



## Action Plan for Creative School

### Background

The International School of the Gothenburg Region (ISGR) is an International Baccalaureate (IB) school for grades 0-12. The school is divided into two campuses: Guldheden (grades 0-5) and Götaberg (years 6-12).

ISGR is one of the few international schools that offers the IB continuum, offering the Primary Years Program, the Middle Years Program and the Diploma Program, as authorized by the IB organisation.

The school also offers the Swedish curriculum, LGR11, taught in Swedish and divided into the primary program (LGRP) and middle year program (LGRM).

This action plan applies to the entire elementary school, grades 0-9: This is why the school, within the Creative School framework, wishes to increase focus on creativity and integration between the school's campuses and sections. Two years ago, ISGR focused on the international school culture at the school. Last year the focus was on how the older grades' education can prepare them for an adult life, creation and imagination. This year we would like to focus on increased integration throughout the school.

The Creative School plan is particularly important for ISGR as the school is not covered by the Cultural Guarantee that state schools experience. But because of the international focus of our school, there is a lot of awareness of different cultures around the world. There are exchanges with other countries, such as Uganda, France and Spain. The school is also working on increasing the focus on creative working methods.

We want to encourage open and experimental working methods in our school, based on knowledge, sharing, and collaboration across sections and campuses. To this end a Creative School committee will be started at one campus.

### What is Creative School?

Creative School is a project supported by the National Cultural Council. It allows students to meet professional cultural practitioners and participate in an aesthetic learning process. The intention is to strengthen the connection between school and cultural life.

Creative School is in line with the Children's Convention. For example, Article 31 states that:



*“That every child has the right to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.*

*That member governments shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity.”*

[https://unicef.se/barnkonventionen/las-texten#full\[2016-12-22\]](https://unicef.se/barnkonventionen/las-texten#full[2016-12-22])

In the national cultural policy goals one can also read that in order to achieve the cultural policy objectives, children and young people’s rights to culture must be upheld.

Cultural experiences reinforce student learning which leads to increased academic success and personal development. The experiences and discussions that emerge from this kind of cultural creation can help shape students to become democratic citizens.

Through Creative School activities students can experience what it feels like to be another person and how it can feel in certain situations while being in a safe and secure environment. This can help provide students with the understanding, empathy and experiences that will help them in the future.

Creative School is a complement to ongoing cultural and aesthetic work activities at school. Creative School also contributes to greater academic success, as the project is in line with pedagogical philosophy of the school, which aims at:

*The International Baccalaureate® aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. [...] These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.*

This year, ISGR has chosen to focus on all school courses. We have seen that Creative School has helped to promote student self-esteem and allowed them to dare to take more space. The project has support of the staff from both sections of the school, national and international. This allows for increased cooperation at school and we have seen a positive upswing in the interaction between students of both sections.

### **What is the School Doing Today?**

The school has an international focus and therefore has a strong commitment to different cultures, languages and global issues such as children’s rights. The school conducts a series of events each year, such as ‘love week’, the literature festival, the culture week, cultural days and more. During these



events students from both the national and the international section come together to work on and investigate different themes, questions and issues, allowing cross section collaboration to occur.

The school also celebrates a variety of international cultural days such as UN Day, Equality Day and International Women's Day. These types of celebrations help strengthen the values and the international culture of the school.

In addition the school hosts international picnics, Lucia, a spring show, exhibitions in the library and more. These are opportunities that promote the students' aesthetic learning processes, cultural interests and cultural experiences. These are all ways of celebrating our students' creativity and achievements.

The school also works to strengthen ties with locally situated cultural institutions. During the cultural days held at the end of the school year, students are able to visit such places as the World Culture Museum, The Röhsska Museum, the City Museum, the Gothenburg Concert Hall, the Gothenburg Art Museum, the Gothenburg Art Hall and more.

Individual teachers also take students on excursions to museums, (teachers in community-oriented subjects, art, technology and more).

## **Purpose**

The purpose of this action plan is to investigate issues that are relevant to everyone at school. How can we do our best to understand each other? How do we do our best to feel import and secure in our identities? We wish to focus on interaction, and empathy through aesthetic learning practices.

We believe that increased integration will lead to deeper learning and that students will be more willing to try new things. We want to give students the chance to have new experiences, participate freely in cultural events, and talk about them and how they were affected by these experiences. We also want the students to discuss what creativity is, and what it means, to reflect on the different ways we can create and to some extent, interpret, analyse and present their findings. We believe in combining creativity with critical thinking.

As students try to express themselves in different ways, and while coming from different cultures and countries they develop on a personal and pedagogical level. It makes it easier to identify with the school's international culture while raising their own academic achievements. Collaborative creation, which can be dome in a myriad of ways and with a variety of content increases the sense of community while bridging the barriers of language.



Traits such as imagination and independence are enhanced and allowed release. It is also a chance to see the students in a different light, through their creativity. They are also indirectly encouraged to problem solve through the act of creation. In other words students will be able to exercise their creative abilities and also increase their problem solving skills which will benefit them in adult life.

Cultural experiences, enrich students' lives. Cultural experiences enable students to be more in touch with life outside of their school and family environments. This benefits the student's sense of self and their sense of self-worth. These cultural experiences allow for increased integration, strengthen community ties and lead to a better society. In meeting cultural practitioners, students can also make connections with their academic subjects and 'real life'.

As ISGR is not covered by the Cultural Guarantee, Creative School provides an opportunity for all students to participate in a professional artistic activity at some point during their schooling. Creative School also allows for increased student influence, thereby improving student motivation and contributing to our democratic values. Students also have the opportunity to imagine different hobbies, careers or professions linked to their own interests in creative subjects.

Students can also learn about the important role art plays in society; that artists can be important people in supporting society's changes. They can create the conditions for living creatively, sustainably and non-violently.

## Goal

Our focus for this year's Creative School is integration and empathy. How do we best understand each other, and feel significant and secure as individuals? We want to increase the focus on creativity and integration between both the campuses and the national and international section. We believe that deeper learning allows students to take risks in their learning. We want to give students the opportunity to freely participate in artistic and cultural learning experiences. We want students to try out new ways of expressing themselves. We want students to reflect on what creativity is and what it means, to reflect on different methods of creation while to some extent interpreting, analysing and presenting their thoughts. We would like the students to combine creativity with critical thinking.

We wish to strengthen learning through artistic and cultural experiences, thereby improving overall academic achievement and personal development. For example, qualities such as imagination and independence can be strengthened by encouraging students to problem solve during the creative process. By highlighting and discussing their personal experiences we can also promote the democratic nature of interactions. We can also provide the opportunity for students to imagine different careers



and professions for themselves by their exposure to different forms of artistic creation. By learning about societies need for the arts, we can show them that there is a way of living creatively, sustainably and non-violently.

## Implementation

All work within Creative School revolves around the students' own ideas and initiatives. The implementation is adapted to the age of the students and based on the specific conditions for each campus.

### Guldheden Grades 0-5

**Preparation:** Librarian, teachers and students talk about what creativity is. Students are allowed to look at a lot of pictures and then discuss what kind of creative workshop they want to participate in. Presentations of cultural performers that students can meet are then made.

**Implementation:** As the children are still so small, we consider it important to give everyone the same opportunities to participate and try out new forms of expression. The application therefore covers all students. Creative school events mainly concentrate on two festivals, which take place annually: the Reading Festival and the Cultural Week.

The reading festival emphasizes the art of telling a story, through words and illustrations. It also inspires and supports students to create their own stories, in their own way. Students can explore many different ways of telling a story.

The culture week allows students to participate in creative workshops, which are very different from those usually occurring during the school year. They are an excellent complement to both PYP and LGRP curricula. The culture week has a new theme each year and cultural activities are chosen with the help of student input.

**Evaluation:** The younger students show what they have learned through verbal and visual means. The older students fill in a Google form asking them to rate the various activities they participated in, as well as propose activities for next year. Teachers are invited to give one or two anecdotes about how the students responded to the activities and how they experienced it.

### Göteborg Grades 6-9

**Preparation:** Students and teachers will be given time to think and write down what kind of creative workshop they want to participate in. The results are compiled and used to help make the final



decision. The school also reviews the wishes given in evaluations of previous creative school initiatives. Librarians and teacher then discuss together, and agree on activities based on students' wishes.

After this, students will be asked to provide the names of artists, authors, performers that they would like to see take part in the creative school project. Teachers can submit names, based on student wishes and their teaching. Then there will be a vote that includes all students at the school. The principals will then assist with bookings of those people invited to take part.

**Implementation:** We think it is important for children to have equal access to author visits since literature is essential for language development, empathy and experiencing other perspectives. In the case of other aesthetic expressions, we allow it to be voluntary as this increases student motivation when taking part in a workshop they have chosen for themselves. We take into account each grade levels units of learning in different subjects, what resources they have at their disposal, so that the impact of the efforts is as strong as possible, as regards how students have perceived the experience, what they learned and how they were affected.

The pupils are prepared for Creative School efforts via the librarian's and teachers' presentations of the artists they will meet, working on themes that of the year's Creative School project, reading books by authors they will meet and more. Creative School activities are spread throughout the school year.

**Evaluation:** Students make evaluations through class discussions. They can discuss, write down thoughts and questions about their experiences, their understanding, what they learned and how they want to move on. Teachers also reflect in the same way, making links with curricula, and more. The library also buys books based on aesthetic expressions, authorship or cultural activities that students want to learn more about.

## Gender Perspective

The school creates a secure environment with a focus on rights and accessibility. Adults take responsibility, have knowledge, respect and ensure good treatment of the students, beginning with the children's perspective. The goal is as inclusive an approach as possible.

The school uses various methods to talk about everyone's equal value in society, what norms are visible and not visible in society, reflect on the words we use, representation of men / women / transgender, etc. We wish to invite equal numbers of men / women and let as many girls / boys participate. However, it is not entirely possible to control, because we also include students' votes. In any case, we will assume a norm critical perspective.



We want the students to see the best in themselves, each other's similarities and differences. Realize that everyone is unique, yet equal, regardless of origin, sex, religion, sexual orientation. We want the students to be exposed to positive role models. Learn that different parts of one's identity can change depending on context. Students should feel free to participate based on their interests and backgrounds, to discover new perceptions by themselves and treat each other's differences in line with the school's keyword: "Embrace Diversity, Explore the World!"

A global theme will always be present. Students can meet local, national and international role models. Many students at school do not speak or study Swedish, therefore, from an international perspective, it is necessary for the school to invite artists who speak Swedish and English.

Students will be given the opportunity to read translations of books, listen to audio books in different languages in order to allow as many students as possible to have these reading experiences. Anyone who wishes to, can participate and become involved in the follow-up discussions.

Many of the students at our school have had the experience of reflecting on their cultural identity and place in the world. Many students are using a language which is not their mother tongue. Many students have read and appreciated the work of Ann-Helén Laestadius. We wish therefore to invite her to talk about national minorities and the importance of them being able to read in their own language.

## **Planned Activities School Year 2018/ 2019**

### **ISGR Guldheden and Göteborg**

Invite the Following:

7 authors (3 Guldheden, 4 Göteborg). Students think a lot about their cultural identity and language, so the authors will be invited from different geographic locations.

1 artist (1 Göteborg). Through an encounter with the artist, students are encouraged and supported in their own creativity, thinking and relationship with the outside world. The focus will be on finding their own personal expression, based on their interpretation of the outside world.

1 sculptor (1 Guldheden). Students want to experience being able to sculpture in clay. They will work in small groups, combining creativity and collaboration.



3 actors (1 Guldheden, 2 Göteborg). Students want to meet an actor or drama group. By doing so, they will develop socially and in terms of communication. Students will be given access to other ways of expression, outlet for thoughts, feelings and ideas.

2 musicians (1 Guldheden, 1 Göteborg). Students have wanted to try singing. They will learn how to use the voice in different ways and to take musical initiatives.

1 digital artist (1 Göteborg). Pupils want to create digitally. By participating in an animation workshop, they will practice storytelling techniques using digital tools.

1 dancer (1 Göteborg). Students want to meet a dancer or dance group. Students will get to practice rhythmic skills and use the body as a means of expression and communication.

## Documentation

Actions will be documented as follows:

- Exhibition in the library
- Librarian's blog: <https://lmcgotaberg.wordpress.com/>
- Facebook
- Instagram
- Newsletter to Parents

## Cooperation

We use artists who have undergone formal artistic education or have practiced their art for some time. These cultural practitioners should also have experience working with the target group of children and young people and have educational experience. For bookings, we use for example:

- Författarcentrum
- Illustratörscentrum
- Kulturkatalogen Väst
- Kulturterminen
- Drums for peace Network
- Talarforum
- Contact with a children's culture consultant



In this way we ensure a level of professionalism. The culture council has also agreed to the school booking international Skype-based authors.

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