



**Discover the world through languages.**

**Mehrsprachig die Welt entdecken.**

**Découvrir le monde à travers les langues vivantes.**



INTERNATIONAL  
MULTILINGUAL  
SCHOOL

# General Information



Tandem IMS is an international multilingual day school which offers Early Years, Pre-School, Kindergarten, Primary and Gymnasium programmes. We specialise in providing high quality multilingual education in a warm and child-friendly environment. Our four locations are based on the northern shore of Lake Zurich. In Zurich, we offer Early Years and Pre-School programmes up to Grade 4 of Primary School. Early Years and Pre-School are also available at our locations in Zollikon and Erlenbach. Our Küsnacht campus is home to the 5th and 6th grades of Primary School, as well as the Progymnasium and Kurzgymnasium programmes. Our Tandem IMS bus service connects the four locations, enabling an uncomplicated transfer to and from our kindergarden and schools.

## Multilingualism

Tandem IMS has developed a unique concept of multilingualism in the education of the very young through to Gymnasium. English and German are spoken simultaneously from the Early Years. French becomes a fixed component of our curriculum from 1<sup>st</sup> Primary onwards, yet can also be included as an optional subject in Kindergarten. Teachers of each language regularly co-teach in the classroom. This unique feature of Tandem IMS develops the “translanguaging” skills of our children; the ability to rapidly switch from one language to another and exchange thoughts in different languages. This is an essential part of our well grounded and progressive multilingual curriculum. The multilingual communication skills learned in this way enable each child to enhance their linguistic repertoire, strengthen their academic and cognitive skills and deepen their social and global understanding.

## High Quality Education

Tandem IMS aims to provide a high quality school education leading to a variety of excellent offers at secondary and Gymnasium level within Switzerland and abroad. Our Tandem IMS pupils work intensively towards the Zurich Gymnasium exams and other international school entrance requirements. Our multilingual curriculum prepares the children for a variety of school choices and opens many educational opportunities to them.

## Children

Over 300 children of over 30 nationalities attend Tandem IMS. More than half of them communicate in three or more languages. Tandem IMS children benefit daily from our passion for education, our enthusiasm for multilingualism and our deep knowledge of the international

and Swiss education systems. Our families are from both Swiss and international backgrounds. They all value international education as well as integration into the local Swiss community.

## School Life

The school day at Tandem IMS is vibrant and full of positive energy, shaped by our diverse and international community of families. As a day school, we offer extended hours, school lunches, a homework club, extracurricular activities, holiday care, and holiday camps. These offerings not only enrich pupils’ experiences but also allow families to organise their schedules flexibly to meet their individual needs.

## Settling-In

For the younger children, Tandem IMS has a detailed settling-in programme, which is extensively discussed with parents upon enrolment. For the older children in Kindergarten, Primary and Gymnasium levels, trial days and a welcome morning are organised for all new children in a class. This time gives the parents and the child an opportunity to meet the teacher and learn more about the class environment.

## Teaching Staff

Our highly qualified teaching staff brings extensive experience in both Swiss-German and international curricula. With a strong foundation in multiple languages, our educators exemplify the multilingualism they inspire in the children. Excellent team teaching, professional development, and career growth are central to our values, ensuring we remain at the forefront of the evolving education system.

## Parents and Tandem IMS

Tandem IMS greatly values the home-school partnership in educating and caring for our pupils. We foster positive relationships with our parents through strong communication and collaboration. Each of our Tandem IMS locations has its own Parent Teacher Association (PTA). This is an active link between teachers and parents in order to support the school and to positively promote school life.

## History

Sonya Maechler-Dent founded Tandem IMS in 2004, first as a Pre-School which extended into a Kindergarten in 2006 and a Primary School in 2010. Sonya holds a Master in Education Management with a focus on multilingualism and organisational culture. She has led training programmes for teachers and has taught in different school systems in Switzerland and abroad. She lives with her husband and their three sons in the canton of Zurich.

# Early Years and Pre-School (0 to 4 years)



## Curriculum for Early Years and Pre-School

Our Early Years curriculum is centred around the needs of each individual child to discover and develop their curiosity. We provide a safe and secure environment for each child to explore their world through their senses. There are precise objectives in several areas of learning, which will guide our teacher to develop the small child's skills in a caring and holistic manner.

Our Pre-School programme encourages children to fully engage in enquiry-based learning. Children choose topics to learn by asking questions based upon a broad given theme. Teachers then use our children's questions to guide the direction of the theme and help the children "discover" the answers.

## Languages in Early Years and Pre-School

All groups are taught by a German and an English speaking teacher or person-in-training. Thanks to this "translanguaging" method, even our youngest children get to know the two languages naturally and learn to distinguish between them.

### Early Years

For the Early Years groups, the emphasis is on exposing our children to two languages. This is done through communication with the teachers and the use of songs, poems and stories in the teacher's native language. This allows the child to hear different phonemes, melodies, expressions and rhythms. In addition to our communication in German and English, we also teach baby sign language. Using just a few simple signs and gestures, we help our youngest children to express their interests, wishes or needs.

### Pre-School

Pre-School children begin to play with the two languages as they start to notice similarities and differences in the language sounds. This playful approach to the languages provides an optimal language learning environment. In Pre-School, literacy is introduced using a UK developed phonics programme.

## Additional Benefits

For our younger children, Tandem IMS has a detailed setting-in programme, which is extensively discussed with parents upon enrolment. Later, parent teacher conferences are an ideal opportunity to discuss the individual needs of the children, set new objectives and help find continuity between home and school as the children achieve those early childhood milestones.

## General Information

**Location:** Zurich, Zollikon, Erlenbach

### Early Years (0 to 3 years)

2 days minimum attendance

Max. 8 children per group (6–18 months)

Max. 11 children per group (18–36 months)

1 teacher and 1–2 persons-in-training per group

### Pre-School (3 to 4 years)

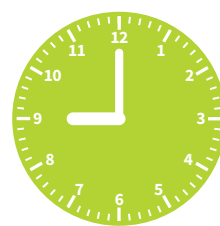
3 days minimum attendance

Max. 12 children per group

1–2 teachers and 1 person-in-training per group

## Daily Routine\* in Early Years and Pre-School

Day Care\* from 07:30 until 18:30



- Circle Time
- Activities
- Snack



- Lunch
- Sleep Time or Quiet Activities



- Outdoor Activities
- Structured Centres
- Snack



- Daily Routine Ends
- Optional: After School Club

# Kindergarten (4 to 6 years)



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## Curriculum for Kindergarten

Our children in Kindergarten delve deeper into their themed topics using enquiry-based learning where they investigate, explore and make predictions. In addition, our Kindergarten children develop their social and emotional skills and are encouraged to actively reflect on their use and choices of languages, as well as to notice the similarities and differences between them.

English reading and writing continues using the next steps of the UK program which was started in our Pre-School. Reading and writing in German is introduced as well. Most children end their Kindergarten years at Tandem IMS with a solid foundation in literacy skills and are ready to take on the challenge of enhancing both reading and writing in three languages in first grade. Our children are also introduced to numbers, the number system and basic mathematical concepts during their Kindergarten years to prepare them for the beginning of Primary School. Literacy and mathematical objectives and levels in Tandem IMS' Kindergarten exceed those set for the Swiss public school system.

## Languages in Kindergarten

Through our “translanguaging” approach, our children in Kindergarten are introduced to the daily use of several languages. English and German teachers spend approximately half the week co-teaching each class. We aim to support our children in their ability to comfortably interact in different languages in both academic and social activities. Our Kindergarten children are given daily opportunities to discuss diverse topics, role-play, and create stories to share in different languages. These discussions often lead to an investigation of the words and expressions used within the language itself. As a result, our Kindergarten children are encouraged to playfully, linguistically and culturally progress and switch between languages.

All our Kindergarten children have the option of choosing French as an additional language.

## Additional Benefits

Activities such as excursions, project weeks, nature days, specialist art lessons, music, IT projects and gym will increase throughout Kindergarten 1 and 2.

In addition, we offer a range of extra curricular activities including after school clubs and holiday camps.

## General Information

**Location:** Zurich (Seefeld district),  
Erlenbach (Opening August 2026)

Age: 4 to 6 years

Maximum 23 children per class

Minimum attendance in Kindergarten 1: 3.5 days

Minimum attendance in Kindergarten 2: 4 days

Additional Option: French programme on Friday

Admission: In case of a waiting list, Tandem IMS Pre-School children have priority over new registrations.

## Daily Routine in Kindergarten



- Circle Time
- Activities and Snack



- Lunch
- Outside Breaktime



- Golden Götti Time
- Activities and Snack



- School Ends
- Optional: Late Care or After School Club

# Primary School

## (6 to 12 years)



### Curriculum for Primary School

The curriculum for our Primary School is designed to permit our students a wide range of opportunities at the end of Grade 6 whether they wish to continue their education in German, in English, or bilingually. This latter objective, the aim of many of our students, can be achieved by working towards the Swiss Gymnasium examinations and then continuing towards a Cantonal bilingual Maturität.

The Tandem International Multilingual Curriculum for our Primary students is based on both Swiss and international programmes with a strong focus on learning languages and on enquiring about different themes. We enable our students to broaden their world perspectives in an interactive way. They learn the need to understand and respect other cultures as well as explore various ways of applying this knowledge.

We are accredited by the canton of Zurich's educational authorities and follow Zurich's curriculum guidelines and holiday structure. Throughout the year, our students are assessed regularly by their teachers to help them reach high standards.

### Languages in Primary School

At Primary School level, our goal is for each student to acquire fluency in English and German, in both oral and written forms. Our students learn to read, write, speak and comprehend. They actively engage in language switching and compare their thoughts in different languages. The acquired multilingual switching skill provides not only a greater cognitive development but they also develop the child's social and global understanding. Our students are tested using both standardised English and German assessments throughout their Primary School years to gauge their language skills.

Additionally, our students receive classes in French starting in the Grade 1. Beginning in Grade 3, they are given the opportunity to take the DELF exams to assess their French language levels. The DELF exam also allows our students to gain first-hand experience in external exams.

### Additional Benefits

Our Primary School focuses on arts, music, and other forms of artistic expression. We also offer IT lessons and weekly instruction in physical education or swimming.

During the school year, Tandem IMS organises project weeks for special activities such as drama, film-making, circus. Such weeks offer our students many exciting opportunities that are not always possible to incorporate into daily lessons. Part of these special project weeks is our French camp which takes place once a year as of Grade 4.

In addition, we offer a range of extra curricular activities including homework club, after school clubs and holiday camps.

### General Information

**Location:** Zurich, Seefeld district (1st to 4th grade)  
Küsnacht (5th and 6th grade)

Age: 6 to 12 years  
18 - 23 children per class  
Minimum attendance: 4.5 days

### Daily Routine in Primary School



- Circle Time
- Lessons



- Lunch
- Outside Breaktime



- Lessons



- School Ends
- Optional: Late Care or After School Club

# 10th Grade Bridge Year

## (Gymnasium Preparation & Creative Pathways)



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### A Confident Step Toward the Next Academic Stage

Starting with the school year 2026/27, Tandem IMS offers a dedicated 10th Grade Bridge Year on our Küsnacht Campus. This additional school year is designed for motivated pupils who wish to prepare thoroughly for the Kurzgymnasium entrance exam (ZAP or Tandem entrance exam TAP) or explore alternative academic and creative pathways in a focused, supportive environment close to Zürich.

The 10th grade is not a delay. It is a strategic year of consolidation, orientation, and growth—providing clarity, confidence, and strong preparation for the next educational step.

### Who the 10th Grade Is For

The programme is designed for pupils who:

- Wish to prepare intensively for the Kurzgymnasium entrance through structured training in German, Mathematics, and English and French
- Aim to enter schools such as Tandem IMS Gymnasium, Kantonsschule Küsnacht, or Liceo Artistico
- Want to develop a strong Design Portfolio alongside academic preparation
- Seek orientation after Grade 9 and wish to explore future academic or vocational pathways
- Plan to prepare for BMS 1 while benefiting from integrated Gymnasium preparation

The programme also includes an extended design-focused training, supporting pupils aiming for competitive apprenticeships in fields such as architecture, engineering, media, and graphic design.

### What Pupils Will Learn

In 10th Grade, pupils deepen subject knowledge while building the skills required for successful entrance examinations and independent learning.

#### Core Academic Focus

- German: Advanced reading comprehension, structured writing, grammar mastery
- Mathematics: Algebra, geometry, logical and analytical problem-solving
- English & French: Academic language development, fluency, and confidence
- Design: Portfolio development with a focus on individual strengths and creative quality

### Exam Preparation

- Realistic simulations of the ZAP / TAP
- Proven strategies for time management and exam performance
- Targeted feedback to address individual learning gaps

### Personalised Support & Development

Small class sizes allow for focused teaching and individual attention. Pupils benefit from:

- Personal coaching on learning strategies and study habits
- Continuous academic monitoring and feedback
- Close communication with parents
- Mentoring that supports motivation, independence, and self-organisation

By the end of the year, pupils are prepared academically—and equipped with the confidence to move forward with clarity.

### Campus Küsnacht: Designed for Learning and Growth

Our Küsnacht campus combines purpose-built learning spaces with a unique lakeside location.

Our Design studio, media room, quiet study areas, and collaborative project spaces create an environment where pupils feel motivated, supported, and inspired. This is a place where academic preparation, creativity, and personal development come together—offering pupils the space to grow, reflect, and prepare for what comes next.

### General Information

Location: Seestrasse 157, 8700 Küsnacht

Programme start: School year 2026/27



# Gymnasium

Pro- and Kurzgymnasium (11 to 15 years)



## Curriculum for Gymnasium

Our Gymnasium curriculum combines the Swiss education system with an international, problem-solving approach. Tailored to support critical thinking, design skills, and humanitarian understanding, our pupils engage in bilingual (German/English) studies, preparing them for a world that values both local roots and global perspectives.

## Progymni vs. Kurzgymni

The **Progymni** prepares pupils for the Kurzgymni entry, with challenging content and gymnasium-level teaching methods. The **Kurzgymni** is designed for advanced learners who aspire to achieve a bilingual Swiss Matura, supported by Zurich's curriculum guidelines.

## Beyond Traditional Academics

No other Zurich Gymnasium offers a unique curriculum focus on **Technical & Creative Design** and **Humanitarian Studies**—key areas to prepare our pupils for the evolving job market, where many future careers do not yet exist. From architecture to sustainable engineering, our pupils will explore real-world challenges in an ethical and sustainable context.

## Languages: Fluency for a Global Future

Our immersive language program helps pupils become fluent in English and German. With language assessments throughout, our curriculum encourages pupils to switch languages with ease, enhancing both cognitive and social skills.

## Core Focus: Design & Humanitarian Studies

Design and Humanitarian Studies are integrated into the curriculum, with specific weekly lessons dedicated to hands-on design, plus project-based learning across disciplines. Pupils engage in digital design, prototyping, and ethical studies, with real-world applications in collaboration with universities and community service projects.

Examples of integration include:

- Fine Art combined with design technology.
- History and Geography blending with humanitarian studies on topics like sustainability and demography.
- IT classes featuring digital creative tools.

## Grading and Pupil Development

Adhering to Zurich's grading system, we assess not only results but also the learning journey: teamwork, empathy, and innovation. Our focus on self-evaluation and group reflection encourages a balanced view of academic and personal growth.

## Class Sizes and Facilities

With a maximum of 25 pupils per class, Tandem IMS offers a collaborative, flexible learning environment. Our facilities include:

- State-of-the-art-classrooms
- Modern prototyping labs for wood and metalwork
- High-tech IT, podcasting, and video rooms
- Chill-out areas and a spacious auditorium

In the Kurzgymni, pupils will enjoy a dedicated floor with shared amenities for a unique "WG" (shared flat) learning experience.

## Looking Ahead: Swiss Hausmatura

Our long-term goal is to offer the Swiss Hausmatura, with ongoing compliance with cantonal regulations to ensure quality. We prioritize hiring experienced, qualified educators who adhere to high standards in teaching and pupil support.

## General Information:

Location: Seestrasse 157, 8700 Küsnacht

Opening: August 2025

**Do you love learning and challenging yourself academically? Do you enjoy teamwork and thrive in a multilingual environment? Are you passionate about design? Creative? Enjoy empathising with others and solving real-world problems? If so, you may be one of our creative future pupils!**

# Our Mission

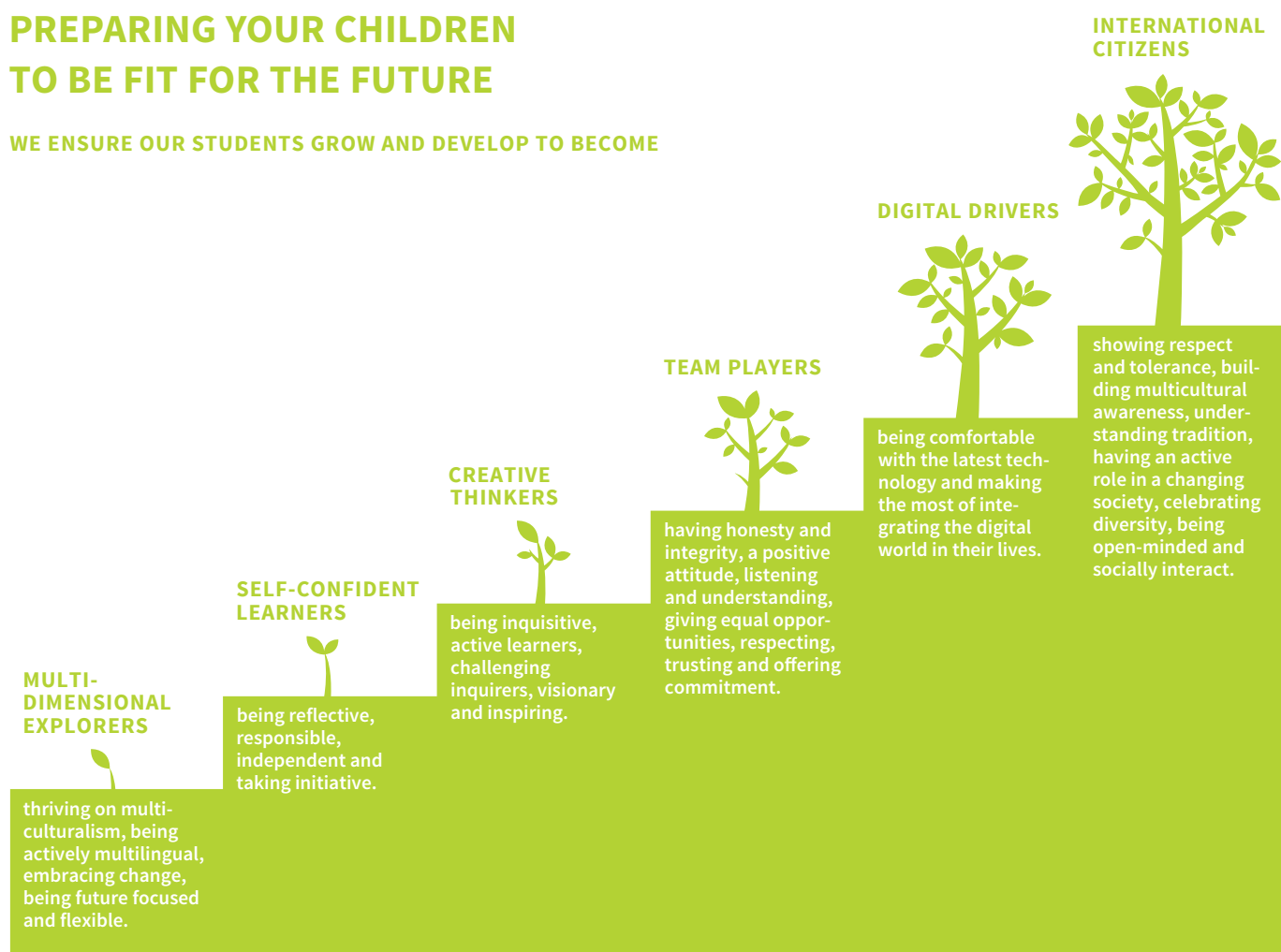


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At Tandem International Multilingual School, we continually strive to provide a positive and dynamic learning climate within which diversity is celebrated and where language learning is key to encouraging open-mindedness, gaining international perspective, creative thinking and developing respect. We aim for your child to be fit for the future in a digitalised, ever-changing world.

## PREPARING YOUR CHILDREN TO BE FIT FOR THE FUTURE

WE ENSURE OUR STUDENTS GROW AND DEVELOP TO BECOME



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