

Student Parent Handbook 2010 – 2011



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Student Parent Handbook 2010-2011

Welcome to the International School Rheintal. The following information has been prepared to help you and your child settle into school as easily and safely as possible. Each year, information is added to the handbook so please read through this edition. During the year more information may be sent home and should be added to this handbook. If you are not sure about any aspect of the program, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

ISR Mission Statement

Our mission is to provide a high quality education in English for students from Pre-School to Grade 12.

Within a supportive, challenging and child-centered environment we enable each student to reach his or her potential while promoting life-long learning, open-mindedness, tolerance, and respect and responsibility for themselves, others and the environment. Through team work and individual endeavor students are encouraged to think critically, reflect thoughtfully, communicate effectively, appreciate and respect diversity and to celebrate their successes.

Philosophy and Objectives

The International School Rheintal provides a balanced program of instruction in English designed to meet the intellectual, physical, social and emotional needs of the child. The school aims to:

- Offer a child-centered, welcoming environment which fosters an enjoyment of learning and where student achievements are celebrated;
- Provide a challenging intellectual environment for exploring the academic disciplines from a global perspective;
- Encourage and challenge its students to reach their full potential;
- Encourage its students to think for themselves and acquire the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary for effective life-long learning;
- Encourage its students to strive to be: inquirers, knowledgeable, thinkers, communicators, principled, open-minded, caring, risk-takers, balanced and reflective;
- Create an atmosphere where diversity is valued;
- Develop in its students a respect, tolerance and acceptance for people from a variety of cultural, ethnic, religious, and economic groups;
- Help its students to become citizens of the world, to become aware of global issues and guide them to show concern for themselves, for others, for the community and for the environment;
- Develop in its students a lasting commitment to international understanding and responsibility.

ISR Code of Conduct

EVERYONE IN THE ISR COMMUNITY...

IS Respectful of other people

- Respects other cultures
- Respects the ideas and opinions of others
- Uses the language of instruction so all are included

IS Respectful to the rights of others to learn

IS Responsible for their own behavior

- Resolves conflicts fairly
- Does their best in all tasks
- Acts safely
- Is responsible for their own health and well-being

IS Representative of the philosophy of the school

- Dresses appropriately
- Behaves appropriately both inside and outside the school.

IS Respectful of property

- School property
- Other people's property
- One's own property

IS Respectful of the environment

- Keeps the school clean and tidy
- Cares for the environment
- Recycles, reduces waste and saves energy

IS Responsible for keeping the values of the school

Standards of Conduct and Appearance

ISR is a school community comprising many different nationalities and backgrounds. It is a central rule that students at all times show tolerance and respect for the race, religion and nationality of other students.

Students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the following standards of conduct regarding discipline in school, on field trips, and traveling to and from school sponsored events and activities. Students are expected, at all times, to exercise courtesy and refrain from using obscene language or creating any sort of disturbance to others. The school will not condone or tolerate behavior either during or outside school hours which is damaging to the school community or which jeopardizes the reputation of ISR.

Students should:

- Respect others and their property
- Respect the rights of others to learn
- Be polite
- Behave appropriately
- Play fairly
- Work hard and do their best.
- Respect the environment and keep the school neat and tidy
- Support the philosophy of the school

Physical contact which may result in another person being hurt is not allowed in the school. Bullying (including teasing) is not acceptable. If you are aware of students who are having difficulty relating to these standards, please contact us so that we can take action.

It is our belief the students and staff of the ISR have the right to a safe and friendly environment that fosters respect for each other and is free of verbal and physical aggression.

The following behavior is unacceptable:

- Physical aggression/fighting
- Dangerous behavior
- Bringing harmful objects and substances (including knives and drugs) onto the school premises
- Being in school under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol
- Interfering with or taking something without the owner's consent
- Damaging school property (Any damage will be paid for by those responsible.)
- One or more students threatening or coercing a student to do something he/she does not wish to do
- Bullying (including teasing)
- Swearing, rude/vulgar language or gestures

- Verbal, visual or physical harassment by an individual or a group
- Defiant behavior towards an adult
- Ignoring, walking away, or using a rude tone of voice
- Disturbing the learning environment
- Actions or words which prevent students from learning to a significant degree

Behavior in Buses

In the interests of safety, students are expected to behave sensibly in the buses. They should remain seated at all times, wear a safety belt, and not interfere with the driver or other students. There should be no loud talking on the bus. No food, sweets or drinks are allowed in the buses. Students must respect the other students and the driver on the bus. Interference with other passengers or the drivers, either by action or inappropriate language, is not allowed and can be dangerous. Students must not damage the bus in any way. Any infringement of these regulations can result in suspension from, or a total ban on, using the bus service.

Consequences/Disciplinary Action

When inappropriate or unacceptable behavior does occur, students must expect to face the consequences of their actions. The purpose of the disciplinary procedure is threefold:

1. To make the student aware of the fact that they are responsible for their behavior.
2. To serve as a deterrent thereby protecting students from the negative actions of others.
3. To help the child make a genuine effort to modify his/her behavior.

Consequences and Disciplinary Actions include:

- Informal student conference with teacher
- Time-out
- Temporary withdrawal of privileges or additional work
- Formal student conferences with teacher
- Parent contact by phone
- Parent/teacher conference
- Formal student conference with Coordinator/Director
- Written notification to parents
- Parent/Teacher/Coordinator/Director conference
- Removal of privileges
- Detention
- Temporary suspension
- Expulsion
- Notification of authorities where appropriate

Although every effort is made to apply the disciplinary procedure in a uniform manner, the nature of the disciplinary action must, to some extent, be co-determined by the kind of child/children involved, the severity of the behavior and the previous behavior of the child/children.

Note: Students and their families will be liable for any financial damages caused by inappropriate behavior including the misuse of the computers and the internet at the school.

Parents, we ask that you give your active and positive support to these standards of conduct and to the general philosophy of the school. In order for us to maintain a safe and orderly environment for all students, it is critical that you give your support to the school and behavior expectations and consequences.

Student Dress and Appearance

Clothing should be appropriate, non-distracting, non-revealing, neat, clean and free of offensive graphics and language. Slogans and logos on clothing and jewelry may not include vulgarity or references to drugs or alcohol. Parents should expect that children may do messy project work, and that clothes may get glue, paint or other stains on them. Clothing must also be appropriate for outdoors. Students in the PYP should bring indoor footwear – these can stay at school. If you are unsure of how to dress your child, please contact your child's teacher.

Parent-School Communications

Handbook

Parents should read this handbook carefully and discuss with their child/ren appropriate sections. Copies will be given to all families at the beginning of the year or when new families begin during the year. A copy of the handbook is also available on the school web site www.isr.ch.

Contacting the Office or a Teacher

Information which needs to be given to the office or a teacher should be sent on a separate note and given to the secretary or the teacher. Please remember to date the note to avoid confusion. It is also possible to email the office office@isr.ch or telephone the secretary 081 7506300 and a message can be forwarded to the teacher if needed.

Please do not contact the teachers at home to discuss school issues. In an emergency the director may be contacted outside school hours (telephone details for the director can be found in the family directory).

Emergency Contacts

Emergency telephone numbers must be given to the office. Please notify the school if there are any changes to your home, work or mobile telephone numbers and also if there is a change of address.

Family Directory

All families will be given a family directory with names and addresses of those families who give permission to be included in the directory by filling in the appropriate form when registering or re-registering. This will be updated periodically. If any information changes or is incorrect, please contact the secretary.

Telephone Network

The school will have a telephone network and this will be the means by which urgent information is communicated quickly to parents. A teacher will contact parents – it will not be necessary for parents to contact other parents. This form of communication applies only to extraordinary circumstances. The primary form of communication from the school will be written. Please keep the school informed of any changes which may affect the Telephone Network.

Meet the Teacher/Program Information Evening

At the beginning of the school year there will be a "Meet the Teacher/Program Information Evening". At this time the homeroom teacher will outline the program his/her class will follow. He/she will then be available for questions. This is an ideal opportunity for parents to become acquainted with their child's teacher and the school program. Please note that this is not a time to discuss the progress of individual students. If you wish to discuss your child's progress, please make a separate appointment with the teacher.

Parent - Teacher Conferences

Individual Parent-Teacher conferences will be held in October or November and April or May. Parents are welcome to meet with teachers at any other times if they have concerns or questions about their child. In general an appointment should be made for such meetings. To make appointments outside of scheduled conferences, please send a note or email to the teacher or alternatively, leave a message with the office and you will be called back.

Student Reports

Report cards will be issued at the end of the first semester and the end of the second semester. In the elementary school each student will produce a portfolio of work during the year and these will be sent home periodically for parents to review. In the middle school each student will also produce a portfolio which will be available at the parent teacher conferences. Students' tests and projects will also be sent home during the year for parents to see and sign.

ISR Grading system for use with the Middle Years Program and the Diploma Program

Grade 7: Excellent

Grade 6: Very Good

Grade 5: Good

Grade 4: Satisfactory

Grade 3: Mediocre

Grade 2: Poor

Grade 1: Very Poor

NG (no grade): This grade is used when a student has not been in class long enough for a grade to be awarded.

I (incomplete): This grade is an indicator that assignments or tests have not all been completed or the course has not been completed for some reason. This grade may be changed if assignments are handed in or tests completed within a time established in consultation with the teacher.

For each subject, at each grade level, there will be a written, personalized comment from the individual subject teachers.

Parent Queries/Concerns

Parents are encouraged to contact the school whenever a question or an issue of concern arises. Please contact the teacher most directly involved. If problems remain unresolved they should be referred to the appropriate IB coordinator or then to the director. If you still feel that problems remain unsolved or that your concerns have not been dealt with, you have the possibility to address the board, either in writing or in a telephone conversation with Mr. Heiner Graf, the board chair (Tel: 081 354 9992). These concerns will be recorded and discussed with

the board. The board will deal with the problem as soon as possible and at the latest within 3 months. An answer will be given in writing. In most cases problems are solved (or prevented) by seeing your child's teacher, the appropriate IB coordinator or the director as early as possible.

Suggestion Box

A suggestion box is kept in the reception area. We welcome all ideas and comments from parents and students about all aspects at ISR. Please note that you are always welcome to discuss these ideas or comments with the coordinators, the director or the staff.

Notice Boards

Notice boards are located in the entrance area. These are used for displaying photos of school activities, announcements, messages and advertisements. If you wish to place something on the notice board, please give it to the secretary.

Birthdays/Parties

To avoid hurt feelings please do not distribute party invitations at school unless the entire class is invited to the party.

Parent Absences

Please notify us if parents are away and the child is being taken care of by someone else. At times the behavior of a child is different when parents are away and it helps us to deal with this if we are aware of the situation. Please also notify us of contact details of the person caring for the child.

News from School/Weekly Newsletter

On most Fridays the school will send home a weekly newsletter and any other notices or forms which need to be sent home. In the weekly newsletters teachers will give a review of the previous week and/or an overview of the following week. The newsletter can be received as an email and we would prefer this where possible. Please complete the appropriate form or notify the secretary if you would like to receive the newsletter by email. No newsletter is produced when the Friday is not a school day or if the director is away. Parents may also submit articles to the newsletter – please submit the article by email to office@isr.ch by Wednesday of the week you would like the article to appear.

Address Change

Please inform the school promptly if you are moving to a new address or have a new telephone number or email address.

Helping the School

Volunteers/Help with Events

Volunteers are welcome in the school. Volunteers can help with the organization of special events and social activities, and provide orientation opportunities for new families. This is normally done through the Parent Teacher Association. Volunteers can also provide additional assistance in the classrooms, with displays, with special events, in the library, with student supervision in physical education and swimming, with computers and around the office. If you would like to volunteer in the school, please contact the office. During the year, specific tasks/events which need help will be listed in the weekly newsletter. Parents who would like to offer an after school activity should notify the school. Meeting times for the Parent Association will be published in the weekly newsletter.

Arrival and Departure

Arriving at school

The Early Years Program begins at 9:00 am and someone will be available to watch the children in this program from 8:30 am. Please do not send your child before this time. Parents of young children should supervise their children in the shoe room when they arrive and supervise them as they leave the school.

School for grades 1 to 12 begins at 9:10 am and teachers will be in the building from 8:40 am. Students in grades 1 to 12 generally should not arrive at school before 8:40 am. The children will be informed by their class teachers where to store bags, coats, etc. Students should arrive at school no later than five minutes before the starting times. Late entries disrupt the beginning of the day and should be avoided. Students who arrive after 9:10 must first report to the office before going to the classroom.

Departing from School

The Pre-School ends at 12:30pm or 3:30pm. Kindergarten ends at 3:30pm. It is optional for students in kindergarten to leave at 12:30 on Wednesdays. The school day for Grades 1 to 12 ends at 3:40pm and teachers will be in the building until 4:00pm. Should there be any change in your child's transport home, please make sure that you contact the office and advise the secretary of the changes. Students should not normally remain in the building at the end of the school day unless arrangements are made with the office. All students should leave the school grounds by 4:00pm, except if they are involved in an after-school activity. No supervision is provided by the school for children at the end of the day.

School Bus Service

The buses will be used as transportation for some field trips and sport lessons. Proper behavior is expected at all times on the buses. Students who are not well behaved or are disruptive on the buses may lose the right to use the bus service. Some parents use a private taxi service for transport to and from the school. If you would like details of this service, please contact the office.

Parking

Parking spaces are available but these are limited. If the school parking spaces are full, please use appropriate parking places in the streets. Parking is also available at the car park beside the Werdenberg Lake. Do not park in the area for the buses or anywhere near the front gate. Do not double-park as the streets around the school are very tight. Do not park in the parking spaces reserved for the nearby apartment buildings. Please help us to maintain a safe environment for children when you are driving in the neighborhood of the school – particularly at the beginning and end of the school day.

School Routines

School Office Hours

The school office is open from 8:15 until 4:30 Monday through Friday.

Class Schedule

A weekly timetable for your child will be sent by the teacher at the beginning of the year. The schedule will show the times of specialist periods as appropriate (e.g. physical education, German) and the times for those academic subjects which are scheduled on a weekly basis.

Lunch and Snack

Parents should provide snacks, drinks and lunch for their children to have at school. A water fountain and a drink machine are available for students. Lunch can be ordered by those students who wish to purchase it – details about this service will be sent out separately. A weekly menu for the catered lunch service will be sent home at the end of each week for the following week. On Fridays students may also order pizza. Please provide healthy snacks and lunches; no candy, chips or highly sugared or caffeinated drinks. Do not send your child with candy to be shared with others during the school day. We strongly recommend fruit juices, milk or water for drinks, and vegetables, fruits, grains, breads, cheese and meats. Food should be prepared so that only a reasonable amount of assistance is required. It is helpful for the snack to be packed separately. Please try to avoid glass containers and especially messy or difficult to handle food. Please label all containers that are sent in. Students from grade 3 up are

responsible for heating their own lunch. Assistance can be given where necessary by the staff member on duty in the lunch room. For hygienic reasons the school prefers that students eat their own lunches which they have brought in and do not trade with others. Some parents also do not wish their children to share their lunches with others.

Absences

It is important to call the school before 9:00am if your child is going to be absent from school due to illness. If you wish to take your child out for a reason other than illness, please send a written request for this to the director. Under extenuating circumstances students may be excused from school; however, absences due to holidays, family celebrations or such events will be noted as unexcused absences on the report card. Absences due to illness will be noted as excused absences. Students should see the teachers about work they miss during an absence and should attempt to make up any work they can. It is impossible to make up all work that is covered during the normal school day as much of it depends on interactions with the teacher and the rest of the class. We would appreciate it if parents avoid unnecessary absences (including part days) as these are often disruptive and disturbing to the child, to the other children in the class, to the parents of other children and to the teachers.

Students are expected to adhere to the school calendar and holidays and visits etc. should be arranged to coincide with the calendar. Please note that we would also appreciate it if students are not taken out early just prior to a holiday.

Please note: Students missing more than 20 days of schooling in one school year will not automatically be promoted to the next grade. Promotion of these students will be discussed by the teachers and the director. Students may also be ineligible to register for the IB Diploma exams or receive a high school diploma if attendance is an issue.

Calendar 2010-2011

Thursday, August 12	Teachers Begin
Wednesday, August 18	New students visit
Thursday, August 19	School Begins
Friday, October 1	In-service day (no school)
Saturday, October 2 - Sunday, October 17	October Break
Monday, November 1	No school
Thursday, November 25 - Friday, November 26	No school
Friday, December 17	In-service day (no school)
Saturday, December 18 - Sunday, January 2	Christmas Break
Monday, January 3	Classes begin
Thursday/Friday February 3 and 4	In-service days (no school)
Saturday, February 19 - Sunday, February 27	Winter Break
Saturday, April 9 - Monday, April 25	Spring Break
Tuesday, April 26	In-service day (no school)
Thursday/Friday, June 2 and 3	Ascension (no school)
Monday, June 13	White Monday (no school)
Friday, June 24	Last day of school

- 175 days for students
- 185 days for teachers

Health Matters

The school will follow the advice of a Swiss doctor or Swiss authorities where there are health concerns.

Medical Records

The school keeps records on each child's medical history and doctor, and their parents' emergency telephone number(s). Parents must notify the school whenever this information changes.

Illness and Attendance

If your child is sick, please keep your child at home. Please notify the teacher immediately about any contagious disease your child has contracted or if your child has head lice. Please ask the doctor for advice on when the child can return to school. If your child is on medication or has had a difficult night, please inform the teacher as this may influence his/her behavior at school. If it is necessary for a child to take medication during the day, the medication with clear written instructions must be handed to the school secretary (or the classroom teacher if the secretary is not available) on arrival at the school. We prefer not to have to administer medication during the day if possible. Please note that you may be asked to produce a doctor's certificate to verify that your child is unable to attend school. You may request homework assignments through the school office if the absence is likely to last more than one day. Individual teachers may also be contacted by email about missed work.

Health Services

The school has a small supply of first aid supplies and is able to treat minor injuries or health problems. In serious situations we will contact a doctor. We will attempt to contact parents as well. Illness or injury should be brought to the attention of the school office as soon as possible. When your child is genuinely ill or has been injured, please inform the office and keep him/her at home if appropriate. We do not have staff to carry children if they are not mobile, so if your child is not able to move independently, appropriate arrangements would have to be made. Please note that parents should obtain accident and health insurance for their children since ISR does not provide it.

Emergencies

The school provides care to students to the best of its ability at all times. In the case of a serious crisis or emergency, the school will contact the emergency support services as a first priority and contact the parents as soon as possible thereafter. In the case of a less serious situation, medical or otherwise, the

school will make every attempt to contact parents first. Parents are responsible for ensuring the school has up-to-date information on emergency telephone numbers and their child's doctor. If the school is unable to make contact with parents, it will act in loco parentis and decide an appropriate course of action.

Emergency School Closure

In cases of an emergency school closure or delayed opening of the school because of inclement weather or other causes, the school will notify parents and arrangements will be made as appropriate. The information will be communicated by the Telephone Network and a teacher will contact you. Where possible and appropriate the information will also be available through Swisscom where a message will be left. To hear the message:

- if you ring from Switzerland or Liechtenstein call 1600 or if you ring from Austria call 0041 848801600
- then choose 1 for schools – all messages from all schools will be recorded there.

Note: It takes at least one hour to get a message onto this service so sometimes it may not always be possible to use the service and the telephone network will be the only way used to distribute emergency information.

Classroom Supplies

The school provides textbooks and workbooks. The student should provide the following materials:

- Indoor shoes for PYP students (These must be sturdy with non-slip soles. It is essential that indoor shoes are worn at all times inside the building.)
- Outdoor shoes (These must be sturdy and easy fastening. The smaller children change their shoes many times a day.)
- Large bag to hold lunch box, library books, homework and the Friday information packet
- Set of water-based colored felt-tip pens
- Set of colored pencils
- Pencils/pens
- Eraser
- Sharpener
- Ruler
- Pencil Case
- Physical education clothes – see below
- Non-native English speakers should have their own copy of an English/mother-tongue dictionary
- A recorder for music may also be required – the music teacher will advise classes individually.
- Homework diary (for students in grades 5 – 12).

Students in the Middle Years Program (MYP) and the Diploma Program (DP) are also required to have the following:

- Mathematical tools – protractor and compass
- Calculator
 - For MYP a scientific calculator is required. Students in grades 9 and 10 should also consider purchasing a graphics calculator.
 - For DP a graphics calculator is required. (Only certain graphics calculators are allowed for the IB exams and the school recommends using the TI 84 or TI 84 Plus. The TI 84 plus is available through the school.)

Please note: Books can often be quite heavy to carry – please ensure that the student’s book bag is appropriate for carrying heavy books and that students are not carrying unnecessary books.

Please ensure that all clothing, shoes and personal articles are labeled. Articles which are not kept in the appropriate place in the school will be put into one of the lost property boxes – one can be found in the hallway of the cellar in the main building and one is in the Middle School Student Lounge.

A note will be sent home if a need for further supplies arises during the year.

Students may drink water during lessons. The water must be kept in a closed container so spillage is reduced. (Note: No other drinks, including flavored waters or tea, are allowed during lessons).

Physical Education

Parents are expected to provide their son/daughter with the following: Sports shorts, T-shirt, socks (or leotard) and non-marking gym shoes. Please ensure clothing is not too skimpy and is appropriate for school physical education lessons. The shoes may only be worn for indoor PE (to protect the gymnasium floor) and should not have an exceptionally high-profile sole. Students may also wear sport pants or tracksuits during PE. In good weather use is made of the outdoor facilities and therefore PE shoes for outside use will be required. Sweat shirts may be necessary. Students will be notified as to when they will need to bring outdoor shoes for outside lessons. For swimming lessons, suitable swimwear and towel is required. Children with longer hair need to tie the hair back. All items of clothing and personal belongings should be clearly marked with the student’s name. Jewelry should not be worn during sports lessons.

All clothing should be placed in a bag. Every week children are expected to take their PE clothes home to be washed. Students will need to return this gear to school for the following lesson.

If a child is unable to participate in PE at any time for health reasons, parents must send a letter informing the class or PE teacher. These students will attend the class and sit on the side or be given an alternative activity or task by the PE teacher.

Classroom/Homeroom Program

The school is authorized to offer the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program (PYP), the Middle Years Program (MYP) and the Diploma Program (DP). More information and booklets regarding the respective programs will be given out at the Parent Information Evening at the beginning of the year and such information for all classes throughout the school is available in the library. Further information regarding any of the programs can be obtained from the appropriate coordinator and/or from the web site of the International Baccalaureate Organization (www.ibo.org). Throughout the year parents are kept informed about the program via the weekly newsletter.

The language of instruction in the school is English. Teachers will provide parents with an overview of the program. The class teacher will send home a weekly schedule of classes at the beginning of the year.

The school follows the guidelines of the IB programs and prepares the students for these programs and not necessarily for the programs offered in the local schools or other national school systems. With respect to the teaching of languages, grammar is taught but it is not the main focus in the teaching of languages. An appreciation of the language and language usage, the culture and the life in countries where the language is spoken are also important.

English as an Additional Language (EAL)

ISR provides some additional support for students who enter the school with limited or no English. Where intensive EAL support is necessary, additional support may be needed and additional costs may be incurred. This will be addressed individually. EAL support may be withdrawal from normal lessons and the students taught in a small group by an EAL teacher for 1 to 3 lessons per week or the EAL teacher may go into the normal classroom and work with the homeroom teacher supporting the EAL students as appropriate. All classroom teachers will also offer support to EAL students and will modify tasks or expectations where appropriate. The learning of an additional language takes a considerable amount of time. It may not be possible to complete all tasks in the classroom or in the homework, but EAL students are encouraged to attempt what they can. During the early stages of EAL, homework will be minimal but will increase over time. The children are strongly encouraged to read simple reading materials in English on a regular basis. As their reading and writing skills develop, they will be able to accomplish more of the classroom and homework assignments and more would be expected of the student. If at any time a

parent is aware that their child is feeling very frustrated or stressed about the learning of English, please contact the homeroom teacher to discuss this.

English and Mother Tongue Languages

Since the common language of the school is English, while at school the students are encouraged and expected to use English where possible. ISR also considers it important for students to maintain a high level of competence in their own language. Currently we only have mother tongue lessons in English and German. Where possible and practical, German classes are split into 2 separate groups - native and advanced speakers and non-native intermediate and beginner speakers. French is taught as a foreign language only – from grade 6. Parents are encouraged to provide support at home for the learning and maintenance of mother tongue languages. This can be done by providing books, movies and magazines appropriate to the age level. Some countries also offer on-line courses which students can follow. Any group is also welcome to use the ISR facilities without cost for language lessons outside of normal school hours.

At the diploma level, for those students whose mother tongue is not English or German, it is possible for students to self-study their mother tongue as a first language A1 at the standard level. Details of this can be obtained from the IB Diploma Program Coordinator.

Library

The ISR has a fully automated library which is available for research, reading pleasure and reference. The library welcomes suggestions for books or resources from parents, students and staff, including books in languages other than English. Parents may also borrow books from the library. Donations to the library are always welcome – particularly for books in languages other than English. Students who lose or damage books will need to pay for the cost of replacement.

Homework

The aims of our homework program are to:

- Develop motivation
- Develop children's initiative and sense of responsibility
- Help children see that formal learning can take place outside the school
- Reinforce skills, concepts, knowledge and attitudes taught in the classroom.

We strongly encourage you to provide a suitable study space at home for your child. This space should be quiet and well lit. The student should be seated at a table and have all working materials readily available.

Students in the Middle School and the Diploma program will be given homework on a daily basis. Students in grades 5 to 12 are expected to purchase their own diary and are expected to use this to record homework assignments. We request that you check your child's communication booklet or homework diary each day. We also recommend that you regularly assist your child with cleaning out his/her school bag and organizing school materials at home.

Homework may be given over the weekend.

When a child is unable to complete the set homework, please send a note to the teacher with the reason. If a child is not spending the recommended time on homework (either too much time or too little time), please notify the teacher to make them aware of the situation.

Recommended Time for Homework

Grades 1 – 2

Approximately 1 – 1 ½ hours per **week** - 15 minutes reading time per night.

Grades 3 – 4

Approximately 1 - 2 hours per **week** - 20 minutes reading time per night.

Grades 5 – 6

Approximately 2 – 3 hours per **week** - 20 minutes reading time per night.

Grades 7 - 8

Approximately 1 – 2 hours per **night**.

Grades 9 – 10

Approximately 1 – 2 ½ hours per **night**.

Grade 11 - 12

Approximately 3 – 4 hours per **night** - including on the weekend (Time recommended by the International Baccalaureate Organization.)

Examinations

Grades 9, 10, 11 and 12 have exams in December and May/June. Grades 7 and 8 have exams in June only. The examination period will last a number of days and students can expect to have a number of exams on any one day. A student who misses such an exam is responsible for arranging a make up as soon as possible.

Field Trips

Field trips are taken to supplement a specific unit of study or to enhance the school program and provide opportunities for valuable educational and social experiences. There will be various trips organized throughout the school year. Parents will be informed of these events – either through the newsletter or by a letter. Where possible all classes from Grade 1 up will take part in at least one

overnight field trip during the year. Students in grades 5 – 10 usually take an extended field trip of 3 to 5 days. The cost of field trips is included in the tuition fees.

Note: In Grade 11 field trips other than those in the local region, will only be taken if they are directly related to the IB Diploma Program. No large field trip will be taken in Grade 12.

Permission slips will need to be signed and returned to the class teacher for certain trips (e.g. for field trips which extend beyond normal school hours or which go outside Switzerland or the local region). Parents should note that the school does not carry accident and health insurance for students and parents should arrange this privately. Health cards should be sent with your children for extended field trips outside Switzerland.

Field trips are part of the curriculum therefore it is expected that all children will attend. If there is a reason why a child cannot attend, the parent should inform the school in writing of the reasons for the child's absence. It may not be possible to provide supervision at school if a child cannot attend a field trip. A refund for the cost of the field trip will not be given if a child misses a school field trip.

Local field trip permission forms for field trips in the local area and which take place within normal school hours are signed with the application/re-registration papers and such trips may be taken without notification to parents.

Participants in school field trips are representatives of the school at all times. As such they are expected to abide by all school rules, to follow appropriate standards of behavior and appearance and to demonstrate concern for the well-being of others. Students who cause serious concerns because they have violated a major school or trip rule (e.g. theft, drinking, vandalism, drugs, mixed company in rooms, continuous general uncooperativeness etc) may be dismissed from a trip and sent home (following consultation with the director and a call to the parents). Any additional costs incurred in such cases will need to be covered by the parents. Students who are involved in disciplinary incidents on a trip may be barred from future trips. Students who fail to attend school upon their return due to 'being too tired' may be barred from future trips.

In the case of an accident on a school trip chaperones are expected to take all measures necessary to ensure prompt and appropriate treatment of the student(s) involved. In addition the parents of the student(s) and the Director are informed as soon as the situation permits.

Field trips related to the International Award are not included in the tuition fees and any costs incurred on trips related to the Award will need to be paid for separately in addition to the normal school fees. Students who fail to attend

school immediately after a trip related to the International Award will generally not be given the Award.

Extra-Curricular Activities

During the school year the school will run 3 sessions of after-school extra-curricular activities program. Activities will run for approximately 8 weeks. Details of the activities with forms for sign up will be put into the weekly newsletter. Changes to the after school activities, for example cancellations, will be listed in the weekly newsletter or individual parents will be notified by telephone.

Visitors

Visiting adults, including parents, are asked not to make unannounced visits to classes. If you need to visit a class or speak with a student you must report to the office first – do not go directly to classrooms. Parents may wait in the reception area in the main building or the lunch room if it is free.

Insurance

As Swiss law requires parents to carry accident and health insurance for all children the school does not provide any. Therefore the school assumes parents have fulfilled this obligation and in the event of an accident the costs will be covered by the family's insurance company. In addition the school recommends that each parent carry an additional personal liability policy (for each of their children). Such a policy can be purchased from your insurer.

Telephones

In emergencies the school telephone is available for student use with permission from a teacher. Mobile telephones may be brought to school but must not be used at school and must be turned off during the day. Phones should not be out at all during any lessons. Phones may be not allowed at school for students who do not use them as requested. The school is not responsible for any lost or stolen telephones.

Radios/Music Players

Radios and Music Players must not be used while at school and should not be taken to lessons. The school is not responsible for any lost or stolen radios or music players.

Photocopying

Parents and students may do photocopying for CHF 0.20 per page for black and white and CHF 0.50 per page for color. Please see the secretary if you wish to photocopy.

Lost and Stolen Property

Lost and found boxes are maintained in the school and can be found at the end of the corridor in the cellar and in the Middle School Student Lounge. Articles which are not kept in the appropriate places will be placed in one of the lost and found boxes. The school is not responsible for student and visitor property, which goes missing. Students should refrain from bringing valuable property to school and should name personal articles (including clothing). Please ensure bicycles are locked up.

Off Campus Privileges

Students in grades 7 to 10 may leave the campus during lunch time provided they have permission from their parents and provided they sign in and out with the school office.

Grade 11 and 12 students may leave the campus during the academic day if they do not have other commitments, provided they have permission from their parents and provided they sign in and out with the school office.

Failure to sign in and out, returning late or behaving in an inappropriate way while off campus may result in this privilege being removed.

Lockers

Lockers are school property and are assigned by the school office at the beginning of the year to students in grades 5 to 12. A spare key will be kept with the secretary. Students may use only the locker to which they have been assigned; they are expected to treat it properly by keeping it free from stickers, graffiti, scratches, or other damages. The locker door should generally be kept closed and locked. Lockers may be locked by staff if the door is left ajar. Open food or drinks may not be kept in the locker. Lockers should be cleaned out on a regular basis and kept tidy. If a key is lost there will be a charge of CHF 25 made for replacement. Keys should be returned at the end of the year.

Security Cameras

Security cameras are installed in the cellar hallway and in the shoe room so that these areas can be monitored.

Student Identity Cards

Student Identity cards will be issued to students in grades 7 to 12. If any other students need a student identity card, please see the secretary.

Bicycles/Scooters/Skateboards/Shoes with wheels

Bicycle stands are available for those students who cycle to school. Bicycles should always be left locked. Students may not ride bicycles or other wheeled objects on the school grounds.

Re-Registrations

In the second semester of the school year re-registration forms will be sent out for the following school year.

Leaving Students

When a student is leaving ISR, a student leaving form should be obtained from the secretary and returned to the school as soon as possible.

High Ability/Special Needs Students

This year ISR has a 50% special needs teacher in the school. The special needs teacher will at times withdraw students for individual support and she will also support the teachers who teach high ability or special needs students. To some extent we are able to cater to the needs of high ability and special needs students; however, this is nevertheless quite limited. Individual tasks for different students are set where possible and appropriate. Such tasks may be modified to suit the needs of particular children. At times additional tasks may also be set where this is suitable. Each child is encouraged to reach his/her potential. It may not be possible to take students who need a substantial amount of individual attention or extra support. In some cases we may advise that students should receive additional help or extra tutoring outside of the school.

At ISR we do not just concentrate only on the acquisition of knowledge but also on the development of the whole child. In general, students will stay with others of their own age group. In exceptional cases and after discussions with the teachers and parents it may be decided to retain or promote a child to another class if it is in the best interests of the child.

To the Parents of the Students of the International School Rheintal

Board Information

The Structure of the ISR

The functions of the various groups within the ISR and the question of who to contact regarding concerns or questions can be briefly summarized as follows:

The Board is responsible for the strategic development of the school, ensures the school has the necessary requirements as well as being primarily responsible for the financial management of the school.

For the day-to-day operation of the school the Director, Meg Sutcliffe is responsible.

Where parents have concerns about their child and their education the appropriate subject teacher or homeroom teacher should be the first to be consulted and if concerns remain, the appropriate IB Coordinator or the Director should be contacted.

The Parent Teacher Association supports and enriches the life of the school and gives feedback from parents to the Director.

Values / Mission Statement

Our mission is to provide a high quality education in English for students from Pre-School to Grade 12. Within a supportive, challenging and child-centered environment we enable each student to reach his or her potential whilst promoting life-long learning, open-mindedness, tolerance, and respect and responsibility for themselves, others and the environment. Through team work and individual endeavor students are encouraged to think critically, reflect thoughtfully, communicate effectively, appreciate and respect diversity and to celebrate their successes.

The ISR was initially set up in the Rhine Valley so that a reputable international school would be available for internationally mobile families. The school would make it easier for such families to settle into this region and for companies in the region to more easily recruit the necessary expertise. The ISR was also made available for families from the local region who wished their children to have an international education in English. The mission statement and the philosophy and objectives reflect the way in which the school is set up and how it was intended to be set up from the beginning.

Values / Philosophy and Objectives and School Atmosphere.

The ISR actively maintains an atmosphere of openness, encourages respect and tolerance for one another and constantly strives to meet the goals and demands of the programs. The programs which the school offers support the Mission Statement, the philosophy and objectives and are based on the programs of the International Baccalaureate Organization. These programs are the same or similar to those offered in many other international schools throughout the world. We are committed to these values and the programs and they define what we do and what we offer. Students who do not accept these values and act against them must face consequences. The programs which the ISR offers will differ in various ways from those programs offered in many other national systems and parents should not expect that the ISR will be the same as those systems they have come from or may go to.

Personnel/Recruitment

The teaching staff at ISR has gradually increased from year to year as the numbers in the school increased. We are pleased to be able to employ a wider range of teachers with different professional expertise as subject specialists and with different interests and personalities as the school has grown. In general, the teachers have English as a mother tongue and we also aim to have a wide range of nationalities within the teaching faculty.

Tuition Fees and their Development

ISR has a 10 year plan for the development of the school during its first 10 years. This plan includes moderate yearly increases in tuition fees. Tuition fees will generally rise by approximately 3% each year. This increase is based on what is needed to cover the costs of the school.

Lunches

The lunches are not a part of the package offered at the ISR and are also not a part of the tuition fees. The staff at ISR provides supervision over the lunch time and a staff member is assigned to collect and serve ordered meals. The cost of this person is added onto the costs of the ordered meals. At times, we have received comments and questions regarding the quality and price of the lunches. The decision of where we now get the ordered lunches was made by parents. Over the years many options have been investigated and tried and what we have now seems to be the best alternative for our situation.

School Information and Language

The ISR provides information about the school and its program in many formats – the weekly newsletter, parent information evenings, program booklets, parent-teacher conferences, the parent-student handbook, the homepage, the magazine, the year book, news articles, staff meetings and Board Parent Information Evenings. Since ISR wants to be a respected and recognized international school all information is given first in English. It is not possible that all documents are translated into German or other languages. We expect that parents can operate in English or have someone who can help them. Where clarification is needed or questions arise parents may also contact the school.

Thanks

The development of the young people in our school is our priority and also our most rewarding task. Parent, teachers and the director must put all their efforts into helping each student reach his or her full potential. The students themselves must also strive to achieve the highest they can. We are grateful for the positive contributions made by the parents and thank you for your valued and continued support.

Sincerely,

Heiner Graf,
Board Chair

Verein International School Rheintal
Liechtenstein – St. Gallen – Vorarlberg

Useful Phone numbers and addresses

Police	117	
Fire	118	
Emergency Ambulance	144	
Rescue Helicopter REGA	1414	
Information	111	
The Helping Hand (for parents)	143	
Poisoning Emergencies	145	
Telephone help for Youth	147	
Mintegra – social services in foreign languages, center for integration	0817565147	
Information about Swiss Authorities	www.ch.ch	
Child and Youth Emergencies	071 243 77 77	
Teenager Assistance in Grabs Hospital (Gynecology)	081 772 54 70	www.spitalgrabs.ch
School Psychology Services www.schulpsychologie-sg.ch	071 858 71 08	
School Psychology Services Bahnhofplatz 7 9000 St. Gallen	071 224 54 36	
Children and Youth Psychiatric Service Grossfeldstr. 19 7320 Sargans	081 720 03 20	
Parent Advice Werdenberg	081 771 4044	
Family Advice Service Fröngartenstr. 16 9000 St. Gallen	071 228 09 80	
Social Services Werdenberg Wiedenstr. 15 9470 Buchs	081 750 08 40	
Regional Advice Center for Addiction	071 841 96 04	www.suchthilfe-rorschach.ch
Cantonal Center for Addiction Prevention	071 226 91 60	www.zepira.info
Vocational and Career Guidance Werdenberg	0817505620	