



## International School of Tallinn

### HANDBOOK

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Tallinn International School (IST) was founded in 2016 by a resolution of the school's owner AS Mainor's supervisory board and opened in 2017. IST provides education in English based on the Estonian State Curriculum merged with the IB (*International Baccalaureate*) Curriculum. IST is an international general education school that covers the whole cycle from primary school to the end of upper secondary school. IST is located at Keevise 2, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor.

**Mission Statement:** IST Mission is to support the holistic development of every individual to become responsible global citizens and independent life-long learners by providing a rigorous inquiry and multicultural learning environment.

**Our Promise:** To foster a yearning for life-long learning through academic rigour and a network of global citizens.

**Vision:** To create a global community who values inquiry, critical and creative thinking, open and entrepreneurial mindedness, and acts with tolerance and compassion.

- A cohesive community of students in grades 1-12, faculty, staff, parents, and alumni.
- An outstanding faculty that is continually embracing best pedagogical practices.
- Enhanced knowledge and skills in math, science, and technology that prepare students for a changing technological future.
- Students who strive to become entrepreneurial leaders in their desired fields.

**Beliefs:** At IST, we believe it is important to be a balanced member of society through:

### Leadership

- Being a good role model inside and outside of the school
- Inspiring and encouraging others
- Good communicator
- Demonstrating empathy

### Culture

- Accepting everyone and embracing differences
- Being yourself
- Welcoming change
- Sensitivity to political correctness

### Integrity

- Being honest
- Respecting everyone
- Showing a good moral and ethical attitude

### Action

- Being active members of the community
- Taking responsibility for your actions
- Embrace the creativity of your inner child

**An Empowering School:** As a PYP IB candidate school, we have adopted a student-centred approach in the broadest sense, seeking out and offering opportunities for students to develop their sense of personal worth and to discover aptitudes and capabilities that they have not previously recognized within themselves.

In the classroom, our teaching strategies will reflect and reinforce this approach. Beyond the classroom, our students will be provided with opportunities for participation and responsible action. In learning how to make an impact upon the quality of their own education at the school, our students will acquire invaluable insights into leadership, critical self-awareness, and team-building skills.

### **At IST we will:**

- Identify, celebrate, and nurture the diverse, cultures, talents, and intelligence of all our students.
- Engage staff who are expert leaders in learning and able to promote excellence in academic, creative, social, spiritual, physical, and emotional development.
- Teach students to learn by questioning, problem-solving, and creative, critical thinking rather than by the mere retention of facts.
- Enthuse, motivate, and inspire students with our innovative approaches and high expectations.
- Nurture and model the values of the IB learner profile.
- Enable our students to achieve beyond their previous limits and expectations.
- Encourage our students to be active participants in the learning process and to become independent, co-operative learners.
- Welcome parents as equal partners in their children's education.
- Enrich students' learning by making effective use of the abundant resources and linguistic opportunities in Estonia and the surrounding regions.

Nurture in our students a sense of personal accomplishment, self-confidence, and an enduring appreciation for learning.

## **SCHOOL RULES**

**Rules and Regulations:** All organizations require a set of rules and regulations to moderate behaviour and outline expectations of student, parent, and staff conduct. The school rules and regulations detailed in this policy reflect the culture of International School of Tallinn and are approved by the school board and director; they are implemented and upheld by all members of the IST community.

### **Daily Schedule:**

- Lessons begin at 9:00 and end at:
  - 2:00 for grades 1 and 2
  - 3:00 for grades 3, 4, 5, and 6
  - 3:00 or 3:45 for grades 7 and 8 depending on the timetable.
- All students must leave the premises promptly at the end of their school day, unless prior arrangements have been made.

**Absences and Attendance:** We recognize that absences occur. However, we ask parents to do everything they can to ensure that such absences do not conflict with school days. We do not expect teachers to make exceptional lesson planning arrangements for students who miss school because of holidays are taken during school days. The school year includes a generous amount of vacation time and therefore an extension of this time is not encouraged.

There are two types of recognized absences, **excused** and **unexcused** (truancy).

**Excused Absence:** The term “absence” is defined as non-attendance with permission of parent/guardian and school administrator.

Excused absences are as follows:

- Sickness
- Death in family
- Religious Observance
- Medical Appointment
- Field Trip
- Travel for school athletics or activities
- Extended Travel
  - During extended travel time, parents are required to provide written notification to the office manager and make their own arrangements for the gap in learning

**Unexcused Absence:** The term “truancy” shall be defined as non-attendance in one class or more without permission of parent(s)/guardian(s) or school administrator.

The school may take one or more of the following actions as a result of an unexcused absence:

- Telephone/written notification to parent/guardian
- Conference scheduled with parent/guardian
- Disciplinary action

Absenteeism disrupts learning and it is not possible to “make up” in full the learning lost during a period of absence. We understand that emergency situations happen; however, the nature of our program is designed for students to learn within their community of peers. It is not always possible to send class work home or for students to complete the equivalent work at home.

It is the responsibility of students to complete/submit any assessment tasks before the absence or within two (2) school days of the students return.

All days that students miss from school for any reason will be reported on the report card as an absence. The procedures listed below will be followed each term for all accumulated absences (with the exception of verified medical absences, approved pre-arranged absences, or absences due to suspensions).

(a) Parent(s)/Guardian(s) are asked to inform the homeroom teacher, in writing, if they are planning extended holidays.

(b) When your student is absent from school for two (2) consecutive days or more, you need to provide a letter explaining their absence or provide a note from the doctor upon return to school.

(c) If a student has six (6) absences, a letter of notification will be sent to the parent(s)/guardian(s) along with a copy of the attendance policy.

(d) On the twelfth (12th) absence, a letter will be sent requesting a conference with the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) to reiterate the adverse effects of the student's absences and to devise a plan to rectify the problem.

(e) On the fifteenth (15th) absence, the student/parent(s)/guardian(s) may be required to participate in a school conference. Disciplinary actions may occur.

(f) After 21 consecutive absences, a student may be withdrawn from school.

**Absence Notification:** When a student is absent from school, parent(s)/guardian(s) are asked to input the absence on eKool and email to homeroom teacher. When attendance is being recorded, if a student is absent and homeroom teacher has not been informed, a phone call to home will be made to find out the reason for the absence.

If your child has an illness or is recovering from an illness and is unable to participate in physical education, swimming activities, etc., a medical certificate should be issued by the student's physician. The certificate should indicate the period of time that the student should be excluded from certain activities.

All students must be in class for the start of the school day at 9:00. Consistent tardiness with no reasons, will result in an unexcused absence.

The preference of student departures is determined by the parent(s)/guardian(s) at the start of the year. Options include:

- Parent(s)/guardian(s) pick up
- A student riding public transportation home
  - If a younger student is to travel with an older student/sibling, the school needs to be notified, and a form needs to be filled out/signed.

\*\*\* For special occasions, other arrangements can be made if the parent(s)/guardian(s) communicate the changes in advance with the school.

**Daily Monitoring and Feedback:** Parent(s)/Guardian(s) have continuous daily access to their student's progress in the classroom. Assessments in the classroom are geared to guide and encourage learning and develop each student's capacity for self-assessment. Daily progress, activities, and classroom behaviour are available on eKool.

It is important to us that each student is dedicated to taking responsibility for his/her learning; after all, we are striving to make good global citizens who take pride in their success. With this being a goal here at IST, our teachers have decided to make homework an optional task. If we send home activities with your child, it is encouraged that they complete it for mastery of content. If we notice your student is struggling with a topic, we will make a note of it and suggest additional practice at home with one of these activities – but they will not be graded. We respect your time as a family, but also want to work as a parent/guardian/teacher team to maximize student learning.

**Responsibilities of Parent(s)/Guardian(s):** Parent(s)/Guardian(s) play an important role at IST and have a responsibility to support the efforts of school staff in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all students. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) fulfill this responsibility when they:

- Show an active interest in their child's school work and progress
- Communicate regularly with the school
- Help their child to be neat, appropriately dressed, and prepared for school
- Promptly report to the school their child's absence or late arrival
- Regularly read the updates and newsletters
- Become familiar with the school rules, behaviour policies, and expectations
- Encourage and assist their child in following all rules
- Treat all school employees with respect
- Assist school staff in dealing with disciplinary issues

**Communication:** IST offers various ways of communication for all members of our school community.

- Class Dojo
- eKool
- Email
- Face-to-face

Other school information can be accessed at our school website: [ist.ee](http://ist.ee)

**Dress Code:** There is no uniform at International School of Tallinn, but it is expected that students and teachers dress appropriately. Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified if there are any issues with the dress code. Students are required to have a pair of indoor shoes to wear in the classrooms.

### **Student's Duties and Behavior**

**Electronic equipment:** Personal mobile phones and other electronic gadgets are not allowed to be used during school hours. For safety reasons, electronic gadgets should be stored in backpacks or handed over to the class teachers.

**Behaviour guidelines:** We want IST to be a place of tolerance and respect. Each classroom will have a set of rules, but everyone in the IST community is expected to follow the basic rules of the school.

The PYP attitudes form the foundation of our discipline of our behaviour guidelines. In addition to these attitudes, we also promote the following:

- Bullying is NOT tolerated and should be communicated with an adult when identified
- Everyone is expected to respect school, personal, and other's belongings
- No smoking, drugs, or alcohol on IST premises at any time
- Every individual will take responsibility for his/her actions
- Conflict will be resolved with peaceful discussion and personal reflection
- Communication between teachers, parent(s)/guardian(s), and students will be open and courteous
- In unique circumstances, decisions need to be made based on good ethical conduct
- For safety purposes, students may not leave the school grounds without permission from the teacher.

No bikes, scooters, skateboards, or rollerblades in the building or for use outside at recess. There is a designated area outside where these items can be stored during school hours.

### **School Facilities**

**Canteen:** Included in the tuition cost for IST, one hot meal will be served to each student every day. If a student would like to bring their own packed lunch, that is acceptable. We promote healthy eating, so nutritionally packed lunches are most encouraged.

Students are only allowed to eat in the canteen and during designated snack times during the school day. Other exceptions may be made on a situational basis (medical reasons, popcorn and a movie in class, birthday treats, etc.).

Food allergies will be noted at the start of the year, and all parent(s)/guardian(s) will then be notified for snack purposes.

Students are not permitted to chew gum on school grounds.

**Cloakrooms:** Each student will have their own hook in the cloakroom area, and they are expected to keep this area neat and tidy. Students should change from their outdoor shoes into their indoor shoes only in the cloakroom area; this is where all school bags, coats, hats, gloves, and scarves should be kept during lesson times.

**Playground:** Students are expected to follow all rules and regulations given by the supervising adult. Students should be respectful of all age groups that are using the area during time outside of the school building.

**Lost and found:** All items found on school premises will be kept in the office. If there is a name on the item, it will be returned to the rightful owner. All items will be displayed to the students before all major breaks, anything left unclaimed will be donated to charity.

**Educational Visits:** During the school year, different educational visits will be organized by the teachers. Parental/guardian permission is obtained by signing a document, once per school year, and used throughout the entire school year for all outings. In the absence of a permission slip, the student will not be permitted to participate.

Details of educational excursions and the cost (day-trips) will be announced at least 1 week in advance.

*Approved: Director's Order, 29 Aug 2018.*