



Curriculum Policy

Acorns International School offers an inquiry-driven, inclusive, and rigorous curriculum that fosters the development of the whole child, intellectually, emotionally, socially, and physically. Grounded in the IB philosophy and enriched by local and global perspectives, our curriculum supports intercultural understanding, curiosity, agency, and lifelong learning. It emphasises conceptual understanding, skill development, ethical action, and learner well-being across all programmes.

Inspiring & Empowering

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Acorns Vision

To inspire and empower each other to achieve our personal best.

Acorns Mission

To build an accessible, inclusive learning community of global citizens that pursues academic excellence in a holistic, inquiry-based environment that develops lifelong learners with the attributes to shape a better and more peaceful world.

Acorns Core Values



Lifelong Learner

Discovers the joy of learning, acquires the skills to 'learn how to learn', and promotes intellectual endeavours and academic potential through inquiry, critical thinking, and problem-solving.



Innovative

Embraces creativity, resourcefulness and a willingness to explore new ideas, through technology and high-quality teaching and learning to be problem solvers and agents of change in an ever-evolving world.

Core Values

Environmentalist

Participates in environmentally friendly practices through an understanding of the importance of conserving and preserving our shared, finite, and natural resources.



Global Citizen

Plays an active role in local and global contexts, with strong ethical and moral understanding, through shared accountability and acts of service to create an equitable and inclusive world.



Wellbeing

Promotes and recognises the importance of physical, emotional, and mental health by creating a supportive environment that cultivates resilience where everyone is valued, respected, and empowered to seek assistance and prioritise self-care in order to thrive.



Responsible

Actively strives to inspire and ensure discipline and excellence in all pursuits based on a personal commitment to integrity, equity, justice, mutual respect, and compassion.



Pluralist

Genuinely embraces an international mindset by showing respect and tolerance towards all cultures, languages, and traditions, through engagement in the world's rich diversity, while valuing our own identity, languages and beliefs.

IB Learner Profile



IB learner profile

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 we 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.	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.
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.	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.
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.	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.
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.	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.
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.	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.

The IB learner profile represents 10 attributes valued by IB World Schools. We believe these attributes, and others like them, can help individuals and groups become responsible members of local, national and global communities.

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“IB learner profile”

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Curriculum Policy

1 Purpose

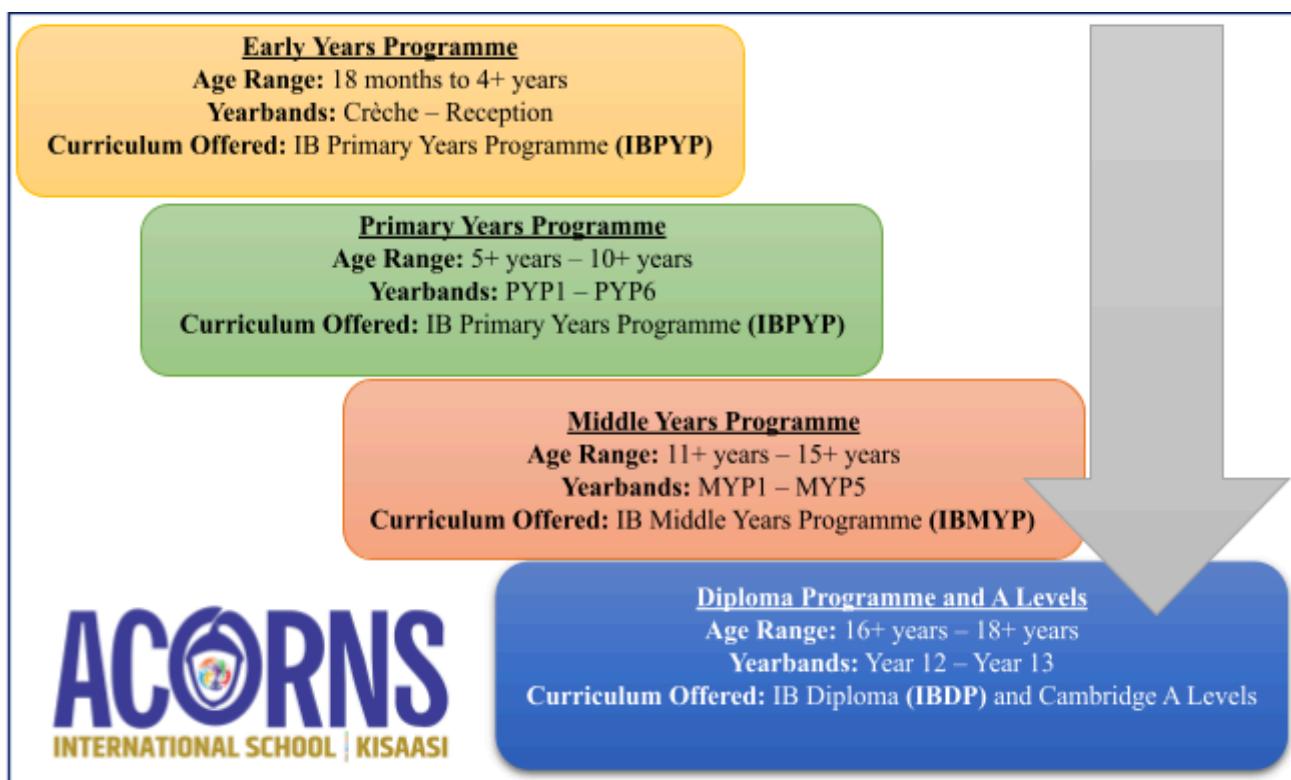
The purpose of the Curriculum Policy at Acorns International School is to provide a clear and unified framework that guides the design, delivery, assessment, and continuous review of learning across all programmes. It ensures that our curriculum reflects the philosophy of the International Baccalaureate and Cambridge pathways offered and meets the standards of the Council of International Schools, while staying true to the school's mission and vision.

This policy communicates our commitment to high-quality teaching and learning, as well as coherence across the Early Years, Primary, Middle Years, and Diploma Programmes, and A Levels. It also establishes consistency for staff, transparency for families, and accountability for leadership, ensuring that our curriculum is inclusive, rigorous, and responsive to the needs of our learners and the demands of an ever-changing world.

*Note: As of August 2026, Acorns Kisaasi will no longer offer Cambridge A Levels. Wherever referred to in this policy, notes the practice or documentation prior to this date.

2 Scope

This policy applies to all staff and students at Acorns Kisaasi and covers curriculum design, implementation, assessment, reporting, inclusion, and transition processes across the Early Years Programme(EYP), Primary Years Programme(PYP), Middle Years Programme(MYP), and Diploma Programme(DP). It includes formal curriculum documents, scope & sequence, programmes of inquiry, schemes of work, assessment policies, and programme-specific guidance.



3 Definitions

Curriculum

- All aspects of the teaching and learning process for students in an IB programme, namely its design, implementation, assessment, and review.

Programme(s)

- A coherent educational framework that includes the curriculum, assessment practices, and pedagogy for a particular age range.

Programme Evaluation

- The process of reviewing the implementation of an IB programme to support development.

Approaches to Teaching(ATT)

- Deliberate strategies, skills, and attitudes that permeate the teaching and learning environment.

Approaches to Learning(ATL)

- A set of interrelated skills: thinking, research, communication, social, and self-management—that help students learn how to learn and support metacognitive growth.

Inclusive Education

- Teaching that ensures individual students, regardless of ability and/or background, have equal access to learning opportunities, participation, and resources for the widest possible range of students.

Inquiry/Inquiry-Based Teaching and Learning(ITL)

- A core philosophy of how students learn the curriculum. Teachers intentionally plan experiences that encourage questioning, research, reflection, and application.

IB Learner Profile Attributes

- Ideal traits set by IB that are intended to inspire, motivate, and focus the work of schools and teachers, providing a set of learning outcomes for each student. Includes ten attributes: Inquirer, Knowledgeable, Thinker, Communicator, Principled, Open-minded, Caring, Risk-taker, Balanced, Reflective.

International-Mindedness

- The capacity to appreciate and engage with global contexts, intercultural understanding, and diverse perspectives, often developed through the IB Learner Profile and programme experiences.

Pedagogical Approach

- The method and practice of teaching encompassing strategies, theories, and activities used to help students learn and meet educational objectives.

Written Curriculum

- Our school's formal, documented plan for taught content. It details what we want students to know, understand, and be able to do, including the concepts, skills, and content for learning.

Taught Curriculum

- The active process of learning and teaching. It is how the written plan is brought to life using inquiry, engaging experiences, and effective strategies in the classroom.

Assessed Curriculum

- The methods used to gather evidence of learning. It includes all tasks, criteria, and feedback strategies that allow students to demonstrate what they know and can do.

4 Early Years Programme(EYP)

Programme Structure

The Early Years Programme at Acorns serves children from 18 months to 4+ years, organised into four yearbands:

Age	Yearband Guide
18 months+	Crèche
2+	EYP1
3+	EYP2
4+	EYP3/ Reception

Pedagogical Approach

The foundation of learning in the EYP is inquiry through play-based learning. Play nurtures curiosity, creativity, and symbolic representation, while supporting cognitive, social-emotional, language, and physical development. Children explore, negotiate, and take risks in environments designed to encourage discovery and self-expression.

Teaching is guided by Universal Design for Learning(UDL) principles, ensuring access for all learners by presenting content in multiple ways, offering varied modes of expression, and engaging learners through choice and interest. Support is structured through a Response to Intervention(RTI) model:

- Tier 1: High-quality classroom differentiation.
- Tier 2: Targeted small group interventions.
- Tier 3: Individualised support through an IEP in collaboration with the Learning Support Services team.

Curriculum Overview

The curriculum is organised around the six IB transdisciplinary themes:

- Who We Are
- Where We Are in Place and Time
- How We Express Ourselves
- How the World Works
- How We Organise Ourselves
- Sharing the Planet

These themes provide a conceptual framework that integrates all areas of learning: literacy, numeracy, unit of inquiry, specialities, social-emotional development, and physical development. Even at the earliest levels, children are introduced to the same broad structures that guide learning throughout the PYP, ensuring cohesion and continuity across the school.

Literacy

- Early literacy is supported through *Write Dance*(Crèche–EYP2) to develop fine-motor control and pre-writing skills.
- *Big Writing Adventures* in EYP3 to introduce structured writing experiences.
- Guided reading follows the *Oxford Reading Tree*(Levels 1–3) in EYP3 and from Creche to EYP2, and is supported by a well-resourced library.
- Phonics instruction is delivered through *Floppy's Phonics*, with Levels 1 and 1+ used for children aged 4 and below, and Levels 2 and 3 for the Reception class. Levels 1 and 1+ emphasise pre-phonics skills such as environmental sounds, rhythm and rhyme, listening

skills, and oral blending, while Levels 2 and 3 introduce systematic letter–sound correspondences, as well as blending and segmenting for early reading and spelling.

Numeracy

- Numeracy is guided by the *EYFS Development Matters* framework and the *IB PYP scope and sequence*. Children explore number, pattern, measurement, and shape through playful, hands-on experiences that build reasoning and problem-solving.

Unit of Inquiry(UOI)

- The UOI sits at the core of the EYP, integrating subjects through the six IB transdisciplinary themes. Through conceptual investigations, children begin to see connections across disciplines and with the world around them.

Specialist Subjects

- Students broaden their experience through specialist lessons in STEAM, Library, French, Physical Education, and Swimming.

Organisation of Learning

- Classrooms are structured into learning centres(Sensory & Science, ICT, Numeracy, Literacy, Arts & Crafts, Fine Motor, Dramatic Play), complemented by outdoor inquiry through water play, sand play, and gross motor activities.

Assessment

Assessment is continuous and child-centred. Teachers use observations, anecdotal notes, and developmental checklists to inform planning and provide feedback. Screening tools such as the *Oxford Reading Criterion Scales(ORCS)* and *EYFS Ages and Stages* milestones are used at key points to track progress. Summative assessment occurs at the end of each UOI through play-based projects, portfolios, and visual artefacts.

At the end of EYP3, readiness checks provide feedback on a student's preparedness to attend PYP1.

Reporting is conducted through Toddle, which allows documentation and sharing of learning journeys with families. Collaborative reflection on growth and next steps takes place during conferences calendared at the end of each term.

5 Primary Years Programme(PYP)

Programme Structure

The Primary Years Programme at Acorns serves students from 5+ years to 10 + years and is organised into six yearbands:

Age	Yearband Guide
5+	PYP1
6+	PYP2
7+	PYP3
8+	PYP4
9+	PYP5
10+	PYP6

Pedagogical Approach

The Primary department implements the IB Primary Years Programme(PYP) curriculum.

Throughout the year, the students participate in six transdisciplinary Units of Inquiry, following the themes:

- Who we are
- Where we are in place and time
- How we express ourselves
- How the world works
- How we organise ourselves
- Sharing the planet

Transdisciplinary teaching provides authentic contexts for students to investigate central ideas that connect language, math, science, social studies, the arts, and personal development. This approach allows them to make meaningful connections between their learning and the real world, deepening understanding. Students develop critical thinking, problem-solving, and transferable skills that prepare them to engage with complex, global issues beyond the classroom.

The PYP culminates in the PYP Exhibition during PYP6. This exhibition requires students to apply all the skills acquired throughout the PYP to address a problem related to one of the transdisciplinary themes. Our emphasis is on equipping students with the necessary skills to transition to the MYP.

Curriculum Overview

At Acorns, our core subjects form the foundation of teaching and learning across the school. The Unit of Inquiry serves as a central driver of transdisciplinary learning, incorporating aspects of science and social studies depending on the current unit. This approach ensures that students engage with concepts in meaningful, interconnected ways, building knowledge, skills, and understanding across disciplines.

In order to support teaching and learning in core subjects, Acorns uses the following supporting curricula:

- Numeracy is taught through the Singapore Math approach, which emphasises problem-solving, deep conceptual understanding, and the development of strong mental strategies.
- Language learning is supported by Big Writing Adventures, which enhances creativity, structure, and confidence in written expression, and Project X, a guided reading program designed to build fluency, comprehension, and a love of reading.

In addition to the major core subjects of Language, Math, Social Studies, and Sciences, which are covered throughout the Units, our students have a weekly session(s) in:

- Performing Arts(Dance, Drama, and Music)
- Library
- Visual Arts
- Personal, Social, and Physical Education(PSPE)
- Physical Education(PE)
- Swimming
- Information and Communication Technology(ICT)
- Languages(French, Kiswahili, and Mother Tongue): With a student population representing over 50 nationalities, languages are an integral part of the curriculum. Students are encouraged to use and practice their mother tongue within units and during school events such as Global Village and Celebration of Learning, ensuring their cultural and linguistic identities are valued and celebrated.

Assessment

Assessment in the PYP at Acorns is authentic and varied, with students demonstrating learning through projects, presentations, reports, performances, and tests. The programme uses criterion-referenced assessment, supported by rubrics that measure progress against set standards rather than peer comparison.

Formative assessment takes place continuously through observation, classwork, quizzes, and self-reflection, while MAP testing is conducted once each term. MAP covers Reading and Numeracy in PYP1–2; Numeracy, Language, and Language Usage in PYP3; and Numeracy, Language, Language Usage, and Science in PYP4–6. Summative assessments occur at the end of each Unit of Inquiry, where students present projects that show conceptual understanding. In PYP6, the Exhibition serves as the culminating assessment: a collaborative, student-driven inquiry into a real-world issue that demonstrates the knowledge, skills, and action developed throughout the PYP.

6 Middle Years Programme(MYP)

Programme Structure

The Middle Years Programme at Acorns serves students from 11+ years to 15+ years and is organised into five yearbands:

Age	Yearband Guidelines
11+	MYP1
12+	MYP2
13+	MYP3
14+	MYP4
15+	MYP5

Pedagogical Approach

In our Secondary Department, students aged 11–16 engage in the IB Middle Years Programme(MYP) that explores eight diverse subject groupings. This comprehensive approach, guided by the IB Learner Profile, focuses on developing character, acquiring skills, fostering interdisciplinary connections, building conceptual understanding, and ensuring contextual relevance. The IB Learner Profile describes the qualities and attributes determined to be most important in creating positive and productive citizens of the world, and the dispositions necessary to be a fruitful lifelong learner.

Planned projects, assemblies, exercises, and field trips are all used to develop character. We also emphasise character growth through the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award Scheme, in which students develop skills, physical abilities, and service as action, and also take part in adventurous trips.

The Written Curriculum

Students in MYP Years 1–3 study all eight subject groups for a broad and balanced education. These subjects are:

- Language and Literature(English)
- Individuals and Societies(Integrated Humanities)
- Mathematics
- Sciences(Integrated Science)

- Design(Product & Digital/ICT)
- Language Acquisition(French & Spanish)
- Physical and Health Education
- Arts(Visual Arts, Music, Theatre)

Every science unit includes practical lab work, and our Design curriculum uses ICT skills along with technologies like 3D Printers and Raspberry Pi. In MYP3, students choose one Language Acquisition subject to continue. For MYP4 and MYP5, students have more flexibility, with options to specialise in two specific science courses(from Biology, Physics, or Chemistry) and an Individuals and Societies course(Geography or History), in addition to selecting an Arts/Design course.

To develop self-motivated learners, a core aim of our institution, we emphasise the development of Approaches to Learning(ATL) skills. These essential skills are taught and assessed in all subjects and include Thinking, Social, Communication, Self-Management, and Research skills.

Each unit uses one of the six Global Contexts to make learning relevant. These contexts are:

- Orientation in space and time
- Personal and cultural expression
- Scientific and technical innovation
- Globalisation and sustainability
- Fairness and development

Service as Action is a key part of the curriculum, encouraging students to take part in school and community service projects. This provides learning experiences outside the classroom.

The MYP ends with two key projects. The Community Project(MYP3) lets students work together on a project that helps the community. The Personal Project(MYP5) is a long-term, independent project on a topic the student chooses. For a full overview of these projects, please refer to the school's 'MYP Projects at Acorns International School' policy.

The Taught Curriculum

Teaching in the MYP is based on inquiry, using student curiosity to guide learning through a cycle of Inquiry, Action, and Reflection. Our Learner Support Services Team(LSS) helps all learners access the curriculum, including students with Special Educational Needs(SEN) and those who need academic support. For a full overview of our support systems, please refer to the school's Enrichment and Inclusion policy.

Additional elements of the taught curriculum are:

- Interdisciplinary Learning- To promote deeper connections, students are encouraged to examine one subject through the lens of another. Each year in the MYP, students must complete at least one Interdisciplinary Unit. Their learning in this unit is assessed based on the Interdisciplinary Unit Criteria: Evaluating, Synthesising, and Reflecting, and students exhibit their work that shows the interdisciplinary understanding they have gained.

- Conceptual Learning- We prioritise conceptual understanding over simply teaching factual content. This approach allows learners to transfer their knowledge, enabling them to comprehend an increasingly complex world across various contexts.
- Contextual Learning- We uphold two core beliefs regarding contextual teaching: firstly, that learning is most effective when it is perceived as meaningful and purposeful; and secondly, that learning inherently carries a sense of responsibility. Consequently, every unit of study across all our classes incorporates an element of real-world application. This approach serves to make the learning purposeful and ensures it is applied in responsible and active ways.

Assessment

Assessment is continuous, focuses on the learning process, and is based on set criteria. It includes both formative assessment(to guide learning) and summative assessment(to measure what has been learned). The types and timings of assessments are shown in the table below.

Type	When	How	Why
Formative(MAP)	Twice-yearly	Online MAP assessments for Math, Language, Reading, and Science.	Reporting: to identify learning needs and adapt teaching.
Formative(Ongoing)	Throughout Units	Practising criteria-based skills; gauging progress through the unit.	Tracking and Monitoring; to identify learning needs and adapt teaching.
Summative(End-of-unit)	End-of-unit	Project/performance-based authentic assessments.	Assessment against subject-specific criteria and objectives.
Summative(End of Term)	End of Term 1 & 3	Internal assessments across all subjects(MYP 1-5).	Exam Practice; Revision; Reporting and recording.
Mocks	February	Internal assessments for MYP5 candidate classes.	Reporting and recording: Guidance for final exam preparation.
External Exams	April/May	Externally set and marked MYP examinations.	Benchmarked summary of achievement; Graduation requirements.

Reporting and Grade Descriptors

End-of-unit summative assessments are assessed against the official IB criteria for each subject group(A, B, C, and D) on a rubric with a maximum score of 8 in each criterion. It is important to

note that these descriptors are qualitative and not quantitative. Report cards are issued at the end of Term 1 and Term 3. Scores from the four criteria are added to a total out of 32. This total gives a final MYP grade from 1 to 7, as shown below. Report cards include grade descriptors and teacher comments to explain student progress and give advice for improvement.

Final Grade	Boundary Guidelines (Total score out of 32)	Descriptor
1	1-5	Produces work of very limited quality. Conveys many significant misunderstandings or lacks understanding of most concepts and contexts.
2	6-9	Produces work of limited quality. Expresses misunderstandings or significant gaps in understanding for many concepts and contexts.
3	10-14	Produces work of an acceptable quality. Communicates basic understanding of many concepts and contexts, with occasional significant misunderstandings.
4	15-18	Produces good-quality work. Communicates basic understanding of most concepts and contexts with few misunderstandings and minor gaps.
5	19-23	Produces generally high-quality work. Communicates a secure understanding of concepts and contexts. Demonstrates critical and creative thinking.
6	24-27	Produces high-quality, occasionally innovative work. Communicates an extensive understanding of concepts and contexts.
7	28-32	Produces high-quality, frequently innovative work. Communicates a comprehensive, nuanced understanding of concepts and contexts.

Academic Integrity

We expect high standards of honesty. All members of the school community are expected to act with integrity and produce their own, honest work. For a full definition of academic misconduct, responsibilities, and consequences, please refer to the school's Academic Integrity Policy.

6 Diploma Programme(DP)

Programme Structure

The Diploma Programme at Acorns serves students from 16+ and 17+ and is organised into 2 yearbands:

Age	Yearband Guidelines
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16+	DP1
17+	DP2

DP is recognised by universities worldwide and designed to provide a broad, balanced education while preparing students for university and life beyond. The programme develops intellectual, personal, emotional, and social skills to thrive in a globalised world.

The IB embeds Approaches to Learning(ATL) across all DP subjects. These skills are not separate courses but integrated into teaching and learning to help students become self-regulated learners.

- Thinking skills: Critical, creative, ethical.
- Research skills: Information and media literacy.
- Self-management skills: Organisation, affective skills, reflection.
- Social skills: Collaboration.
- Communication skills: Oral, written, and non-verbal communication.

The DP at Acorns emphasises inquiry-driven pedagogy, critical thinking, and interdisciplinary connections. Teachers guide students through conceptual learning, ensuring knowledge is transferable and relevant across contexts.

Core integration ensures that:

- TOK is interwoven with subjects to highlight knowledge questions.
- EE is supported with structured research workshops, librarian input, and teacher supervision.
- CAS is embedded in co-curricular activities, clubs, service-learning projects, and community initiatives.

The Learning Support Services(LSS) department ensures access for all learners, including those with Special Educational Needs(SEN) and those needing additional academic challenge. Differentiation strategies ensure students of varied strengths succeed.

Holistic development is further supported through the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, PSPE, and leadership opportunities.

At Acorns, students can pursue one of two distinct pathways:

1. Full IB Diploma(comprehensive programme with six subjects and three core components).
2. DP Courses(individual subject certificates without the full Diploma requirements).

Pathway 1: The Full IB Diploma

The Full Diploma is for students seeking a holistic and academically challenging qualification. Students must complete six subjects and the three DP Core components.

Students select six subjects, one from each of the following groups, ensuring breadth and balance:

- Group 1: Studies in Language and Literature – English A: Language & Literature(mandatory).
- Group 2: Language Acquisition – French B, French ab initio, Spanish ab initio.
- Group 3: Individuals and Societies – Business Management, Digital Society, Economics, Geography, History, Psychology.
- Group 4: Sciences – Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, Physics.
- Group 5: Mathematics – Analysis and Approaches(AA) and Applications and Interpretation(AI).

- Group 6: The Arts – Music, Visual Arts. Alternatively, students may replace Group 6 with another subject from Group 3 or Group 4.

Students must take at least three subjects at Higher Level(HL) and three at Standard Level(SL). Some may opt for four HL and two SL subjects. HL courses require 240 teaching hours, while SL courses require 150.

In addition to the six subjects, all Full Diploma students complete the three essential Core components:

- Theory of Knowledge(TOK): Encourages critical reflection on the nature of knowledge.
- Extended Essay(EE): An independent, self-directed 4,000-word research paper.
- Creativity, Activity, Service(CAS): A programme requiring engagement in creativity, physical activity, and service projects.

Pathway 2: The DP Courses

This pathway offers a flexible alternative for students who may find the rigour of the full Diploma too demanding, restrictive, or not well aligned with their career goals and learning preferences. It allows students to select individual subjects without being bound to all six groups or the DP Core.

Students may choose:

- Option 1: Four HL subjects and one SL subject.
- Option 2: Two HL subjects and four SL subjects.

Students on the DP Courses pathway still benefit from holistic development through the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Personal, Social, and Physical Education(PSPE), CAS, and supervised study sessions.

Assessment Model

Assessment in the DP is continuous and balanced, combining internal assessments(IAs) and final external examinations. Internal assessments are marked by teachers and moderated by IB. External assessments are set and marked by IB examiners.

Each subject is graded on a scale of 1(lowest) to 7(highest). TOK and EE together can contribute up to 3 bonus points. The maximum attainable score is 45 points(6 subjects x 7 points = 42 + 3 core points). A minimum of 24 points is required for the award of the IB Diploma, provided all core requirements are met.

Assessment Timeline

Type	When	How	Why
Formative(Ongoing)	Throughout Units	Internally set and internally marked examinations, gauging progress through the unit.	Tracking and Monitoring; to identify learning needs and adapt teaching.
Summative(End-of-unit)	End-of-unit	Project/performance-based authentic assessments.	Assessment against subject-specific criteria and objectives.

Summative(End of Term)	End of Term 1 & 3	Internal assessments across all subjects DP1-2.	Exam Practice; Revision; Reporting and recording.
Mocks	February	Internal assessments for DP1-2 candidate classes.	Reporting and recording: Guidance for final exam preparation.
External Exams	April/May	Externally set and marked DP2 examinations.	Benchmarked summary of achievement; Graduation requirements.

All teaching and assessment practices are underpinned by the Academic Integrity Policy, ensuring honesty, fairness, and respect in all student work.

7 Cambridge A Levels

Programme Structure

The Cambridge Advanced Level (A Level) programme at Acorns serves students from 16+ and 17+ and is organised into 2 yearbands:

Age	Yearband Guidelines
16+	Year 12 (AS)
17+	Year 13 (A2)

The formal final external examinations are administered by Cambridge Assessment International Education (CAIE), a department of the University of Cambridge.

At Acorns, students undertake a two-year linear programme. Students typically begin with four subjects in Year 12. In Year 13, *students may continue with only **three subjects at Full A Levels and complete only one at AS Level***, in line with the current Cambridge programme implementation at the school. These subjects are externally examined during the April–May examination series.

As outlined in the policy, Acorns Kisaasi will discontinue Cambridge A Levels as of August 2026. The details provided reflect current practice until that transition takes place.

Curriculum Overview

Students select subjects from the following Cambridge subject groups:

- Sciences
 - Physics
 - Chemistry
 - Biology
- Mathematics
- Humanities and Individuals & Societies
 - Business Studies
 - Economics
 - Psychology

- Geography
- History
- Languages
 - English Language
- Arts
 - Art & Design
 - Music

Subject offerings each year depend on student interest, staffing, and school capacity.

Pedagogical Approach

The Cambridge A Level programme at Acorns emphasises:

- Rigorous, discipline-based academic study
- Critical, analytical, and evaluative thinking
- Independent learning and extended reading
- Inquiry-driven approaches to promote deeper understanding
- Preparation for advanced university-level work

Teachers design learning to support conceptual mastery and academic maturity across the two-year programme.

Examination Model

At Acorns:

- Students study the full AS and A2 content across two years
- Assessment consists of continuous internal assessments and the final external A Level examinations.
- All external examinations are completed at A2 Level only in Year 13
- No standalone AS examination session occurs at the end of Year 12
- All examinations are administered during the April–May Cambridge session

All assessments are:

- Set and marked externally by Cambridge
- Conducted under strict CAIE examination regulations
- Awarded using the **A*-E** grading scale determined entirely by external examiners

Grade	Mark Boundary
A*	90% and Above
A	80% - 89%
B	70% - 79%
C	60% - 69%
D	50% - 59%
E	40% - 49%
U	Below 39%

Missed examinations cannot be retaken until the next official Cambridge session.

Assessment Timeline

Type	When	How	Why
Formative(Ongoing)	Throughout Units	Internally set and internally marked examinations, gauging progress through the unit.	Tracking and Monitoring; to identify learning needs and adapt teaching.
Summative(End-of-unit)	End-of-unit	Project/performance-based authentic assessments.	Assessment against subject-specific criteria and objectives.
Summative(End of Term)	End of Term 1 & 3	Internal assessments across all subjects AS and A2.	Exam Practice; Revision; Reporting and recording.
Mocks	February	Internal assessments for AS and A2.	Reporting and recording: Guidance for final exam preparation.
External Exams	April/May	Externally set and marked A2 examinations.	Benchmarked summary of achievement; Graduation requirements.

Reporting and Academic Standards

- Internal assessments inform teacher feedback, reporting cycles, and exam readiness.
- Performance is benchmarked against Cambridge grade thresholds.
- Students must meet school expectations to be registered for Cambridge examinations.
- All assessment practices align with Acorns' Academic Integrity Policy and CAIE regulations.

8 Relevant International Baccalaureate (IB) Standards and Practices

- Culture 2: The school community fosters internationally minded people who embody all attributes of the IB learner profile.(0301-02)
- Culture 2.1: The school's curriculum demonstrates commitment to international-mindedness and intercultural understanding.(0301-02-0100)
- Environment 3.1: The school allocates resources to sustain and further develop the curriculum across programmes.(0302-03-0100)
- Environment 4: The school implements a process of ongoing curriculum development.(0302-04)
- Environment 4.1: The school ensures curriculum review is systematic and involves all stakeholders.(0302-04-0100)
- Culture 4: The school develops and implements policies and procedures that support the programme(s).(0301-04)

- Culture 4.1: The school has a curriculum policy that articulates philosophy, expectations, and practices, aligned to IB requirements.(0301-04-0100)
- Approaches to teaching 1: The school ensures teaching is based on inquiry, conceptual understanding, and contexts.(0403-01)
- Approaches to learning 1: The school develops ATL skills across the curriculum.(0402-01)
- Approaches to curriculum 1: The school ensures vertical and horizontal articulation of the curriculum.(0401-01)
- Approaches to curriculum 2: The curriculum is broad, balanced, inclusive, and ensures progression of learning.(0401-02)
- Approaches to curriculum 3: The curriculum integrates opportunities for student agency, action, and service.(0401-03)
- Approaches to curriculum 4: Language development, including mother tongue and host country languages, is supported within the curriculum.(0401-04)

9 Relevant Council of International Schools(CIS) Standards and Criteria

- C1: The curriculum offers access, engagement, and challenge to support the intellectual, physical, social, and emotional needs of all students.
- C2: The documented curriculum develops knowledge, skills, attributes, and intercultural competencies.
- C3: Global citizenship, intercultural learning, and digital citizenship are intentionally planned for within the curriculum.
- C4: The curriculum is sequenced, documented, and articulated horizontally and vertically for continuity.
- C5: The curriculum is systematically monitored, reviewed, and developed based on student outcomes and external influences.
- C6: Breadth of programmes and activities complement the formal curriculum, fostering learning, well-being, and global citizenship.

10 Citations

- Acorns(2025). *Assessment Policy*.
- Acorns(2025). *Access and Inclusion Policy*.
- Acorns(2025). *Academic Integrity Policy*.
- Acorns(2025). *MYP Projects Policy*.
- IBO(2017). *IB Learner Profile*. <https://resources.ibo.org/ib/resource/11162-43492?lang=en>

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Last Reviewed Date: September 2025

Next Review Date: September 2027