



Connections

The ICS School Magazine • Issue 31 | 2022-2023



**inter-community
school zurich**

EST. 1960

The Inter-Community School is committed to providing a supportive and enabling learning environment in which all members of the community are challenged to achieve their individual potential, encouraged to pursue their passions, and expected to fulfil their responsibilities.

Welcome to Connections

The ICS School Magazine • Issue 31 | 2022-2023

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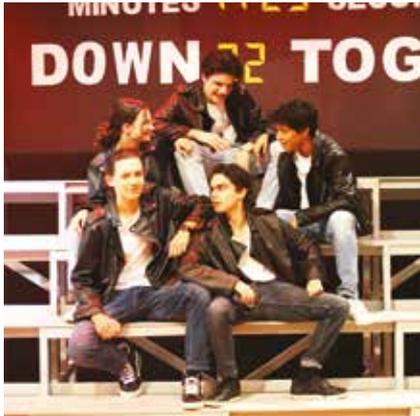


Snapshots

A look back over the year.

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An introduction from our Head of School

It is my absolute privilege to welcome you to the pages of Connections - the ICS School Magazine.

In my six months as Head of School, I have come to understand the uniqueness of this environment; so very hard to capture in words, it has to be lived to be known.

Journeying from a small coastal town called Mt. Martha, on the Mornington Peninsula in Australia, the contrasts between my worlds could not be starker.

From the mountains to the crystal-clear lakes, the quiet neighbourhoods to the clean public transport, there is much to be intrigued and animated by in Zurich.

Some people say that schools are the same the world over, perhaps once upon a time, I was one of them. I am not now.

This school cannot be replicated.

I remember vividly during the interview process for the role, listening to a Trustee describe what the name of the school meant to him.

“Lucy,” he said, “there is a reason the word community sits in the centre of our name. We are united by learning, and the spark of our student lit by life’s opportunities, made possible because they went to our school.”

His humble yet powerful explanation of what this school meant to him, of the importance of community, created in me a determination to be part of this very special place.

How true his words were, for they were lived the moment I arrived on this campus.

From the students who stopped me in the hall to introduce themselves, to the nursery children who let me sing with them, to the staff who swung by the office to say hello, I have felt the warmth of people’s welcome from the outset.

I have been so very grateful for the warm welcome I have received in the School and extend my sincere gratitude to the Board of Trustees and the Parents’ Association for making the experience so very inspiring.

I see this publication as the first chapter in the next volume of sharing with each other the uniqueness of life at Inter-Community School (ICS). Ours is a welcoming community built on a history that spans sixty years. It is a place of purpose, of ambition, and of powerful learning, built on a solid foundation of commitment, resilience, and humility.

As you turn the pages of this magazine, it is my sincere hope that you share in the joy, the thinking, the reflections, that make the learning that occurs each day on this campus, possible and purposeful.

As the dust of the first six months begins to settle, and the routine of the School becomes more familiar, I am excited to be able to meet and connect with our families and our alumni, and of course to spend more time getting to know and celebrate the uniqueness of our students.

I look forward to the many occasions to come that will unite our community and build our culture.

Yours faithfully,



Lucy M. Gowdie
Head of School

The moral purpose, not the material product

Focusing on the values, not the value.

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By **Lucy M. Gowdie**, Head of School

In my quarter of a century in education, I have come to understand much of what occurs in the space that is learning is temporary; it ebbs, and it flows.

Be it the latest technological advancement, the recently improved curriculum initiative, the newest dazzling teacher training tool, education is a flooded, chaotic market, full of (mostly) well-meaning entrepreneurs and aficionados (many of whom left the classroom eons ago) in pursuit of their particular dream. This newfound marketplace combined with the explosion of international education choices for families has, without doubt, seen a weakening of substance, of strength, and of scrutiny across the scope and sequences that drive effective curriculum delivery and, ultimately, outcomes in international schools.



Of late I have come to sense a danger in this dilution of learning, the very purpose of education, and the perilous precipice upon which it now sits. New international schools are rising almost daily, not always based on demand, but based on the insatiable appetite our globalised world has for a “private” education.

I caution parents to consider the veritable differences in private education across the international education marketplace and to do this, I ask them to consider, as they look for a place for the continuation of their child’s learning, to scrutinise the values that underpin their preferred School.

From time immemorial, schools have been the bastion of secular society; the gathering place where families come in times of triumph and of tribulation. This is particularly true in international education. There can be no price put on the moral purpose of a school who provides for families a real and true community for the duration of their stay in their adopted country – this is something money simply cannot buy.

It is important that parents understand that the danger in commodifying education, means we are deducing that we can somehow put a price on the development of a person.

This is why I encourage all of our prospective families to read our values statement, our family handbook, and to discern for themselves if ours is a school that they want to partner with.

And it is a partnership.

When parents tour a prospective school, they should ask to meet with the Head, and listen to them speak to the culture, to the community, and to the curriculum of the school. A good Head will be able to link these to an innate understanding of their school’s uniqueness and their ability to fundamentally shape their child.

When parents consider if the school is the best one for their children, they should ask themselves if they agree with the mission of the school, if they share the values that underpin it, and if they believe that their child will thrive in this environment.

When parents compare two schools against each other, they should not be too quick to look at the landscape over the learning, the location over the lesson structures, or the technology over the quality of the teaching.

Parents should not be beguiled by the bells and the whistles – instead they should search for the substance and the soul of the school. The best way to do this is to observe the students, watch their behaviours, their manner, their engagement with each other. Talk to the teachers about why they love their work, and the staff about what makes the school special.

It is unequivocal, next to home ownership, private education will be the single most expensive investment a family makes in their lifetime. However, parents can often mistake this investment as the purchasing of a product, an outcome so defined by the polished advertising pamphlet that promises something that can seemingly be purchased, be it an outcome, a place at a prestigious university, or even a powerful social network.

Ask any good educator at a private school of substance and they will tell you, what you are in fact purchasing is the development of a good and respectful person, who will achieve their full potential only if they have instilled in them the values needed to live a deep and meaningful life.

And what price can we ever put on that?

Each school is unique in and of itself, the question parents must begin to ask is; does this school, and the values that it lives by, align with our values and the life we dream of for our children.

Once you have answered this question you will realise, a great international education, at a great international school, is in fact, priceless.

Pursuing novel approaches for making an impact in the PYP

By **Nathaniel Atherton**, Primary Principal

As Primary Principal at ICS, I feel passionate about the learning experiences of our students. Our team of educators care deeply about the children in their care and endeavour to instil a sense of wonder about the world, whilst fostering an atmosphere of creativity, innovation, and inquiry.

In accordance with the International Baccalaureate® (IB) Primary Years Programme (PYP), we regularly provide ways for our students to engage with the community as much as possible. Through a wonderful dynamic with our Parents' Association, students under our supervision can go out into the local environment at any time.

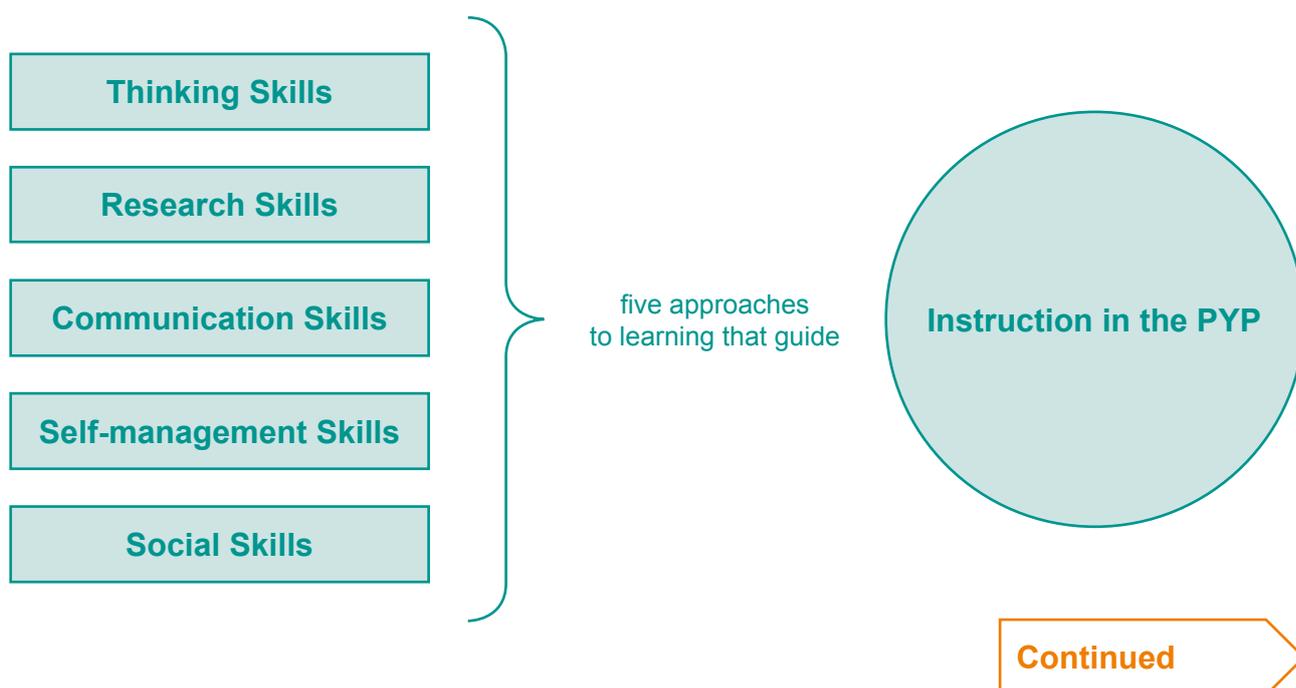
Teachers take advantage of community connections and possibilities, so that class visits to a grocery store, the post office, the fire hall, the forest, pond, and our campus Research Garden, can frequently occur. Furthermore, promoting opportunities for engagement in the community enables authentic service learning, a core component of the IB's mission and vision for education.

Concerning our school's mission statement of Potential, Passion and Responsibility, the word 'Responsibility' is of fundamental importance. When we think about service and action, we are trying to be very intentional - to be a school where Responsibility is a flagship element that defines us.

For example, our Grade 5 pupils are spending a sizeable portion of the term studying the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Claire Febrey, Curriculum Coordinator, endeavours that we as a school, focus on engaging locally, identifying the relevance of our units of study, and taking a close look at advocacy, lifestyle, and sustainability.

When I arrived at Inter-Community School (ICS) in 2020 (from the Western Academy of Beijing), I began exploring next steps for community engagement and action. Several members of our faculty, including Claire and I, took part in a Harvard think tank about global education. We explored the action component of service learning and brainstormed with our team. During the 2020-2021 school year, following an in-service event centred on a workshop model titled "Empathy to Impact", Claire worked with teachers to identify units they might want to redesign based on the model, with teachers grouped in a transdisciplinary way around those units. Important to note is that they were not rewriting units but working with existing units and enhancing them. Our educators evaluated these units' relevance, and they assessed the learning engagements to begin redesigning them with a deeper focus on the PYP approaches to learning.

Thinking skills, research skills, communication skills, social skills, and self-management skills, are the five approaches to learning that guide instruction in the PYP. In our Primary School, many units were well established, and we were keen to evaluate the purpose of the learning. We found that using aspects from the "Empathy to Impact" model dramatically changed some units.



Potential, Passion and Responsibility



An example is the Grade 2 Science unit “How the World Works”, with a focus on forces and energy; how people use their understanding of force to invent and create. In the past, students designed and built simple mechanisms using force as a summative demonstration of learning.

After redesigning the unit with a couple of external specialists, our students did the same thing but with this additional detail: design and build a simple mechanism using force to make your world a better place.

We are certain this made a significant difference and that instead of designing something random, there was now purpose involved.

Recently, our Grade 1 students explored public spaces and the SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities); they spent time in the community and made connections about how communities come together.

In a Primary Social Studies unit, students collaborated with the Visual Arts team and took action by creating sculptures for the community.

They displayed their artworks in the Zumikon Dorfplatz (city square) and then evaluated how people were responding to their sculptures by interviewing community members.

Reflecting on the substantial natural enthusiasm around topics pertaining the SDGs, our Grade 4 and 5 teams changed the order of their units to connect with the SDGs and improve approaches to the PYP Exhibition.

Our educators particularly want to create a more humane, just, and healthy world, and a lot of the work our school is undertaking in this area speaks to why teachers are engaged with this work overall. I see our faculty excited to get going with this topic and have worked on more units than just the core unit we asked them to re-evaluate.

ICS Preschool teachers were particularly enthused about the nature-themed resources shared in the workshops. As readers may be aware, our instructors regularly accompany classroom groups to the nearby forest and this lens was great to add to their year-long unit about changes in the natural environment.

I believe that when great unit planning is happening at our school, everyone feels the positive effects, especially our students. We look forward to hosting the above-mentioned workshop facilitators in two subsequent sessions in the coming year, and plans are underway to partner to host a regional workshop in 2023.

A personalised learning experience

What education should look like.

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By **Alexandra Carlin**, IB Diploma Coordinator

With many curricula, educational philosophies and school missions, students and their families are exposed to a broad spectrum of options. As a Diploma Coordinator for the International Baccalaureate® (IB), I often question what we offer our students - what knowledge and skills we want to teach them, what virtues and aptitudes we wish to instil in them?

Then, once they graduate and step into the world, what type of citizens does our school want to shape?

Between 2016 and 2020, the number of IB Programmes worldwide grew by 33.3%*. The increase in popularity comes as no surprise given the ethos of the Programme and its rigorous academic standards. Having experienced three different curricula before the IB, I can attest to its value. My first few years of schooling were spent in a post-communist education system that revolved around memorisation and where the arts were undervalued; foreign language courses were practically non-existent.

“Our school’s educational philosophy nurtures students to overcome challenges and supports their journey to success.”

When I entered high school in Canada, the approach to education was more liberal yet still teacher-centred. I pursued a post-secondary education in the U.S, where I noticed a move away from a theoretical approach to a more experiential one, especially during my master’s degree programme. It was only when I entered the world of the IB, that my entire outlook on the archaic approach to education changed. The autonomy of students, freedom of expression, and inquiry-based learning will forever remind me of what education should look like.

Our school’s educational philosophy nurtures students to overcome challenges and supports their journey to success. For example, ICS’ graduating class of 2022 achieved 37 points in the IB exams despite the constraints of a global pandemic. These students’ academic achievements are a testament to their efforts combined with the support of a team of specialists dedicated to equipping students with the skill sets necessary to be successful. As a result, our students are armed with the tools that will serve them well beyond their academic tenure.

Our school emphasises personalised learning experiences, which means each student entering the Diploma Programme (DP) chooses subjects that align with their passions and complement their aptitudes. We take the time and care to review each student’s CEM IBE assessment, facilitate parent information evenings, hold subject-specific workshops, and university counselling sessions before making decisions that will ultimately shape their roadmap for the future. We aim to foster a holistic learning experience that extends beyond classroom walls and toward developing internationally minded students. This is embodied through the examples provided as well as offering our robust Creativity Action Service (CAS) programme and extra-curricular activities.

Over the last 60 years at this school, we have seen that when children feel supported, their voices heard, and their individualities celebrated, they can maximise their potential and overcome any obstacles.

*International Baccalaureate Organization, Facts and figures, October 2022.

Learning Happens
Everywhere



It's more than a game.

By **Matt Febrey**, Secondary Head of Physical Education

Certainly, a priority item on any parent's wish list for their child's future would be good health or physical well-being. At ICS, Physical and Health Education encompasses both learning about and learning through physical activity. We actively support our students in finding a physical activity they enjoy, can benefit from, and could pursue beyond school. As John F. Kennedy once said, "Physical fitness is not only one of the most important keys to a healthy body, but it is the basis of dynamic and creative intellectual activity".

We want students to develop depth in their conceptual understandings by offering a programme with breadth. We continually rethink the units we teach and try to offer experiences beyond what is often seen as traditional sports. Furthermore, the International Baccalaureate® (IB) Programme compels a unit concerning an aesthetic experience to be taught in each grade. Building on core gymnastics skills taught in the Primary Years Programme, we revisit these concepts through Grade 8 in martial arts, and in Grade 9 with Tabata (High-Intensity Interval Training).

By focusing on a range of learning units, students develop Physical and Health Education knowledge and skills. The curriculum also provides an opportunity for students to develop positive character traits within a safe environment. Former NFL Coach Joe Ehrmann, stresses in his book, “InSideOut Coaching: How Sports Can Transform Lives”, that teachers need to convey to students the characteristics to display, model those characteristics, and then provide youngsters opportunities to display those characteristics.

Our school supports the development of the IB Approaches to Learning via a broad range of learning units. Through PHE lessons, students develop effective collaboration and communication skills and learn to appreciate and respect the ideas of others. For instance, the units on Games, support the development of social skills, furthering opportunities to build positive interpersonal relationships.

In Secondary School, an expanded assortment of sports choices is available to youngsters. Kayaking and rock climbing, for example, are popular pursuits for our Grade 10 pupils. Yet these athletic challenges may be unfamiliar to a number of them; hence, they are given the opportunity to be risk-takers within a safe environment. Recently, we saw a student become nervous during an initial kayaking lesson and then capsized. When I saw the pupil’s surprised and soaked expression as he got out of the water, I assumed he would not be participating in future lessons. However, this youngster came back the following week, and as the lessons progressed, he demonstrated perseverance, resilience, successfully managed his emotions, and greatly improved his self-management skills.

Our teachers expect students to come out of school with the confidence and knowledge to be able to independently look after their physical, social, and psychological well-being. ICS Grade 11 and Grade 12 students can choose how they want to stay physically active within Physical Education courses. Options include developing and following personal fitness goals or choosing from a range of indoor and outdoor sports such as badminton, football, and squash.

A recent conversation with a former student revealed how playing frisbee in PHE classes had given him the confidence to join his university’s team. For this particular alum and many youngsters at ICS, we are certain the PHE experiences our department provides, help to “develop enjoyment, engagement and confidence in physical activity that students need in order to achieve and maintain a healthy life”, to cite the IBO Physical and Health Education Guide (2014).

Education, without education for the heart, is not so good

By **Lucy M. Gowdie**, Head of School

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The roots of International Women's Day are bound to the suffragette movement and the gaining of voice for women in the political, cultural, and social spheres of society.

How women use their voice is of equal (if not more) importance today, as it was some two hundred years ago, when the movement was born.

Since its inception, this day has grown, as more than simply a moment in time to recognise the rise of women the world over – it has become a catalyst for revolutions of change, for equality, and for opportunity – this has not, and will not, change.

On this day, I write to celebrate the strength of one woman, and I do so, in honour of her extraordinary life's work.

In using her voice to irrevocably and humbly, change the lives of hundreds, if not thousands, of disadvantaged children and by extension their families, in the Himalayan region of Nepal, Shirley Blair, Director and Fundraiser for the Shree Mangal Dvip Schools, is shaping, and shaking, the very spheres she exists in.

Like the suffragettes before her, she is using her voice, her influence, and her unyielding passion to drive change for those whose place in society, so defined by a system they do not prescribe to, has been characterized by centuries of deliberate and sustained discrimination.

Influenced by the teachings of Tibetan Buddhism, and the tireless work of Thrangu Rinpoche, Shirley has used her voice as an advocate, an educator, and an ardent believer in the fundamental right for the forgotten mountain children of the Himalayas to receive an education – the basic and the fundamental right of every child on this planet.

Since 1997, Shirley has worked in the service of these children, those from communities formerly labelled under law as ‘enslaveable alcohol drinkers and eaters of yak meat.’ She has done so with a commitment to their education centred on the contributions they can, and they do make, when they return to Nepal, upon completion of their tertiary studies.

Inspired by the work of the selfless and scholarly women who came before her, Shirley welcomed Dr Jane Goodall to SMD on a number of occasions. Intrinsicly linked to any meaningful education is an innate understanding of our environment and our interaction with it. Dr Goodall’s reflections, these being, that having an open mind, and confidence of self, can enable one to live the width and breadth of life, gave rise to students of SMD, who under Shirley’s guidance have forged purposeful paths in a society structured against them.

Of particular importance to Dr Goodall, the attributes of determination and obstinacy highlighted the importance of understanding and accepting our role in the world and our collective responsibility to protect it – these perspectives speak to all people, not to gender, and talk of our shared obligation to walk diligently in the direction of meaningful change.

Some of the most powerful lessons we learn, occur through the unintended social interactions we have. We should remember these moments in time, unconstructed, unplanned, and use them as catalysts to harness the strength of the women before us; those who have not only blazed the trail but kept the flame burning for those who will walk the path long after they have left it.

Their footprints a guide for future generations.

There is a spirit that exists in Shirley Blair that is hard to define – one can hear it in her calm and compassionate voice when she speaks of the students in her charge, and the mission she is on. It is the spirit of a woman so shaped by her purpose, so driven by her desire for change, and so ardent in her belief that education is not a privilege but an inalienable right, one cannot but help be humbled and called to action listening to her.

The women who fought to use their voice, knew long ago that being loud served little purpose.

Being informed, being educated, being articulate, it was these attributes working in unison that would create the loudest, most profound voice of all.

On this day, I write in honour of Shirley Blair, who has used her voice, her knowledge, her education, her pursuit of justice, and her passion, to truly change the world for the forgotten mountain children of the Himalayas.

What we must all do now, what matters most now, is that we listen to that voice.

That we create the momentum needed to make the mountains sing with the strength of students who have studied, succeeded, and returned to serve others, because of the selflessness of Shirley Blair.





Celebrating a milestone

Our 50th year in Zumikon.

As the first international English language school in Zurich, the Inter-Community School holds a place of distinction in our region. Although several properties were utilised in our school's early years – from rooms in a now 125-year-old hotel to a villa that was used in the 1930s by a Yugoslavian prince – our campus has been in Zumikon for the past fifty years.



It was during the 1960s that a search commenced for a site where all students could be together on one campus. The Board of Trustees had found a farmer in Zumikon who was willing to sell ICS some of his land. The contract for the purchase was signed in November 1970. After receiving two major loans from Credit Suisse and the Union Bank of Switzerland, ICS was ready to build its own facility. Construction began in November 1971 and was completed in December 1972. The 1973 winter term saw 270 pupils enrolled and together for the first time on one campus!

A reminder to readers, that until the 1980s, ICS students who had completed Grade 7 had to leave to attend classes at what was then the American high school in Kilchberg, ZH. Sensing the need for more international High School facilities, ICS grew its learning programmes by adding Secondary Grades up to Grade 10 and introduced the International General Certificate of Secondary Education. In 1977, additional land was purchased in Zumikon, and extensions to the Primary School building were carried out in 1979 and 1982. Shortly thereafter in 1985, a library and kindergarten were built. In 1987, after plans were formulated by the Board of Trustees, the first pavilion was erected as the first Secondary School classroom.

In the 1990s, ICS added classes up to Grade 12 and a new Secondary School building was constructed on the Zumikon campus. Since 1993, ICS has been an International Baccalaureate World School, seeing the first Grade 12 classmates take their IB Diploma Exams in May of 1996 here in Zumikon. Currently, ICS is the only educational institution in the Zurich region offering all three IB programmes: the Primary Years Programme; Middle Years Programme; the Diploma Programme (and the Bilingual Diploma).

For the past couple of years, our school has expanded its pedagogy to offer a Nursery programme that uses elements of the Reggio Emilia approach and IB PYP curricula for children from 18 months of age. Today, approximately 800+ students representing 55 nationalities are enrolled at ICS. Most notably, we recognise and celebrate how our community has helped shape our traditions and culture. Not to be forgotten, are our many students who have and continue to take part in Zumikon's array of music education and sports programmes. This engagement in our local community adds an extra layer of enrichment, along with integration.

Through the years our school has employed quite a few Zumikon residents and hired the services of many local firms. Our annual neighbourhood breakfast has become a well-received event for those wanting to catch up with their neighbours and hear about local business activities. And it is not just a rumour that neighbourhood Migros and Coop personnel have enquired about the school schedule – to plan their holidays around it!

The ICS Parents' Association has been an integral component of our school and we applaud them for the countless programmes and fundraising events they have organised over the decades.

In summary, we spend a moment to reflect on our 'golden anniversary', the numerous collaborative and enlivening endeavours on and off our wonderful campus, and we look forward to many more in the years ahead. We are thankful to have found a terrific home, here in Zumikon, and appreciate our neighbours for letting our school continue to create welcoming, caring, and creative spaces - environments where children are provided optimal settings to learn.



New staff: *Robyn Collins*



I could not believe that I had the most amazing good fortune to be moving to ICS and Zurich. I was beyond excited.

The packing and moving drama was interspersed with watching videos of life in Zurich and getting information from ICS regarding my impending move and position at the school. Moving is always stressful, and I have done so 46 times now, mostly when I was an air force wife, but I have also worked in five different overseas locations and so I have become something of a removal expert.

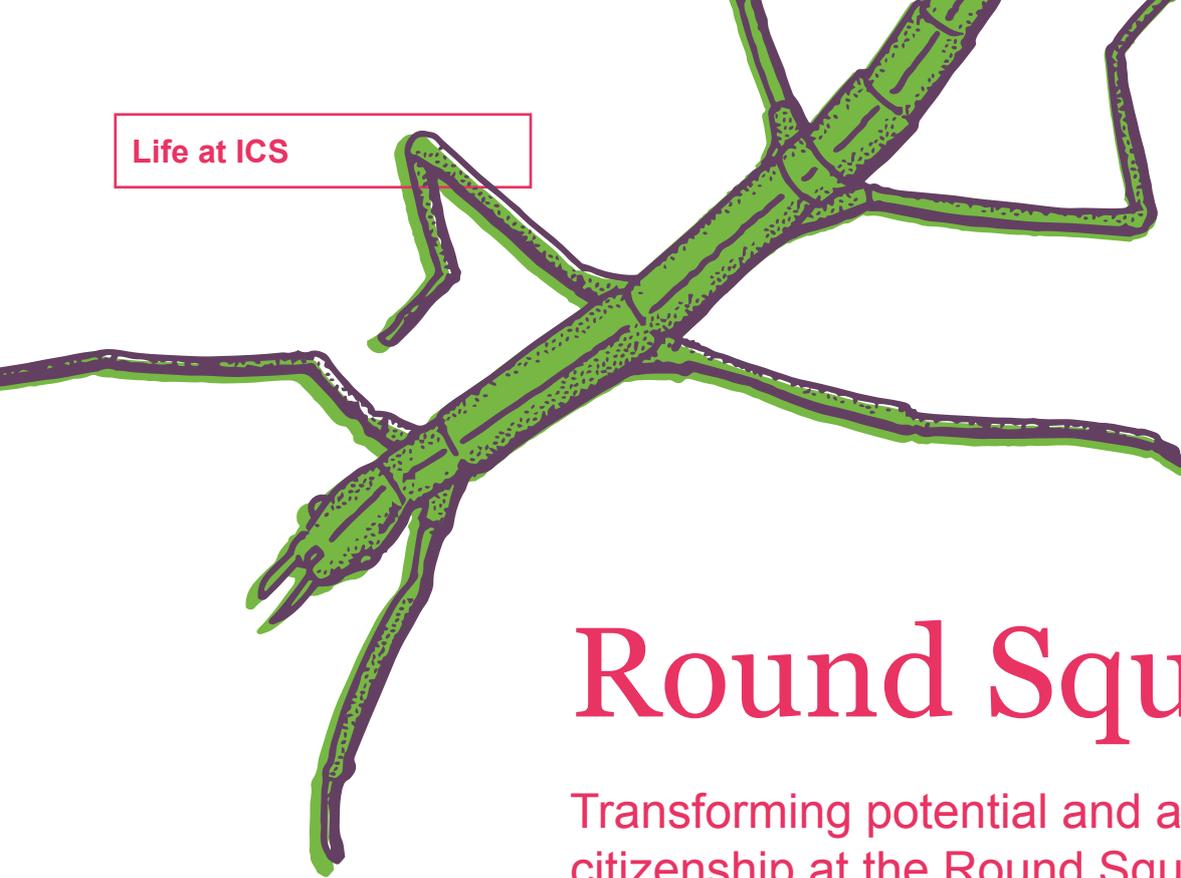
The move to ICS for me was very smooth, I arrived at the airport with a member of HR to greet me and help me with the luggage and drive me to my apartment; a very different experience from Hong Kong when I arrived in the middle of the protests and had several thousand angry university students greet me. I was helped to get a phone and internet connection, train and tram cards and Gemeinde information done. How she managed to steer me through that in my jetlagged induced fog after travelling and layovers taking 26 hours, I do not know; it is a testament to her resilience.

My arrival at school was just as welcoming with tours of the school, an excursion into Zurich, lunch and breakfast provided, all new staff felt that our presence was greeted with excitement and a genuine feeling of belonging to a family.

Just riding the tram to school is a joy! The first snow made all the new Australian staff run outside in excitement. I am thoroughly enjoying my time at ICS, we work hard, but it is very rewarding and the camaraderie of all of the ICS staff is wonderful.

Hong Kong





Round Square

Transforming potential and active citizenship at the Round Square International Conference.



Round Square is an international network of schools sharing a platform for developing courageous and compassionate leaders. Committed to building life skills and competencies in students, meaningful, experiential learning opportunities are a touchstone of the programme.

ICS was accepted into the prestigious organisation in 2010 and is currently the only Round Square school in Zurich involved in spearheading practical hands-on activities, primarily for those in Grades 6 to 11.

The Round Square International Conference returned to in-person gatherings, bringing together approximately 800 student delegates from 50 countries. Hosted in the UK, the autumn event's theme of "Take Less: Be More", underscored the organisation's recent shift toward a UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) focus.

A number of determined ICS Grade 11 pupils participated in the annual summit, set amidst the historic surroundings of Oxford University, and followed by an excursion to Wales. The students stayed overnight at Balliol College, considered the oldest college in Oxford, dating to the 13th century.

Keynote speakers provided insights into topics such as ocean advocacy presented by Ms Emily Penn, founder of sailing research expeditions company eXXpedition. Economist Sir Dieter Helm, professor of energy policy at Oxford University, and author of the book Net Zero discussed his ideas on tackling climate change. English broadcaster and writer Mr Ben Fogle urged the teenagers to step outside their comfort zones and strive to achieve more.

A panel of young speakers, all alumni from Round Square schools, relayed how their school experiences had shaped their paths since graduation. ICS Alumnus, Mr Jack Harrison, who is a learning and evaluation officer at the Henry Smith Charity in Britain, spoke about organising one of the first Movember projects at ICS and how this impacted him and inspired him in his career.

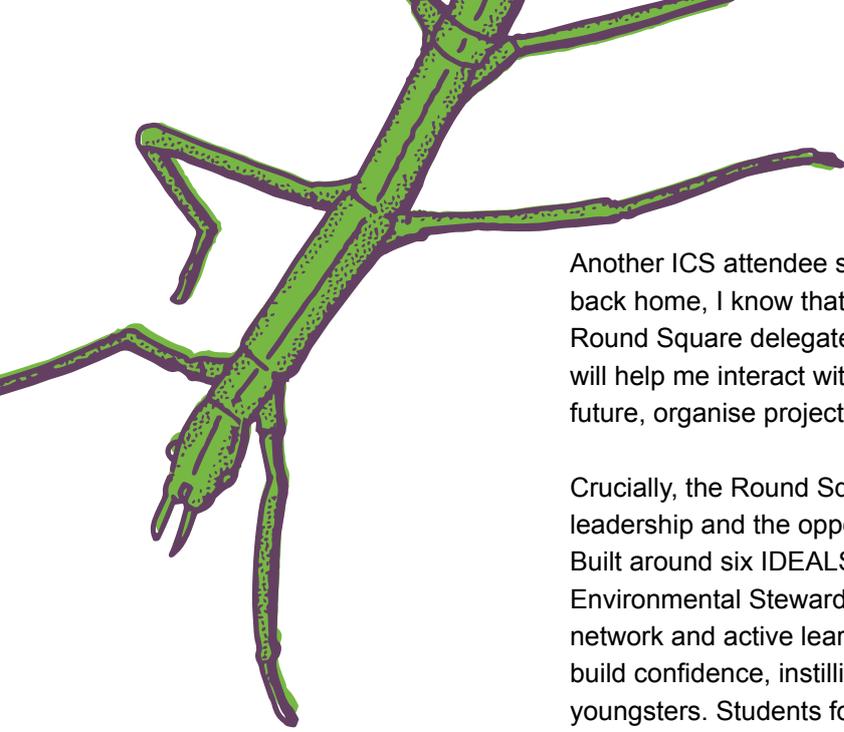
Breakout sessions, called Barraza (an East African term for a public meeting), saw the youth exchanging ideas and perspectives. ICS delegates collaborated on sustainable business ideas and presented their concept to fellow participants. As one of our participants mentioned, “I enjoyed this conference since there were so many students from all over the world, and hearing about their experiences and perspectives on ‘take less be more’ was both informative and fascinating. Hearing all the speakers in the Oxford Theatre talk about their life and how they made a positive change in our environment was enlightening and has inspired me

that one day I will be on the stage in one of these conferences and talk about the positive impact I have made to help our planet”.

Complimenting the 2022 conference were evenings filled with students performing different music and dance styles. In a celebration of global cultures, ICS youngsters sang and played, for example, the violin. Our Grade 11 classmates then travelled to Wales for outdoor challenges and wildlife awareness activities. A visit to a 100-acre insect farm known as Dr Beynon’s Bug Farm featured exhibits on sustainable farming and the vital role invertebrates play in our ecosystem. ‘Bug Burgers’ were savoured by all!

In a mixture of nature and adrenalin, coasteering was a way for the students to face their fears whilst exploring the coastline of Wales. Climbing, cliff jumping and swimming wildly in wetsuits proved indubitably challenging for some. Exclaimed one ICS adventurer, “Seeing everyone’s enthusiasm and determination to make a positive impact on our society, inspired me throughout the whole conference. As a result, I was able to push myself beyond my comfort zone, such as jumping off cliffs when coasteering, something which I would have never attempted previously as I am afraid of heights”.

Continued



Another ICS attendee stated, “This entire trip was eye-opening. Coming back home, I know that I will sustain the connections I made with other Round Square delegates. And more than just having life-long friends, this will help me interact with other Round Square schools to maybe, in the future, organise projects together with other schools”.

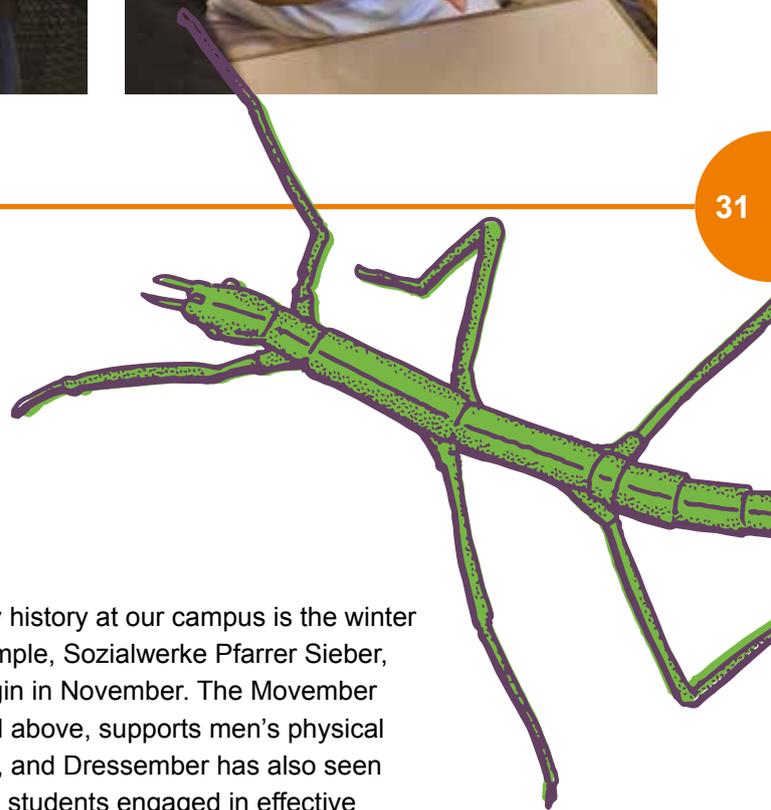
Crucially, the Round Square programme at ICS enables student leadership and the opportunity to work with outside organisations directly. Built around six IDEALS of International Understanding, Democracy, Environmental Stewardship, Adventure, Leadership, and Service, the network and active learning projects aim to further global awareness and build confidence, instilling values for positive and active citizenship in youngsters. Students found the conference unforgettable, with reflections including, “My biggest takeaway is that every successful individual once started off in the same position in which I encounter myself today; a passionate student that wants to help communities on a global scale with many ideas waiting to be implemented.

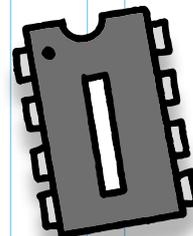
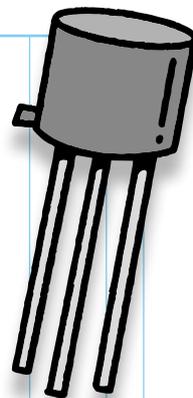
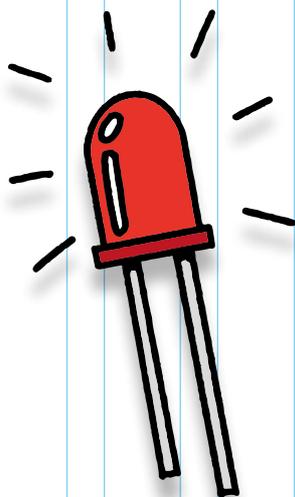
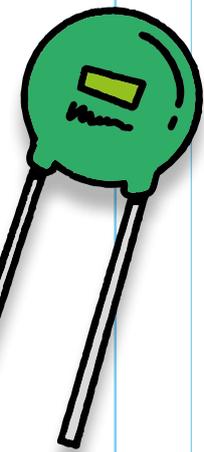
In conjunction with the Round Square programme, our students plan and organise ventures and fundraising activities throughout the year.

“This entire trip was eye-opening. Coming back home, I know that I will sustain the connections I made with other Round Square delegates. And more than just having life-long friends, this will help me interact with other Round Square schools to maybe, in the future, organise projects together with other schools”.



Enjoying a lengthy history at our campus is the winter food drive for example, Sozialwerke Pfarrer Sieber, which is set to begin in November. The Movember project, mentioned above, supports men's physical and mental health, and Dresember has also seen Secondary School students engaged in effective community awareness campaigns. Considering the 2022 conference's theme, readers should stay tuned for more sustainable development-oriented endeavours in ICS' future.

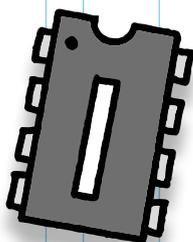




Design

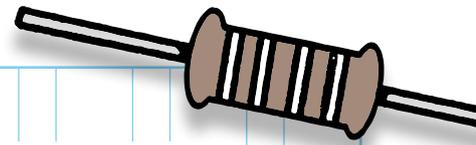
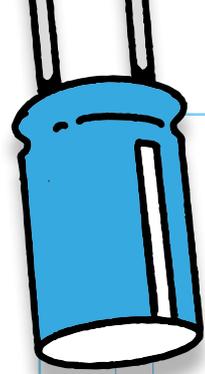
Design students are given agency, let's see what they do with it.

By **Daniel Bush**, Secondary Head of Design Technology



The Design department has been working with Grade 6 to 9 students, in aiding them to be independent and critical thinkers in problem solving. In Grade 10 we demonstrate practically and theoretically how we use and adapt the design cycle to solve a problem and produce a solution. When students embark on their first Grade 10 project, they have agency to choose how to tackle a problem. The students work on unique projects, all learning from each other and inspiring further solutions.

What do they create? The classmates selected their own problem and a way in which to solve it. The brief was for students to choose a Zurich site for designing an object or digital product. When installed, the installation would cause passers-by to stop and autonomously interact with it.



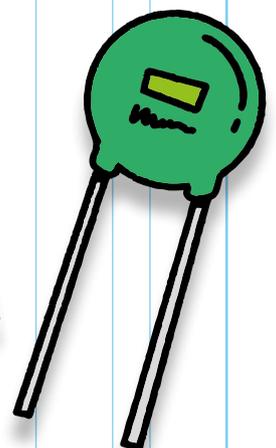
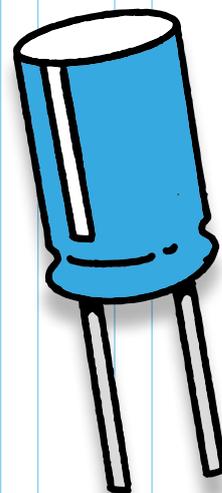
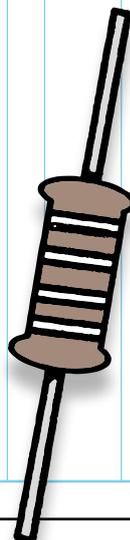
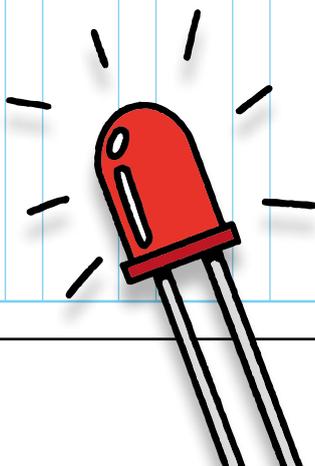
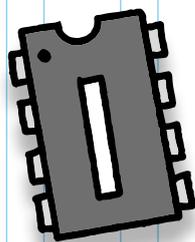
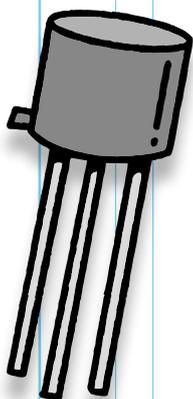
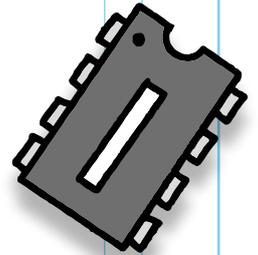
Many of our students opted for a problem linked to the Sustainable Development Goals. Another popular topic was the amount of time spent viewing digital devices. A few students identified the amount of time spent on mobile devices, with a classmate seeking to redirect the practice. Redirective practice features heavily in design but in subtle ways so that end users are unaware. Conversation regarding the line of vision when one looks down at a phone followed.

As alternatives, the group discussed exploring nature and admiring the clouds in the sky. We spoke about gazing at clouds to provide momentary escapism. And that is when an idea was born: If people are looking down, how do we get them to look up? The solution was to place an object on the floor, in this case, an intelligent mirror.

Four mirrors to be exact, moving in a tilted fashion; a motion sensor would be triggered, tilting the mirrors toward the user - to catch the eye of the mobile phone user. The movement and slow rotation of the mirrors would keep the user engaged and simultaneously show beautiful clouds and sky.

Left to do was ordering electronic components and materials for constructing in our Future Studios workshop. Parts were laser cut, 3D printed, programmed, and assembled. Ultimately, the learning experience was looking at the redirective practices and empathising with users' needs.

Designing is about communication and sharing concepts. The best ideas come from conversations and testing whether concepts are viable in the real world. Our school's Design faculty members encourage students to discuss and evaluate ideas with their peers, parents, and teachers in order to obtain optimal results. An exhibition for students to showcase their work is planned for June 2023.



Encouraging children to flourish

A Grade 11 student reflection.



Genevieve S (Gini) has big dreams. After spending her early years in England, she arrived in Switzerland and enrolled at ICS in 2018. Gini recalls her first year in Grade 7 as being rather difficult, however, this was soon to change. At the start of the following year, our school initiated the Extended Learning Needs Programme that would appeal to a broader range of learning styles for Secondary students requiring a more individualised educational environment and curriculum. The new pedagogical approach was seen as an opportunity for all children enrolled at ICS to learn, thrive, and fulfil their potential.

Gini opted for a learning path that features the ASDAN (Award Scheme Development & Accreditation Network) curriculum, in which independence and self-advocacy are emphasised. She already knew a few of the individuals overseeing the pedagogy here – a well-regarded alternative to the IB Diploma Programme – so the transition was seamless. The academic approach affords interventions and lessons within the supported classroom, which are planned carefully to ensure the individual student's strengths, interests, and needs are considered.

Gini has seen improvements in her learning skills and what she terms her "outside school skills". In view of the pandemic necessitating remote learning, our faculty members recognised the importance of encouraging students to collaborate face-to-face and to nurture soft skill progress. Gini's time on campus has been valuable and productive; she is happy to be able to spend tutorial meetings and lunch breaks with her peers in the Diploma Studies Centre (DSC).

Recently, she gained experience as a teaching assistant for Grade 3 classes. Observes Gini: "When I started with the learning programme back in Grade 8, I started to really enjoy school. The staff are really nice to me, and I always get the help I need".

Gini enthusiastically engages in the Performing Arts and most recently became a member of the Secondary Choir group. She really loves to perform and sing. Baking and cooking classes are also eagerly pursued, particularly when she can polish her techniques in making cakes and tiramisu.

Though Gini has a fondness for Language and Literature, she may be chiefly dedicated to the coursework titled Animal First Aid. As a pet lover (especially dogs), Gini's goal in the future is to work in the field of animal care. ICS instructors gather evidence of her undertaking hands-on exercises and submit photographs of her completed work for moderation by ASDAN officials.

Gini is aiming for the International Gold Award, a certificate awarded upon completion of the programme. She has set her sights on a college in Scotland; and, as per a teacher, the individualised curriculum and encouragement of self-advocacy are, "preparing her for a successful and independent transition to her next educational steps, outside of ICS".

Gini is certain the individualised learning at our school has helped not only herself but "a lot of different children"; exclaiming, "I see every day how the kids [enrolled in the programme] learn and grow".



Parents' Association

The PA Transitions Team: helping new families feel they belong

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By **Nadia Liapi**, PA Communications



"I never felt so welcome as I feel at ICS" says Lorena Moro, a new parent at our school. "People took such good care of us at the Welcome Coffee & Tour and beyond".

What Lorena refers to is the Parents' Association's Transitions Team who offers pastoral support to new families at ICS.

How does it work?

As soon as the team is notified of a new arrival by the ICS Admission Office, they send a welcome email with information on local resources and how to connect. Class parents are notified too to extend the welcome. At the start of term, the new families are invited to a Welcome Coffee and a neighbourhood tour to help them get acclimated.



Angela Cochran, who leads the team since the last two years and has been volunteering since its inception, says: “my family and I have lived in five different countries and I know what it is to feel lost. That’s why it’s so rewarding helping new families integrate”.

Sanna Forsberg, an ex-PA board member and a team volunteer since the last two years, agrees: “My family and I had such amazing support when we moved here. Not just at the start, but even much later, whenever we needed it. It’s good to give back now”.



The team reaches out to families that arrive outside of term start times too. Ali Stephenson, an ex-PA board member who volunteers at the team since the last two years, says: “I was making follow-up calls and I remember a parent was so pleased to hear a voice and connect. She had questions she didn’t want to air in a group and I was happy to help. It’s all about making sure people don’t fall through the cracks”.

How did it all start?

When Liz Kaman arrived in 2015-2016, she recalls the Welcome Back event for returning parents and other PA initiatives such as the New In Zurich presentation and the Parents’ Clubs.



Encouraged to see a very active community, Liz approached the PA board with the idea of helping new parents settle. As she explains “to not only lessen the transition’s stress but also help make them feel seen”.

Michelle Stitt, the PA president at the time remembers: “the community’s ad hoc support was incredible. For example, when I arrived, a parent showed me around the supermarket! We just needed to channel that goodwill”.

The PA board got the school’s approval for the project and the rest is history! Kristen Cockroft, who worked with Liz to create and run the Transitions Team, says “it was a privilege to be involved. It put into action our motto ‘You Belong’ and the real sense of community that exists at ICS”.



Michele Stitt concludes “I remember parents at the first Welcome Coffee & Tour telling us ‘thank you, this is the best thing we did since we arrived’ and thinking to myself ‘what a great gift to our community’.

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