



# **Middle School Academic Policy**

Pakistan International School Jeddah – English Section  
(PISJ-ES)

## Middle School Academic Policy:

Pakistan International School Jeddah – English Section provides a detailed, planned and integrated academic scheme covering a child's whole school experience, from the ages of 3 to 18. The Academic Programme is the intellectual embodiment of the School's core values and designed to engage students in the life of the mind through cultural and scientific exploration from around the world.

At PISJ-ES, students gain exposure to a broad spectrum of thought in humanities and sciences, develop their intellectual curiosity, and work to channel this curiosity by thinking and learning both independently and collaboratively. Students are also encouraged to reinforce theory through practice – in laboratories, model performances, and school representations.

## Curriculum Overview:

The curriculum at PISJ-ES is based upon the programmes of the Cambridge Assessment International Education (CAIE), starting with Cambridge Primary and moving through Lower Secondary, IGCSE to AS & A-Level in the senior years. The integrated international programme ensures a smooth transition through the years of schooling and provides the opportunity for students to succeed in a stimulating, externally validated, and, highly respected world-class educational programme. The universally recognized qualifications obtained by our senior students open doors to universities all over the world.

Middle School provides a seamless progression from Cambridge Primary to develop advance learners' skills and confidence in English, Mathematics and Science. It offers a curriculum framework for educational success for learners, typically 11-14 years old, with an assessment structure similar to Cambridge Progression tests and Checkpoint examinations.

**Y5 – Y6:** Following the Cambridge International programme, Year 5 and Year 6 are characterised by an increasingly focused approach with specialist teachers for all subjects. This ensures that not only do students develop their knowledge and skills but that they are also prepared for the rigours of the Cambridge International examination-based qualifications beginning with Primary Checkpoint.

- Core Subjects: English, Mathematics, Science
- Compulsory Subjects: Social Studies, Islamic Studies, Computing & Urdu/USL
- Special Subjects: Physical Education, Arts, Arabic, Quran & Library (Y5)

**Note:** In addition to internal assessment, Year 6 students also take the Cambridge Primary Checkpoint examination for core subjects at the end of year.

**Y7 – Y8:** Seeking alignment with the learning outcomes and skills required in Upper Secondary (IGCSE), Year 7 & Year 8 are staged for the completion of Cambridge Lower Secondary. Five key skill areas underpin learning in these years – research, social, communication, thinking and self-management skills. These skills are fostered through further subject-expert strands and a sustainable curriculum mapping between Lower Secondary and IGCSE programmes.

- **Core Subjects:** English, Mathematics, Science
- **Compulsory Subjects:** Pakistan Studies, Islamiyat, Computing & Urdu/USL
- **Special Subjects:** Physical Education, Arts (Y7), Arabic & Quran

**Note:** In addition to internal assessment, Year 8 students also take the Cambridge Lower Secondary Checkpoint examination for core subjects at the end of year.

### **Urdu for Beginners (UFB):**

PISJ-ES is a diverse learning community with students from various backgrounds and academic needs. All students are required to acquire Urdu language skills as part of the PISJ-ES academic programme.

Understanding the international context of the School, newly admitted student(Pakistanis/Non-Pakistanis) are offered Urdu for Beginners (UFB) syllabus in place of Urdu CAIE syllabus, if they have not previously taken the language. The students sit for a ‘UFB Placement Test’ to determine their proficiency level, based on which they are registered at the following levels:

- UFB 1 – Foundation Level
- UFB 2 – Limited Working Proficiency Level

The performance of the applicants in the placement test will determine if they will take UFB for one year or two years.

### **Conditions:**

- UFB will be offered to the students from Y2 onwards.
- After 2 years of UFB, students admitted to Y2 – Y5 will continue with regular Urdu.
- Students placed in UFB from Y6 – Y9 will have a choice to continue to stay in the UFB Programme after language proficiency evaluation.
- Non-Pakistani Nationals can choose to stay in the UFB Programme throughout their course of studies, based on the language proficiency evaluation.

**Note: Exemptions from the Urdu language are not allowed under any circumstances.**

### **Special Subjects:**

To ensure that the education provided at PISJ-ES is well-rounded and satisfies the local context, the School offers certain subjects in parallel with the structures of the Cambridge International Curriculum. These are referred to as ‘Special Subjects’.

- **Physical Education** (PG – A2) focuses on developing physical fitness, confidence, and healthy competitiveness, students engage in regular fitness exercises and coaching sessions necessary to participate in a wide range of sports activities such as football, basketball, cricket, badminton, squash, and taekwondo
- **Arts** (PG – Y7) fosters creativity, self-reflection, and confidence in self-expression. Students receive a mixture of both open & closed guidelines and practice on creating various forms of artwork ranging from sketching to multidimensional masterpieces.
- **Library** (Y1 – Y6) instills reading habits with the help of regular, facilitated visits to the School’s impressively stocked library. Students learn how to be actively involved with text, make

connections, infer, question, and improve their vocabulary.

- **Quran** (PG – Y7) develops familiarity with the Holy Quran which is an essential component of the student's religious upbringing. Students learn and practice the rules of Tajweed for recitation and life.
- **Arabic** (YN – Y7) builds working proficiency in the language given its necessity in the local and socio economic context of the Kingdom.

## Approach to Assessment:

The School follows a Continuous Assessment Model across all grade-levels, evaluating students' progress throughout the prescribed duration using various assessment tools. Continuous Assessment has abundant purposes to serve including determining students learning achievement, identify their learning difficulties for special support, to improve teacher's pedagogical practices and to enhance the quality of education in general.

The School has devised a precise, nuanced and comprehensive assessment system for appraising student's academic progression and achievement of learning objectives using a wellthought-out mixture of formative and summative assessment techniques.

- **Formative assessment** is used to monitor student's learning to provide ongoing feedback that can be used by teachers to improve their teaching and by students to improve their learning. This comprises of classwork and homework activities such quizzes, assignments, practice questions, group projects and presentations.
- **Summative assessment** is used to evaluate student's learning and achievement of curriculum objectives at the end of an instructional unit, term or year by comparing it against Cambridge International standards. This is conducted in the form of scheduled tests, mid-year and final year examinations.

## Grading Structure

**Y5 – Y8:** For all subjects including Arabic and Quran, students are assessed continually on a formative basis throughout the academic session using graded classwork and homework. Standardised tests and exams are used for summative assessment.

For Year 6 and Year 8, students take mock exams for core subjects (English, Mathematics and Science) ahead of the Cambridge Checkpoints which are considered final-year exams on the Final Report Card.

Assessment	Weightage
Classwork	15%
Homework	05%
Scheduled Tests	25%
Mid-Year & Final-Year Exams	50%
Student Conduct	05%

Considering the necessary personal development of the students, the following work habits are also assessed and reflected in the Final Report Card (Y3 – Y7). However, they do not affect the overall final grade.

Work Habit	Rating
Completes work on time	1.0 - 5.0
Grasps Concepts	1.0 - 5.0
Applies Self Control	1.0 - 5.0
Works Independently	1.0 - 5.0
Respects Others and their Property	1.0 - 5.0

\*1.0 being Unsatisfactory and 5.0 being Excellent

### Special Subjects

**Physical Education (PG – AL)** Based on students' performance across scheduled Sports activities, including Annual Sports Day and in-school tournaments, student skills are evaluated as classwork whereas overall fitness level is assessed as homework. Keeping in view the aforementioned attributes, the overall grade is determined by the respective P.E teachers.

**Arts (PG – Y7)** Based on students' performance during art lessons, other art-related activities, including the Annual Arts Exhibition and Arts Competition, levels of creativity, artistic skills and presentation are assessed. Keeping in view the aforementioned attributes, the overall grade is determined by the respective Arts teachers.

**Term Distribution:** The academic calendar comprises two terms, First Term and Final Term. For each term, the student's performance is evaluated as per the Grading Structure outlined for the respective schools and grade levels. The final grade on the Report Card is calculated using a term distribution in line with the Ministry of Education's (MoE) report card format:

School	First Term	Final Term
Junior School (Y3 – Y4)	50%	50%
Middle School (Y5 – Y8)	50%	50%
Senior School (Y9 -A2)	50%	50%

**Grading Scale** Ungraded (U) indicates a standard below the required percentage for grade D i.e. 50%. Not Applicable (NA) indicates:

- The student is a late admission and has not taken the relevant assessment.
- A subject is not applicable or opted e.g. Islamic Studies for Non-Muslims

## Y5 – Y8:

Percentage	Grades
95% and above	A*
85% - 94%	A
75% - 84%	B
65% - 74%	C
50% - 64%	D
Below 50%	U (ungraded)
	NA (Not Applicable)

## Student Conduct Rubric (Y1 – A Level):

The student conduct will be graded, using the following rubric on a 5-point scale (once per term) and will be reflected in the Midterm and Final Term Report Cards.

Behaviour Observation Points
Disruptive behaviour in class
Friendly & respectful behaviour towards adults and peers
Follows school rules
Attention span
Respects school property
Follows task submission deadlines

**Verification, Standardisation and Moderation** Verification, standardisation and moderation are the key processes by which the School maintains academic standards by assuring the appropriateness of assessments, and the accuracy of marking and grading decisions. These procedures also ensure alignment with the learning objectives and marking guidelines set out by Cambridge International.

**Verification** ensures that the form and content of assessment tasks and briefs are appropriate, fair and valid in terms of standards, effectively assesses the achievement of learning objectives and presents an appropriate level of challenge to students. Marking involves the academic judgement of students' submitted assessments against predetermined marking schemes and the provision of raw marks.

**Standardisation** activities are employed to ensure the consistency of marking across a cohort where there are multiple teachers involved.

**Moderation** is employed by the respective Head of Department to ensure that academic standards and marking are regulated within agreed norms and against predetermined marking scheme for the assessment. Moderation is usually undertaken by reviewing a sample of students' work.

## Attendance:

Student attendance is essential for learning as it ensures proper utilization of valuable instructional time. For this reason, the School equates attendance with academic achievement and establishes policies and procedures designed to encourage and require students to be in school.

## Approved Leave

In case a student is unable to attend due to reasonable circumstances or commitments, they are required to submit a leave application for approval.

In case a student is on an approved leave:

- Any missed homework must be made-up for upon resumption by coordinating with the concerned teacher.
- Any missed classwork or test is automatically graded based on the average performance across all similar assessments taken by the student (denoted by AL).
- Any missed exam must be made-up for as per the concerned school's 'Retake Schedule'. In case multiple exams are missed, a student may need to sit for more than one exam on a single day. If a student fails to appear for the retake, they will not receive any additional make-up chances.

## Unapproved Leave (Truancy)

A student is considered on unapproved leave when absent without valid cause for a school day or any portion of a school day. If a student's leave is unapproved, they do not receive credit for any graded work or tests that are missed.

In case a student is truant for more than 30 days in an academic session, the School reserves the right to defer the student's promotion to the next grade-level/ registration for CAIE Exams.

## Academic Honesty:

The School is a learning community in which students experience educational practices that honour and empower them. The School works with students to design the education and training needed for their academic and career success through programs which develop and enhance skills, competencies, attitudes, and values.

In order to take advantage of the educational opportunities at PISJ-ES, students must engage with and produce their own original papers, exams and other assignments. They may not reproduce the work of others and characterize it as their own. Not only is such a practice dishonest, but it does not lead to the development of new skills and intellectual capacity.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, any form of academic conduct that is deceptive, dishonest, or fraudulent such as cheating, plagiarism, and fabrication.

**Base Consequences:** In any actionable case of academic dishonesty, the following consequences occur:

- A "0" for the assessment in question
- Notification to the student's parents

**First Offense:** The first offence in a student's academic history incurs a base consequence as defined above. If a first offence is deemed to be more serious, it may incur additional penalties

**Additional, Multiple, or More Serious Offenses:** Additional, multiple or more serious incidents of academic dishonesty (including serious first offences) are dealt with more severely. In addition to the base consequences defined above, consequences may also include any of the following:

- 1-10 days of suspension (in or out of school)
- Removal from any leadership positions in the school or extra-curricular activities, including, but not limited to, captaincy on sports teams and club/activity leadership positions
- An ‘Ungraded (U)’ letter grade for the subject in which the offence occurred

**Variables for Determining Severity of Offense:** Penalties and consequences are determined by the Disciplinary Committee based on the severity of the offence. In determining severity, the Disciplinary Committee considers factors such as:

- Recurrence (prior incidents)
- Collusion with other students
- Type of violation
- Seriousness of offence
- Contrition of student
- Premeditation of offence
- Degree of effect on the school community

## Promotion & Retention

**Promotion Board:** The following members constitute the Promotion Board which is solely responsible for all decisions pertaining to the promotion and retention of any student.

- Principal
- Deputy Head
- Homeroom/Subject Teacher
- Relevant HOD

**Y5 – Y9:** A student’s promotion to the next grade-level is subject to the following conditions

1. Achieving a minimum of 50% in every subject
2. Achieving a minimum of 60% aggregate across all subjects
3. Regular attendance

**Retention:** A student failing to qualify the above conditions will be retained in the same grade level.



**Conditional Promotion:** Conditional Promotion is granted only in extraordinary circumstances where the student is unable to perform due to extreme emergencies e.g., medical conditions, or close family tragedies. The Promotion Board will decide about the Conditional Promotion on the merits of each case.

**Academic Probation:** A student on academic probation is required to demonstrate academic improvement during the course of the session. If no such improvement is observed until the end of the first month of probation, the School reserves the right to withdraw or retain the student.

## **Academic Support Programme (ASP):**

The PISJ-ES Academic Support Programme (ASP) provides support to all students identified with additional educational needs. The programme strives to develop each student's ability by establishing a solid foundation in key academic areas.

An objective and data-oriented student profiling process, Multi-Tiered Support System is in place for the development of a swift and appropriate plan of action for each student every month. The support program offers a variety of academic services for students including targeted skills sessions, peer tutoring, one-on-one specialized tutoring, and small group instruction.

To monitor the student's academic progression, the school encourages positive feedback from the parents. Parents are not to wait for the Official/ Regular PTC conducted once a term to interact with the teacher and to share academic concerns.

To discuss academic queries, parents may secure an appointment anytime with the concerned teacher by reaching out to the Deputy Head Office of the relevant school via Query Portal.

## **Academic Enrichment Programme (AEP)**

The PISJ-ES Academic Enrichment programme is aimed at high-performing students to further stretch their competencies through the use of thought-provoking and challenging hands-on activities, which extend upon what they are already learning in their classroom. The programme sets extended expectations of academic rigour and offers students to become mentors to their peers and gain vital leadership skills.

## **Extra-Curricular Activities**

The wide selection of extra-curricular activities at PISJ-ES broadens the opportunities for students to enhance their natural abilities and to challenge themselves through the development of new interest areas. Extra-curricular activities include Science & Arts exhibition, Quran Competition, Model National Assembly (MNA), Model United Nations (MUN) and a variety of sports activities.

**Student Clubs:** The School has a well-established system of Student Clubs in place for Middle and Senior School students. These clubs have been formed with the vision of tapping into the metacognitive skills of the students and serve as a platform for self-exploration and self-development. Developing the ability to ponder over one's thought process and guiding towards innovative outcomes play a pivotal role towards the School's vision for educating the future leaders and global citizens beyond the ambit of traditional classrooms. These club activities are student-led and student-driven to provide diverse opportunities boosting critical-thinking, problem-solving, teamwork and personality development. In order to promote active participation of students, the School offers a credit-hour program – applicable to Senior School.

## Awards and Recognition

PISJ-ES seeks every opportunity to recognize the students' accomplishments and recognise their hard work and positive efforts. The PISJ-ES student awards aim to celebrate the students' commitment to all aspects of school life.

Academic Awards are given in the following categories:

Category	Criteria	Grade-Levels
Outstanding Achievement	95% and above	Y5 – Y8
Achievement Awards	85% to 94%	Y5 – Y8
Good Progress	Achieving two grade jumps in English, Urdu, Math & Science	Y5 – Y8
Certificate of Merit	1st 2nd & 3rd position holders in class	Y5 – Y8
Certificate for Overall Position	1st 2nd & 3rd position holders across the grade-level	Y5 – Y8

The following Soft Skills Acknowledgment Awards are available for students from Y5 – Y8:

Category	Criteria	Grade-Levels
Perfect Attendance	100% attendance throughout the year	Y5 – Y8
Best Behaviour	Having supportive and cooperative behaviour towards peers and teachers	Y5 – Y8
Certificate of Appreciation Grooming	Based on the collective evaluation of the attribute	Y5 – Y8
Certificate of Appreciation Avid Reader	Based on the collective evaluation of the attribute	Y5
Certificate of Appreciation Good Handwriting	Based on the collective evaluation of the attribute	Y5