



International Montessori
Academic Year 2011-2012

RE-ENROLMENT INFORMATION PACK



'Changing Education Paradigms'

Sir Ken Robinson, an author, speaker and international advisor on creativity and education is convinced that the concept of education, as we traditionally know it, no longer serves as preparation for society at large. Children are entering an accelerating world of change in every area of life. They live in the most intense information era yet, by receiving stimulation via computers, smartphones, media players (iPod), and a gluttony of television programming. Children need a functional mental framework to deal with all this. Otherwise the seeds of negative consequences such as addiction, hyperactivity, disinterest and apathy are sown.

The original system of education still has 'factory lines': school bells, separate facilities, separate subjects and single-age ranges. Ken Robinson refers to single-age grouping as education, "by date of manufacture". This standardisation is born out of and begets linear thinking; the antithesis of what is necessary for divergent thinking skills.

According to Ken Robinson, the Educational Paradigm needs to shift to:

- Acknowledging human capacity
- Nurturing and assisting development in all areas of the brain to give the possibility for bilateral functioning, thus creating divergent thinking. Discontinuing the idea that academic equals important and non-academic equals not important.
- Ceasing the individual measurement of learning and testing. This is damaging to the student. Most great learning happens in groups. Collaboration increases result.
- Changing the overall culture in our educational institutions.

Maria Montessori spoke of these same ideas over 100 years ago. She advocated a learning method which was in harmony with the development and personality of the child. Individualised learning incorporates the child's character and personal learning style. For instance teachers form their lesson groups according to the content and the individual children who are involved. So a lesson may be a small or large group, or even individual depending on the needs of the circumstance. Children are first helped in feeling good about themselves, which then allows them to focus on the content of the lesson.

Becoming independent and learning to think for oneself is seated in the use of the left and the right side of the brain. Divergent thinking involves knowledge, previous experiences, imagination and emotions. It allows for interpretation, instead of black and white viewpoints. It also allows the thinker to come up with multiple answers to a question. It is the essential capacity for creativity. Children develop divergent thinking when they are in a diverse setting that stimulates and values right and left brain activities.

Hence at school we value and support all areas of the development of the child's brain and personality. We have diverse groupings in a single classroom: multi-age ranges, diverse cultures and languages, and large and small lesson groups. The relationship of the child with their teachers and environment also supports divergent thinking: interactive relationships with different teachers, small groupings to allow discussions within lessons, concrete materials which 'reveal' concepts to the child and move their knowledge to the abstract, and an integrated curriculum that relates topics horizontally, vertically, and diagonally!



An integrated curriculum offers what Ken Robinson names 'Aesthetic Experiences'. The students bring themselves into the process, which acknowledges their learning style and immerses the students fully. When we are totally immersed in a project we lose sense of time and are only in the task at hand. The senses operate at a peak and the child is involved and happy. The child is 'in his element' or as Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi calls it, 'in flow'. Not only does this type of experience nurture love of learning but it also conditions us for respecting the environment and each other. The learner becomes grounded through the growing consciousness of himself and his surroundings.

It is obvious to us that the overall culture in the school influences the outcome of the education process! Children do not need an environment that mimics a factory, with electronic badges to log in and out. They need inspiring learning habitats that are aesthetic and pleasing. They need a variety of materials, objects and books to seed the urge in wanting to know more. This stimulates the development of life long learning which is essential in equipping this future generation for whatever future society demands.

Annie R. Hoekstra-de Roos

For more information please read:

- 'The Element' or 'Out of our Minds' by Sir Ken Robinson. You can also find presentations on the TED (ideas worth sharing) website or on Youtube, either as a conference presentation or including mindmaps via the RSAorg.
- * By Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi'
'Flow, the Psychology of optimal experience'
'Finding Flow: The Psychology of Engagement with Everyday Creativity'
'The Evolving Self'



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THE PLANS FOR 2011-2012 SCHOOL YEAR

Premises

Every year we work to keep our premises in a beautiful condition and to add to the already existing materials and furniture. Classrooms and age ranges offered at the different locations will remain the same in all schools.

In 'Hof Kleinberg', the Primary is still 'growing up'.

The oldest children in this class will be 10 next year, thereby covering, compared to the traditional system, also Grade 4.

The renovations of the third and last phase of International Montessori 'Hof Kleinberg' have started. The large barn is scheduled to be complete by June 2012. Much of the work is invisible as it is happening underground. The foundation has been fortified and the cables and pipes are being laid. Next we will be constructing the first floor. From there we will begin work on the roof. Closer to the summer holidays the roof tiles and old wooden supports will come off except for the beautiful oak beams. A new roof will be put on in the similar manner and style as the other sections.

During this school year, 'Savoorkes' Parent Café was completely refreshed with painting, trimming, and lighting. As well there have been several information sessions scheduled. The next two are on 'Reading and Rearing' and on 'Home and Holiday' suggestions. We hope you will take part in these!

The 'Savoorkes' location will also house the forthcoming Parent Infant Group, starting at the end of September 2011. The upstairs area next to the Children's House will become the prepared environment for the infants and their mum or dad. We will also utilise the Parent Café space for the sessions with mum or dad on child development. Application forms for the Parent and Infant Groups are available to download on our website.

There are no facility or programming changes to report for the Sterrebeek or Wezembeek-Oppem premises. They are both enjoying their gym rooms and attractive outdoor play areas.



Financial Administration

Our Business Administration office is now completely settled in their new premises in Tervuren on the first floor of Rotselaerlaan 3. This upstairs level of Rotselaerlaan 3 has been remodeled to house our Business Admin team, including office space and a conference room. We have also implemented a new customised finance software. This system is in place for all financial matters related to the 2011-2012 school-year. The system should not only enhance our internal operations but will upgrade the formatting and layout of the documents you will receive.

The school continues to offer reduced fees to parents who do not receive financial contribution from their companies. This is a very special aspect of the school, since these fees are the lowest of any international schools in Brussels. Please note that if you qualify for reduced fees that an invoice cannot be supplied. Invoices for tuition fees are only supplied to companies and sent directly to them. If your company is responsible for paying for the school fees, please indicate on your re-enrolment form the appropriate name of your company's "Accounts Payable" department.

Programs offered are the ones stated on the enclosed Tuition Fees Schedule. To further accommodate families' requests, an additional program has been added to the options of Toddler Community and Children's House. The option of 3 full days and 2 mornings can now be indicated on your re-enrolment form. There is a wide selection

of program schedules and we ask that families find a program within these options.

Attached you will also find the Financial Policy of the school. There have been slight changes in this policy, so we request that you read through it thoroughly.

The Tuition Fees for the 2011-2012 school year include any day excursions the students may take as a class for Children's Houses and Primary. If the class takes a multiple-day excursion, parents will be asked to contribute.

Marleen Moyson and Nicole Holleman are available full time should

you have queries on 02-768-0751 or by e-mail on montessori-admin@skynet.be.



Re-enrolment procedure

Please find enclosed your child's Re-Enrolment forms, Tuition Fees schedules and Administrative Policy. Your child's place is confirmed as soon as the school has received the re-enrolment fee and the corresponding enrolment form. During the re-enrolment period, all current families have priority over new families wishing to join the school. This period ends on 4th April 2010.

Requests for transferring school premises will be processed after the closure of the re-enrolment period and will be allocated according to places available and the order of re-enrolment. The order is determined by the date the re-enrolment fee has been received.

The re-enrolment fee is the same as last year: €450 for Toddler Community and Children's House children and €650 for Primary and Middle School students. This re-enrolment fee will be deducted from the second payment of the tuition fees of the 2011-2012 school year.

Specific details on the different age ranges:

Toddlers to Children's Houses:

'Graduating' Toddlers of 'Savoorké' can choose the Children's House of 'Savoorké', Sterrebeek, Wezembeek-Oppem or Tervuren 'Rotselaerlaan'. Not all Toddlers who graduate will fit in the 'Savoorké' Children's House. Therefore enrolments in the 'Savoorké' Children's House will be taken on a first come/first serve basis. The date of receipt of the Re-enrolment fee is the determining date.

Children's Houses to Primary:

Graduating Children's House children of Sterrebeek, Wezembeek-Oppem, Tervuren-'Savoorké', and Tervuren-'Rotselaerlaan' to Primary are recommended to enrol in the Primary of Tervuren.

Transfers to 'Hof Kleinenberg' are very limited. Priority is given to the children already enrolled in the school moving to Primary and their siblings. It is anticipated that the school will be full.

Primary to Middle School

Middle School is looking forward to their new classmates. The Upper Primary has already visited the MYP program and will do so again.

School bus

The school busses will be available again next school year, with an addition of a new Nissan school bus in heavenly blue. It has just arrived and will be used for the Middle Year Students who take the bus from 'Rotselaerlaan' Tervuren to 'Hof Kleinenberg' Woluwe. We are currently designing the new text for the outside of the bus!



Forthcoming Events:

The school year is actually only just half way, with spring time coming soon. So we have lots of social and informative happenings in the planning and hope to see you at many of these. The two remaining information evenings are:

- Learning Styles and Individualised Education
Tuesday March 1
Location: 'Wezembeek-Oppem'; 19.30
- Natural Sciences: 'C'est la vie,' Reaching integration through practice
Monday March 21
Location: 'Hof Kleinenberg'; 19.30

After Easter the Primary and Middle School will start with the show time preparations, so please keep these dates free! Children's Houses will hold Sing-alongs for children and parents as well. Finally, we host an End of Year Event where families of all schools are invited to come to 'Hof Kleinenberg'. This year we will have farm related demonstrations which will involve the whole family! We look forward to seeing you at these events in the coming weeks and months!

More information on future events, please see your Montessori calendar, the latest newsletter and the website: www.international-montessori.org



EASTER CAMP

at International Montessori 'Savoorké',
Bergestraat 24, 3080 Tervuren
April 11 to 15
From 9.00 to 16.00 hrs
(Extended hours possible till 17.00 hrs)
www.international-montessori.org

