



Parent/Student Handbook

2023–2024



Global education. International citizens.



Melina's Kindergarten is operated by the International School of Athens. The main campus building is nearby, on Artemidos & Xenias in Kefalari. At the main campus, the Primary School accepts students in grades 1 – 6, and the Middle and High School accept students from grades 7 – 12. The ISA Primary School offers an inquiry based, concept driven curriculum. We aim for a balance between the acquisition of knowledge, essential skills and attitudes, and the search for meaning and understanding.

Mission Statement for Nursery and Junior Pre-Kindergarten

Our primary aim is to provide a safe and secure environment where every child may acquire the foundations for their holistic, personal and emotional development. We strive to open each child's mind for future learning.

Our aim is:

- To encourage curiosity, interest and enthusiasm in discovering their environment and the world around them.
- To introduce simple problem solving.
- To familiarize each child with routine, limits and boundaries.
- To develop their English language skills.
- To instill good manners and empathy.
- To encourage them to enjoy and benefit from social interaction.
- To promote independence and self care.
- To stimulate and develop fine and gross motor skills.
- To provide the introduction to numbers, phonics, simple concepts and themes.

In this way, the children gain valuable life lessons and are prepared for their transition to Kindergarten.

Mission Statement for Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten

Our primary aim is to provide a safe and secure environment where every child will develop their social, emotional and academic individuality in a structured classroom setting where cultural diversity is respected. Each child is encouraged to achieve their personal goals and become an independent, life-long learner.

Our aim is:

- To offer constructive, inquiry-based activities in all core subjects.
- To focus on each child's unique developmental needs and learning style.
- To enable each child to explore, investigate and experiment, think and communicate in a challenging and stimulating environment.
- To build on each child's experiences, ideas, interests and cultural backgrounds.
- To cater for each child's emotional, social, intellectual and physical growth.
- To enable each child to grow into a self-confident and well-balanced individual.
- To follow an age-appropriate learning continuum.
- To prepare each child for primary school.

Curriculum

The curriculum at Melina's Kindergarten is designed to maintain high standards of learning as well as to nurture the children's social and emotional well being and help them reach their greatest potential in a stimulating and caring environment. The children are encouraged to develop a sense of identity, self-esteem and independence. Through an interdisciplinary curriculum and by using an inquiry-based approach with hands-on activities, the programme creates opportunities for the children to make meaningful connections. Emphasis is put on the communicative importance of language. Children are taught to respect others and their natural environment and to develop an awareness and appreciation of different cultures.

In Kindergarten, the students are introduced to the IB Primary Years Programme. Integrated learning occurs through six Units of Inquiry. These units integrate subject knowledge across the main curriculum areas of Languages; Mathematics; Social Studies; Science and Technology; The Arts; Personal, Physical and Social Education (PSPE). The Kindergarten students inquire into a unit from each of these five PYP Transdisciplinary Themes:

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



We believe in an effective partnership between home and school. We therefore recommend that parents keep a copy of this Handbook for reference so that we can work together for the welfare of the individual and the community.

Please contact the appropriate person with concerns or questions:

Dr. Spiros Molfetas	Consultant to the Administration
Dr. Christina Tsibiridi	Director
Ms. Helga Barry	Early Years Principal Summer School Coordinator
Ms. Maria Protopapa	Deputy Director, Head of the Centre for Counseling & Learning Services
Mr. Fanis Malakondas	Financial Director
Mr. Apostolos Zakkas	Bus Coordinator

ISA reserves the right to deny the enrollment or re-enrollment of a student in case:

1. The student's parents/guardians have not fully paid off their financial obligations to the school on the day of the enrollment/reenrollment
2. Upon the ISA director's justified recommendation, it is deemed that the student cannot be enrolled in the next grade for reasons other than his/her academic performance
3. During the student's attendance of ISA, there has been:
 - repeated and proven difficulty in the cooperation between the student's parents/guardians and the school,
 - lack of trust and good faith on behalf of the student's parents/guardians or,
 - incidents of improper and inappropriate behavior on behalf of the student's parents/guardians towards the school's faculty and staff.

As an IB World School we believe in the IB Learner profile

IB learners strive to be:

Inquirers: We develop our natural curiosity. We acquire skills necessary to conduct inquiry and research and show independence in learning. We actively enjoy learning and this love of learning will be sustained throughout our lives.

Knowledgeable: We explore concepts, ideas and issues that have local and global significance. In doing so, we acquire in-depth knowledge and develop understanding across a broad and balanced range of disciplines.

Thinkers: We exercise initiative in applying thinking skills critically and creatively to recognize and approach complex problems, and make reasoned, ethical decisions.

Communicators: We understand and express ideas and information confidently and creatively in more than one language and in a variety of modes of communication. We work effectively and willingly in collaboration with others.

Principled: We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness, justice and respect for the dignity of the individual, groups and communities. We take responsibility for our own actions and the consequences that accompany them.

Open-minded: We understand and appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, and are open to the perspectives, values and traditions of other individuals and communities. We are accustomed to seeking and evaluating a range of points of view, and are willing to grow from the experience.

Caring: We show empathy, compassion and respect towards the needs and feelings of others. We have a personal commitment to service, and act to make a positive difference to the lives of others and to the environment.

Risk-takers: We approach unfamiliar situations and uncertainty with courage and fore thought, and have the independence of spirit to explore new roles, ideas and strategies. We are brave and articulate in defending our beliefs.

Balanced: We understand the importance of intellectual, physical and emotional balance to achieve personal well-being for ourselves and others.

Reflective: We give thoughtful consideration to our own learning and experience. We are able to assess and understand our strengths and limitations in order to support our learning and personal development.

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Attendance

Please ensure that your child has sufficient time in the morning to get ready for school in a relaxed manner and arrive at school on time. Students who are consistently tardy will miss vital instruction and information. The school day starts at 9:00am.

We ask your co-operation in seeing that your child's attendance record is one that will give him or her the full benefit of the learning experiences we have planned.

In case of absence from school, a written statement indicating the date and reason for your child's absence is required on the day he/she returns to school. If the reason for the absence is an infectious illness or a hospital stay, the child must have a note from a doctor stating that he or she may return to school. If this note is not presented on a student's return, a parent will be called to come and collect the child from school and will be required to keep the child at home until such a doctor's note is presented.

Campus Security and Safety

Students are never left unsupervised during school hours, and are accompanied to all classes by a faculty member. All play areas are fenced and gates remain closed throughout the school day. All visitors are requested to report directly to the kindergarten office.

Please do not park in front of the Kindergarten gate at any time as it is used by our buses throughout the day. Parking on the sidewalk makes it very difficult for parents and children in prams to exit the building safely.

The ISA Centre for Counseling and Learning Services

All students and parents may access the services of the ISA Counseling and Learning Services which provides a range of services to support the academic, emotional, social, psychological and personal needs of the members of our school community.

- **The Child Study Team of Melina's Kindergarten (CST)** offers a wide range of services to students in need. The team, comprised of the Director of the Centre of Counseling and Learning Services, Early Years Principal, Counseling Psychologist, Kindergarten Coordinators, and another professional if needed, meets regularly to discuss, refer, recommend and create individual education plans for students with learning differences and social and behavioural or emotional difficulties.
- **Screening:** Personnel from the Centre of Counseling and Learning Services administer, if needed, the Brigance Readiness Assessment to ISA Kindergarten students at Melina's at the start and end of the school year. Prospective students from other kindergartens may be administered the Brigance Assessment as part of their application process. The information given by the screening helps to provide evidence of learning strengths and weaknesses and readiness for entry into grade one.

- **Testing and Referral Process for Special Learning Support Services**

- ◆ A teacher or parent may refer a student based on observed behaviours (academic, social, or emotional) that give cause for concern.
- ◆ An in-class observation by the counselling Psychologist follows.
- ◆ The Child Study Team of Melina's Kindergarten will meet to discuss, refer and make recommendations. In specialized cases, the parents may be asked to collaborate with specialized external professionals such as a child psychiatrist, child neurologist, speech therapist, occupational therapist, play therapist etc., and the findings need to be reported to the Child Study Team in order to work for the well-being and advancement of the child.

- **Counseling Services:** A variety of services and activities of counseling nature are available for students and parents. The decision for counseling is made by the personnel of the ISA Centre. After an initial session, parents are informed of the outcome. If there is a necessity for regular counseling, this will be discussed individually and privately with the schools administration.
- **Parent Coffee Meetings:** The Centre for Counseling and Learning Services of the Primary School and of Melina's Kindergarten provides lectures and group sessions to small groups of parents at regular coffee meetings. The topics for the coffee meetings may be of a psychological, educational or social nature.

Evacuation Procedure

Emergency evacuation procedures and routes are posted in all classrooms. Two practice drills are held during the first two weeks of school and at regular intervals throughout the year.

Field Trips and Special Events

Advance notice of an event is given by faculty members.

Notification of all field trips is given in advance and it remains the parents' responsibility to inform the teacher if a child will not participate in any particular trip.

If you plan to send a birthday treat for your child's birthday or name day, please inform your child's classroom teacher at least two days in advance. Please note that if the treat is for consumption, it should be individually wrapped. It is, of course, vital that parents inform the school of any allergies their child may have, on the health information form we distribute at the beginning of each year.

Health and Emergency Information



A trained first aider is available for first aid and liaison with parents for minor injuries and ailments.

We request from parents that all the medical forms are completed and returned in a timely fashion. We also request that parents notify the school immediately of any changes to contact details and medical updates.

Please note that in the event of an emergency and where reasonable attempts to contact parents/guardians have been unsuccessful, the child will be transferred to any hospital reasonably accessible.

We believe that a student who is well enough to attend school is well enough to participate fully in the daily schedule. Therefore, if your child is not well enough to participate in PE class or in outside recess play times due to cold or fever, please keep your child at home for the sake of the health of other students.

As a general rule, the school cannot take the responsibility for administering medication of any kind to students. However, if your child has been prescribed a medication to enable him or her to participate more actively in their learning, please contact the Kindergarten Principal.

It is the parent's responsibility to inform the school when a child contacts head lice so that appropriate action can be taken within the community.

Your child needs to stay home if he/she:

- Has a fever equal to or higher than 37 C, especially if other symptoms are apparent (such as pain, lethargy, decreased appetite) and the child looks and feels unwell
- Is vomiting
- Has diarrhea
- Has an uncontrolled cough or difficulty breathing
- Has a severe sore throat (with or without fever) and is unable to drink without discomfort
- Complains of constant stomach pain
- Has a skin rash that is associated with a fever
- Has red, weeping eyes with white or yellow drainage (this may indicate conjunctivitis)
- Has a severe headache
- Is in the first 48 hours of antibiotic treatment



Your child can return to school when he/she:

- Has no fever for 48 hours (without the aid of medication such as depon)
- Has no vomiting or diarrhea for 48 hours from the last episode (without medication)
- Can eat and drink normally
- Is rested and alert enough to participate in school activities
- Has completed any period of doctor recommended isolation

Please note the following:

These are general guidelines only. If your child exhibits any of the above symptoms or you have any questions/concerns about your child's health please contact your doctor.

If your child comes to school with any of the above symptoms, for the well being of your child and the whole school community, you will be called and asked to come in and pick him/her up.

We kindly request that if your child is sick and needs to stay home, that you contact the school and describe the illness and symptoms. Parents should also inform the school if a doctor makes a specific diagnosis such as strep throat, conjunctivitis, chicken pox etc.

A doctor's clearance letter is required for contagious and infectious conditions.

Home School Communication

We believe that an open, honest relationship between home and school is central to any child's welfare. There are, therefore, a number of ways in which we communicate within our school community.

- Notes to parents will be emailed by the teachers or the administration. Any communication from home to the classroom teacher should be emailed to the teacher in copy to the Principal.
- Informational letters are sent home when the need arises by other departments within ISA and parents receive regular professional communications from their child's teachers.
- Parents will receive a letter at the beginning of each Unit of Study. This letter contains details of the central idea of the unit, details of field trips and any home/school co-operation needed.
- Private or confidential letters to the Principal or Kindergarten Coordinator should be sent to school in sealed envelopes.
- Your comments and feedback are most valuable. Please do not hesitate to call the office at any time for an appointment to meet with your child's teacher, Kindergarten Coordinator, or the Early Years Principal to discuss any concerns you may have, or ideas you wish to share with us at school.

Language Programmes

English is the language of instruction at the International School of Athens. Our primary goal, therefore, is to provide the necessary support for every child to reach a level of English proficiency in reading, writing, listening and speaking that ensures effective participation and success in the curriculum. However, Native Greek students in Junior Pre-Kindergarten may participate in Greek lessons which are offered twice a week. All students in Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten will participate in daily Greek lessons

Lunch

Parents have the option of ordering lunch from the school menu or sending in a packed lunch from home.

Please note that nuts, chewing gum and carbonated drinks are not allowed on campus.



Parental Support

A child's first years at school are important in the formation of a love of lifelong learning and in the development of a healthy self-image. Teacher and parent role modelling ensure that future generations will be productive and significant members of our global community. In our efforts to support parents, the ISA Centre for Counselling Services offers the following support to parents. Meetings are held at the main campus:

1. Parent Coffee meetings where parenting issues are explored.
2. A series of evening seminars on educational topics is open to all parents and friends of the school.

The following suggestions may prove helpful as you guide your child through his/her early years education:

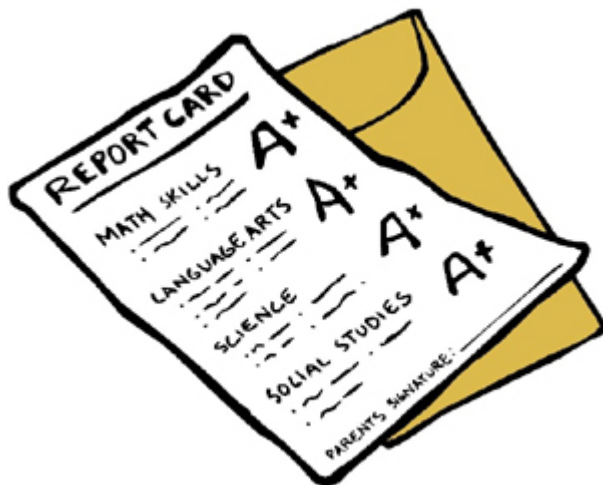
- Stay informed - Please keep track of important dates and send back all reply slips.
- Belonging to a diverse international community enriches our lives. Please support our efforts to honor and respect the physical, social, cultural and individual differences within our community.
- Regulate after-school time and find a balance between home and school. Provide a stimulating home environment in addition to a quiet study area. Students enjoy contributing to dinner discussions about what transpired during the day at school. Limit the time spent watching TV and playing computer games. Read to your child instead.
- Check your emails in order to avoid misunderstandings of classroom policies and procedures. Communication with your child's teachers and / or to or to request a prompt appointment for clarification of any concern will be done via email.
- Self-reliance is developed over time, through the taking of responsibility for one's actions and through understanding that making mistakes is a natural part of the learning process. Help you child develop self-reliance and a sense of pride in resolving conflict successfully. For example, avoid using "having a bad day" or "being overly tired" as excuses for inappropriate or disrespectful behaviour.
- Get to know your children's teachers. They are your first contact if you have any concerns. Never hesitate to contact a teacher if you have a question.
- Don't hesitate to contact the Kindergarten Coordinator or Principal if you notice a change in your children's attitude or behavior.

Being aware of your children's strengths and weaknesses and supporting them to become the best they can be is the best gift you can give them as parents.

Reporting Student Progress

A student's progress is reported in a number of ways throughout the year, and according to the needs of each individual student.

- Parents are informed of minor incidents.
- Parents of students who are experiencing difficulties of any kind will be contacted by telephone or through the passport by the appropriate faculty member and a meeting will be arranged to discuss the matter with all involved parties and/or the Principal. An individualized academic plan or behaviour modification plan will be designed to support a student in need and to provide accountability for a student's progress in these areas.
- A portfolio of student work is compiled throughout the year in Pre-Kindergarten and in Kindergarten.
- Report cards are issued at the end of the first and second term, during a Parent/Teacher conference. No classes are held on these days. The third term report is mailed after the end of the school year.



The School Day

Students at Melina's Kindergarten attend classes from 9:00am to 3:00pm. Students using school transportation may leave at 2:50pm.

Parents are reminded to make appointments to speak with teachers. Faculty are not available for meetings before or after school without prior arrangement as these are professional planning times.

Parents must ensure that all students who do not use school transportation arrive and leave the campus at the appropriate times. In the event of an unexpected delay, please call the office so your child can be informed of your situation.

Parents are reminded that students are expected to leave campus promptly at the end of each school day. The pick-up time for parents is 3:00pm.

Babysitting to accommodate working parents is offered daily at Melina's Kindergarten from 7:00am until 8:30am and 3:00pm until 7:00pm and on Saturdays from 10:00am until 3:00pm. Parents are asked to sign up for this service a month in advance.

If it is necessary for a parent to take a child from class before the end of the school day, the parent must send a note via email, stating the reason and the time the child will be leaving school. Parents are requested to pick up their son/daughter from the office to avoid disrupting classes.

No child is handed to an individual other than a parent, without agreed prior notification. If a parent who regularly picks up his/her child after school sends a relative or friend in his/her place, the office must be notified in advance by the parent. The individual picking up the child must come to the office and identify him/her self before taking the child.

Stationery, Supplies and Textbooks

Textbooks, stationery and main supplies are provided for all Kindergarten students.

Student Behavior

The three explicit rules for behavior at Melina's Kindergarten are: Be Safe; Be Responsible and Be Respectful. These rules provide a sense of security and a common identity for all members of our school community. They represent the values and beliefs of the Kindergarten and communicate the ways in which our community works together. All faculty are responsible at all times for ensuring that rules are followed.

Transportation

You may make transportation arrangements on orientation day. Please contact the main campus at 210-6233888 for all transportation issues throughout the year.



Uniform

A copy of the Uniform List is issued to each family prior to Orientation. Pre-paid uniform can be delivered to the school. Payment can be made by Visa, MasterCard or Bank Transfer.

For their comfort and convenience, all children are required to wear the uniform and also provide an Art overall with their name.

Uniform is mandatory for students in Junior Pre-Kindergarten, Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten.

We ask that every item of clothing be clearly labelled with your child's name.

Each child is asked to provide an extra set of clothes to be left at school. If your child uses these clothes please be sure to provide another set the following day.

All uniforms must be purchased from:

LB Creations, 12 Gymnasiou, Pefkasia, N. Ionia.

(Opposite the train station, Pefkasia). Tel: 210 2717847 Fax: 210 2717383.

Hair

Ostentatious hairstyles and hair colors (i.e. outside of the natural color range) are not permitted.

Visitors

The Kindergarten campus is open for academic business from 8:30am - 4:00pm Monday through Friday. All appointments to meet with the Early Years Principal, Kindergarten Coordinator or a faculty member must be made through the office.

Confidential discussions referring to any student's progress will take place by appointment during the school day. It is inappropriate for a parent to contact a faculty member at home or out of school hours.

Please inform your child's teacher, the Early Years Principal and the Kindergarten Coordinator in advance if you plan to bring any visitors to the campus.

HAVE A NICE
SCHOOL YEAR



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