



The Diploma Programme Core

All of our DP students have had an exciting, busy Term One filled with rich learning experiences across the subject disciplines. Our results continue to be significantly above world average and we are extremely proud of the quality of the Diploma Programme that we offer here at MES Cairo. As well as building strong foundations for university, our IB students are developing as well-rounded individuals, particularly through the Core elements of the IBDP.

TOK

Students have been exploring knowledge and 'how we know' in their Theory of Knowledge classes. Many IB graduates say that they believe



that TOK was one of the most valuable classes they took at school as it has such a profound impact on how they approach learning in all disciplines at school, at university and through life.

The Extended Essay

DP12 students have been finalising their 4000-word Extended Essays

while DP11 are starting to learn all about this crucial element of the Diploma. Each DP student has been building up his or her CAS portfolio based on a wide variety of Creativity, Activity and Service experiences. We hope you enjoy reading all about the IBDP's fantastic CAS residential in Fayoum, which took place in October, on pages 19-20 of this Messenger issue.

CAS

The IB Organisation's Mission Statement clearly emphasises the aim of educating young people to be the world's future leaders and peace makers and this is why the CAS element is so critical to an IB Education.

All of our students are involved in at least one long-term Service project connected to MES Cairo, for example Outreach and Community Service.

We hope you got a chance to hear many of our DP students performing in the CAScade Choir at the MES Cairo Seasonal Concert. I would like to take





this opportunity to thank Mr Harper for working so hard with his new CAScade Choir. Next term, many of our students will be expanding their creative awareness by participating in the Secondary Musical Production - both on the stage and behind the scenes.

Opting for the IB Diploma Programme



It is a very special year for our IB Diploma Programme – this year we welcome our largest ever DP11 cohort, with 33 year one students now happily embarked on their IBDP learning journey.

We are currently considering applications from highly enthusiastic students in Year and Grade 10. We would like to thank all those who

attended our recent Information Session in November. We enjoyed giving our visitors an insight into the IB Diploma Programme and what exactly it means to be an IBDP student.



Perspectives on the IB Diploma Programme

DP11 students have had a very positive start to the year. They tell me that they are often asked by members of the community and beyond - whether or not they feel they made the best choice for them personally by moving to the IBDP Section. I asked them to share their views with readers of the MESSenger.

“Every time anyone asks about the IB they link it to how hard they think it is and they have the understanding that you have to be a top student in order to excel in the programme. You might believe that I have no time to do anything but study. Some of you may be afraid to join the IB in fear of losing your social life. I know myself that I was in your position last year. I can definitely tell you it was the best decision I've made regarding my education so far. The change is very satisfying, and my social life has been unaffected. My after-school activities are a big part of my day, especially since the IB encourages you to participate in them in order to fulfil the CAS requirements. I participate in rugby, football, volleyball, the international award, outreach in Egypt, mentoring in primary and I'm also an athletic mentor. I find the time to go to the gym at least four times a week, and still manage to do everything I have to do and get good grades. IB is all about time management, and it's not as hard as you think it is. I'm not saying it isn't demanding, it is, but it's also definitely enjoyable and very doable. I'm genuinely glad I switched sections. It's better for me, I am becoming very well-rounded, and feel like I am being

prepared for university. We have a class called TOK where we question and debate everything around us, which helps expand your mind-set on certain aspects in life. Don't push it away because you're scared of it, take the risk; that is much better than regretting not doing it later.

Khaled Megahed (DP11Y)

“I'll start by saying that it is in fact, a challenging programme, but it's also very rewarding. I personally feel that I have already learnt so much, not only about

the subjects I take, but about the world around me as well. From my experience I can safely tell you that the IB really is more than just a diploma, it truly is a lifestyle, in that it doesn't only focus on the learning



you do inside a classroom, but the learning and experiences that you gain throughout all aspects of your life. It's holistic and really gets you to develop a new outlook on life through things such as CAS and TOK. Overall, the IB programme is a demanding, but beneficial programme which you will come out of with a well-rounded perspective on the world.”
Haya Shamaa (DP11R)

“I'm sure you've heard lots about the Diploma Programme. Anyone can do well in the DP if they adapt well and choose what they like most, and what they are passionate about. In fact, there's a whole core subject, which is based upon activity beyond the classroom that focuses on self-improvement. I myself was never a straight A student but after putting effort into the IB, I am doing well. I made sure to choose the subject areas I'm interested in, and not what seemed the easiest. On that I tell you: make sure you think this through and remember that it's not the way of learning you are used to, but rather a more engaging experience. You should expect to work hard, but with that comes great achievements and recognition.” **Hassan Gaber (DP11R)**

“Nothing good ever comes easy, you have to earn it. The IB programme appeals to universities and opens doors for you because universities look for students who are studious, and that's what the IB learner profile does for you, you are well prepared for the challenges that the world has for you in the future. Everyone can make time for something they're passionate about. The teachers are there to teach you and guide you as well as prepare you for an exam. The teachers will always keep an eye on you to make sure that you're keeping up. Our teachers ensure that all students are supported and aided in their journey throughout the Diploma Programme. We feel privileged to have teachers that care for us and take initiatives in ensuring a healthy mindset.” **Farida El Sonbaty (DP11Y)**

“To make this point quite clear, I was not a straight A student at IGCSE, yet here I am and I am doing very well. The IB is not an educational system that requires one to be able to regurgitate syllabus, but one that prefers students who enjoy general knowledge and have a taste for learning and adventure. Ms Sheehan told me that she always thought I was IB material after I answered a question on the Odyssey during an assembly!

Through the CAS programme and TOK, I have obtained new perspectives on the world around me and, in the process, have become more learned about how other people think, feel and live, as well as being introduced to their philosophies and perspectives on life. For me, this has been an enriching process in terms of learning and I have enjoyed all the experiences and viewpoints the IB has blessed me with.



Due to how close-knit our experiences are, my IB schoolmates feel more akin to an extended family rather than companions. We all learn together, experience the same adventures together and debate new viewpoints together. Much like an actual family, we are all supportive of each other and, in times of need, stand with one another. **Youssef Atta (DP11R)**

DP12 - Senior Year

Several of our DP12 students have already been offered places at top universities around the world. The future looks bright for all of our



Seniors, and we wish them all the very best of luck in their remaining applications to universities in the UK, USA, Canada and Egypt.

Joining the IBDP is to join a prestigious community of lifelong learners, both students and teachers. Being an IBDP student is a lifestyle, and our students and teachers enjoy the community spirit that this lifestyle engenders. IB Diploma Programme alumni around the world report that the IB has profound, long-lasting effects on their lives. It is an exciting pathway and one which requires much commitment, for as IB students all know, hard work brings about the very best rewards.

FOCUS ON IB SUBJECTS PSYCHOLOGY, ENGLISH AND BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Learning is fun in Psychology!

The AS and DP11 Psychologists kick-started their Psychology journey with an invitation to the annual Psychology ‘Mocktail speed-dating party’. Students were each given a famous Psychologist from History to research in terms of their name, age, date of birth as well as their



key beliefs and theories regarding Psychology.

Students had to investigate the research their Psychologist had conducted and their likes and dislikes.

Drinks, snacks, balloons and banners greeted students as they entered the speed-dating circuit. Each student playing the

role of a fundamental psychologist from History. Everyone from Freud, Zimbardo, Milgram and Loftus were there!

Students each had two minutes to tell one another about themselves; from Freud’s theories of personality to Skinner’s theories on conditioning. Loftus and her research on the reliability of memory, to Broca and his pioneering research into localisation of function in the brain. A wealth of psychological studies and theories were discussed. Students worked collaboratively using excellent communication skills to ensure they imparted their new-found knowledge upon one another.



Towards the end, students decided which psychologists were most like themselves. Through this, we were able to distinguish between the different psychological viewpoints that exist in attempting to explain human behaviour. The psychologists were divided into biological, behaviourists, sociocultural and cognitive. The theories linked to these areas were shared and discussed as a class. For the majority, each person left knowing they had a fellow ‘psychological’ partner that shared the same view as themselves. Only Freud was left to his own devices.

The aim of the lesson was to give students who are all brand new to Psychology, background information as to what the subject is about and the types of topics they will be studying. It also introduced students to key terms and definitions that they will come into contact with throughout the course.

Ms J Rainford – Head of Humanities, British Section

Learning is for Life in Group 1 English

In IBDP SL English Language A: Literature the students have made a great start to the year studying for Unit 1 ‘Works in Translation’ exploring two different texts translated from French into English. As part of the course we have been examining two critically acclaimed novels in ‘Madame Bovary’ by Gustave Flaubert and Albert Camus’ ‘The stranger’.

Within the classroom the students have taken full advantage of the opportunity to share ideas, opinions and analysis of the two texts to bring these two masterpieces to life. Activities have included group discussions, presentations, taking part in a Socratic seminar, developing essay writing skills (invaluable for not only this class but in preparation for life beyond MES Cairo) and many more engaging tasks.

Although it still early on in the course the students have exemplified the qualities that are required to succeed in the IB program by embodying that attributes of a successful IB learner. In discussions the students have shown themselves to be gifted inquirers through digging deep within the texts to look at difficult concepts such as the absurd, gender, societal expectations and behaviour. A great group spirit has been formed through students maintaining a caring attitude and open mind to new ideas and by respecting the opinions of others.

Looking ahead we will be moving on to the next set of texts to study which come in the form of drama texts namely, 'A view from the Bridge' by Arthur Miller and 'Cat on a hot tin roof' by Tennessee Williams.

Mr M O'Connor – IBDP11 English Teacher

Virtual Board Room in Business

I have very much enjoyed teaching the DP11 Business Management group; what has encouraged me is students' attitude to feedback and determination to improve on exam answers, based on specific command terms. Moreover, the students' debate in the virtual board room has also been very impressive, where a very informative discussion took place regarding business size and the advantages and disadvantages of growing or remaining small. Students are now about to start their next unit which is finance, and we will hopefully see budding accountants, starting to flourish. Well done.

Mr C Stock – Subject Coordinator for DP Business Management and Economics

IBDP Students of the Month – Learner Profile

This year our students of the month are being selected based on the attributes of the IB Learner Profile.

Each month of the academic year is focused on one attribute.



Congratulations to students who have excelled in these attributes so far this year.

DP11Y - Omar El Fiky, Jumana Khafaji, Tia Ghalban, Khaled Megahed, Nadine EL Nomrosy

DP11R - Ibrahim El Nemr, Farah Talaat, Nayra Soliman

DP12 - Lana EL Seesi, Laila Diab, Ali Attia



Selim El Badri – IBDP MESConian at Oxford University

We are extremely proud of Selim El Badri (Class of 2014) who is now studying at Oxford University in the UK. Selim recently visited his IBDP family to participate in our DP11 Parent Information session and to speak to current IB students about his IB learning journey.



Selim stressed to the students that although the IB is challenging, the rewards are great.

"I remember A-level vs IB dilemma very well. I chose the IB in the end and am so grateful for having done TOK and the EE – this really prepared me well for my degree studies and gave me a head start. I look back now and am thankful to MES Cairo for the quality education that it provided me with. I will never regret moving to MES for the final two years of my schooling. I really believe that the IB is world class and



that it offers breadth without compromising depth. You need to look beyond university as the IB produces students who can think critically, who can write fluently, who are culturally aware and can hold their own in any context, anywhere in the world.

Selim told our parents:

"The message I want to deliver is to have faith in your children and don't let anyone put them off. I owe my success first and foremost to my mother. From London, I first joined another school in Cairo where they refused to give me the opportunity to do IB. I was in disbelief, I had been deprived of the opportunity to enhance my learning and pursue my dreams. Imagine - your teachers telling you that you are not good enough. I was really upset but it was my mom who decided that I would move schools. She insisted that I do the IB and moved me to MES Cairo. Here they gave me the opportunity and welcomed me. I was awarded the diploma with 37 points. I graduated with a First Class Degree and am now studying for my Masters. I urge you to have faith in your kids even when at times, they don't have faith in themselves.



I personally feel very privileged to have accessed such a wonderful education and I will never forget my incredible teachers at MES Cairo."



Selim shared this inspirational quote with our IBDP students before he answered their many questions with great eloquence. It was an honour to welcome Selim back to our school. His motivational words

have proven that he truly is a first class person who is fully deserving of everything he achieves.

We will continue to watch his progress with great pride.

We wish the MES Cairo family a restful and peaceful holiday.

Ms S Sheehan – Assistant Head/IBDP Coordinator

INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE (IBDP) SCHOLARSHIP WINNER 2017-2018

Lana Alla-El-Din El Seesi (DP12Y)

We were delighted to announce Lana El Seesi as our IBDP Scholarship winner for the academic year 2017-18. Lana gained 5 A*s in her IGCSE exams at the end of Year 10. A high achieving academic, she also enjoys the more creative worlds of art, music and theatre – in fact and she has a real passion for performing on the stage. Articulate and confident, she is an excellent communicator and public speaker and has a hidden talent for storytelling. Her favourite subject has always been Mathematics but she has a quiet passion for Art too. An impressive all-rounder, dedicated IB student



and true achiever, Lana is proving to be a fine ambassador for MES Cairo.

Lana joined MES Cairo back in 2008 from an Arabic speaking school in Jeddah and soon became a popular member of Year Three Violet class. When she first joined us, she was disappointed to find herself behind her peers in English. Her determination and resilience showed from a young age as she soon became a top achiever in English. Lana told me that, “this experience shaped into who I am today because it taught me that there are no definite barriers and no need to fear difficulties or complications. You should always be confident when facing challenges and always believe that you can progress.” In fact, she was so determined to improve her command of spoken and written English that the following year Lana got a main part in the Year Four production as Christopher Columbus!



A caring philanthropist, Lana is a great example of a truly balanced student who is able to excel in academics without compromising her participation in a wide variety of other interests. She has been a dedicated MES Cairo Pioneer through Key Stages Two and Three. She has been a constant member of NJHS and NHS throughout her Secondary experience, and is always a lead participant in fundraising projects and events.

She volunteered through the MES Cairo Community Service programme to support younger students in the Library and also in Primary. She has stayed after school on many afternoons to help primary students in the music and storytelling ASAs. This year she is one of our Student Mentors for Year Eight. She is a regular helper in the MES Cairo Outreach and Adopt a School projects, working hard to make things a better for some of the less fortunate children in our community. Away from school, Lana spends time volunteering to help Syrian refugee families here in Egypt.



When she is not helping others, Lana can be found smashing out aces on the tennis court, or playing great music on her guitar. She has also found the time to complete the International Award at both Bronze and Silver level. MUN has been a huge part of Lana’s personal and academic journey. Lana has been fortunate enough to have participated in several MUN conferences both locally and internationally. She recently participated in the MUM Moscow conference with great success.

Lana is an excellent role model and a well-balanced all-round achiever. She is applying to top universities: Imperial, McGill, Bath, UCL, Leeds, Bristol and Lancaster. We will be watching her progress with pride and we know she will make a positive difference wherever she goes.

Ms S Sheehan – Assistant Headteacher/IBDP Coordinator

