve an educational purpose. Should parents decide not to permit their child to participate in a field trip, they are required to keep their child at home or provide alternative supervision.

## **After School Activities (ASAPs)**

The school offers a variety of after school activities spanning a range of interests. Throughout the year, there are several after-school activities available, usually running from 3:45 p.m. to 4:45 p.m. These activities will be advertised in advance and sign-up forms will be distributed to parents and students. A minimum of 7 students must be registered for the ASAP to be offered.

## **Library/Media Center**

Students and teachers may use the Library/Media Center to sign out books, research, create presentations, watch videos, search the Internet and send e-mail. Please note that:

- All students in the school are entitled to use the library to check out books;
- Books may be borrowed for up to two weeks;
- Borrowed material may be renewed;
- If a student has an overdue book, additional books will not be allowed to be checked out until the overdue books are returned;
- Lost or damaged books will be charged at the full reimbursement price;
- Reference materials cannot be checked out;
- The library does not charge overdue fees.

## Parent Involvement and Communication

Regular and open communication between parents and the school will result in a positive partnership, which will form a strong basis on which to build each child's educational program. Should there be questions or concerns, please contact your child's homeroom or respective subject teacher. You may also contact us by e-mail at [info@is-ulm.de](mailto:info@is-ulm.de). Regular communication in regards to matters concerning parents will be handled via e-mail but we are also happy to mail specific documentation to you if needed.

### **Communication Book/Folder**

Lower School Homeroom teachers use a communication book/folder and/or email to send notes to the parents and for reading or homework assignments. Teachers check email or communication folders daily, but not always first thing in the morning. Please remember to date any notes sent to the school to avoid confusion and check your child's folder regularly for information from the school.

### **Newsletters**

A newsletter informing parents of various aspects of the school's operation is published regularly via email. Teachers will communicate with parents and students about their program of study, Field Trips to be taken, as well as any other aspects of the students' educational program either via e-mail or by letter.

### **Lower School Curriculum Updates: PYP Classroom and Curriculum News**

A curriculum update will be sent by email at the beginning of every Unit of Inquiry. This update will inform parents about the planned inquiry and learning in all subject areas.

### **Class Schedule**

The class timetable for your child will be sent home by the homeroom teacher at the beginning of the year. The schedule will show the times and names of specialist periods as appropriate (e.g. Music, Physical Education, German), and the times for those academic subjects which are scheduled on a weekly basis.

### **PTG**

The Parent Teacher Group (PTG) supports the school through activities which benefit the parents, children and ISU staff. The mission of the PTG entails welcoming new families, raising funds, organizing social events, and selecting members for the Community Advisory Teams (CAT). Every parent is welcome to participate in the activities of the PTG and they are encouraged to do so as it is a good way to get to know other parents. For questions about the PTG you are encouraged to contact the PTG president at: [ptg@is-ulm.de](mailto:ptg@is-ulm.de).

### **Volunteer Programs**

An extensive parent volunteer program is run to provide the school with much needed additional assistance in the classrooms, in the libraries, with student supervision in physical education, swimming, and with computers.

## **Concerns or Problems**

Should you have comments, questions, or concerns, please contact the staff member who is directly responsible first, usually your child's teacher.

You are welcome to speak to the Lower School Principal (Karma Rodriguez), to the Middle and Upper School Principal (Tony Bailey), or to the Director (Rob DeWolf) at any time. Before you ask for an appointment, please ensure that you have contacted and talked to the person responsible for your concerns and questions first.

## **Student Behavior**

### **ISU Behavior Philosophy**

Behavior at ISU begins with clear and consistent expectations in a safe and respectful environment of integrity, empathy, pride, and cooperation, which results in personal responsibility to our entire school and community.

### **ISU Code of Conduct**

Students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with guidelines which need to be followed both in school as well as traveling to and from school sponsored events and activities. We expect students to be responsible for their own behavior and not to interfere with the learning opportunities of others. We encourage students to exercise self-discipline and to respect the rights of others. Respect is expressed through the following expectations of behavior:

When we are at school we:

- Act in a polite and well-mannered way towards friends, teachers and visitors;
- Listen to others and follow directions;
- Use respectful language;
- Are principled, honest and trustworthy;
- Solve conflicts constructively;
- Respect other students as well as class property and take care of our own belongings;
- Take responsibility for our actions;
- Complete homework assignments to the best of our ability, and hand in work on time;
- Come to school prepared to work;
- Support our classmates in their learning;
- Are attentive in class and responsive to the directions of the teacher;
- Include everyone and demonstrate that we care about others;
- Walk at all times inside the building;
- Behave quietly in the hallways – others are at work;
- Keep the school tidy;
- Are welcoming and accepting of new members of the school community and include others by using a common language.

Parents will be informed of incidents when students constitute serious breaches of the Code of Conduct. The Principals and ultimately the Director will be responsible for the progression of disciplinary actions applied in each individual case.



### **Behavior Expectations**

ISU expects students to behave in a manner that reflects the school's values and its Code of Conduct. This includes the following considerations:

- Students are not allowed to bring large sums of money to school;
- Mobile phones, iPods, MP3 Players, etc. have to be turned off and kept inside the school bag while on school grounds, unless students are otherwise given permission to use them by a teacher;
- Scooters and Skateboards may be used as a method of transport to and from school; however, they are not to be used in the school building during the school day;
- Students are not allowed to bring the following to school: electronic games, (toy) weapons, or pocket knives;
- Bullying or teasing of others is not acceptable. Cases of bullying are reported to the Principal or the Director;
- Dangerous behavior, including the use or threat of physical violence, is treated extremely seriously at ISU;
- Alcohol, drugs and cigarettes are strictly prohibited. The school requires that there will be no smoking or drinking alcohol during school hours and on school premises. This also applies to all field trips and activities organized by the school.

In circumstances where students commit minor infractions of school rules, teachers are required to give appropriate consequences. In circumstances where students commit serious or repeated minor infractions of school rules, or display other forms of disobedient, disruptive, or unmanageable conduct, the Principal and/or the Director will be informed. The Director is empowered to suspend or, in extreme cases, to expel a student from school. In all cases of suspension or expulsion, the Director's decision will be final.

### **Behavior on Buses/Public Transportation**

In the interest of safety, students are expected to behave sensibly on buses/taxis and public transportation. They should remain seated at all times, wear a safety belt, and not interfere with the driver's task.

### **Behavior Using Computers**

Students are responsible for appropriate behavior on the school computer network. The network is provided to students to conduct research and to communicate with others. Access is a privilege, not a right and therefore entails responsibility.

Students are not to use the internet unless a teacher has given specific permission. Users of the computer network are responsible for their behavior and communication over both the Intranet and the Internet.

Students will be held responsible for their actions on the Internet and will be held accountable. The International School of Ulm/Neu-Ulm will assume no liability in the case of illegal activity on the part of the student. In particular, ISU expects its students to:

- Handle computers with care;
- Not eat or drink around computers;
- Clean up the computer area after each use;
- Report any computer related problems immediately;
- Use computers for school related tasks only;
- Save energy and follow ISU staff's instructions in how to do so; and
- Print documents only as authorized by a teacher.



### **Student Dress Code**

All clothes should be marked with the student's name. Clothing should be clean and free of offensive graphics or language, and large holes and tears. No caps are allowed indoors. Slogans and logos on T-shirts may not include vulgarity or references to violence, drugs or alcohol. In the Middle and Upper School, particular attention will be paid to children wearing clothes which are not revealing and do not distract from learning. Specifically, students cannot wear clothes with midriff showing, spaghetti straps, see through t-shirts/blouses/sweaters, shorts that are too short (must be at least mid-thigh in length), low hanging pants, etc.

Parents should expect that children will often do messy project work and that clothes may get glue and water based paint on them. An effort is made to ensure that the children wear protective covering (plastic smocks or dad's old shirts), but there will inevitably be spills and other accidents, which can stain or damage clothing. Clothing must also be appropriate for play outdoors which can also be messy. Lower School students are required to wear a change of shoes in the building (this helps to keep the school clean). In Physical Education classes (PE) students must wear a suitable non-scuff sole indoor shoe.

### **Student Council**

ISU has two Student Councils, one in the Lower School and a combined Middle and Upper School Student Council. The student council is supported by a teacher with the aims being to:

- Give students a forum for feedback on their learning environment;
- Empower and encourage students to take positive action within their school;
- Foster good communication skills.

## Health and Safety

### **Safety and Security**

ISU aims to provide a safe and caring environment for all community members. It is our foremost goal to raise safety and security awareness within our community as responsible behavior and attentiveness are the key factors in keeping accidents and other risks to a minimum. To help ensure a safe school environment, various safety drills are practiced throughout the year.

### **Accidents & Health**

Minor accidents involving bruises, cuts and stings are dealt with by the teachers or assistants. In the case of more serious injuries we will immediately contact you and take your child to a doctor's practice nearby or to the hospital. Please make sure that we have your emergency number (mobile or business number) and don't forget to inform us about changes in numbers.

### **Medication**

The school does not administer medication to students. Medicines, whether prescribed or non-prescribed should be administered to children by their parents. Parents are required to inform the school if a student brings medicine to school.

### **Illness and Contagious Diseases**

Because colds spread quickly, we advise you to keep your child at home until all signs of illness are clear and your child is able to participate in all school activities. Showing this consideration for classmates and teachers will help to maintain a healthy school environment. If your child is on medication or has had a difficult night, please inform the teacher as this may influence his/her performance at school.

If you suspect your child has contracted a contagious disease, such as chicken pox, measles, whooping cough, mumps, impetigo, please do the following:

- Visit the doctor to confirm the diagnosis;
- If confirmed please contact the school immediately and keep your child at home for the amount of days recommended by the doctor.

In the case of the outbreak in school of contagious or nuisance diseases, such as head lice, school will use its best judgment about when, whether, or how to notify parents. It will, however, abide by the notion that, where appropriate, it is better to share information than not. When school receives information about a child having contracted a serious contagious disease, we will communicate information to parents in the child's class. If there is a more serious outbreak school-wide the school will notify all parents.

## Procedures

### **Calendar**

The school calendar is published in advance of the upcoming school year. It will be available on the school's web site or from the office.

### **Arrival Times and School Hours**

Arrival time at ISU is between 8:00 and 8:30 am. At the end of instruction at 3:30 p.m., students can stay at school to attend After School Activities (ASAP Program) or to attend Homework Club or the After School Care Program (ASCP) until 5:00 pm. Outside these hours, children are under the responsibility of their parents.

Students in grades 1 – 10 are not allowed to enter the school building until 8:25 a.m. Before 8:25 a.m. parents whose children attend the EYP Program are kindly requested to bring their children directly to the classroom and to personally hand-over their child to the respective teacher.

Please note that there are early dismissals each Friday at 2:00 p.m. Teachers use Friday afternoons from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. for faculty meetings and for curriculum planning and development.

### **Optional Extended School Day**

As an additional service, we also provide child care between 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. This service is only available for children who have been registered and who have paid in advance. Please register in the office if you would like your child to come early or stay late. For details regarding fees please refer to our financial regulations.

### **Teacher Workdays**

On occasion, school will be closed for teacher professional development. These days will be published in advance on the school calendar.

### **Attendance – Legal Obligations**

Please support your child in his/her learning by ensuring that he/she attends ISU regularly and fulfills the German Education Act for compulsory school attendance. You are kindly requested to keep your child's absences from school outside vacation times to a minimum. Absence not only impedes the learning progress, but it also affects the interaction within classes. Parents must telephone the school on the first morning of an absence before 8:30 am. If we have no information about an absence and the absent child has not arrived by 9:15 am, we will call home to confirm the reason for the absence.

If your child is absent for several days, please inform us about the approximate length of absence and let us know the reason so that we can give your child the appropriate support. Notification of an extended absence (3 days or more) should occur in advance, in writing as soon as you are aware of it. Students should see their teachers about work they will miss during their absence and are expected to make up any missed work.

In the event of a contagious disease please notify the office as soon as the illness is confirmed. Please provide a medical certificate before the child returns to school.

Because of the German Compulsory Education Act, ISU cannot grant excused absences for travel or extended vacations.

### **Leaving School**

Lower school students may not leave the campus during the school day, including lunch period, without authorization from a teacher. Grades 9 to 12 may be given permission to leave campus at lunch time at the discretion of the Upper School Principal.

### **Access to the School Building**

For security reasons, the school building is locked at all times. A video camera is installed in the main office which allows ISU personnel to identify any person entering the school building. In order to enter the building, you are kindly asked to ring the bell. All visitors to the school must register at the office and wear a visitor's tag.

At the end of instruction, students not authorized to leave at that time need to join Homework Club or After School Care until being picked up.

Please understand that these measures are taken with your child's safety in mind. Parents and volunteers who stay longer than for drop-off or pick-up are asked to sign in and out of the building in the register at the office. This will ensure that we know who is inside the building in case of emergencies.

### **Parking**

There are several parking spaces available in the school's parking lot. As parents with children in the EYP are asked to accompany them into the school building, we would ask for your understanding in giving them priority in using the parking lot. Should you wish to stay longer at the school because you have an appointment, please use the school's parking lot or look for a regular parking space.

### **Picking Up Children after School**

For your child's safety we kindly request parents of EYP students to come inside the school building to collect their children and sign them out. Please note that for safety reasons, it is very important to know which children are still at ISU. The Lower School will have a detailed drop-off and pick-up procedure, which will be published at the beginning of the school year.

Children in EYP are not allowed to leave the school grounds unless accompanied by an adult authorized for pick-up. Older children (grades 1 and up) may leave the school grounds at 3:30 pm and 5:00 pm alone if their parents signed and handed in a permission slip for unaccompanied leave. All students leaving the school premises however should sign themselves out in the register located at the main entrance. If for any reason you have to pick up your child before the regular time or if your child is being picked up by someone else, please make sure to inform the office and the teacher beforehand by email or letter if at all possible.

### **Back to School Night**

Back to School Night is held at the beginning of each school year. This is an excellent opportunity for parents to visit the school, to meet the ISU faculty, and to learn about the school's learning expectations and curriculum. Parents are encouraged to meet with their child's teachers and learn about the curriculum and classroom policies and procedures.

### **School Year Ending**

Please check the school calendar for the last official school day. Students will be presented their final report cards on that date.

### **Supplies**

Regular school materials (books, notebooks, folders) will be supplied by the school. Students should come prepared with basic learning items such as pencils, sharpeners, fountain pen, rulers, erasers and some colored pencils.



### **Lost and Found**

Each year many children misplace personal items. If a student has lost an article, they should check the Lost and Found box first. In regular intervals, items from the lost and found box will be donated to an old clothes collection. It is recommended that parents clearly write their child's name on all

belongings.

### **Lunch & Recess**

Students may order hot lunches from a catering service online and Lower, Middle and Upper School students will eat their lunch in the atrium. EYP students may eat either in their rooms or in the atrium.

It is the responsibility of the parents to ensure that a lunch for their child is ordered before 2:00 p.m. at least one day in advance. Parents who have not ordered are asked to ensure that children bring a packed lunch to school. Registration forms for this service are available at the ISU office.

Students should also bring snacks and drinks for the breaks during the day. When packing your child's snacks, please remember that healthy nutrition is a vital aspect of learning.

We ask that your child not bring hot drinks for reasons of safety; and sodas (e.g. cola) or other sweets (lollipops etc.) for reasons of health. Exceptions can be made for birthdays and other festivities at school. Please provide your child with a water bottle which can be used and refilled during the day. After lunch we encourage younger students to brush their teeth in an attempt to develop good dental hygiene habits. Either before or after meals, all students go outside, weather permitting.

**Pets**

Please note that pets are not allowed inside the school building.



