

Dear friends,

Well, school has started again and so begins the 5th year of our existence; the time has really flown by!

I hope you all had a great summer break and I would like to extend a big welcome on behalf of OIS to all of you, especially new teachers, parents and students.

As you will have noticed, there has been a lot of building work done over the summer and the school now comprises the picturesque Quinta and the newly named White House. I'm sure you will agree that OIS looks fabulous!

Very soon, we will be starting the parent-teacher meetings so you will be able to hear how your child is progressing and I sincerely hope this will be good news for everyone.

May I take this opportunity to refresh your memory about a couple of important items?

- Students must switch off their phones and lock them away in lockers throughout the school day, 8:15 to 3:40. They may not use them at breaks or lunch.
- Your children can be picked up from the covered terrace area after school. Please use the normal entrance door to gain entrance to school up to 5 o'clock and the gate near the re-cycling area after 5 o'clock.
- Uniforms. I'm sure you'll agree that time spent chasing students about incorrect uniform is time that could be better spent by teachers. Please would you work with us to ensure your child is in correct uniform when they arrive at school?

As you may know, the school was officially opened by Mr. Ake Sorman on 17th September. As his speech covered so many important issues, we are changing the usual format of the newsletter this month and presenting it in its entirety below.

Best Regards,

Steve Bruce-Lomba

Oeiras International School 17 September 2014

Good afternoon.

Dear Chair of the Board, dear school administration. Thank you very much for the invitation. Dear students, teachers and parents. I am honoured to be at Oeiras IS today to participate in your ceremony.

I have worked for the IB for many years. It has been a privilege to work with colleagues whose focus is 100% education. Many not least politicians claim education is the most important topic today but it is not always shown in concrete resource allocation.

Tony Blair the former prime minister in the UK proudly stated there three priorities on his agenda education, education and education. In the recent elections in Sweden all parties from left to right agreed that education and school were of the highest priority and we had the impression that all of a sudden teachers were the most important people in the country. For IB teachers and students have always been in the centre.

In recent years I have worked more and more with recognition issues. Generally speaking IB enjoys a good recognition. Prestigious universities worldwide all accept the Diploma but there is still work to do with conversion tables and the comparison with national systems is not always as good as we would like to. Portugal is no exception and thanks to schools like Oeiras we have had a good dialogue with the ministry. It takes time as is it is a delicate matter. However more and more research proves the high quality of an IB education.

The IB has also enjoyed consistent worldwide development.

Founded in 1968, we currently work with 3,875 schools in 147 countries to develop and offer four challenging programmes to over 1,220,000 students aged 3 to 19 years.

A group of talented, forward-thinking teachers at the International School of Geneva, with assistance from several other international schools, created the IB Diploma Programme. What started life as a single programme for internationally mobile students preparing for university, has today grown into four programmes for students aged 3 to 19.

Many of the IB schools are among the best schools in their respective countries. So called league tables in the UK and the US are convincing evidence that top schools do the IB.

Today the IB has global centres in The Hague, Bethesda and Singapore plus offices in Geneva, Cardiff and Buenos Aires. In addition there are also regional representatives.

So this is a little background to the IB studies that you have carried out or will embark on at your school.

Many, many students and parents before you have witnessed that studying an IB programme is an exciting adventure. Some say it is hard work particularly the DP but very much worthwhile. But let me underline it is in no way a programme for the academic elite only. My long experience tells me that a motivated student can very well be successful in the Diploma Programme.

I am sure you will have good moments, moments when everything will go your way and you feel inspired to go on finding out more about a special topic and that studying can be fun. When you will find that teachers and you have worked together towards a common goal.

We all know that the ultimate tests of our programmes are in the classroom and how teachers and students can work with them. And in the long perspective what pathways into HE and employment our programmes open up for our students and last but not least how they are prepared for life.

That is the essence of the IB programmes. That students should feel the relevance. My best experiences from my school days are those when I felt students felt that the programmes gave them the structure but also the flexibility and freedom to concentrate on the subjects they were most interested in. when they could dig deep into a topic in for example the Personal project or the Extended essay. We did not have PYP at my school in Sweden but I have seen wonderful exhibitions on my numerous school visits. The IBCC students will have a possibility to show how they can draw upon their wide experience of a blended education with both career elements and traditional academic subjects in the reflective project

One common element in all programmes is languages. Mother tongue. No one denies the importance. Identity, culture and history. The study of literature is also a means to continue develop your language. Only in literature do we see and enjoy the full power and variety of languages.

Second language. An important element and requirement for the Diploma. Acquisition with focus on language learning but also increasing your interest in and knowledge of another culture. DP students know from ToK the role that language plays for our learning and ways of knowing.

The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

We could go on with all other groups to see how they contribute and belong to a balanced programme of studies

A balance that makes sure that skills competencies and knowledge form a whole and that different skills are learnt in the different subject groups. That is why we insist on a certain structure in all our programmes. A coherent structure that also allows flexibility.

But academic excellence is not all that is required to meet our vision to create a better and more peaceful world. The academic part needs to walk hand in hand with social growth and awareness of the needs in society and respect for human life. There is too much evidence in the world around to show that we there still remains a great deal to be done in this area. And we have long way to go before we can say that peace is the normal condition of life and relationship between countries.

“Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed” UNESCO 1945

Reference to J Delors **The Four Pillars of Education**

IB has always stressed the importance of this dual task for education. The core with elements of service action and creativity is an IB trademark. It may seem as a modest contribution but we have many examples of great achievements that IB students have made and been exposed to the best aspects of education outside the classroom. It feels particularly appropriate to talk about such activities today as we see so much need around us and are reminded of our common responsibility for the well-being of the world.

My short tour around the Oeiras school clearly showed me that this school is a perfect example of how relevant and exciting education can take place outside the classroom. Projects including gardening and keeping hens and goats provide a fascinating backdrop.

Howard Gardner, the Harvard professor changed our look at intelligences when he widened the concept to include interpersonal intelligences in addition to the traditional cognitive definition.

Now he has gone further in his book the Five minds for the future

- The Disciplined Mind
- The Synthesizing Mind
- The Respectful Mind
- The Creating Mind
- The Ethical Mind

And recently I heard him underline the ethical mind. The ethical dimension. It seems he wanted to say the creative and innovative parts we now master and excel in but how much progress do we make with the ethical aspects?

Do IB programmes give you enough opportunities to explore this? Across the subject groups I hope there is scope and inspiration to encourage such discussions.

Sometimes it sounds as if we the older generation put all our hopes in you the younger to fix what we have not managed, peace, climate changes and many other challenges we face. That is of course not but I do hope that you also believe that education is our most efficient tool or weapon if you like to break down barriers of prejudice that stand between a greater understanding between people and countries with different languages and culture. From the very beginning the key word in IB education was educating for international understanding. Today we express it in another way and the key word international mindedness runs through all IB programmes as a core element.

Finally let me quote a former Director General of IB Roger Peel which I think sums up the IB mission and philosophy in a very concise and convincing way.

The honesty of the IB stems from the fact that we require all students to relate first to their own national identity – their own language, literature, history and cultural heritage – no matter where in the world this may be. Beyond that we ask that they identify with the corresponding traditions of others. It is not expected that they adopt alien points of view, merely that they are exposed to them and encouraged to respond intelligently. The end result, we hope, is a more compassionate population, a welcome manifestation of national diversity within an international framework of tolerant respect.

“Ideally, at the end of the IB experience, students should know themselves better than when they started, while acknowledging that others can be right in being different.”

I wish you every success in your studies. I know that you will benefit from an education that will provide a solid platform for you so you are ready to meet the challenges with confidence and conviction knowing that you have the competence and the skills to cope with a variety of situations in a quickly changing world.

Finally let me wish you a good start to the new term and an exciting academic year that you will never forget.

Lisbon 17th September

Ake Sörman

Former development and recognition manager

IB Global Centre, The Hague

October 2014

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
		1	2	3	4	5
		DP info evening new parents Boys D3 & D4 Basketball X St. Julian's at OIS 4.30pm DP University Evening Boys D3 & D4 Basketball X St. Julian's at OIS 4:30pm Field Trip Y13 CCB & Vihls	MUN Braga Field Trip Y12 Vihls Exhibition	MUN Braga MUN Braga	MUN Braga Gold Medal Expedition in Spain	Gold Medal Expedition in Spain
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Varsity Boys Basketball x St.Julian's Girls Varsity Football x St.Julian's at St.Julian's Gold Medal Expedition in Spain	Gold Medal Expedition in Spain	Myp info evening new parents Boys D3 & D4 Basketball X St. António at OIS 4.30pm Gold Medal Expedition	Gold Medal Expedition Cats Musical Production Campo Pequeno Year 11	Gold Medal Expedition in Spain		
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Varsity Boys & Girls X German School at OIS 4.30pm	Varsity Girls Football X CAISL Boys D3 & D4 Basketball X CAISL at CAISL 4.30 pm		Parent's evening Year 6-7		Varsity Girls Football 7-A-side X St. Julian's 5.00pm to 10.00pm	
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Varsity Girls & Boys Volleyball X German School at OIS 4.30pm	Varsity Girls & D3 Boys Basketball X CAISL at CAISL 4.30pm		Parent's evening Year 12-13		Mid-Term Break	Mid-Term Break
27	28	29	30	31		
Mid-Term Break	Mid-Term Break	Mid-Term Break	Mid-Term Break	Mid-Term Break		