

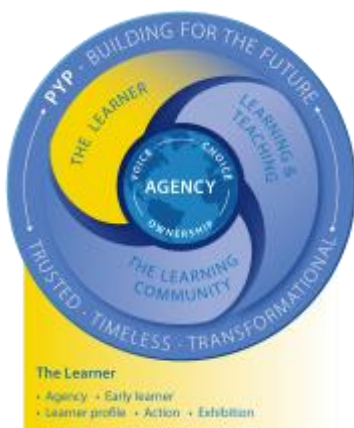
THE LEARNER IN THE ENHANCED PYP

INTRODUCTION

'The Learner' is the first deep dive into the enhanced Primary Years Programme (PYP) as part of the new organising structure of the programme, illustrated in the below communications graphic.

This communication is for your information only, no action is required at this time. Please be aware that current standards and practices remain valid for authorization and evaluation. Further details on transition to the enhanced PYP will follow in 2018.

OVERVIEW



The rigorous, and collaborative, PYP review process was informed by research, analysis and school feedback.

Subsequent enhancements have been designed to reflect our pedagogical thinking and explore the reciprocal relationship between the **learner, learning and teaching** and the **learning community**, broadening the perspective on what constitutes a PYP educational experience to make it:



better for students



easier for teachers to implement



more flexible for schools.

Winston Pierce, PYP Principal:

*"I think the impact of the enhancements on me as **principal** of the school will be to provide updated and clear guidance for the direction we need to go. **Our teachers** will have some concise tools they can use to feel incredibly successful, even from day one in implementing the programme. The greatest impact on our **students** will be this new design of including the learner, the learning community and learning and teaching all as equal parts and partners in the process."*

WHAT is AGENCY in the enhanced PYP?



Agency is the power to take meaningful and intentional action, and acknowledges the rights and responsibilities of the individual, supporting voice, choice and ownership for everyone in the learning community.

Your understanding of the learner is the foundation of all learning and teaching and will influence how you support student agency, and how the learning community considers children's rights, responsibilities and identities.

Agency is present when students partner with teachers and members of the learning community to take charge of what, where, why, with whom and when they learn. This provides opportunities to demonstrate and reflect on knowledge, approaches to learning and attributes of the learner profile.

Students with agency:

- have voice, choice and ownership; and a propensity to take action
- influence and direct learning
- contribute to and participate in the learning community.

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WHAT is AGENCY in the enhanced PYP? (continued)

WHY?



Agency is fundamental to learning. Agency “enable[s] people to play a part in their self-development, adaptation, and self-renewal with changing times” (Bandura 2001).

Whilst inquiry is a pedagogical approach, agency relates to the educational philosophy underpinning the enhanced PYP. A commitment to agency in the enhanced PYP will create a culture within the learning community where students co-construct and self-adjust their learning experiences, building self-efficacy, a greater sense of learning ownership and contributing to their social, emotional and cognitive growth.

HOW?

The learning community will play a vital role in supporting and nurturing student agency in the PYP. Relationships with students will be strengthened; learning partners will listen, respect and respond while the student makes choices and adjustments, and takes ownership and risks.

Valuing agency begins by accepting that students are capable learners and natural inquirers. Members of the learning community are encouraged to regularly reflect on how their decisions regarding time, spaces, materials, interactions and relationships support student agency

You can support agency by:

- personalising learning
- creating learning environments to support social, physical and emotional well-being
- creating a culture of respect
- collaborating and co-constructing learning and learning goals.



Teacher support materials will include illustrations of agency in action, and advice on how teachers and the learning community can support learner agency.

Taryn Bond, PYP educator:

“Agency is not something that is given to children, it is something they already have - something that we as educators need to do a better job of respecting and supporting.

For me, supporting students to lead their own learning stems from a combination of philosophical, political and pedagogical reasons.

Philosophically, I see children as human beings who have the inherent right to be involved in decisions and issues that affect and effect their own lives.

Politically, I am wary of the typical power imbalances in many traditional approaches to education and think children should be able to have a voice and democratically participate in the classroom and school communities where they spend so much of their time during childhood.

Pedagogically, I understand that personally relevant and significant learning is the deepest, most enduring and transformative learning. So, if we as educators are striving for that type of learning, who better to know what learning is personally relevant than the students themselves?”

WHAT enhancements strengthen the **EARLY LEARNER**?



The enhanced PYP will **extend the early years from ages 3-6**, underlining the importance of this foundational period, emphasising that very young learners are capable and have agency. There will be greater flexibility and autonomy for schools including the ability to offer a minimum of four units of inquiry each year for this age range.

The power of **play will become the primary vehicle for inquiry**, supporting thoughtful and intentional opportunities for child-initiated play, hands-on learning, and the co-construction of learning between teachers and young learners. Through play and exploration, students will learn to inquire as they build and test theories to help make sense of the world around them.

WHY?



Play offers young students authentic contexts through which to cognitively, emotionally, linguistically, physically and socially learn and develop at their own pace.

Social and emotional development also takes shape in the early years as children are naturally inclined to explore, discover, play and to make connections between self, others and their learning environment. Through these interactions, children form their perception of themselves and others in the world (Rushton, Juola-Rushton 2010).

HOW?

Four interwoven central features of early years learning will enable you to observe and plan for further development by responding to students' emerging interests and theories:

- Planning uninterrupted time for **play**
- Building strong **relationships** with students and their families
- Creating and maintaining responsive/interactive **learning spaces** for play
- Offering many opportunities for **exploration and expression**.



Teacher support materials for the early learner will include support on assessment, inquiry, effective mathematics and language practices, planning to support emerging interests and the role of relationships.

Anne-Marie Evans, IBEN:

“As a workshop leader, I am particularly excited that our teachers of 5–6-year-old students will now be included in the early years; they will be thrilled to be able to focus on play as a medium for learning.

Our workshops will certainly change to become more play filled learning workshops which encourage participants to take back engagements and ideas for their classrooms and new ideas for creative, playful learning spaces.”

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WHAT enhancements strengthen the LEARNER PROFILE?

The learner profile remains fundamental to all learning and teaching in the PYP. Increased clarity around reporting of the learner profile attributes will shift focus away from summative assessment towards monitoring and documenting students' development over time. 'Attitudes' in the PYP have now been subsumed within the descriptors of the learner profile. See [What is an IB Education?](#) (2013-17).

The learner profile attributes provide all members of the learning community with a common language to describe and to reflect on the school culture, communications, feedback, and expectations. It is expected that they will be infused within the programme of inquiry as well as throughout the life of a school.

WHY?



It will be more effective for schools to monitor the development of the learner profile attributes on an ongoing basis.

Reinforcing the **central importance of the learner profile attributes** across the school community will bring them to life for students, supporting their development of international mindedness and in taking action for positive change.

HOW?



Together with your students, you will have greater flexibility to display, discuss, reflect on and develop attributes of the learner profile. You will be encouraged to think about ways to provide opportunities for exploration and demonstration of specific learner profile attributes, their connections, and how multiple attributes work together.

Reflective questions will inspire you to further develop learning dispositions relevant to your own context. The whole learning community will play an important part in valuing, appreciating, monitoring and demonstrating the learner profile in action.

You can collaborate with students to identify meaningful learner profile attributes by:



- developing definitions and descriptions of the attributes
- exploring how multiple attributes work together, eg open-minded thinker, principled risk-taker
- evaluating how the attributes link to the approaches to learning
- using them as a tool for self-assessment and feedback on personal learning
- gathering evidence of their development.

Your learning community can consider:

- how to create shared understandings
- how to embed the attributes within the culture of the school
- how the development and progression of the attributes is integrated inside and outside the programme of inquiry.

Sean Walker, PYP educator:

"The enhancements coming to the learner profile are exciting as they contextualise the 10 attributes and embed them as a natural and necessary aspect of learning in the PYP."

"The guidance will allow schools to make authentic connections between different parts of the programme and greater flexibility to use the learner profile in innovative ways."

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WHAT enhancements strengthen ACTION?

Action, agency, the learner profile and international mindedness will work hand in hand to strengthen students' confidence in their capacity to make a positive change in the world.

Student-initiated action will be considered a dynamic outcome of agency, and an integral part of the learning process that can arise at any time.

Demonstrations of action can include:

- participation – contributing as individual or group
- advocacy – action to support social / environmental / political change
- social justice – relation to rights, equality and equity, social well-being and justice
- social entrepreneurship – innovative, resourceful and sustainable social change
- lifestyle choices – eg. consumption, impact of choices.

WHY?



Action, the core of student agency, is integral to PYP learning and to the programme's overarching outcome of international-mindedness.

Through taking individual and collective action, students will come to understand the responsibilities associated with being internationally minded and appreciate the benefits of working with others for a shared purpose. When students see tangible actions that they can choose to take to make a difference, they see themselves as competent, capable and active agents of change (Oxfam 2015).

HOW?

You can support action by:



- acknowledging and celebrating the various forms of action that occur
- guiding students to reflect on their actions and adjust their course of action when necessary
- planning for inquiry that supports making informed choices
- providing opportunities for skills development that facilitates action.

Your learning community can support action by:



- helping students connect action with personal experiences
- celebrating student action with others
- engaging students in dialogue around 'what is action?'
- encouraging students to consider the appropriateness and impact of their actions
- supporting students in establishing and maintaining connections to local and wider communities.

Katierose Deos, PYP educator:

"I believe the enhanced PYP model with a defined action core calls us to question our own actions as teachers which will create opportunities for authentic teacher modelling of being active and thinking about action.

Defining some ways action can be demonstrated provides a common vocabulary among IB professionals, school communities and classroom communities which in turn helps make action visible.

The further defining of 'the learner' helps teachers realize that we have the power to strengthen action within our school communities by intentionally planning learning engagements that provide students the opportunity to evaluate how they make decisions, develop skills that facilitate action and provide time to reflect on action within our community."

Teacher support materials will include examples and tools to help students connect action with attributes of the learner profile.

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WHAT enhancements strengthen the EXHIBITION?

Schools will be able to start from a guided exhibition and move to a student-led exhibition as their experience with the PYP deepens and their expectation for student independence increases.

The exhibition may become one of your six units of inquiry during the final year or it may stand outside the programme of inquiry, with a more flexible timeframe to support student needs and school contexts.

Only authorized IB World Schools offering the PYP are required to participate in the exhibition, although candidate schools may choose to do so.

WHY?



As a powerful demonstration of agency, the exhibition has been repositioned to reflect students' capacity to take action on an issue they have chosen to explore, as well as acknowledging the community of learners that have nurtured them through their years in the PYP.



A more flexible approach to the exhibition will take the experience of your own school into account while emphasizing that students have the capacity to independently initiate, design and lead the exhibition.

HOW?



You will find additional clarity around how the exhibition may work in practice, through supporting students in demonstrating their understanding of an issue or opportunity they have chosen to explore.

Teacher support materials and guidance will include a sample exhibition journal, a journey of the exhibition infographic and a learning story reflecting on one school's exhibition journey.

Jason Doucette, Vice Principal/PYP Coordinator:

"As the culmination of learning in the PYP, the flexibility that enhancements to the exhibition will reflect is very exciting: the recognition that as schools grow so can the exhibition experience for everyone involved demonstrates the responsiveness and commitment of the IB to lifelong learning for all.

Mirroring their learning through the programme, participating in the exhibition will help celebrate not only the learner as agentic, including being assessment capable, but also the learning community for the ongoing collaborative role they play in the lives of students.

As an authentic community event, the enhancements to the exhibition will serve to remind us of the power of our students to transform their own lives and the lives of others."

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Following receipt of this communication you may have questions.

FAQs are available on the [programme resource centre](#) and via [IB Answers](#).

For additional clarification related to 'The Learner', please share your queries with our community via [twitter](#) and our PYP online community BEFORE END NOVEMBER 2017. We will monitor carefully and address the most common themes during scheduled webinars with members of the PYP team and IB educators.

THE LEARNER WEBINAR: 6 DECEMBER 2017

Washington DC: 08:00 The Hague: 14:00 Singapore: 21:00

DIGITAL RESOURCE

The new digital experience launching in October 2018, will replace 'Making the PYP Happen' and most other supporting PDF documents.

A single-sign on through [My IB](#) will enable you to access the new PYP digital platform on the [programme resource centre](#). This can be personalised to connect you directly to the content most relevant to your needs, with links to the new glossary, teacher support materials and relevant Programme Standards and Practices.

A phased transition plan to support full integration of the enhanced PYP in your school is currently in development. Further details to follow in 2018.

KEY COMMUNICATION TIMELINE



Key communications you may have missed:

[Preparing for the enhanced PYP:](#)

exciting enhancements coming to the PYP

[Trusted, timeless and transformational:](#)

a summary of what's not changing in the enhanced PYP

[Leadership & preparing for change:](#)

a reflection on the role of agency in leadership and continuous school improvement.

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Questions? ibid@ibo.org