ACADEMIC POLICY MIDDLE SCHOOL

Pakistan International School Jeddah – English Section

(PISJ-ES)

1. Curriculum Overview

The curriculum at PISJ-ES is based upon the programmes of the Cambridge International Education (CIE), starting with Cambridge Early Years, Cambridge Primary and Lower Secondary, furthering to IGCSE in senior years and A levels in the College Programme. The integrated Internationally recognized qualifications ensure smooth transition through the years of schooling and open doors to universities and programmes all over the world.

1.1 Middle School

Middle School provides a seamless progression from Cambridge Primary to Lower Secondary success for learners, typically 11-14 years old, with an assessment structure aligned to Cambridge Progression tests and Checkpoint examinations.

Y5 – Y7: This level onwards school moves from homeroom teachers to subject specific teachers for all subjects. This is to facilitate the provision of specialized trained teachers for the rigors of the Cambridge International examination-based qualifications beginning with Primary Checkpoint.

- **Core Subjects:** English, Mathematics & Science
- **Compulsory Subjects:** Social Studies, Islamic Studies, Computing & Urdu/UFB
- **Special Subjects:** Physical Education, Arts, Arabic, Quran & Library

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

1.2 Urdu for Beginners (UFB)

PISJ-ES caters students joining from diverse backgrounds and academic needs. All students are expected to acquire Urdu language skills as part of the PISJ-ES academic programme till Y7. Newly admitted students (Pakistanis/Non-Pakistanis) are offered Urdu for Beginners (UFB) syllabus in place of Urdu syllabus, if they have not previously taken the language. This is ideally a two-year programme offered in the classes Y2 to Y7. 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 take UFB for one year or two years.

Conditions:

- UFB will be offered to the identified students from Y2 onwards.
- After a maximum of 2 years of UFB, students will continue with regular Urdu.
- Non-Pakistani Nationals can choose to stay in the UFB Programme throughout their course of studies, based on the language proficiency evaluation.

Note: Exemption from the Urdu language is *not allowed* under any circumstances.

1.3 Special Subjects

To ensure well-being, well rounded and holistic development of our students and to cater to the MOE requirements school offers subjects which come under the domain of Special Subjects, these are not assessed externally but are integral part of daily school life and school's curriculum.

1.5.1 Physical Education

(PG − A2) Focuses on developing physical fitness, confidence, team building and healthy competition. Students engage in regular fitness exercises and coaching sessions necessary to participate in a wide range of sports activities at national and international level.

1.5.2 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.

1.5.3 Library

(Y1 – Y7) 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.

1.5.4 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.

1.5.1 Arabic

(YN – Y7) Aims to build proficiency in the language given its necessity in the local and socio- economic context of the Kingdom.

2. Approach to Assessment

The school follows a Continuous Assessment Model across all grade levels, with the sole purpose of improvement and development using various assessment tools. Continuous Assessment has abundant purposes to serve including determining students learning achievement, identifying their learning difficulties for special support, improving teachers' pedagogical practices, and enhancing the quality of education in general.

The school has devised a precise, nuanced and comprehensive assessment system for appraising students' academic progression and achievement of learning objectives using a well-thought-out mixture of formative and summative assessment techniques.

- **Formative assessment** is used to gauge students' learning, to provide *constructive* feedback, to help teachers in self-evaluation about their teaching and for further planning. This comprises *classwork* and *independent* activities such as quizzes, assignments, practice questions, group projects and presentations.
- **Summative assessment** is used to evaluate students' 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*, and mid-year/ final- year *examinations*.

2.1 Grading Structure

2.1.1 Middle School

Y5 – Y7: For all subjects including Arabic and Quran, students are assessed continually on a formative basis throughout the academic session using graded classwork, project work and listening and speaking. Scheduled tests and exams are used for summative assessment.

For Year 6, 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%
Listening & Speaking/Project	10%
Scheduled Tests	20%
Mid-Year & Final-Year Exams	50%
Student Conduct	05%

Student Conduct Rubric (Y5 – 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

Behavior Observation Points
Disruptive behavior in class
Friendly & respectful behavior towards adults and peers
Follows school rules
Focus and concentration
Respect's school property
Follows task submission deadlines

2.1.2 Special Subjects

Physical Education (PG – AL)

Assessment is based on students' participation and performance across scheduled Sports activities, including Annual Sports Day, in-school tournaments and inter school competitions.

Arts (PG – Y7)

Assessment is based on students' participation and performance in art-related activities, including the Annual Arts Exhibition and Arts Competition, levels of creativity, artistic skills, and presentation.

2.1.3 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 – Y7)	50%	50%
Senior School (Y8 – A2)	50%	50%

2.2 Grading Scale

Ungraded (U) indicates a standard below the required percentage for grade D i.e. below 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

221 Middle School

Y5 – Y7:

Percentage	Grades
90% and above	A*
80% - 89%	A
70% - 79%	B
60% - 69%	C
50% - 59%	D
45% - 49%	E
Below 45%	U (ungraded)
	NA (Not Applicable)

2.3 Verification, Standardization, and Moderation

Verification, standardization, 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 judgment of students' submitted assessments against predetermined marking schemes and the provision of raw marks. **Standardization** 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 a predetermined marking scheme for the assessment. Moderation is usually undertaken by reviewing a sample of students' work.

3. Attendance

Student attendance is essential for learning as it ensures the 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.

3.1 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 within 3 days of absence, via parent portal to the Student Affairs department. In case a student is on an approved leave:

- Missed work must be made-up for, upon resumption by coordinating with the concerned teachers.
- Missed graded 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 '*Make-up exams"*. 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.

3.2 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 unapproved 30 days in an academic session, attendance alerts are generated, also, the school reserves the right to defer the student's promotion to the next grade level/ registration for CIE Exams or get an undertaking signed by the parents.

4. Academic Honesty

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

To take advantage of the educational opportunities at PISJ-ES, students must engage with and produce their original test 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 also does not lead to the development of new skills or an increase in 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.

4.1 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

4.2 First Offence

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.

4.3 Additional, Multiple, or More Serious Offences

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 (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
- Issuance of warning letter
- An 'Ungraded (U)' letter grade for the subject in which the offence occurred.

4.4 Variables for Determining Severity of Offence

Penalties and consequences are determined by the Disciplinary Committee based on the severity of the offense. In determining severity, the Disciplinary Committee considers factors such as:

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

For further details on General student conduct, refer to document *PIJS-ES Student Code of Conduct.*

5. Promotion & Retention

5.1 Promotion Board

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

- Principal
- Deputy Head
- Homeroom/Subject Teacher- ifrequired
- Relevant HOD/ academic coordinator
- Exam department

5.2 Middle School & Senior School

Y5 – Y9: A student's promotion to the next grade level is subject to qualify following Conditions:

1. Achieving a minimum of 50% in every subject
2. Achieving a minimum of 60% aggregate across all subjects
3. Regular attendance (refer to section 3.2)

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

5.3 Conditional Promotion

Conditional Promotion is granted only in extra ordinary 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.

Note: The school does not grant double promotions under any circumstances. All students are required to progress through each grade level in accordance with the established academic sequence and promotion criteria.

5.4 Academic Probation

A student on academic probation is required to demonstrate academic improvement during 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.

6. 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 MTSS, 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.*

School will organize special PTCs for the students who are struggling in academics. Students who are not performing well, at least 50% in a particular subject will receive this invitation and parents are expected to attend the PTC. School must ensure at least three special PTCs with struggling students.

7. Academic Enrichment Programme (AEP)

The PISJ-ES Academic Enrichment program 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 classrooms. The programme's extended expectations of academic rigor offer students to become mentors to their peers and gain vital leadership skills.

8. Peer Tutoring Programme (CAPT)

The PISJ-ES Cross-Age-Peer-Tutorship (CAPT) programme improves student-body coherence, and citizenship, encourages shared responsibility and develops mentorship skills.

- Tutees are motivated by tutors of higher grade levels to navigate their academic performance through personalization.
- Psycho-social grooming is acquired by the tutor as an outcome of such mentorship and partnership with the peers.

9. Co-Curricular Activities

The school aims to widen the selection of co-curricular activities at PISJ-ES and broaden the opportunities for students to enhance their natural abilities and to challenge themselves through the development of new interest areas. Co-curricular activities include and are not limited to Spelling Bee competition, speeches and debates, dramatics, Food Bonanza, Science & Arts exhibition, Quran recitation Competition, Model National Assembly (MNA), Model United Nations (MUN) and a variety of sports activities.

9.1 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 serving 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 in the school's vision for educating future leaders and global citizens beyond the ambit of traditional classrooms. These club activities are student-led, and student-driven to provide diverse opportunities to boost critical thinking, problem-solving, teamwork and personality development.

Science Club

Art Club

Community Service /Environment Club

Literary Club

Performing Arts

Sports Club

In order to promote the active participation of students, the school offers a credit-hour program – applicable to Senior School.

10. Awards and Recognition

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

Middle School

Academic Awards are given in the following categories:

Category	Criteria	Grade-Levels
Outstanding Achievement	90% and above	Y5 – Y8
Achievement Awards	85% to 89%	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
Outstanding Attendance	95% 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

Examinations and Results

The school conducts two examination sessions in each academic year. The Midyear Examinations are held at the end of the First Term (typically in December), and the Mock or Final Examinations are conducted at the end of the Final Term/Academic Year.

Report cards are issued to students after each examination cycle, reflecting a combination of class-based assessments and examination scores, compiled in accordance with the weightages defined in the Academic Policy. The Final Report Card presents the overall cumulative performance of the student and includes the final academic outcome (e.g., Promotion, Retention, etc.).

All examination papers are the property of the school and are not distributed to students with report cards. Students' examination scripts (Midyear and Final) are securely retained by the school for record and reference purposes. However, parents and students may review the examination scripts during designated time slots communicated by the school.

Change of Student Section

The School reserves the right to change a student's section during the academic year, whenever deemed necessary and in the best interest of the student and the school. Parents/guardians will be informed of such changes. Reasons for a section change may include, but are not limited to:

1- Academic performance and learning support requirements.
2- Bullying, peer relationship, or student welfare concerns.
3- Opening of a new section or changes in class structure.
4- Maintaining a balanced distribution of students, including gender balance (Junior School).
5- Subject combination and timetable requirements.
6- Behavioral or disciplinary concerns.