

**Spojená škola Novohradská
Gymnázium Jura Hronca
Bratislava, Slovakia
Primary Years Programme**

Parent Handbook

**SCHOOL YEAR 2016 - 2017
GRADES PYP 1 – PYP 5**



International Department

Head of the International Programme

Mrs. Eva Žitná

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Main School Office Hours

Monday – Friday

9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Secretary: **Mrs. Monika Koňanová**

Tel. number: 555 69725

Reception: (Slovak Language only)

Tel. number: 55576396

PYP coordinator

Mrs. Zuzana Butler

Tel. number: 55576396 ext.123

butler@gjh.sk

Welcome to the International Programme at Gymnázium Jura Hronca

The Primary Years Programme in our school has been running since 2005 and was authorized by the IB international programme in February, 2009. We also run the Middle Years Programme and IB Diploma Programme.

Our school is situated in a walking distance from the downtown area, Main Bus Station and the biggest outdoor market.

Gymnázium Jura Hronca is a state owned school that is entering its 12th year implementing PYP and MYP programmes and its 22th year with accredited IB Diploma Programme.

Comprehensive School Facilities and Services

The International Programme of our school benefits greatly by sharing extensive and well-equipped facilities with other parts of the elementary and high School. To help our students study and develop to their greatest potential, the international department offers the following facilities and services:

- Individual Classrooms: Each grade has its own classroom and visits other rooms for specialized subjects such as PE, Arts, and IT.
- Research and Reading: A well-stocked and organized English library is in place for researching and reading. A good number of books are owned by each class and shared across the PYP programme. Each class continues to expand its own classroom library as we are encouraging our children to become enthusiastic readers and explorers through reading.
- Information Technology and Arts: The school has seven computer rooms as we benefit from using high school facility as well. Recently, we have finished the reconstruction of our new art studio and a music room.

- Sport: Physical education and sport activities benefit from four gymnasiums, the outdoor courtyard and a nearby playground.
- Canteen: Our in-house kitchen provides hot meals and soups for lunch, usually offering a choice of 2 meals.
- Extra-curricular activities: An exciting programme of afterschool clubs and activities is offered at the beginning of each school year, for a very minimal cost.
- Special Services: The school offers services of a psychologist. We do not offer dental or medical services on the premises of our school.

Establishment of International Programmes

The International Programme of Gymnázium Jura Hronca was found to facilitate preferably the life of foreign families and Slovak families coming from a stay abroad. That is why we are implementing three International Baccalaureate Programmes, the Primary Years Programme (PYP), the Middle Years Program (MYP) and the IB Diploma Programme. We focus on the total social and intellectual growth in children's development.



Mission and Philosophy Statement

Our school is a unique international state school in Slovakia committed to meeting the needs of today's multicultural societies and recognizing the changes in the global nature of our lives. A creative and challenging environment of our school helps to develop students' academic knowledge together with their personal growth respecting uniqueness of each individual and thus supporting the diversity of cultures, religions and attitudes.

Providing caring, stimulating and happy learning environment we educate students to become responsible, confident, articulate, industrious and healthy individuals, who think critically and creatively and are well prepared for a lifelong learning.

Our staff are committed to recognizing and developing a child's full potential through structured planning, excellent teaching and through the sensitive and caring relationships that are nurtured with every individual.

The school thoroughly pays attention to the adherence to the binding legal regulations – The Declaration of Children's Rights, The Bill of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms, and other valid documents in relation to students, teachers as well as other school employees.



Working Together with the IB

Gymnázium Jura Hronca with its IB Diploma Programme has taken on an active role in becoming an authorized member of a big family of 1800 school in the whole world, that are members of the International Baccalaureate Organization (IB) a non-profit educational foundation based in Switzerland that works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education with rigorous assessment.

The IB offers the Primary Years Programme (PYP) for students 3 – 11 years old, Middle Years Programme (MYP) for students in the 11 – 16 years age range, and its Diploma Programme for students in the final two years of secondary school preparing for entry to university.

IB Mission Statement

The IB most recent mission statement reads:

“The International Baccalaureate Organization (IB) aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. To this end the IBO works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment. These programs encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.”

Welcome to Our International Programme

Our international school is now in its eleventh year of existence. Majority of our teachers are experienced PYP teachers, familiar with the PYP philosophy and methodology. We find the PYP programme both challenging and very exciting.

The curriculum framework of the primary school is based around the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme. Fundamental to this programme is the recognition that children are natural inquirers who will develop socially, physically and educationally at different times and at different speeds, as we believe that education is a process, not a race.

We should be able to recognize that children have different times when they can hold a pencil, want to start reading, colour within lines, bring a lunchbox and a bottle back home and do homework without causing a huge domestic upheaval! So please recognize, as we do at school, for different children we have different expectations, socially, educationally and physically.

Education is a partnership. You as parents place incredible trust in schools and teachers. This trust gives us as educators a huge sense of responsibility to ensure we meet the needs of your children.

To be able to do this effectively the school needs your support. There are many ways to do this but, critically, the main one is to maintain regular contact with your child's teacher. This does not mean just attending parent/teacher conferences. It means making the school aware of any questions, concerns, or anxiety that you may have and when you have them.

We will be delighted to assist you in any way possible.

Sincerely,
Eva Žitná
Head of the International Programme

Primary Years Programme

focuses on the development of the whole child as an inquirer, both in the classroom and in the world outside.

Learners Profiles

The learner profile describes a list of attributes that promote academic rigour and the establishing of a personal value system leading to international-mindedness. It is expected that PYP teachers will assess and report on individual student development regarding each of these attributes.

The programme encourages students to become:

- **Inquirers** — our natural curiosity has been nurtured and we actively enjoy learning
- **Thinkers** — we exercise initiative in applying thinking skills critically and creatively to solving complex problems
- **Communicators** — we receive and express ideas and information confidently in more than one language
- **Courageous** — we approach unfamiliar situations without anxiety and have the confidence to explore new ideas
- **Knowledgeable** — we have explored themes that have global significance and have acquired a critical mass of knowledge
- **Principled** — we have a sound grasp of the principles of moral reasoning and have acquired integrity, honesty and a sense of justice

- **Caring** — we show sensitivity towards the needs and feelings of others, and have a sense of personal commitment to helping others
- **Open-minded** — we respect the values of other individuals and cultures and seek to consider a range of points of view
- **Well-balanced** — we understand the importance of physical and mental balance and personal well-being
- **Reflective** — we give thoughtful consideration to their own learning by constructively analysing their personal strengths and weaknesses.



Primary Years Programme Curriculum framework

At the heart of the programme's philosophy is a commitment to structured, purposeful inquiry as the leading vehicle for learning.

Six transdisciplinary themes

Six transdisciplinary themes of global significance provide the framework for exploration and study:

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

Teachers are guided by these six transdisciplinary themes as they design units of inquiry that both transcend and articulate conventional subject boundaries.

The programme can be illustrated by a circle with the six transdisciplinary themes surrounding six subject areas:

- Language
- Social Studies
- Mathematics
- Arts
- Science
- Personal, Social and Physical education



The transdisciplinary themes and subject areas outlined above form the knowledge element of the programme.

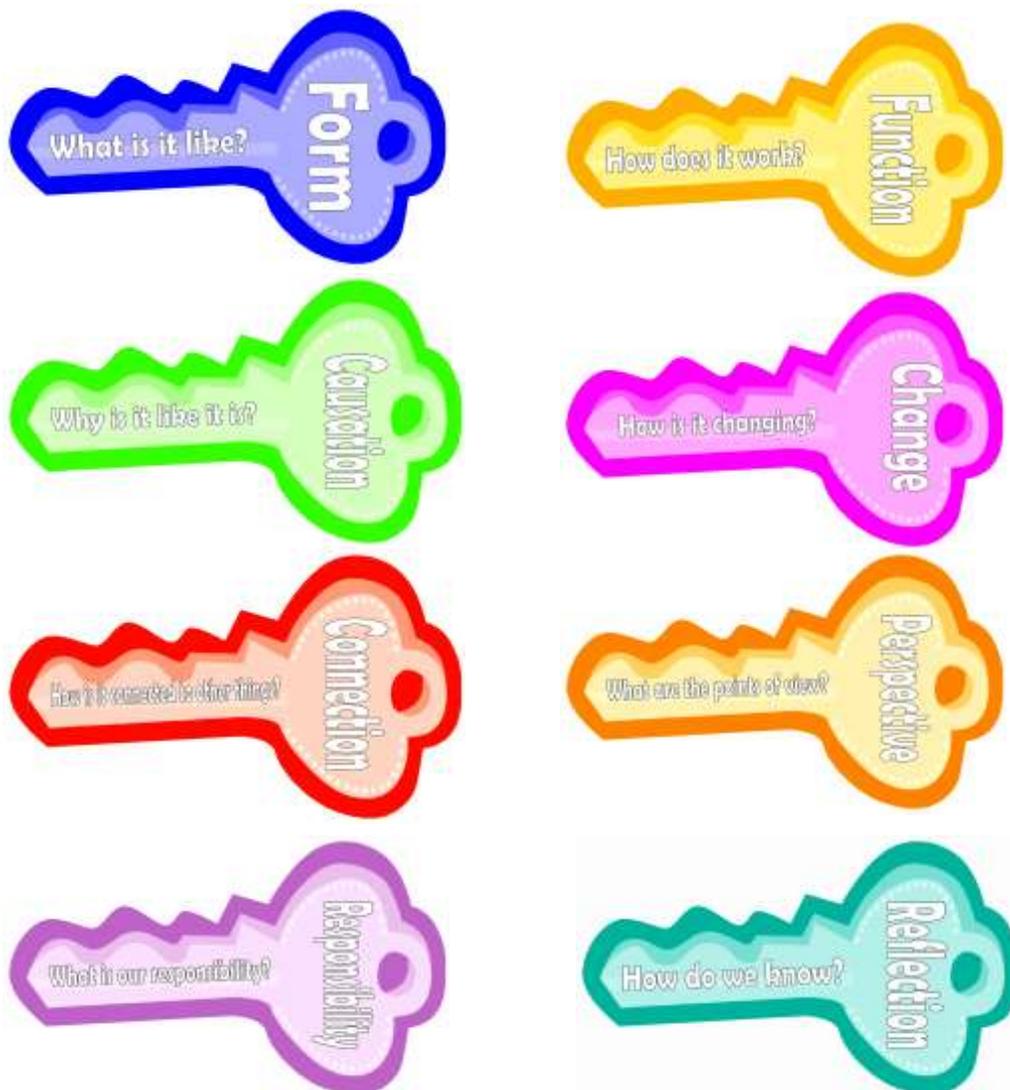
Five essential elements

The five essential elements — concepts, knowledge, skills, attitudes, action — are incorporated into this framework, so that students are given the opportunity to:

- gain knowledge that is relevant and of global significance,
- develop an understanding of concepts, which allows them to make connections throughout their learning,
- acquire transdisciplinary and disciplinary skills,
- develop attitudes that will lead to international-mindedness,
- take action as a consequence of their learning.

Key Concepts

These questions suggest lines of inquiry which provide a structure for students engaged in purposeful research.



Transdisciplinary Skills

Within their learning throughout the programme, students acquire and apply a set of transdisciplinary skills. These skills are valuable for any teaching and learning that goes on within the classroom, and in life outside the school.

Thinking skills - Acquisition of knowledge; comprehension; application; analysis, synthesis, evaluation, dialectical thought, metacognition.

Social skills - Accepting responsibility; respecting others; cooperating, resolving conflict; group decision-making; adopting a variety of group roles.

Communication skills - Listening; speaking; reading; writing; viewing; presenting; non-verbal communication.

Self – management skills - Gross motor skills; fine motor skills; spatial awareness; organization; time management; safety; healthy lifestyle; codes of behaviour; informed choices

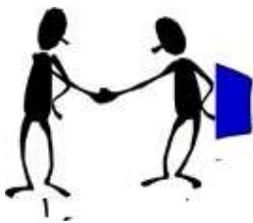
Research skills - Formulating questions; observing; planning; collecting data; recording data; organizing data; interpreting data; presenting research findings

Attitudes

Every students should develop and apply the following attitudes:



Tolerance - feeling sensitivity towards differences and diversity in the world and being responsive to the needs of others



Respect - respecting themselves, others and the world around them

Integrity - having integrity and a firm sense of fairness and honesty



Enthusiasm - enjoying learning



Independence - thinking and acting independently, making their own judgements based on reasoned principles and being able to defend their judgements

Empathy - imaginatively projecting themselves into another's situation, in order to understand his/her thoughts, reasoning and emotions



Curiosity - being curious about the nature of learning and of the world, its people and cultures

Creativity - being creative and imaginative in their thinking and in their approach to problems and dilemmas



Cooperation - cooperating, collaborating and leading or following as the situation demands

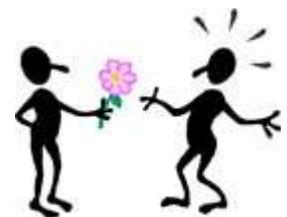
Confidence - feeling confident in their ability as learners, having the courage to take risks, applying what they have learned and making appropriate decisions and choices



responsibility

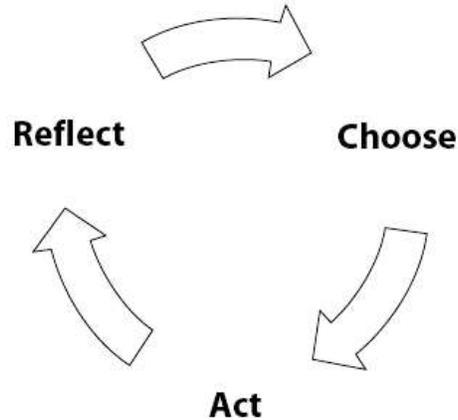
Commitment - being committed to their learning, persevering and showing self-discipline and

Appreciation - appreciating the wonder and beauty of the world and its people



Action Cycle

Successful inquiry may lead to **action**, initiated by the student as a result of the learning process. It may be an extension of students' learning or it may have a wider social impact.



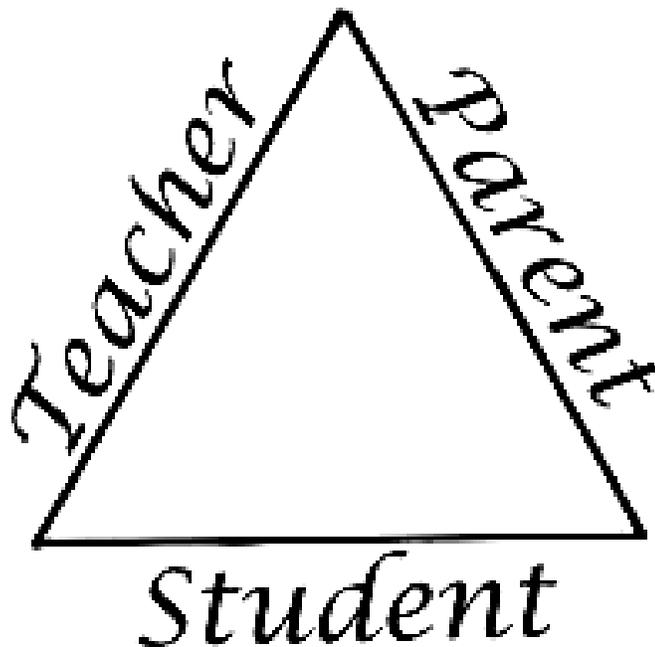
The PYP action model allows students the opportunity to choose to act, decide on their actions, and then reflect, in order to make a difference.



Learning Support

At every stage we involve you as we really value parents' support. Our school counsellor is available to support all parents, not only those with children receiving support from Special Education Facilities.

The Office hours of the PYP and MYP psychologist and counsellor **Mrs. Renáta Nemčoková** are to be confirmed. Please arrange an appointment by e-mail nemcokova@gjh.sk or you can call on tel. number 55576396 ext. 133



Reading at Home

When sharing a book your child brings home, recommend the following approach to help them tackle unknown words.

The 3 Ps – Pause, Prompt, Praise

Pause

Encourage the child to look at the pictures.

Ask: What word would make sense?

 What would sound right?

 What does it start with?

If the word makes sense ... allow the child to continue reading. If the word does not make sense ... encourage the child to have another try or tell the child the word.

Praise

At all times it is important that children are praised and encouraged for their efforts. The support and encouragement provided through praise will greatly assist children's reading development. Try comments like:

I like the way you ... that's what good readers do.

Well done ...

That's really great ...

You must have been practicing ... You did a lot of work today ...

How to Help Your Child with Reading

Make ...

A regular time for reading together. Share books brought home from school or old favourites from your own collection.

Talk ...

About the book. Use the pictures to predict what it is going to be about. Ask your child to make suggestions.

Provide ...

Reading materials that are about the interests and experiences of your child and your family.

Join ...

The local library.

Locate ...

Signs, read recipes, junk mail, packets, boxes, and other household items.

Give ...

Books for gifts or treats. Select books with rhyme, rhythm, repetition and predictable ideas.

Read ...

Old favourites again and again to promote familiarity and confidence. Encourage your child to read them to you.

Display ...

An interest in reading. Let your child see you reading, e.g. newspaper, phonebooks, magazines, novels.

Discuss ...

The parts of the book. "Show me the cover. Where is the title? Do you know the name of the person who wrote the book? Can you show me where the name is written? "

Talk ...

About the author. Read books by the same author. Try to find things that are similar about the books.

Explore ...

The pictures in books to decide where the story is taking place. Compare events and places with those in your own lives, e.g. 'What would you do if you were the person in the book? '

Read aloud ...

Together and look for the clues to tell you how to say what is written, e.g. "quotation marks", question marks??, bold print, italics.

Writing at home

Provide ...

A range of materials to encourage writing, drawing, and publishing, e.g. pencils, markers, paste, old magazines.

Write together ...

Make your own shopping and encourage your child to make theirs, too. When you write to family and friends, encourage your child to add a piece to cards, letters and messages.

Explore ...

The various ways in which we write, e.g. 'Can you write some directions for me so that I can make a dinosaur like yours?'

Read and write ...

Your own map, posters and information brochures to show different ways of writing.

Discuss ...

Various types of writing in the books you have at home, e.g. 'This book gives us information. This one is a funny story. Can you find the speech balloons in this book?'

Experiment ...

With the way written language works by reading and writing out familiar poems, songs and rhymes.

Praise ...

All attempts at writing and spelling. Talk about what your child has written. Have your child point to the writing and talk about the message it carries.

Demonstrate ...

All you write by recording the message too. Explain what you are doing as you write, e.g. 'I start my writing on this side of the page. I'm making gaps between the words. This is what I want to say.'

Let your child ...

Observe what you do when you try to spell unknown words, e.g. say it, write it down, try again, check it with a friend or in a dictionary/word book.

Ask ...

Your child to read their work to other people, such as a friend, neighbour.

Look ...

For your child's work in class books that are brought home to share.

Identify ...

Letters and words around you. Play with the letters of the alphabet; find letters and words in magazines that are of significance, e.g. 'That's the way you spell your name.'

Daily Schedules and Timetables

The school begins at 8:00 when the door to the elementary school part is closed. Children need to be in their classrooms according to their grades.

An afterschool programme is available at an extra cost starting after their last lesson until 5p.m.

Please be informed that children who remain at school and are not a part of the afterschool programme will be unsupervised. Therefore parents should make provision to have their children leave the school grounds after their school day is over.

Please note that if a child from the PYP finishes school earlier than a sibling from the same programme, this child is permitted to join the afterschool club and wait for his sibling there at no extra cost.

Proof of payment for the afterschool club needs to be submitted to the afterschool club teacher before the new month starts.

Before School Drop-off and After School Pick-up

In the morning, parents should drop off their children between 7:30 and 7:45, unless specified differently by the school. The children will wait either in the main lobby or in the backyard.

The afterschool club teachers will inform the parents how to pick up their children after school. We ask the parents to be punctual when picking up their child. The parents should phone the school if they are going to be late. If the parent is late more than three times, the child might lose the privilege to be in the afterschool club.

Parents should not wait in the parking lot and phone their children to come to them, but need to pick them up in person.

If a child is to go home on his own, a classroom teacher needs to have a written and signed permission from the parent or guardian. The child should then leave swiftly and not linger in the school.

If somebody else picks up the child, parents must inform the school, classroom teacher, or afterschool club teacher.

Breaks and Recess Break

Students must follow all school rules during breaks and when in the school building. Buying snacks in the school snack shop is allowed before the school starts or during the lunch recess on the way back from lunch.

School Holidays

	Last day of school	From-until	Returning to school
Autumn break	27 Oct 2016 (Thursday)	28 Oct 2016 - 31 Oct 2016	2 Nov 2016 (Wednesday)
Christmas break	22 Dec 2016 (Thursday)	23 Dec 2016 – 5 Jan 2017	09 Jan 2017 (Monday)
Half term break	02 Feb 2017 (Thursday)	03 Feb 2017 (Friday)	06 Feb 2017 (Monday)
Spring break	17 Feb 2017 (Friday)	20 Feb 2017– 24 Feb 2017	27 Feb 2017 (Monday)
Easter break	12 April 2017 (Wednesday)	13 April 2017- 18 April 2017	19 April 2017 (Wednesday)
Summer break	30 Jun 2017 (Friday)	03 Jul 2017 - 31 Aug 2017	04 Sept 2017 (Monday)

Please note that a special permission has to be requested from the headmistress in order for a student to be granted a leave beyond the holiday time. Not more than 5 days a year might be granted.

Also a child cannot miss more than 30% of the schooling hours. Had he missed more, he would have to be assessed from every subject to secure that he is eligible to proceed to a higher level provided that he fulfilled the level requirement.

Late Arrival

Students are expected to be in the classroom on time. Three times of late arrivals equal to one unexcused lesson. Repeated behaviour of unexcused lessons will be reflected in the report card.

Money and Valuables

Students should not bring large sum of money or other valuables to school. The school does not take responsibility for any stolen personal property. However you can insure your child with an insurance company and for specific details ask your child's classroom teacher.

Mobile phones

The students are not allowed to use mobile phones in the school during the lesson time and the breaks. They should keep their phones switched off in their lockers. If a student breaks this rule, the phone will be removed and the parents will be informed to pick up the phone from the classroom teacher or

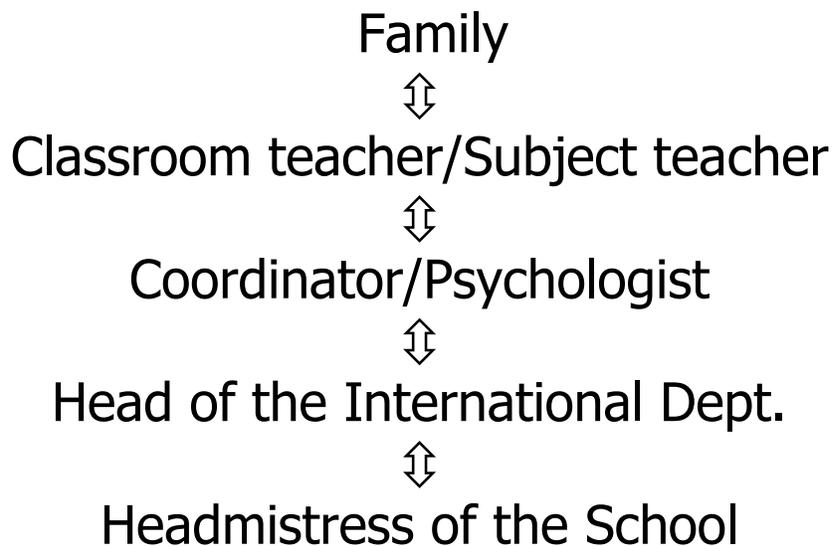
afterschool club teacher. If a student needs to make an urgent telephone call, they must do it through their classroom teacher, or in the school office. If parents need to contact their child during school time they should call the main office.

Physical Education

It is compulsory for all students to participate in all PE lesson, unless they have a special certificate from their paediatrician stating that they must be excused. In the case of illness, a note from a parent is required in order for the student to be excused from the lesson.

Parents – School Communication

Email communication will be used only for sharing information about organization of the teaching process and essential information about the child (sickness, information about absence etc...) All concerns should be solved where they start. Constructive collaboration between parents and school is of great importance. On the other hand, trust in the competence and professionalism of the teachers is greatly appreciated.



Parents' Meetings

Four parents' meetings are planned for each school year. Parents will be informed of the date and content of the meetings during the school year.

Visiting the School

Parents who wish to go to the office or have an interview with a teacher need to contact the receptionist and come during the teacher's office hours.