

Autumn 2014

INTERNATIONAL
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Welcome to International School Parent Magazine!

Happy 1st Birthday to International Schools in Switzerland Magazine. What a year it has been. We have learnt many things along the way from our original magazine to arrive where we are now. We are humbled to have been embraced and supported by our distributing International Schools and thanks to our Parent readers, you, with your continuing words of encouragement. Thank you for the support from all those who enjoy the magazine and its articles.

Starting as of this magazine, we have rebranded to the name of International School Parent Magazine, an important step in helping us focus on our target readers – parents. In this issue, we have more excellent articles about the changes being made to the MYP, how to get your girls motivated about sports, and how to help your children write that all-important UCAS application.

As ever at International School Parent Magazine, we are always pleased to hear from you. Our magazine is written and enjoyed by professionals, parents and students at every level of the international schools system. If you would like to contribute, distribute, or write for the magazine, or you have a topic you would like one of our experts to feature please get in touch.

We hope you enjoy this first, fresh issue of International School Parent Magazine and look forward to hearing from you.

Work hard and be the best!

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MYP: the Next Chapter

BY CLARE MCMINN MITCHELL - MIDDLE YEARS PROGRAMME COORDINATOR - GEMS ACADEMY ETOY

The IB's Middle Years Programme is about to implement a range of changes to the programme, collectively known as the 'Next Chapter.' All MYP schools, of which there are a number in Switzerland, will be starting to implement these changes starting this September.

What is the MYP?

The MYP is the IB's programme for the first five years of secondary school, for students between approximately 11 to 16 years of age. It complements the Diploma Programme (the DP), the oldest and best-known of the IB programmes, as well as the PYP (Primary Years Programme), aimed at students below the age of 11.

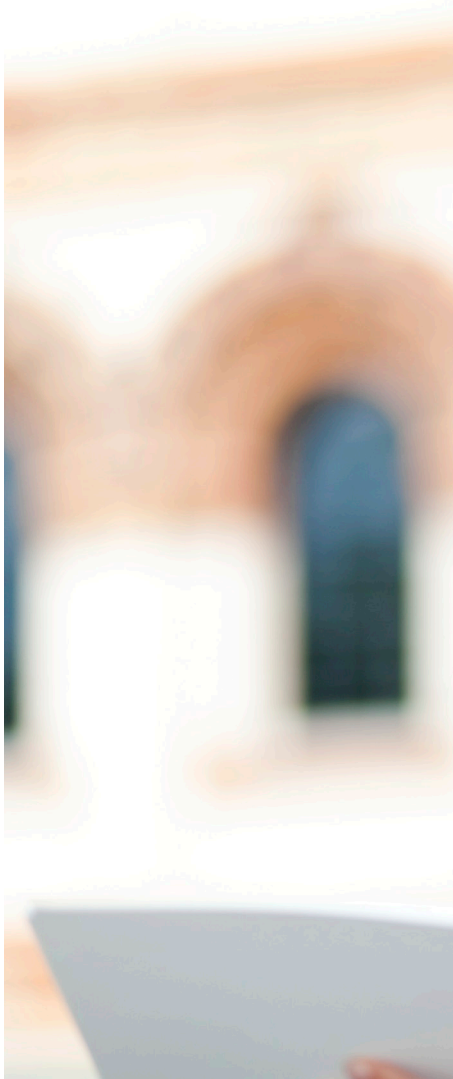
During the five years of the MYP, students follow studies in eight broad subject groups, all of which (until this point) have been compulsory. They are Mathematics, Language A, Language B, Humanities, Sciences, Arts, Physical Education, Design and Technology. The teaching is organised via units of enquiry, with an emphasis on interdisciplinary learning. As well as the eight subject groups, students undertake a research-based Personal Project in the final year of the programme. Community and Service is also a mandatory part of the programme.

The MYP differs from traditional exam-based curricula for 16 year-olds in several ways. It is a five-year programme, and is a whole programme rather than a set of individual subjects. Whilst exams and tests form part of the programme, it is continuously assessed, using prescribed assessment criteria that are published by the IB. The content is flexible so that schools can design the programme to meet the needs of their community, as well as to properly prepare students for entry into the DP. The Personal Project is a culmination of five years of ATLs (Approaches to Learning) skills, which provide a very strong foundation for the Extended Essay in the DP.

MYP assessment criteria are converted into term grades using the IB 1-7 scale, in line with the DP grading system. All MYP schools go through a process of authorisation in order to be approved to offer the programme. Once authorised, MYP schools are checked through a process of verification and monitoring. Schools that wish to have official IBMYP certificates for their students go through a process of moderation of assessed tasks and student work.

Key Changes in the Next Chapter

The 'Next Chapter' contains a number of changes designed to better meet student learning needs in the 21st Century. Overall, there remains a strong skills component, but an increased emphasis on inquiry and concept-based learning where broad ideas and key questions are used to drive learning. Alongside these, units are planned around six 'global contexts' which provide a real-world setting and meaning for the learning. As well as changes to the way in which units are planned, there is an increased emphasis on Approaches to Learning skills, which are mapped across the five years of the programme, and provide a strong skills foundation for the DP. Assessment criteria are also being streamlined to be more in line between subjects.



The MYP differs from traditional exam-based curricula for 16 year-olds in several ways.



Previously, community and service was one of the Areas of Interaction. With the new changes, it becomes a separate part of the programme, named 'Service as action,' reflecting the emphasis on taking learning outside the classroom.

Why are the changes better for students?

There are several ways in which the changes will benefit MYP students. The changes are based on up to date educational research, and aimed to prepare students not just for the DP, but for their adult lives. The IB strives to create lifelong learners: in a world where the future is uncertain, and technology is rapidly advancing, as educators we simply do not know what future jobs our students will be doing; many may simply not yet exist. To prepare them for this uncertain future, the MYP prepares students to be effective learners with a range of skills and knowledge.

The subject-group flexibility means that students who find it difficult to cope with all eight subject groups are better able to access the MYP, and schools that have compulsory national curriculum requirements are also better able to offer the MYP. The subject name changes reflect changes in each subject that better meet current needs. Physical Education being widened to include a health component, for example, and Design replacing Design Technology, reflecting the increased focus on the process of the design cycle.

The assessment criteria, for all subject groups, as well as interdisciplinary units and the Personal Project, are much more clearly aligned with each other and easier to follow for students and parents alike. All subjects now have four criteria, each out of a maximum level of 8. They still convert, using prescribed levels from the IB, to an overall IB 1-7 grade, at the end of each term.

Subject-group flexibility means that not all eight subject groups are compulsory in the last two years of the programme, though most still are. There have been some name changes to subject groups: Humanities becomes Individuals and Societies, Physical Education becomes Physical and Health Education, Language A becomes Language and Literature, Language B becomes Language Acquisition, Design and Technology becomes Design. In terms of external assessment by the IB, there are two key changes. Firstly, moderation of the Personal Project (with a Community Project for schools that do not run all five years of the MYP) will become compulsory for all schools. Secondly, schools that wish their students to have IB certificates will enter their students for e-assessments. These are two-hour long examinations, or e-portfolios in more practical subjects, and are available in a range of subjects as well as interdisciplinary.

Community and Service has always been a compulsory component of the MYP: this encourages students to think about the wider community, and their place within it.

The increased emphasis on Approaches to Learning skills and the moderation of the Personal Project reflects the strong focus on skills needed for learning, and the ATL skills continue into the DP as well as providing a strong foundation for university and other higher learning.

The optional e-assessments will help where students are intending to move onto universities that require external exam certificates. Whilst the MYP certificate is relatively well-recognised, the e-assessments will be more widely accepted by universities in different countries as a final certificate for the programme, where this is required.

Overall, these changes to the MYP, which have been developed over a number of years with careful piloting and wide consultation with schools, should mean that the programme is better able to meet the needs of 21st century students. In today's constantly changing world, it is more important than ever that our students are equipped to be lifelong learners.

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An educational revolution

BY SWISS EDUCATION GROUP

Advertorial

In a world where technology is reshaping the design the organisation of work, the Swiss Education Group is focused on providing its entire student and teacher body with high tech equipment, skills and knowledge while further rejuvenating dedicated learning content.

This underscores its commitment to technological innovation, all in the interest of designing the best educational experience for students, and aligning education with the hospitality industry's future needs. "SEG is the first company in the world of hospitality to launch a 1:1 iPad programme," affirms Alexandre Robert-Tissot, CEO of Art Computer, and a representative for Apple in Switzerland and Mexico. He explains: "We are committed today to providing SEG with the best practices available in the world, in order to make their project as successful as possible". SEG's investment in tablets and educational content for 2014 totals CHF 1.4 million.

The Swiss Education Group, Switzerland's leading network of hospitality management schools, has embarked on an ambitious programme to upgrade its infrastructure and technical equipment -- an investment effort adding up to over CHF 12 million between 2013 and 2014. Moreover, with its International Recruitment Forum organised every twice a year in Montreux, SEG is also a leader in offering its students a useful networking event that allows them to explore promising opportunities for their future careers and meet with hospitality industry leaders.

"We are committed today to providing SEG with the best practices available in the world"



Aware of the challenges that future young professionals will face, SEG is intent on adopting the best possible learning approaches in order to foster educational excellence and the development of the skills required in the working world today. Indeed, according to a study carried out by the Institute for the Future for the University of Phoenix Research Institute¹, future professionals will have to demonstrate foresight to organisational and competency changes, adapting to them and reassessing themselves all along their careers. Specifically, this will imply the integration of new-media literacy; experiential learning that gives prominence to soft skills and other interdisciplinary training aspects of a given educational programme.

One student, one iPad

After testing the iPads in 2012 within the group, at César Ritz Colleges, SEG swiftly decided to provide tablets to its entire student body. Although the core of a hospitality education will remain unchanged, introducing tablets supports and enhances teaching practices and makes for a far more interactive and rewarding learning environment. Ronan Fitzgerald, Chief Operating Officer of SEG explains, “We are proud of our contributing role in defining new educational standards. We will continue to focus on technological breakthroughs that may help us revolutionize educational and training approaches. But above all, our mission is to prepare our students thoroughly for the professional world they will be confronted with.”



Why should robots become part of classroom hardware?

DR JELENA GODJEVAC – INTERSECTION.CH



“I believe that a school with successfully integrated new technologies offers the basis necessary for the education of the future members of our society.”

Prof. Francesco Mondada, EPFL

Do you know who was Ibn Khaldun? Let me write a few words about him. He was born in 1332 in Tunisia in a rich family. He benefited from the best educational institutions of his time; he became a historian, politician, and philosopher. Today he is considered as a father of modern economy.

At one point of his life, Ibn Khaldun retired into the desert to think about human communities. He wrote several books and established four rules that should be met in the same place and at the same time in order to reach economical growth. You can apply these rules to your country, your community or your family...

They are:

- stability of political institutions
- respect of human life
- respect of private property, and
- stimulation of innovation

The first three conditions describe a legal, peaceful state or community. What about innovation? How do we introduce it, how do we stimulate it? There are a lot of ways and a lot of resources on the Internet invite you to innovate and give recipes how to do it. We will only talk here about stimulating children's innovative thinking and problem solving capacities. Aren't schools the best place to achieve this goal?

Currently, schools undergo a revolution, starting to implement technological tools for classrooms, most of which being considered as bringing innovation to education. Interactive white boards, iPads, computers, tablets, interactive beamers, serious (and less serious) games, robots, and applications... How to make a choice? Which tool for which methodology and which learning outcomes? How to train teachers to use and integrate all of these tools in their everyday practice? How to evaluate the impact and the effectiveness of these tools? How to ensure parents that all these changes will make their kids happy and motivated to learn?

In this article we will shed some light on what robotics can bring to education.

Let's be clear from the beginning: there are no studies demonstrating scientifically that robotics improves learning outcomes and we will not pretend to make one. All considerations in this article come from the author's experience.

Robot are everywhere: in our kitchens, living rooms, and bathrooms. Recently they entered our childrens' classrooms. While few entered with their wheels or legs, most "robot-like" systems now use screens, cameras, sensors, keys, motors, etc.

One of the best-known educational robots is the LEGO mindstorm. It allows kids to assemble their own robot: it can be a humanoid machine; it can look like a spider, a tank or a snake. Every child can express his own creativity and programming can be very fun. There are lots of robot competitions all over the world. Students' teams should design and build robots, program them, test and show how their machines can solve a given challenge set on a table or how they can play soccer. Judges value creativity and quality of the solution, but also the engineering design, aesthetics, successful presentation and team spirit.

Thymio®, from EPFL, is a robot designed for kids from 3 to 18 years old. It has a large number of sensors and motors, an expressive interactivity based on light and touch, and a programming environment featuring graphical and text programming. An incredible number of creative solutions may be implemented, in a compact, robust, and affordable kit. Kids can learn how sensors and motors work, how to program for solving problems, and understand how a machine interacts with the environment. They may even discover how colors are composed!



Humanoid robots such as NAO® inspire kids, capture their attention and promote individual and group work. NAO allows verbal, tactile, and visual interactions and can be programmed in several different languages. It is an excellent tool to approach engineering sciences to kids and to stimulate their computer literacy.

Robots bring individualized learning and creativity into classrooms. They get away our kids from screens with useless computer games and show them how real systems work. They are great tools to learn physical phenomena, engineering, computational thinking, signal processing, computer literacy and complex problem solving. They can be powerful tools to strengthen self-confidence and increase social skills. Why social skills? Because often, robotics project require varied skills and are team works.

With robots, students' teams learn how to share roles and work together, how to communicate efficiently, how to spot problems, analyze them, break them into smaller ones, propose solutions, evaluate them, and finally how to realize their solutions on real machines. Very often, these solutions require the application of mathematics and physics as well as some programming knowledge. Robot challenges and projects, as well as competitions stimulate teamwork, collaboration, social and presentation skills and self-confidence.

Integrating robotics into the teaching process means stimulate the cognitive process defined by the Bloom's taxonomy at all levels: remembering, understanding, application, analyzing, evaluating and creating. All these levels are necessary steps in a teaching process. Robots in classroom bring challenges to teachers. They should adapt their academic program, their attitude with students and the way they evaluate

students' performance. Teachers should accept that they are not any more a sage on a stage; they should become guides on the side. This can be a very enriching experience, which enlarge their own competencies.

We strongly believe that the introduction of robotics into classrooms can stimulate learning and innovation skills, boost creativity and complex problem solving. It brings also IT literacy, computational thinking and technology skills. All of these are necessary tools of future innovators.

However, technological tools remain only an enabler in the whole picture. They have little impact without the emotion and enthusiasm that only the teacher can bring to his / her class. This ability to vary supports, to provoke discussions, ask the right questions, stimulate creativity and to generate interest remains key for a successful teaching and learning.



More information

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Netball – giving girls that fearless edge

VICTORIA KNIGHTS – DIRECTOR/COACH AT SKILLS N SPORT NETBALL CAMPS



After coaching in International schools and running netball camps in Switzerland with her company Skills n Sport, Victoria Knights looks in to the impact that sport has on a child's development and future potential both on and off the court.

Choosing a school for your child is a very important decision. When you add moving countries, and the possibility of it only being a short term move, it can become an even more daunting task. However when adding moving countries and the possibility of it only being a short term move it can become a daunting task. How will your child settle in to a new culture? Will the culture shift make it difficult to re-integrate? International schools have recognised this dilemma, by offering many different academic qualifications that can complement short-term attendance and the requirements needed for the different universities around the world. What else do international schools do to integrate students into the school life which eases the transition?

Fancy a game?

According to the Swiss Academy for Development, 'physical activity and playing together encourages teamwork, promotes self-esteem and improves communication skills.' Sport has always been a great way to make friends and to connect with a new community – a group of people from different backgrounds sharing a common interest. Relocate Magazine recognises the importance of sport in the settling of children and families in their new school and home, with it being a priority for international schools to 'have a sports programme that is particularly attuned to the wider needs of relocating families'.

Netball and sport provides confidence to compete, determination to follow our dreams and the means to settle into a new environment quickly and confidently.



Introducing 'home' sports into International schools adds continuity to the child's education, development and social network. Eddy Schlachter (Sports Manager at ACS Cobham) has seen the benefits of maintaining a wide range of sports for the varied nationalities – 'it gives students the chance to get into a familiar routine by picking up sports they enjoyed playing in their home country'.

Sport can bring reassurance when everything else has changed. On arriving at a new school, joining a familiar sports team can help build confidence and form new friendships making their move easier to adjust to. Many schools in Switzerland are now embracing the traditional British/Commonwealth sports such as Rugby, Hockey and Cricket – the staple sports of the schools in UK, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa.

Whilst the new sports being introduced are still weighted in favour of the boys, one of the most exciting British/Commonwealth sports fast gaining popularity, momentum and success in Switzerland and the International schools is Netball.

Sisterhood in Sport - Building confidence and resilience in girls

Netball is a fast, exciting, true team sport which involving running, jumping, throwing and catching - with seven players per team, with each player having their own role and responsibilities. As a predominantly female sport, any girl who has grown up in the UK, Australia or New Zealand will remember netball being a key part of their introduction to sport in school.

And it's clear that it helps. Helen Fraser (Chief Executive of the Girls School Day Trust in the UK) believes that 'girls should take part in competitive sport to build confidence and resilience'. Netball is the perfect sport for girls to be part of a team, to lead, take on roles and responsibilities as well as to prepare, strategize and analyse.

In fact an Ernst & Young report 'has linked women in senior management positions to experience with sports, finding that 96 percent of the highest ranking female executives played sports, 55 percent of them at university level' and Fraser reports that 'high proportions of female executives believe sports made them more disciplined, resilient and competitive in their careers'.

Playing netball enhances decision-making, leadership and goal setting skills. Within the netball team, each player has their own role and area of the court within to work – each position determined by the strengths of the player – similar to that of the work place. It encourages the girls to work together as no one player can dominate and win the game – a pure team sport. It is the perfect arena for girls to be competitive and learn how to come back from defeat. Within the classroom, girls have long demonstrated that they are capable of achievement and success – but this is a more controlled environment – put in the work, learn the material and you will succeed. Within sport, girls learn that sometimes there is someone out there who can outperform you on the day, and they learn how to reflect, regroup and come back stronger.

It can only be a good thing, therefore that this exciting sport is spreading its influence in Switzerland. Through my own experience in coaching in some of the international schools and running several Summer Camps in the country, it has been remarkable to see the development of the girls – both individually and as a group. Their communication skills improve as does their confidence, new friendships emerge and they fall in love with a game that they can play in Switzerland, when they return home and or when they leave for University. Therefore, through Skills n Sport netball camps and clinics we want to provide the girls with a fun and exciting new approach to sport and we believe netball is the perfect game.

It gives them 'the chance to be active, to be a leader, to be part of a team, to win, to lose, to make mistakes, to learn from them, to make friends and most of all to be the best they can be.' Fraser outlines that 'the barriers to women progressing in the workplace isn't that they don't win the race, it's that they don't even make it to the starting line as they lack the confidence and courage to compete'. Netball and sport provides confidence to compete, determination to follow our dreams and the means to settle into a new environment quickly and confidently. We want to inspire and encourage as many girls to love the game and for girls to be confident and equipped to stand on that starting line.



Time to get involved?

Skills n Sport are holding some netball 'Learn the Skills, Love the Game' sessions in November, as well as Easter & Summer Camps. Please visit www.skillsnsport.com/netball-in-switzerland.html to book on to this session or for more information contact Victoria via victoria@skillsnsport.com – we look forward to meeting more future netballers soon.



More information

There are also netball clubs running across Switzerland – to find your local clubs and for ways to get involved just visit www.netballswitzerland.ch



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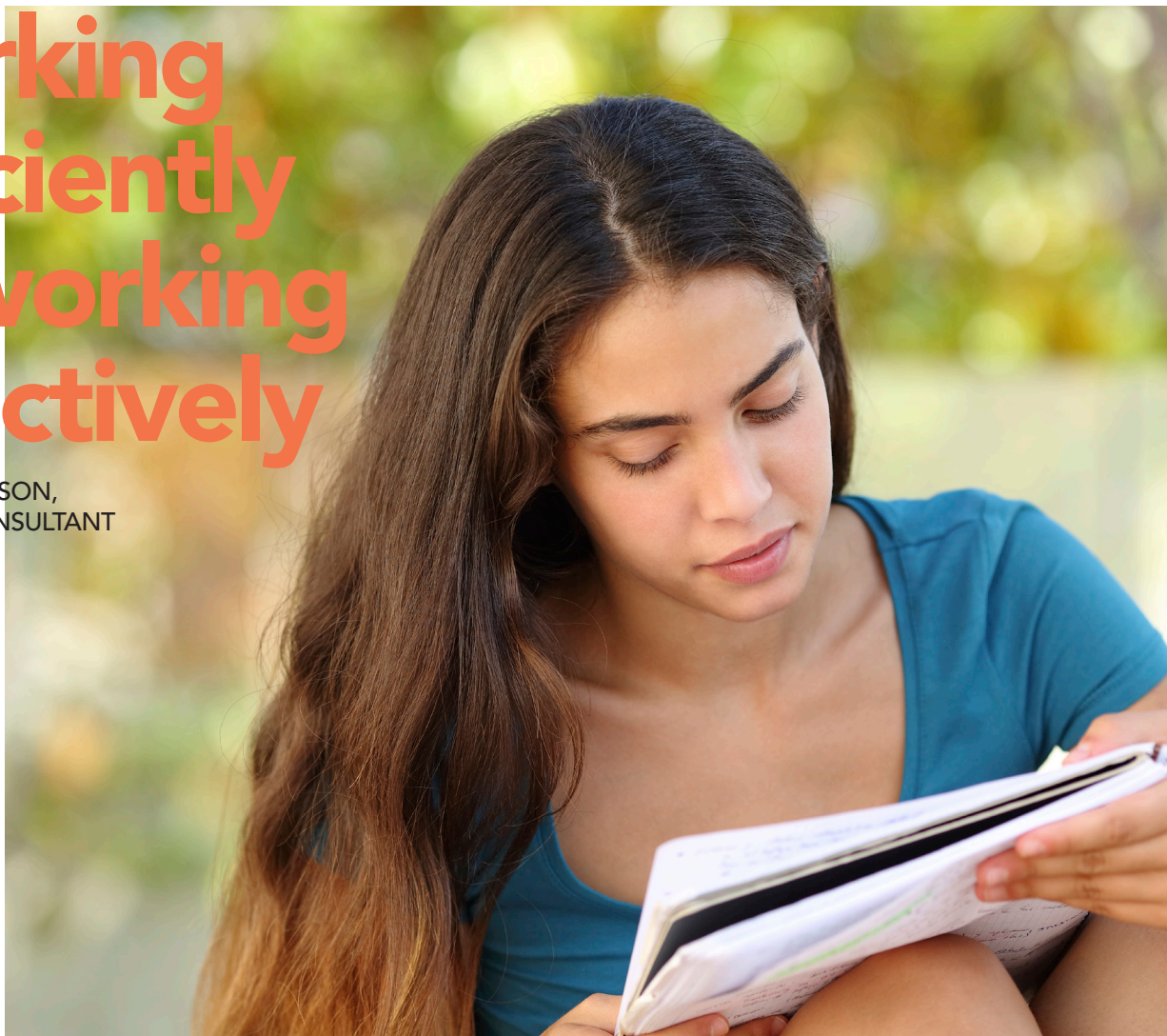
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Working efficiently vs working effectively

SABINE HUTCHESON,
EDUCATION CONSULTANT
AT TUTORSPLUS



Applications in education

Why do we go to school? Past the age of twelve, asking this question is just not socially acceptable. However, if we contemplate it seriously, we come to pertinent questions, such as what we actually want to get out of our education system. Do we want our children to work effectively, no matter what the personal cost, and come out with the best grades they can achieve? Or do we want them to work efficiently in order to develop interpersonal, transferable skills?

In education, it is hard to separate working effectively from working efficiently. Many students, and probably even more parents, are purely concerned with the final results, the exam grades that will open doors to universities, scholarships, funding and later on prestigious careers. A student, however, who has used his time efficiently, who has applied the study skills that are most helpful him- or herself, can only but achieve his or her full potential.

Building on strong foundations – primary school

In the early stages of education, different systems put more or less emphasis on grades. The French evaluate children's work from day one with number grades. Working towards a particular result against a specific benchmark certainly provides a strict framework and a sense of motivation, albeit external to the student. The Swiss have changed their mind several times about grading at primary school but they have consistently given efficient study skills a major place in the programme. The Swiss, indeed, favour the self-discovery approach, teaching children to manage their class and home work by themselves, for them to make more efficient use of their own time. They believe that, by providing children with the right foundation, they will achieve grades that will reflect their true potential, and determine their future academic success.

The English and international systems, on the other hand, focus on equipping primary school children with a skills set that they can use across the curriculum. Finding each student's learning style is part of the programme and this helps students approach their homework more efficiently and, as a result, learn more efficiently too.

Motivation through grades

Working for a better grade, no matter what it takes, can have its benefits. An optimal result fulfils the whole point of getting a diploma. The student also demonstrates that he or she has acquired the necessary knowledge. Working all hours before an exam, cramming it all in at the last moment, coupled with learning only the essentials to pass, can be effective methods to obtain a desired result. Some teachers may adopt the latter attitude, too, especially with students who struggle to retain information. There is nothing wrong with pulling out all the stops and keeping to the essentials to get someone to pass. On the contrary, sometimes their future hinges on one grade. IB students know only too well the pressure of getting a minimum total for the university of their choice and one of their weaker subjects can make all the difference between overall success or failure.

Working effectively in education certainly can help achieve the desired grades, but students must beware of the downside of focusing on the end result only. Students are unlikely to retain information beyond the exams. They also miss out on the process of reflection, which helps them develop their analytical skills. Employers do not always seek candidates who have top marks. They sometimes favour individuals who have a broader range of skills that they have hopefully developed throughout their school career.

However, employers still consider top grades as part of their selection tools. More often than not, high achieving students also have the soft skills developed over time and can probably demonstrate efficient as well as effective work habits.

Transferable skills

At TutorsPlus, we have seen countless students request a tutor because they thought they could not access the curriculum. It often transpires that they simply need guidance in finding the right studying routine for them. The reason they are not taught this in class is because it is such an individual matter. Teachers can only address so many ways of learning in a class of twenty.

A student working with the best intentions is not always working efficiently. They may be spending too long on memorising data or writing essays because they are lacking techniques. They will still be able to achieve good results, but they will have suffered from stress or fatigue and missed out on enjoying learning or developing other skills.

Study skills make for efficient time management and exam preparation. They ensure that information acquired will be retained. Study skills also teach young people to deal with other situations they are likely to encounter in the work place and, therefore, are invaluable transferable skills that makes them strong candidates for their chosen careers. Working efficiently as a student means planning, time managing, working with others in sharing tasks and sometimes delegating, problem solving, analysing data, summarising and presenting information effectively, communicating, and many others.

A whole package

It should come as no surprise that top grade students are also the most efficient workers. In education, great results are the fruit of hard labour but also of effective learning skills, honed to suit an individual's needs and preferences. Successful students make efficient use of these skills, which sets them off in life with a solid set of tools they have practised and the grades to prove their worth.

Being effective is no guarantee of being efficient, but working efficiently inevitably leads to an effective result. This, at least, should be the motto in every classroom. Parents, teachers and tutors must encourage their children and students to develop a good work ethic so as to acquire the skills, as well as the grades, that will lead them to a successful career.



More information

Visit www.tutorsplus.com to find out more about their education consultancy, tuition service, special needs support and intensive IB Revision and SAT/ACT Prep courses.

Learning: beyond the classroom experience

BY SARAH FREI, BRILLANTMONT INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL, LAUSANNE

Those lazy summer days are now a distant memory as across the country, thousands of children settle down into the new term. For some, their sights will be firmly fixed on their end of year diplomas, which promise to open a new chapter in their lives. For others, the new school year brings well-intended resolutions - handing homework in on time, becoming more organised. Amidst this academic frenzy, let us not forget that learning does not simply take place in the classroom.

Extra-curricular activities play a crucial role in a young person's development, whatever their age. For many, they provide the opportunity to try out new activities, something which they might never have had the chance to do previously. For others, they offer the possibility to take something further, to turn an interest into a passion.

In Swiss public schools, most such activities are organised out of school, by the parents, resulting in hectic schedules for frazzled parents as they dash across town, taxiing their children around. Thankfully, in private schools things are very different. Indeed, part of their appeal is down to the fact that they offer an incredible array of activities, sometimes during lunch times but usually after school.

Younger children should be encouraged to try out lots of new things so they get to discover what they like best. Whilst they should be encouraged to persevere for the duration of a course, if by the end of the programme, your son has decided to forsake the recorder in favour of the soccer field, let him do so. If a child comes home from school with a long list of clubs that he/ she has signed up for, why not? As long as with parental support, they can organise their school work and time effectively, let them sign up for things. We should encourage their creativity and curiosity, particularly at a young age.

By the time a child hits High School age, they may well have found their passion and instead of signing up for everything going, prefer to focus on one or two activities, developing expertise each year. For some however, their increasingly demanding academic schedule may lead them to consider dropping a once much-loved activity, as friendships and relationships take centre stage. We should encourage them to pursue a non-academic interest since at this busy time in their development, extra-curricular activities offer a crucial outlet from their busy lives; time to do something different, for fun, without the pressure of grades.





Across the region, we are lucky to have private schools with a huge array of opportunities. Although it is the school which organises them, parental attitudes are key here. Vast evidence states that universities are looking not only for academically able candidates, but also candidates who are active beyond the classroom. The pressure on young people to stand out from others thanks to their extra-curricular CV is immense. Activities such as Model United Nations or Habitat for Humanity offer life-changing opportunities to develop skills of leadership, team work and cultural awareness. They certainly provide transferable skills, which could appeal to university admissions officers. “Extra-curricular activities can provide proof of successful time management skills and a strong work ethic.” (UCAS)

Yet, parents should be careful not to knock other apparently less “useful” activities. Maybe synchronised swimming never appealed to you, but perhaps your son is truly motivated and at least, enthusiastic, so shouldn’t you let him try? Every activity offers useful life-skills – in this case perseverance, working together, the importance of trying.

For certain sports, such as rock climbing, parental reticence is easy to understand. The afternoon that your daughter spends clinging to a rock face as she makes her way up a via ferrata, is likely to pass by very slowly for you. Despite the rigorous safety procedures in place, you can’t help thinking of the “what if” scenarios. Sometimes, parents need to step very clearly out of their own comfort zone if instead of anxieties and phobias, they want to foster trust and a “can-do”, empowering attitude.

There’s a whole range of creative, sporting, humanitarian, musical, leadership and just plain quirky experiences out there for grabs. Make sure your child doesn’t miss out on these great opportunities and above all, on the fun.



More information

At Brilliantmont, the range of extra-curricular activities includes:

Model United Nations (Singapore and the Hague); Habitat for Humanity; School Rock band; Vocal Club, individual instruments, drawing, photography, cooking, drama, Zumba, pilates, trampoline, swimming, volleyball, basketball, football, tennis, fitness, rugby, badminton, climbing, dance, unihockey, yearbook, yoga, trapeze, horse-riding, ping-pong

The use of theatre in education

BY DEAN A W MARRIOTT - DIRECTOR OF THE WORLD LANGUAGE LEARNING CENTRE - GEMS WORLD ACADEMY ETOY

Theatre has always played an important role in society. From the Dionysia festival in ancient Athens to the modern day Edinburgh Fringe Festival in Scotland, theatre has been used not only to entertain but also to educate, influence and mould the opinions of the audience.

The first ever known Theatre in Education (TiE) company was founded in 1965 at the Belgrade Theatre in Coventry, England. The company used theatrical performance and drama workshops to explore issues of cultural, social, political and moral significance for local schools and young people. Word of this pioneering work soon spread throughout the UK and overseas, inspiring like-minded practitioners to set-up similar theatre companies and benefitting millions of young people globally.

As this year marks the 450th anniversary of Shakespeare's birth, I thought it appropriate to start looking at the role of theatre in education by talking to the Education department of the UK's Royal Shakespeare Company. I asked Sophie Hobson, Student Programme Developer at the RSC, about her involvement in theatre in education and why she believes it is important.

"After graduating from East 15 Acting School, I started to work for many different companies as an Education Associate Practitioner. This allowed me to travel the world and work in various educational structures that were both challenging and enlightening. I went to Singapore with the Kevin Spacey Foundation and found the facilities on offer to the students overwhelming, and similarly went to inner-city London schools with the Old Vic and found the apathy amongst staff frustrating.

I think the transformative power of drama and theatre is something that you can't fully understand until you have witnessed it. I have seen students who have been selective mutes actively engage and speak in workshops. I have witnessed apparently 'hard to reach' students become part of a team and work with students and teachers as an equal.



Courtesy of Freshwater Theatre Company and Photographer James Clarke

I tend not to ask or want teachers to tell me who the difficult students are before entering a room as more often than not these students don't display any of these attributes when working actively in a drama setting.

Prior to joining the RSC, I was the Youth Theatre Director and Community Engagement Manager at Polka Theatre and worked with many disadvantaged communities. I believe strongly that if you don't introduce children, young people and members of the community that might not feel theatre is on offer for them to the excitement of live theatre then theatre will die and no longer exist. This is the audience of the future and without them we won't have a theatre.

At the RSC, I create and deliver programmes of work for students alongside all the plays we have on offer here. Shakespeare holds different challenges, we have a manifesto here which states:

- See it live
- Start it earlier
- Do it on your feet

This relates to Shakespeare but I feel it can be easily applied to theatre in general. I know I am shaping an audience for the future and I couldn't think of anything better to do with my time!"

Today, Theatre-in-Education companies can be found all over the world and offer productions and workshops across all curriculum subjects.

When I was living in London, I had the pleasure of working as an actor with Helen Wood and Carol Tagg, the founders of Freshwater Theatre Company. Freshwater reaches in excess of 100,000 children every year and has become one of the most respected and established Theatre-in-Education companies in the UK.



Recently, I spoke with Helen Wood about the philosophy behind Freshwater.

“Both Carol and I were primary school teachers and so we got to observe TIE companies coming into our schools where we taught. I particularly saw several when I did supply teaching. However, I never felt that the quality or the attention to detail was very strong. I felt something much better could be created – that was fun and engaging as well as having rigorous research behind the factual information. That we would be providing what the teachers wanted.

When Freshwater was getting established the new national curriculum had just got going and so we made it an aim to closely support the learning objectives in the curriculum. We started with history as we felt that this subject would lend itself most easily to drama activities. Now that we cover all subjects in the primary curriculum, including maths and science, we realise how versatile drama is and that any subject can be brought to life by its use.

The benefits of using theatre in education are evident and the results speak for themselves. There can also be a serious side to theatre in education.



Courtesy of Freshwater Theatre Company and Photographer James Clarke



Photograph courtesy of Lucy Barriball at the Royal Shakespeare Company



Photograph courtesy of Lucy Barriball at the Royal Shakespeare Company

When I observed other TIE companies I hated seeing teachers being put on the spot by the performers, which happened a lot – cheap laughs from their humiliation. I knew that needed to be avoided. But we always knew that the work we created had to be very interactive for the children – never just passively sitting and watching a performance but being completely immersed and part of it.

Carol and I both share a love of the power of drama – to give confidence, to inform, to excite, to inspire, to allow self-expression, to provide a platform for communication. On several occasions we have had feedback from schools saying that a very introverted child has spoken for the first time in a drama workshop or show. Carol still loves being fully hands on and performing the shows to this day. I'm happy to use my creativity with Freshwater in developing and writing the new activities."

The benefits of using theatre in education are evident and the results speak for themselves. There can also be a serious side to theatre in education. Subjects such as drug abuse, road safety, bullying and drink driving are often themes for TIE shows and workshops. I asked actress, Sarah Fletcher, about her experience in this field.

"Too much Punch for Judy was a play that I performed in which examined the consequences of drinking and driving. It was aimed at 16 -18 year olds. I did enjoy the play but mostly the workshops after. It was pretty hard hitting for some and I remember certain times when pupils would need to leave the room as they were quite affected by the content. I guess I was left with the positive feeling that T.I.E had made some impact, as I'm confident those students affected were highly unlikely to drink and drive in their lives.

I believe that theatre in education is valuable, providing you have the opportunity after a performance to evaluate the learning. A play and workshop should go hand in hand, giving an opportunity to engage further and discuss the issues being presented in an open style forum."

Today teachers have a vast range of resources to hand to stimulate learning in the classroom. However, there is no substitute for real life. Using theatre companies to bring subjects to life in the classroom gives the students the opportunity to fully engage with the reality of the situation; no matter how uncomfortable the subject matter may be. Often actors are cast who have first-hand experience of the situation being explored.

Live theatre stimulates, challenges and provokes unexpected reactions. That's where the excitement is, not only for the teachers and the students, but also for the actors.

As a language teacher and actor, I have witnessed how young people thrive on engaging with actors performing in a foreign language. When I toured in Italy and Germany with the Italian theatre company, The Playgroup, who perform in English, I was amazed by the level of concentration shown by students of all ages during the performances, and the achievement so obviously felt by them when they realised that they could understand the show delivered by native English speakers. Preparation is always the key and educational packs, including essential vocabulary, were always provided to support the teacher as part of the subject preparation.

Theatre in Education has certainly helped to shape my career path and influenced the way I teach languages. I, for one, am grateful for the inspirational work of the Belgrade theatre back in 1965.

I conclude this article with reference to the Belgrade Theatre's publication, Theatre in Education: Building on our Heritage, where Justine Themen, Associate Director – Community & Education comments, 'We are very proud to be the home of the Theatre in Education movement. It is a movement that continues to provide opportunities for thousands of children and young people across the world to become agents in their own learning; to have access to the imagination and creativity of theatre within their own schools; and to be asked to engage with issues and dilemmas in a way that values their voices and their opinions.'



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Music in education

AN INTERVIEW WITH SARAH PRALONG -
DIRECTOR OF KEY ENGLISH SCHOOL

Sarah Pralong, director and founder of Key English School (part of ASC Education Group) has always been a huge advocate of music in education. As the mother of two lovely girls aged 7 and 8, she has seen the benefits that music and performing have brought to her own children, as well as her students. In a recent conversation about the merits of children learning music, Sarah quoted the view of music education specialist Cheryl Lavender that, “The fact that children can make beautiful music is less significant than the fact that music can make beautiful children”. In other words, music should be inclusive and accessible to all children, regardless of their level or natural ability, because of the amazing benefits it brings in all areas of their development and education.

Q: How is music a part of your own children's lives?

A: Both my girls love to sing and dance. When they told me they wanted to take piano lessons, it was a challenge for my husband and I to fit it into their (and our!) schedules. Not only that, initially the lack of practise that the girls were doing gave us another thing to have to nag them about. We have therefore had to experiment with how to get the most enjoyment out of music and dance. Now, I've found that either weekly (one-off for an hour with no commitment of extra work at home) or sporadic (during school breaks) activities work best. These sessions are fun for everyone and require no extra stress at home. Obviously there are tremendous benefits for some people to stick to strict practice schedules and studying the academic side of music. However,



our approach is really about integrating music into family life in a way that works for our children and our schedules. Lilly does more theory as she likes drawing the notes, whereas Elia is happier playing pieces from her favourite film, 'Frozen', on the piano. Everyone is happy with this democratic approach!

Q: How have you been inspired by music in designing this year's programme at Key English School?

A: Music plays an integral role in Key English School courses and camps and we are always keen to find new ways to engage children and young adults. We have found that our English and dance courses were so popular with both boys and girls that we are opening another week over in October. Our dance lessons are always inspired by the need to introduce students to different cultures, which means we teach dance inspired by Indian and African cultures, as well as Jazz and musicals.



We have also developed a programme aimed at teenagers after I visited an exhibition to see young, dynamic DJs promoting their lessons. We are holding a session in October for teenagers to learn how to mix their own music. This is exactly how music should feel - experimental, different and cool, and this is a great way to get teenagers involved.

Q: Different aspects and types of music appeal to children of different ages. How do we keep them interested?

A: The success or failure of a child learning and enjoying an instrument often depends to a large part on the enthusiasm and dedication of the teacher. It is very important for the children to feel inspired and encouraged, as well as having a great example of a something to aim for. This is something that we focused on a lot when we were putting together our courses - the classes were nothing without the strong personalities and credentials of the teachers behind them.

When I met both the DJs and our dance teacher, I just knew the whole concept would work and appeal to students.

- **Let Them Choose a Fun Instrument.** While we may have preconceived ideas about which instruments our children should play, we should always remember that they are the ones who must feel motivated enough to practice and play it, hopefully for years to come. If children are drawn towards a particular instrument, this should be embraced and they should be encouraged to take it up.
- **Kids Want to Play Music They Like.** This is essentially the same principle – children are more likely to practice their instruments if they are playing music they can relate to. Although some children may enjoy playing classical music, many find it overly challenging and culturally alien. It can be incredibly satisfying for children to learn how to play their favourite pop songs or film score. If this gets them playing music, it doesn't matter about the genre!
- **Start with Songs, Not Scales & Rudiments.** To engender a love of music in children, it is important that it doesn't feel like a chore, or an extension of their homework. Scales, arpeggios and other formal practices are clearly an excellent way to instill a disciplined approach to learning an instrument, but make sure these are mixed up with some entertaining songs, tunes and melodies, which are often more memorable.
- **Learn Alongside Them.** There are many benefits to this approach – it is obviously great to pick up a new skill (if you can find the time!), but it also it helps avoid a gridlock, when your child is finding practice too difficult, yet is not seeing the teacher for another week. It can also be very fun to create a family band or small concert if there are other siblings, or even cousins and friends around learning at a similar pace. Group learning encourages children, is more enjoyable and often the fear of being left behind can be a great motivator!

Q: From what I know of your children, at least one of them is a natural born performer. As a teacher and a mum, what are your thoughts on giving kids the opportunity to show what they can do?

A: At the end of every week at Key English School music and dance camps, we put on a short (15 minute) show. Over the years a lot has changed about the programme, but the show has always remained and it has been the children who have been motivated to keep it going. They love being on stage, whether they are singing in a group, dancing in pairs or acting out some lines. The performance gives them the opportunity to showcase their talents and something to improve for. They love their one minute of fame!

Q: Other than simply learning to play music, sing or dance, what other benefits have you seen children gaining from music at school and through activities outside of school?

A: Mostly it is great to see how the children grow in confidence through practising and performing and also develop new friendships through the different groups that they have joined. It is always nice to see children who are just plain happy!

In general, learning music improves children's time management and organisational skills because of the rhythm of regular lessons, concerts, orchestra sessions and practice timetables. This very much helps to instill a sense of responsibility in children. On many levels, playing music is a sociable activity that boosts team skills and helps children understand the capabilities of others by accommodating those they are playing with. Equally, when children see the joy their playing brings to others around them (the audience, for example), it is extremely exhilarating for them. The dedication and long-term investment required to learn an instrument teaches children a high level of perseverance and discipline – it is a real life demonstration of the saying 'you get out what you put in'. The sense of achievement can be huge if all goes well.

Physically and mentally, music improves hand-eye coordination and listening skills, sharpens concentration levels and also improves reading and comprehension, particularly through learning the theory behind music.

It is also a very good way to expose children to culture that they may not otherwise explore and foster self-expression in them. Music often provides an outlet for stress, particularly as children become more involved in playing (although we are the first to admit that battles between parents and children over practice are not at all relaxing!).

Finding creative ways to help more children engage with music is incredibly important. As Cheryl Lavender highlighted, what children gain from music is often more important than the level they are playing at. So we should get our kids involved!



More information

You can visit the Key English School website at www.key-english-school.ch



On the 25th August 2014 we will be opening our Little Green House school in Tolochenaz with places for 15 children of the age of 4 to 7 years. At our school, the children learn in accordance with the canton's guidelines and at the same time benefit from the advantages of Little Green House.

We will convey to the children the joy of

learning in a playful way, taking as a starting point their curiosity and pleasure in learning and discovery.


At Little Green House the children have enough time to play and discover nature.

Learning in small groups will allow us to focus on the individual children, their needs and their level of development.

In the times before and after the lessons, during lunch breaks and in the holidays, the children can continue to be looked after at Little Green House.

The daily exposure to the three languages – English, French and German – will thus also extend beyond the daycare.

www.littlegreenhouse.ch

A piece of white lined paper with a red vertical margin line on the left. The words "school" and "news" are written in a black, cursive script. The paper is pinned to a solid pink background with a piece of white tape at the top center.

school
news

**The latest news from
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www.britishschoolgeneva.ch



Summer Fete

Our annual Summer Fête was held at the end of June and, like each year, was a great success. Students from both the Primary and Secondary programmes came with their families to play games, have their faces painted, win prizes and taste the delicious international buffet. BSG families, teachers and administrators enjoyed the chance for a chat and some fun in the summer sunshine.



Paris Trip

The Year 5 and 6 classes went on a 3-day residential trip to Paris in the summer term. The purpose of the trip was to support the whole-school Geography topic of France. We travelled to Paris by train and stayed at a PGL children's centre just outside the city. During our time there, we visited all the main tourist sites and took a boat trip down the River Seine. A fantastic time was had by all!



Graduation Ceremony

On a beautiful, early-summer evening, a Graduation Ceremony was held for the classes of 2014. Following an interesting and informative address by our honoured guest, Mr Emmanuel Bichet, Head of Human Rights Section, Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations, diplomas and awards were handed out to Year 11 students finishing their IGCSE and Year 13 students completing their A-Levels. Valedictory speeches and the overall feeling of joy, cooperation and pride were wonderful reflections of life at our school.

Principal Raji Sundaram would like to personally congratulate the graduating classes who achieved outstanding results in their exams.





COLLEGE
CHAMPITTET
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www.nordangliaeducation.com/our-schools/champittet



Autumn school outings

As every year, two weeks after the start of the new school year, Collège Champittet organises the traditional class outings. These trips allow students and teachers to get to know each other and to build a strong relationship. The younger students visited the Servion Zoo, the Bread Museum in Echallens or the Chillon Castle while the senior students spent a couple of days in the school's chalet "Les Martinets" in Plans-sur-Bex, where they made the most of nature with mountain walks to discover the area. Grades 6 and 7 students went to Fort de Pré-Giroud in Vallorbe where teachers and students, along with enthusiastic guides, visited the fort. These outings are much appreciated by both students and teachers and enable everybody to have a great start to the new school year!



MYP Sports Day

The sun shone down on us yesterday as our MYP students competed in the first sports day. The students participated in the UBS Kids Cup a competition which involved 3 different events, 60m sprint, 200g ball throw and the long jump. All the results then went into a National Data Base and 6 students were invited to the next round at the Canton Final in Oron. Well done to all the students who made the afternoon so enjoyable.



Oasis des Vétérans

On Thursday, 10th July, 10 MYP students took part in their second Service activity to L'Oasis des Vétérans, an animal shelter in the Canton of Fribourg. Students played with, cared for, learnt how to treat an injury and taught tricks to the older dogs at the shelter. Much fun was had and much useful learning happened despite the unusually cold and wet conditions!



GEMS World Academy ETOY INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

www.gemsworldacademy-eto.com

PYP Family Maths Night

The first annual PYP Family maths night was a success! Families gathered together to engage in a variety of maths games and problem-solving activities. Students started the evening with an estimation by guessing how many cubes were in the jar. We had two close guesses who were only 10 cubes off. Many great maths strategies could be seen throughout the evening as well as smiles and laughter!



Arts Festival: Weaving Threads

Our last Arts Festival of the year 'Weaving Threads' was a wonderful celebration of talent, passion and the arts. Following the success of the release of our immensely popular "Happy" film after the Sparkling Soiree (the second Arts Festival of the school year), the digital photography club are extremely proud to present, 'Jumpology' a tribute to the photographer Philippe Halsman.



World Scholar's Cup at GEMS World Academy-Etoy International

On Sunday 18th May GEMS World Academy-Etoy International School hosted the first ever round of The World Scholar's Cup in Switzerland. Teams of three from three schools in the region competed in an academic competition that challenged students' wit and creativity.

The theme of this year's World Scholar's Cup was "The World Within." It spanned across several major subject areas, with subcategories such as: "The History of Espionage," "Thoughtful Brain, Troubled Mind" and "The Science of Decision Making." Students competed in four major competitions including: collaborative writing, a multiple choice test, a debate and a game show, making for a rigorous yet exciting opportunity to learn, laugh and make new friends.

GEMS is no stranger to the World Scholar's Cup, having hosted regional rounds in its schools around the world over the years. However, this was an exciting opportunity for the newly established GWA-Etoy to engrain itself deeper within the local community. GEMS participants were thrilled to have been a part of the event and to receive an invitation to move to the second round in Singapore. We hope this first event will set a new precedent for more GWE students and more schools around Switzerland to come join in for the World Scholar's Cup next year.





GENEVA ENGLISH SCHOOL

British Education for International Children

www.geneva-english-school.ch

Speech day & Prizegiving

We were delighted to have Mr Thomas Grafton, Simply Theatre Co-founder and Director as Guest of Honour for our Speech Day and Prizegiving ceremony.



Sports Day 2014

Our traditional Sports Day has been again an outstanding success. Great sun, fun and food. And of course an amazing engagement of the GES community. Where else?



GES Fundraising Soiree

Enormous gratitude to our host Mrs Jane del Missier and to the organization team for such a wonderful soiree. Thanks to the GES community generosity, the new GES Learning Center will be a reality this fall.





New IIL Recording Studio

IIL has inaugurated its first Recording Studio. Primary and secondary students and their teachers are able to create sound and video recordings for school podcasts and film projects to enhance the teaching and learning in the classroom.

The studio is equipped with green, black and white screens, a 24-channel mixing board, microphones, film cameras, lights, iPad mounts and tripods. In short, just about everything a creative mind could possibly imagine.

IIL Ultimate Frisbee Club

Older Primary pupils in both sections at IIL are being introduced to a new sport!

Up until now, for most of them frisbee meant just throwing a disc around with a friend or two. Thanks to the weekly lunchtime club, they are learning to play Ultimate Frisbee, and finding out that there is a lot of speed and skill involved. Ultimate Frisbee is unique in that there is no referee. Players have to know the rules and are responsible for making their own calls on the field making this a great way for young pupils to learn about fairplay and sportsmanship.



Dragon Boat Festival on the Lac de Joux - IIL Paddles for Cancer

Two teams from IIL took part in the 2014 Paddle for Cancer Festival by the Lac de Joux, organised by the English Speaking Cancer Association (ESCA).

IIL pupils and friends won the mini regatta and our team of teachers and parents paddled with pizzazz throughout the day. The benefits of their combined efforts will go towards helping people living with cancer in the Swiss Romande area.



www.isbasel.ch



Team building for students...

For many ISB students, the first day of school was not actually spent at School! Instead, groups of students and teachers, organized by year levels, set off on excursions to different parts of Basel and its environs. Olympic events were staged at a nearby farm, a different side of Basel was appreciated from the deck of a boat, hikes took place in the local countryside and a range of swimming activities at various pools in the area completed the day for many.

...and team building for Staff!

Bedecked with floral garlands, the entire faculty of ISB gathered by a Swiss lake to enjoy a Caribbean-themed series of challenges designed to encourage cooperation, skill-sharing and camaraderie. For a large school such as ISB, spread over three campuses and with a growing staff and student body, the day provided a perfect opportunity for everyone to get to know and understand each other better. Hidden talents (salsa dancing, boat-building and beach volleyball to name but a few!) were revealed, bonds were strengthened and much fun was had in the process.

At ISB, the beginning of a new school year means getting to know each other, getting familiar with routines, and getting started on plenty of stimulating activities...

Bringing families together

The Welcome Committee is part of the ISB Parents' Association, and does a great job in providing support to new and existing families at the School through arranging activities such as trips, coffee meetings and social events.



Fun, food and friendship

After a summer where, unusually for Basel, it was wiser to pack an umbrella than a pair of sunglasses, it was a relief to all that the annual Back to School Barbeque – organized by the dynamic ISB Parents' Association – took place on a gloriously sunny day in early September. The unseasonable warmth of the weather was only exceeded by the warmth of the gathering, as new and existing ISB families connected with each other over a delicious burger and salad while children were entertained with games and music.

ECP – enhancing skills, fun and recreation beyond the timetabled day

The new School semester has only just begun, but already students, staff and parents are signing up to get involved in a wide range of Extra-Curricular Programme (ECP) activities – from soccer to saxophone, basketball to Bollywood, cooking to karate – there is bound to be something for everyone to try outside regular School hours

ISB – where Inspiration, Engagement and Collaboration come to life.





Our learning extends beyond the classroom and last term we enjoyed a whole range of special activities.

School camp

The whole school move up into the mountains to Ravoire above Martigny for an experience of camp. The Early Years visited for the day and the rest of the school stayed for 3-4 days. Building shelters, orienteering, climbing and a disco were the highlights!

Soirée evening

Years 3,4,5 & 6 prepare a Soirée evening for their parents showcasing Music, Poetry and individual instruments. This is a great opportunity for children to all participate with their own talents.

International Day

Our International Day is a real family event with International Dances, a whole school performance (this year with a World Cup theme) and food and activities from around the world. We really make the most of our wonderful grounds and all the family enjoy the Summer Fair atmosphere.

Balloon Release

A Balloon Release sends all the children off on the last afternoon of the school year. From the crèche children moving up to the school all the way through to our oldest pupils going to Secondary school, there are tears and cries of joy as the balloon rise into the sky!





**LA CÔTE INTERNATIONAL
SCHOOL**
A NORD ANGLIA EDUCATION SCHOOL

www.nordangliaeducation.com/our-schools/aubonne/

La Côte International School opens stunning new campus in Aubonne

On September 1st, La Côte International School (LCIS) opened the doors of its new campus in Aubonne and welcomed over 200 students and more than 50 staff. Set amidst the apple orchards and vineyards, the school draws on the environment for its inspiration and reinforces the values of a well-established, family-oriented culture. The purpose built facility was constructed using environmentally friendly techniques and materials. The campus supports the school's teaching style through the provision of modern technology, a breath-taking sports hall, an on-site theatre and the LCIS outdoor classroom project. 'The light and airy classrooms with views over the surrounding countryside, and equipped with the latest technology, will inspire our students' said Wendy Ellis, Principal of LCIS. 'We are thrilled to have moved in, following months of meticulous planning'. 'We are also delighted to be able to share these facilities with the community of Aubonne by hosting various local clubs and societies and look forward to expanding these links in the coming months and years'.



The Camp Experience

Each year La Côte International School (LCIS) organizes a series of camps for all of the school's secondary aged students (ages 11-17). These camps are scheduled early in the Autumn Term, in part to ensure that students who have recently joined LCIS are able to integrate quickly and can feel a sense of belonging in the school community. We offer a holistic residential camp program for students that both extends and enriches their school based learning. The program supports the school curriculum by offering a wide variety of experiences in a safe and secure environment. Over the course of a student's education at LCIS, they could attend up to eleven different camps in addition to an annual ski trip. We offer a camp program that has a variety of different locations both in Switzerland and other countries covers different curriculum topics evolves with the capability of the students provides value for money is a positive experience for the students.

About La Côte International School

Founded in 2008, La Côte International School is a co-educational, English language based, day school that welcomes over 200 students between the ages of 3 and 18 years old to our conveniently located campus between Geneva and Lausanne, Switzerland. Our international educational offer is built on the English National Curriculum in the Early Years & Primary and the International Baccalaureate Middle Years and Diploma Programmes in the secondary section. As part of the Nord Anglia Education family of 29 premium schools around the world, our outstanding team of over 50 professionals implements the High Performance Learning approach to teaching. This approach, combined with our culture of mutual respect, tolerance, care and support, ensures that every child can thrive.

The Nord Anglia Education family is growing. Supported by a team of experts and inspiring teachers, it now provides a premium education to more than 18,000 students around the globe. Our network of 29 international schools stretches from North America to Europe to the Middle East and Asia, with two more state-of-the-art schools launching in Hong Kong and Dubai in late-2014. We combine trusted curriculums with contemporary thinking and a global approach to learning.

Three Nord Anglia Education premium schools are based in Switzerland: Beau Soleil (Villars), Collège Champittet (Pully and Nyon) and La Côte International School www.nordangliaeducation.com

For further information please contact:

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T: +41 (0)22 823 26 26, M: +41 (0)79 768 79 56

Young Chefs

Everyone knows Middle Schoolers love to eat, but a group of TASIS students love to cook, too! The group spent an afternoon at Chef School Lugano making pizza and mini fried dough balls with tomato sauce and cheese. Though some students ended up with more tomato paste on their faces than in their food, the result was tasty for everyone.



Inspiring Young Explorers

This summer was the inaugural year of the TASIS Ecological Leadership Adventure Program which brought students from around the world together to challenge themselves physically and mentally via adventure activities exploring the Alps near Château-d'Oex. Designed by Martin Horn, the program is inspired by Horn's brother Mike's Pangaea Young Explorers Program. The program was so successful that next year's French and English language students will also have the option of joining in on the adventure activities. Read about this summer at www.telap.ch

TASIS Leaders Together

Six student ambassadors from TASIS and six from TASIS England joined together this summer for the inaugural TASIS Leadership Academy. After weeks of preparation through readings, discussions, and writing, the ambassadors met to explore historic and current leadership pathways focusing on the common good, diplomatic leadership, and entrepreneurship. Highlights included discussing national defense with British Member of Parliament Phillip Hammond, working with underprivileged youth in Portugal, and presenting solutions to real company challenges at Unilever.

Contemporarily Speaking

Vitra's Rolf Fehlbaum recently spoke to Architecture & Design and Economics classes. Mr. Fehlbaum is on the board of directors of the Basel company his father founded in 1950. His talk was inspirational as he recounted growing up in the midst of renowned designers Charles and Ray Eames, George Nelson, Verner Panton. TASIS A&D students travel to the Vitra Design Museum in Weil-am-Rhein, Germany in October and January to learn about contemporary design and architecture. www.tasisvisualarts.com



Global Service to Africa

In June, two groups of students traveled to Africa as part of the Global Service Program. One headed to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia to teach music, art, and English with Nuovo Fiore, a charity which builds and runs schools in the area. The Serving Africa group visited Mwandia, Zambia, building huts for the elderly and solar ovens to help reduce the use of charcoal. Last year, the Global Service Program took students to Cambodia, Malawi, Nepal, Romania, Hungary, and Kenya as part of TASIS's commitment to global service. www.tasis.ch/service



Where Henry Hudson and William Penn Meet

Every spring, TASIS 3rd graders work for weeks preparing presentations for their annual Wax Museum. Each student learns about a famous person in history and becomes that character during a special museum event, complete with costume, display board, and flags on lapels indicating languages they can use to present their knowledge to others.

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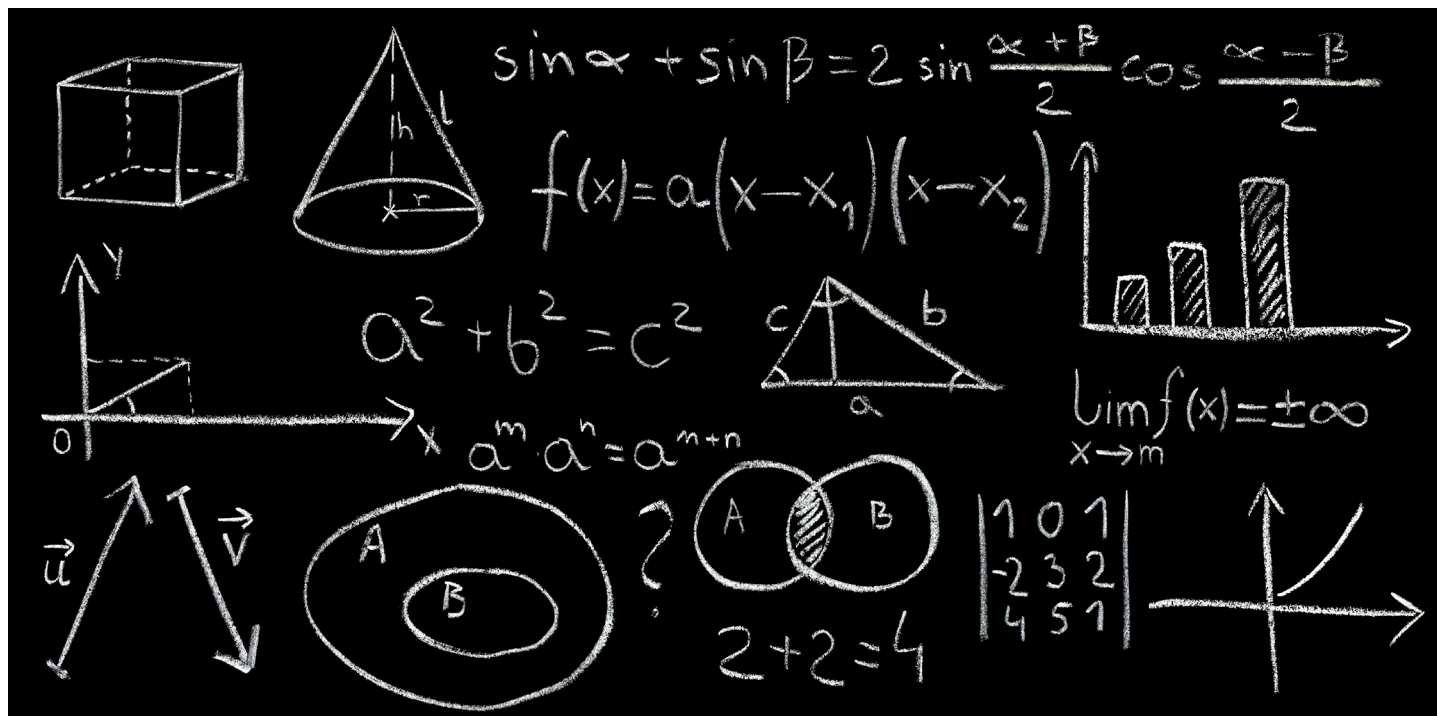
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Why does maths matter? Why learn maths?

BY QUINN CORNWELL – INDEPENDENT MATHS TUTOR



"Why are we learning this? We're never going to use it!"

This is one of the most common questions I hear from my students regarding mathematics, and I am quite sure most teachers have heard this at least once during their careers. Of course the question "Why are we learning this?" is not one generally posed out of curiosity, but rather out of boredom and/or frustration with the subject matter. I remember the first time a friend of mine decided to pose this question. We were in High School in a Grade 11 maths class and the question would lead to one of the most memorable events of my two years at that particular school. Our teacher in this case, normally a calm and relaxed man, exploded with fury, tossing out verbal blows at my friend. I don't quite remember the reasons he gave us for needing to know how to factor algebraic equations or how to find the probability of picking a red marble from a bag of assorted ones, but the memory always makes me think of the question. At that time, I experienced the question as a student via my friend, but these days I experience it from the side of a teacher. So although I do not remember the answer my teacher gave us, I do find myself thinking of the answer I would give, especially with regards to mathematics (specifically mid to high level mathematics). Why does it matter?

However, before we answer this question for our students and children, let us address this as parents and guardians. Why does it matter to you that your children learn mathematics? It is of no use simply telling your son or daughter that they will need maths one day, just to be faced with the respond "Ok, what do you use maths for?" How quickly you would perhaps find yourself looking back at them with a blank stare, trying to think of the last time you used trigonometry or algebra, let alone long division. So, unless you work in a job that is heavily maths dependant, you may have trouble answering the question yourself, for surely it seems silly and rather hypocritical to expect your children to learn something you yourself find rather irrelevant. Also, before you answer any further, remember the almost inevitable response, "But my smartphone can answer that". Touché. Why should I torture myself to learn something that technology can do for me? So, what are your reasons for wanting your children to invest time, effort, frustration, failure and success into learning mathematics? And how many of you secretly dread your son or daughter needing help with their 3D Matrices homework? But yet we do want them to learn maths, so let us look at why.



As a teacher and tutor, I am seeing more and more students at the junior high level taking basic mathematics and struggling with simple concepts. For example, I routinely tutor students aged 14-18 who cannot do basic percentages, fractions and even simple arithmetic. These are skills that should begin to develop from a very young age and early on in the school system. However, I find that not enough importance is placed on ensuring our children are actually developing these skills. This may, in part, be a consequence of a larger problem of the overall education system (a topic for another time), but surely it also says something about the value we place on learning basic mathematics. I often ask myself how it is possible that young adults are so ignorant of basic maths. I remember my parents helping me learn multiplication tables, basic fractions and mental maths. The fact that they were taking time to help me learn these things made me feel it was important. This is perhaps the first step, letting your children know from a young age that we as parents see basic maths skills as an important part of basic intelligence. If they start with a good foundation, they are more likely to catch on to the maths that is then introduced in junior high. At that point if they are having trouble, it is important to notice this and do something about it, because if they fall behind in junior high, they will have a very tough time in high school.

It is at this level that many students are beginning to stream themselves towards certain career paths, some requiring significant maths skills. Coming from an Engineering

background, I can honestly say, knowing maths will matter. I was in a room with over 200 other students when the Dean addressed the class and said "Look around you, over half of you will be gone by the time the second year starts." Such career fields push extremely difficult Mathematics to stream students out of first year programs, thereby shrinking class size and allowing teachers to focus on students that actually have potential to complete the degree. It is therefore a shame to see students shy away from a career choice because they are frustrated by maths, or have fallen behind early on and have thus never been able to establish a sound foundation on which to further their knowledge. This leads to the next but closely related issue regarding mathematics: maths is cumulative! If you don't learn the basics you will not be able to build on them, and will therefore struggle to learn any of the more advanced topics.

This may be a good time to differentiate between basic maths skills and high level maths. In my opinion basic maths constitutes arithmetic, order of operations, percentages, fractions and some very simple algebra. These are the types of things that allow one to give someone change, use measurements, figure out a discount on a sale item, properly use a calculator, and many other standard things we do everyday. Then we have advanced mathematics. This type of maths is what often triggers the question "Why are we learning this?" I can again take an example from my time spent at university getting my engineering degree.

I once had a university professor tell us that 90% of the maths we were learning would never be used once we left university, and that the point of it was to teach us how to work with complex data, problem solve, develop critical thinking and pay attention to detail (ex. a negative (-) sign in the wrong spot will give you an incorrect answer, and in an advanced equation there may be dozens of + and - signs). These are all skills very important to an Engineer! Being a teacher of mid to high level mathematics I completely share this opinion. The maths doesn't actually matter in many cases, it is the skills we learn by doing maths that are so important.

Curriculum is chosen to build skills in a variety of areas, to teach and test students on various topics and to increase abilities in pattern recognition, spatial construction and visualization. Students are able to create models, problem solve and use logic. Higher level maths encourages structured thinking, organizing data, and developing cognitive skills. Therefore, as a maths teacher I completely share my professor's view, as he once stated "he was not teaching us Calculus, he was teaching us how to think."

So the next time you hear a student or your child ask why does maths matter explain to them it's about understanding the basics, building on fundamental skills, and working to achieve a higher level of thinking. You cannot walk before you crawl.

And these fundamental skills are applicable in all career paths one may take. Would you like an Engineer to lack attention to detail when creating the pace maker that is keeping your loved one alive? And we as parents, educators and stakeholders must encourage this by example and by supporting them at a young age. There may come a time where you will not be able to help with advanced calculus or trigonometry but you will definitely be glad you've helped provide a mathematical platform for them to stand on.



More information

Quinn Cornwell, an independent maths tutor currently working out of the city of Basel, welcomes opinions and/or questions and can be contacted via email at quinn.cornwell@gmail.com

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For more information or an informal discussion please contact us.

Inclusive education; what does it really mean and why should you care?

BY STEPHANIE WALMSLEY - HEAD OF ACADEMIC SUPPORT SERVICES AT POLYCOURS

I bet that if you have taken enough interest to begin reading this article there is a good chance that you are a parent of a child in an international or private school and also a parent of a child who has some form of learning, social or emotional difficulty that affects their school and/or home life in some way or other. If you have a child who is experiencing difficulties at school, ensuring that they are being supported appropriately, fairly and consistently can be stressful, time consuming and costly. Whilst in the UK and US the push towards inclusive education settings really began to take pace in the 1990's, in the international private settings inclusive forms of education still remains ad-hoc, confusing for parents and usually very costly.



An article in the Financial Times (FT.com) last year, *Expat Life Sets Challenge for Families with Special Needs*, (Dec 4th 2013, Alicia Clegg), highlighted the plight and dilemma for international transient families who have a child with a learning disability. Finding an educational setting that will a/ take their child and b/ ensure high quality support and c/ not burden them financially, can still be extremely difficult. For many families waiting to accept posts in countries other than their home country, can mean splitting families up or having to play the waiting game whilst a suitable place is found for their child; of which can take months or even years.. yes I said years!

What does inclusive education actually mean?

Defining inclusion in itself is problematic because when we start to define inclusion we also begin to define exclusion and the dilemma of difference. This runs the risk of associated implications for labeling, stigmatization and exclusion of opportunities for our children. As parents we know how hard it is to hear or even to accept that our child has a difficulty and usually it is presented to us against of a background of institutional and educational norms.

During the 1990's, especially in the UK, there was a shift in terminology from 'integration' to 'inclusion'. 'Integration' implied the need for the child to adapt to the school programme or curriculum, whereas 'inclusion' meant schools and their curriculums had to adapt to meet the needs of the child. There was a direct shift towards schools adapting to meeting the needs of diverse learners. v. 'Diverse Learners', diversity embodies enrichment and encompasses uniqueness and equality, every child has the right to be treated on equal terms regardless. The world is a diverse place and human beings are unique, creating educational environments based on understanding diversity will better equip our children to embrace learning diversity as the norm and not as difference.

Successful schools engaging in high quality inclusive education are schools that manage to cohesively fuse educational excellence with equality and diversity. Inclusive schools can demonstrate that they have the means and ability to manage the full range of learning differences, from mild, moderate to profound or severe.

Inclusive schools recognize the need to collaborate with external services and agencies, not every school can or should provide therapy services but having the means to access these on or off site is essential.

"Inclusion is a process by which schools and others develop their cultures, policies and practices to include all students," *Special Educational Needs in IB Programmes, 2010, p.3*

Responsibility of schools towards inclusive education

In most schools, regardless of whether they are international or public systems, you would expect to find on average around



10% of the student population regardless of nationality, culture or gender to have mild additional learning needs, 2 to 3% will have moderate additional learning needs and approximately 1% will have profound or severe learning needs which would require intensive support systems. Most International or private schools will have some form of learning support systems in place to support these students in some form or another but the level and quality of support can vary dramatically between schools. Whilst having learning support teachers within a school to support students and teachers is ideal, it is also important that learning support does not replace good teaching practices and successful differentiation in the classroom to meet diverse learning needs.

Financial aspects of inclusive models of education

For most parents faced with finding the right educational setting and possibly therapy for your child in an international setting it usually means an additional financial burden. Most international and private schools will provide a form of support as part of the school fee, however if your child falls within the realm of moderate to severe need you may find that it is you that has to carry the financial burden of that support and therapy. Check with your medical insurance provider, many therapies can be reimbursed if the therapist is recognized by the insurance provider.

What should you look for when choosing a school for your child if they have learning difficulties?

The tour

The tour of the school is usually the first point when you will get a 'feel' for the school. Whilst walking around look for evidence of inclusive teaching and learning practice. Are the classroom doors open? Do teachers welcome you in during a lesson? How many adults are in the rooms whilst teaching is going on? Acceptance of other teachers, assistants or parents in the classroom is a good sign that teachers are confident and are using other specialists to support learning in the classroom. Can you see students working in groups, pairs etc. Are desks grouped together or in individual rows? Does the school have a happy atmosphere as you walk around?

Closed doors, silent corridors, students working isolated alone in a corridor or classroom can be warning signs...

Ask questions...

Learning Support Policy, request to see a copy of this or an inclusion policy. The LS policy is the key working document in the school related to the type of provision given by the school and will outline all procedures related to that provision.

Screening, does the school screen students prior to entry? Do not try to conceal or hide any assessments or previous therapy from a school, most schools have a 'get out' clause if you have not declared all information on your child's learning or therapy needs. It is in the interest of your child to declare and share all information.

Ask how many support teachers they have for learning support and language support and what percentage they work in the school.

What kinds of support is offered by the school and by external agencies;

- Short term booster groups in maths and literacy?
- English as an Additional Language or other language acquisition support?
- Pull out Intensive or one to one support?
- Pull out daily small group support?
- Push in and co teaching methods of class support?
- Classroom assistants or volunteer support?
- Assessment, ask how students needs are assessed, monitored and tracked?
- Evidence, what evidence can the school provide to show that the support they are providing is effective?
- External Agencies, does the school liaise and collaborate with external therapists or agencies to support students with therapy needs (psychologists, speech and language therapy and occupational therapy) or additional needs?
- How much professional development is dedicated to special educational needs and language acquisition on a yearly basis?
- Technology; how is technology used in the classroom to support students with additional learning and/or language needs?
- School Mission Statement; is the school doing what it says on the tin! The above questions will help you to decide that for yourselves.

Inclusion is a journey with a final destination we will never reach, but continually strive to arrive at.

Stephanie Walmsley is the Director of Academic Support at Institut Polycours, Lausanne. She is a highly experienced support teacher and educational consultant and has led and managed teams of teachers and therapists in programmes of support in international schools and the UK for many years. Stephanie and her team of teachers and therapists provide educational, professional development and therapy support to international schools, families and companies in the Lemman region.

Creating educational environments based on understanding diversity will better equip our children to embrace learning diversity as the norm and not as difference.



More information

If you would like further advice regarding school inclusion or special educational needs please contact Stephanie at **stephanie.walmsley@polycours.com**

Why will technology improve our children's education?

BY ECOLE EDEN

Technology today is changing our world and helping to shape our future. It has become standard industry practice to employ technology in order to boost productivity, output and streamline processes.

It is expected by most industries and businesses as it is commonly accepted that technology helps provide efficiency, speed and reliability when properly used. Yet, why is it so difficult to introduce technology to children early on? And how can education be improved by using technology both inside and outside the classroom?

The adoption of technology in education has been a real conundrum. Not too long ago teachers were afraid of adopting technology and some had even gone so far as to ban it from classrooms. Today teachers' minds are shifting and technology is slowly entering the classroom. This shift is extremely difficult as it means redefining instruction as a whole, redefining the goals of education and reinventing the roles of various stakeholders including directors, teachers, students and even parents.

Technology as opposed to conventional belief is not here to replace our teachers. Providing technology in schools does not insure that it will get used appropriately, or even that it will get used at all. Technology is a tool to support instruction, and if used properly technology has the ability to empower students by motivating, engaging and challenging them to achieve better results faster and with more accessibility than ever before. It is a tool, which can be used to provide better lectures, assessments and will help foster collaboration between teachers and/or students. It is important to understand that a student who has access to collaborate with other students from all across the globe will be able to enhance his or her learning process and be more engaged, and this is why at Ecole Eden, primary school in Geneva, we are promoting technology adoption in the classrooms.

But for technology to be successfully integrated, teachers have to accept a new role in the classroom. Teachers should no longer be mere lecturers disseminating their knowledge to their pupils, rather they should create a space for dialogue and become coaches who can support the learning experience of their students.



There is an emerging new pedagogical model called the flipped classroom, which has been adopted by Ecole Eden. This pedagogy encourages students to view their lectures (often in the form of a video) in their own time and at their own pace, while class time is devoted to:

Exercising and assessing as technology can provide teachers with feedback loops and real time dashboards to see who is stuck on what as well as personalize support.

Collaborative working to capitalize on one another's resources and skills

Project building as it is important to immerse the student in the learning process and help him learn by doing

Creating content for two main reasons firstly because the new content can then be shared for others to learn from but most importantly because when you create you take ownership of your learnings.

Teachers should no longer be mere lecturers disseminating their knowledge to their pupils



As Magali Wahl, director of Ecole Eden, believes that “any child who will find pleasure in their studies and embrace challenges can learn anything”, she has decided to introduce the flipped classroom model while keeping all the studying during school hours. Therefore Ecole Eden dedicates an initial ten minutes of each class session to teach new content, the rest of the session being devoted to apply and assimilate the new knowledge.

Every child is different, learns differently and at their own pace. At Ecole Eden, teachers utilize technology to personalize learning and adapt to the unique needs of individual students. For this to be possible it is important that teachers get the right training to understand that technology is here to support teachers rather than a substitute them, and to not be afraid to experiment with it.

With the rise of the internet knowledge has become ubiquitous, education through knowledge transfer from teachers to students and rote learning have become obsolete.

Technology is helping us move from a single direction knowledge transfer, teacher to student, to a tri-directional learning experience teacher to student, student to student and student back to teacher. The new goal of education is to immerse the student in a state of flow and teach them to solve problems, innovate and create. Education should no more be a passive activity but on the contrary, students should learn by immersing themselves and actively participating in the learning process.

This new pedagogy is such a mind shift that at Ecole Eden we believe it is important for the community as a whole to enter into a dialogue about the current state and future of technology in education, and therefore Ecole Eden has started a series of workshops open to all:

- Teachers who would be interested in learning how to better leverage technology in their classroom
- Parents to better understand the need for technology adoption and the benefits it will provide to their children's education
- Students from 6 to 12 years old can attend a one week vacation camp in order to immerse themselves in this new learning process and participate in workshops in which they will create new material

Ecole Eden hopes to set an example and measure the success of its new processes by the academic learning and progress of its students.



Top tips for a UCAS personal statement

BY HOLLY DIMES, CLIENT MANAGER, TUTORSPLUS

The Universities and Colleges Admissions Service, known as 'UCAS', is a UK-based charity that runs the application process for almost all British higher education courses. Students submit their university applications online through the UCAS website. This standard process requires every student to submit details such as expected or achieved grades, alongside a personal statement. Although the UK and US colleges both require these statements, they require different versions. The tips included in this article are aimed predominantly at helping students applying to UK universities to craft an outstanding piece of writing.

A personal statement is a chance to showcase your talents and achievements, as well as prove why you should be selected from amongst thousands of applicants to your chosen course. It can, however, be a daunting process as it will often be the first such statement that a student has written. Our expert at TutorsPlus, Holly Dimes, is experienced at guiding students through the application process. Here Holly provides a framework for writing an impressive and inclusive personal statement.

At least two thirds of your personal statement should be about your interest and motivations for studying the subject that you have chosen. While your extra-curricular activities are important, remember that the admissions tutors are primarily interested in finding well-read, enthusiastic students, with a natural flair and passion for their chosen subject. Highlighting areas of the school syllabus you have enjoyed (and explaining why) is a good place to start. Be specific about what interests you in your subject and why you are excited about devoting three or four years to it. If you are studying this subject because of certain career ambitions, you could also mention it here, although this is not crucial. Remember, the university will want to teach people who have sufficient drive and love for their subject not only to be able to complete the course, but to be able to direct their own learning and contribute with interesting perspectives.

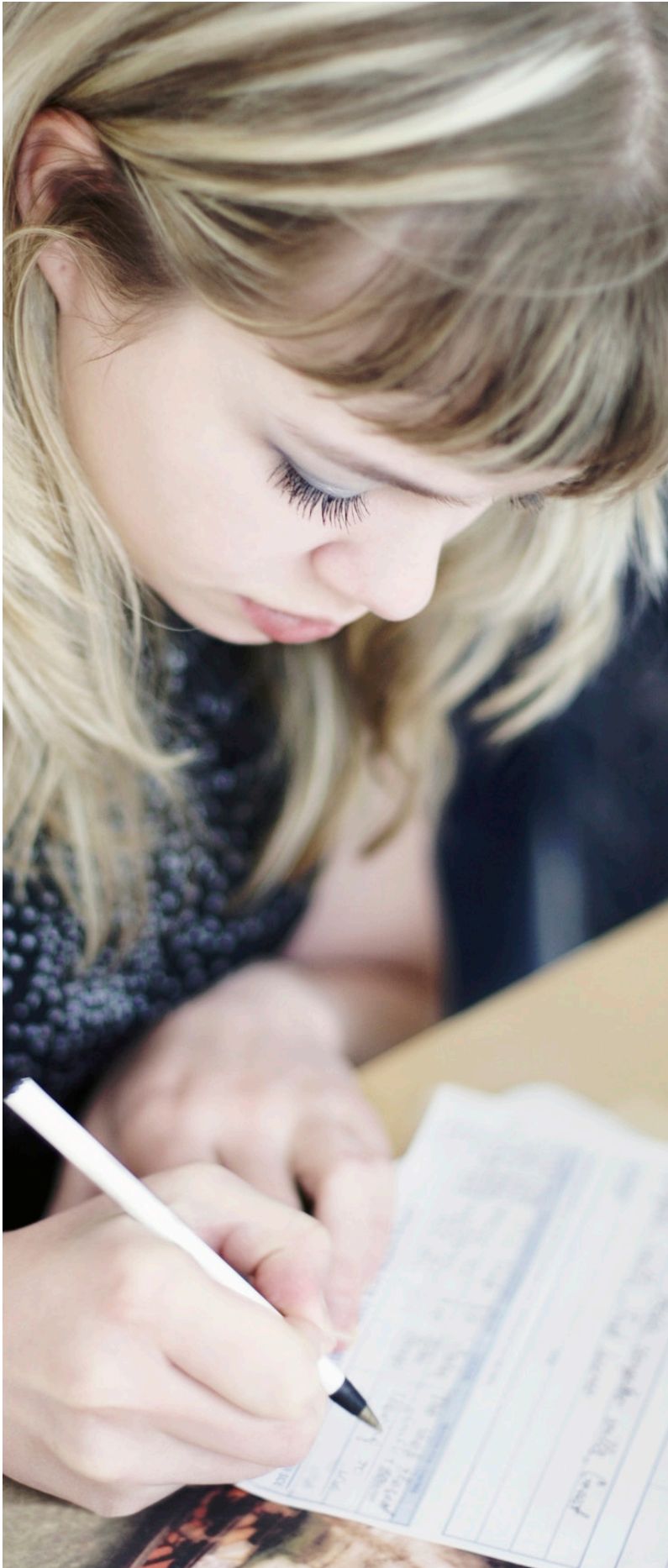
The best students will be able to demonstrate that they have read beyond the required reading and supplemented their coursework with further research and activities.



For example, if you are applying to study languages, joining cultural and language groups outside school to meet with native speakers demonstrates that you have taken the initiative to immerse yourself more deeply in your studies than just sticking with learning words from the textbook. History, Geography or Archaeology students may demonstrate this by visiting the sites or museums of something they are studying to understand more about it and see it in context. Scientists and medical students may want to show their commitment by gaining experience in a laboratory or hospital. Remember that university studies require commitment and self-directed learning, so proving this early on will help you stand out.

Everything you write in your personal statement should relate to the questions 'why do you want to study this subject?' and 'why should we choose you?'. It is likely that your personal statement will have to be used for applying to a number of courses, so it is not possible to tailor it specifically. Even so, research your courses because there are likely to be similarities between what is taught, which means you may be able to show that you are well prepared for your chosen course.

The remaining third should be about your other interests, work experience, voluntary work and extra curricular activities. Do not feel the need to include a list of everything you have ever done – choose your main achievements and interests. If there are activities that are related to your chosen course, then that is a bonus. This is also the chance to show that you will be an asset to other areas of university life, beyond the lecture hall. If you will be joining sports teams at a high level, here is the place to include it.



Any tutoring, mentoring, prefect roles or other positions of responsibility are good to mention, as long as you explain what you have gained from the role.

Be aware of the deadlines for submitting your personal statement and make sure you have left enough time to draft, revise and edit it. Raji Sundaram, Principal of the British School of Geneva recognises that “Students get bored with the process of re-drafting personal statements at a certain point; but they really have to persevere and take the university counsellor’s feedback on board and work on it till it becomes an interesting, cohesive piece of writing that will grab the admission officer’s interest”. It is always a good idea to get others (teachers, parents, older students who are already at university) to read it – they may remind you of something you have done that is also relevant. Students often overlook the importance of perfect grammar, punctuation and formatting. Mistakes can distract the reader from what you are trying to say and leave the impression that you have written the statement carelessly. Make sure you have avoided mentioning universities or colleges by name if you are applying to multiple courses and avoid clumsy humour. It may be good to get someone else to proofread the final version to avoid these kinds of errors.

Concrete examples rather than unqualified statements are always the best way to showcase your talents and suitability for the course. Remember that you may have an interview for some courses, in which you will have to discuss the points you have made in your statement, the books you have read and the interests expressed. So pick things you are truly passionate about, which prove you are the person for them.

Close with a bold statement to re-emphasise your motivations for studying this course and to ensure you stand out from the crowd!



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A smiling man with dark hair and a goatee, wearing a grey t-shirt and a white apron, is standing behind a wooden table. He is holding a white bowl and appears to be preparing food. Two young girls are sitting at the table. The girl on the left is wearing a white sweater with heart patterns and a blue skirt, and is looking towards the man. The girl on the right is wearing a green sweater and is eating a sandwich. On the table, there are several sandwiches, a whole carrot, and some sliced carrots. The background is a bright, sunlit room with a large window showing a view of greenery outside.

5 smart & simple tips to eat healthy when life takes over

BY MIRKKA SCHALLER – SWISSHEALTHCOACH

Do you ever feel that life gets too busy to make those healthy choices for your family that you set your mind to? Let me draw you a picture how it looks like in our home: The boys just started school, it was a new routine, a new rhythm for all of us, packing food to go, getting all the gear necessary for gym classes, swimming and new hobbies. At the same time welcoming visitors to our home and planning both birthdays that are just a few weeks after school start. So, you can imagine, I was up most nights putting invitations together and enjoying the guests. Normally, I would have had to reach out for the fastest most convenient way to save time, if it was ready-made invitation cards or ready-made meals.

But this time it was different. I decided to make a difference that would save my time, my energy and keep the healthy eating habits in the house despite the chaotic times. Here are the 5 steps you can make sure your household remains healthy, when life is about to run you over.



1. Plan it!

Planning is definitely not my strength, however, I noticed fast how much time I could save by making an easy rule to simplify weekly shopping and the overwhelm with the recipes. Start to make a weekly plan that includes one main dish suitable for you for each day of the week. For example: Monday casserole, Tuesday fish, Wednesday pasta, Thursday chicken, Friday meat, Saturday soup and Sunday free. Adding two veggies to each, you will have your weekly shopping list ready every week without extra time planning it.

2. Bulk it!

Whatever it is that you do many times a week, try to bring the tasks together. For example, once you start to peel carrots, peel and cut in different shapes for the whole week, or cut onions into small bags and freeze them for future use. When cooking, try to extend the foods to 3 meals. For example rice, you can have with a chicken sauce, but also prepare for a salmon pie or a tom kha gai soup. Each minute you can save from reoccurring tasks counts.

3. Freeze it up!

I feel like I'm cooking for an army – I use big pans and trays, and I really do prepare each meal for 20 people! The thing is, even though we can't eat even half the food in two meals, I have frozen up the rest in small portions. This way I will have to cook only every other day AND there are hardly ever leftovers in the kitchen (which looks good on your budget).

4. The renaissance of NO!

Do you ever feel that you are cooking 5 meals for one dinner; kids all demanding differently cooked veggies and one eating meat, the others not. It is up to you! Rather than cooking according to each individual separately, simply serve the one food that you cook (once they know this is it, they'll eat rather than starve), and use different seasonings and sauces (or even a meat dish) on the table, so everyone can spice up their own food.

5. Delegate!

We busy parents do have a lot on our hands, however, it is not important who does it, it is important it gets done. Instead of leaning into fast foods, ask for help. You can ask to share lunches with your neighbour or once the kids are older, getting them to take part in the tasks. For the shopping, get a local farmer to deliver weeks' worth of fresh vegetables to your door.

Being a parent is a balancing act, but learning small tricks to make your weeks less stressful will leave you with time to balance those other activities, like birthdays, guests or just to have some time for yourself. ENJOY!

"I want to meet my Dad again"

BY MEDAIR



Khitam is a 10-year-old girl who loves school, misses her father, and lives in a tent in a foreign country. To escape from violence in Syria, she fled to Lebanon with her mother and siblings, leaving behind her beloved father, her home, and her life. Now she has little to do all day but dream of returning home, someday, when there is peace. "We used to be happy. My home was very beautiful. It had two colours, white and black, and six rooms. My sisters and I had a bedroom. Now we all sleep in the same tent. I miss my red bed a lot. The colour red is my favourite."

Khitam fled with her family to Lebanon's Bekaa Valley, the agricultural heartland of Lebanon that has become a temporary home for more than 430,000 refugees who live in more than 1,100 informal settlements set up on flood-prone farmers' fields. "My youngest sister screams a lot while she sleeps," says Khitam. "She screams, 'War planes!' I wake her up, and tell her everything is okay, that here there aren't any planes so she shouldn't be scared. We fled to Lebanon because of the war planes and shooting – we were so scared."

Young Syrians like Khitam are arriving to the Bekaa Valley after a dangerous journey across the border and then crowding into the tents of relatives or friends until their families can set up a shelter of their own.

Medair, a relief agency based in Switzerland, gives out thousands of shelter kits and essential items to newly arriving and vulnerable families so they can build weather-resistant structures where their children can sleep safely, protected from the elements.

"I don't have any toys, so I pretend that the pillows are pets," says Khitam. "In Syria I used to have a cat. She was really beautiful. She was a yellow and white one. I cried a lot when they shot her. She was running outside and then got shot. I wasn't allowed to go outside to save her."

Khitam misses her father more than anything. "I have only talked to my father once since coming to Lebanon," says Khitam. "He says he can't come here because there is a lot of shooting, so he can't travel around. When I meet my dad after the war, I'll say to him: 'What took you so long? We missed you so much! Thank God, now we are all together, and you are fine.'"

Children are vulnerable to contracting diseases in these crowded refugee settlements. Undernourishment, sickness, cold and damp weather, and flooding in the tent settlements present real threats to the lives of Syria's refugee children. But the thing that frightens Khitam the most is the fear that her home back in Syria may no longer be there anymore. "Our neighbour's house has been totally destroyed. We only have this one home. If it's destroyed, we can't go back. We would have no place to stay. I hope things settle down so I can go back home. I want my school to be repaired. Mostly I want to meet my dad again."

There are more than one million young Syrian children like Khitam who have left their homes, schools, and lives behind in exchange for safety from the violence. Now they face a long, cold winter far from the comforts of home.

Medair is providing thousands of children in the Bekaa Valley with warm and dry shelter while also making refugee settlements safer places for children to live and play.



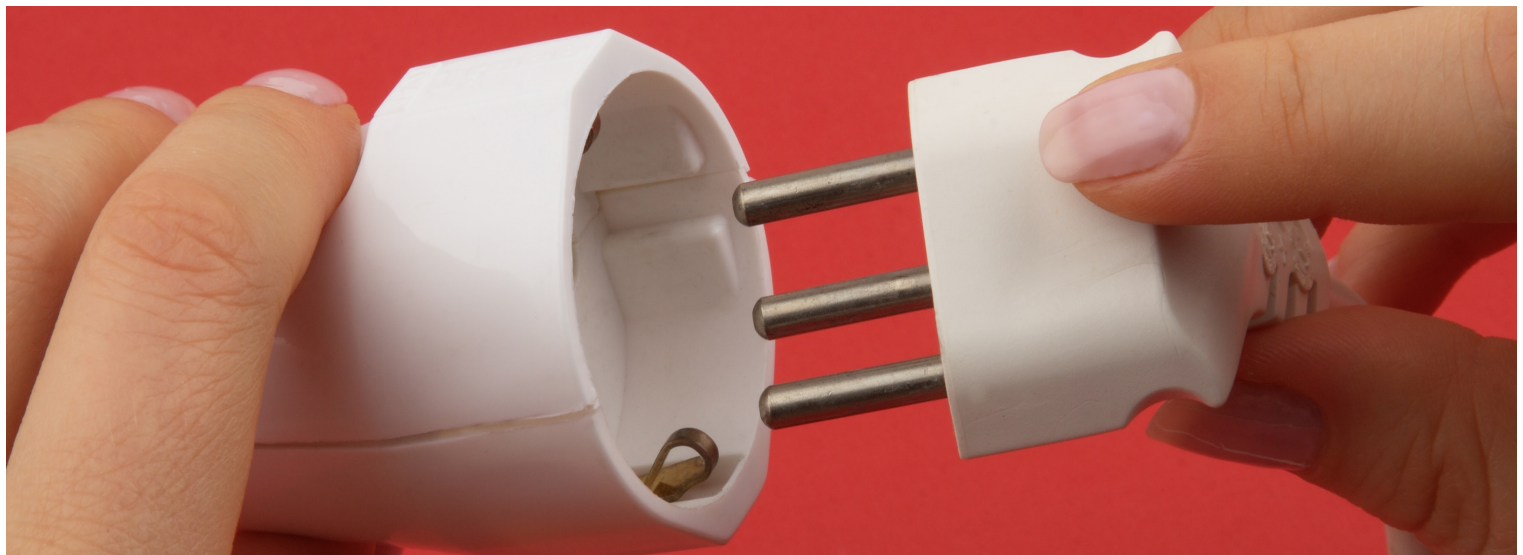
More information

Find out more about how Medair is bringing relief to Syrian children and families and about different ways you can get involved today at medair.org/SyrianCrisis

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