

The Introduction of Years 7 and 8

by G. Flynn

For a number of years now I have been regularly approached by parents suggesting that we consider the expansion of the school to include older children. When the British International School in Cairo (BISC) moved their premises from Zamalek to 6th October City those request became much more frequent. Initial discussions took place between members of our Senior Management Team and these were extended to include consultation with staff and our Board of Directors. Mrs. Barbara Ingram who is Director of Education for The Incorporated Association of Preparatory Schools (IAPS) was invited to visit Cairo to undertake a feasibility study. She undertook a very thorough investigation of our school which included meeting with The Directors and representatives of our parents. Her conclusion was that we were in a strong position to change MBIS from a Primary School to a Preparatory school. Meaning we would add Years 7 and 8. Eventually our oldest pupils will be 13 years old.

A decision to go ahead was agreed by our Board and the second phase of the project got underway.

We have decided that the school will be divided into three sections. The Lower School (Foundation Stage, Year 1 and 2) Middle school (Years 3, 4 and 5) and Upper School (Years 6, 7 and 8) Each section will have a Stage Coordinator who will report to the Head Teacher. A Director of Studies will also be appointed. For next September a specialist teacher of Science and a Modern Foreign Language (MFL) Teacher will also be in post.

The time frame for introduction will be September 2010 Year 7 will open. September 2011 Year 8 will open.

All children in our present Year 6 will be eligible to join Year 7 in 2010. From September 2010 admission to our Upper School will be selective for pupils coming from outside of MBIS.

Here are some of the things that have happened already:

- * A Curriculum Development Committee has been formed. This is helping to create the curriculum that will be followed by the Upper

School. We are looking at The Common Entrance Syllabus which is followed by a significant number of British Prep Schools and the Key Stage 3 guidance



from the English National Curriculum. Our Upper School Curriculum will be influenced by both of these curricula. The Lower and Middle School will still follow the English National Curriculum and The Early Years' Curriculum.

- * Assessment in the Upper School will be through both The National Curriculum Assessment and Common Entrance Examinations.

- * The three members of the SMT have visited Prep Schools in the UK who are of a similar size to MBIS. Between us we visited Orley Farm School London, St Olave's School York, Ranby House School, Nottinghamshire, St George's School, Windsor Castle and Abercorn School, London. These schools were recommended by Mrs. Ingram as examples of high quality schools. Each of us spent a day at the schools and gathered a wealth of information and of course ideas.

- * I am also in the process of interviewing candidates for the Science and MFL posts. These teachers will have a strong influence in all sections of the school.

- * It is intended to offer French, Spanish and Arabic. I interviewed some excellent candidates when I was in London recently. These appointments will be made before the Christmas break and the successful candidates will become involved with the planning.

- * Mr Osman Reda the architect who designed our present building is working on an upgrade of the West Wing to provide a high-tech Upper School Library, An Upper School Common Room, adequate storage for pupils, an upgrade of the Science Lab to make it suitable for Key Stage 3 and the provision of Tutorial Rooms. He has agreed to work with our older pupils to bring some of their ideas into reality.

- * All of our subject coordinators have been tasked to look at their specific subject areas in the light of the expansion.



* All parents with children in Years 5 and 6 were invited to a meeting in December.

* An upgrade of The Design Technology Room is already underway.

* We anticipate that the school day for The Upper School will be extended. Sunday to Wednesday school will finish at 16.00, on Thursday 14.30, 2 days will be extra-curricular activities (clubs) and 2 days will be for supervised prep (homework) sessions or timetabled lessons.

* Lunch and Break Times will be staggered so all children will not be using the external facilities at the same time.

* All lessons will be taught by specialist in Years 6 to 8. Please see the 'Upper School Pupil Sample Timetable.'

* The subjects offered will be:

English	Spanish
Mathematics	Arabic
Biology	Art
Physics	Design Technology
Chemistry	Drama
ICT	Music
History	Personal, Social and
Geography	Health Education
French	Citizenship.

* A full staff audit has been carried out to identify those who are able to make a direct contribution to the Upper School.

I, along with my colleagues believe that this is a fantastic opportunity for every pupil in our school. For the children who continue their studies through years 7 and 8 they will receive an excellent education in a secure, happy and caring environment. The younger children will have role models in both the educational and social sense. Their education will also benefit from the proliferation of specialist teachers with in school. My philosophy of education has always been underpinned by the belief that the higher you set your standards the harder young people will work to achieve them. If any parent would like to discuss our move from primary to prep please do not hesitate to contact me.



Upper School Pupil Sample Timetable

Sun Registration	Whole School Assembly 8.25-8.45 PSHE/RE/ Citizenship	ICT	B	English	English	L	Geography	MFL Elective 1	Prep
Mon Registration	Biology	MFL Elective 2	R	Maths	Maths	U	Music	Swimming	ECA
Tue Registration	Upper School Assembly 8.25-8.45 PSHE/RE/ Citizenship	Physics	E	English	English	N	MFL Elective 1	ICT	Music
Wed Registration	MFL Elective 2	History	A	Maths	Maths	C	Chemistry	Library Upper School Singing Assembly 1.30-2.00	ECA
Thu Registration	Art/DT	Art/DT	K	English	Drama	H	Maths	PE	N/A
8:15 - 8:25	8.25-9.20	9.20-10.0	10.00-10.30	10.30-11.15	11.15-12.15	12.15- 1.00	1.00-1.40	1.40-2.30	2:45 - 3:55