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NEWSLETTER

Friday, 23rd September, 2016

FROM THE ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER



Dear Parents,

At MEF IS one of our strengths is the open communication channels within the school community. We always believe in two way communication. We value your opinion and appreciate it very much when you share it with us.

Timely and professional communication between home and school is essential to keep parents informed and to support teaching and learning; it is also essential to establishing and maintaining positive and open relationships based on trust and mutual understanding. There are a number of communication channels the school uses, including direct contact between individual staff and individual students/families (meetings, email, telephone), school newsletters, school websites, SMS, and Language Ambassadors.

Correspondence

MEF IS encourages families to contact staff when they have questions or concerns. The school favors email over telephone calls, as it is not always possible to reach staff via the telephone. The below points indicate whom to contact when you have a question:

What if I have questions or concerns about...?

- A specific course (Teacher)

- Attendance, behavior, overall academic progress, or discipline (Deputy Principal)
- Health or safety (Deputy Principal)
- Athletics, clubs, or after school activities (Deputy Principal)
- Events (Deputy Principal)
- The curriculum in general (Academic Dean / PYP coordinator)
- Field trips (Academic Dean/ Deputy Principal)
- Cambridge examinations (SS Academic Dean, Mr. Ringo)
- Examination weeks/schedules (SS Academic Dean, Mr. Ringo)
- The IB Diploma or IB Certificate Programme (SS Academic Dean, Mr. Ringo)
- Student records , enrollment letters, etc. (Principal)
- Any of the above items but I could not resolve my question or I have a question about something that is not on this list (Principal)
- For feedback, suggestions, or communication regarding MEF International School (Assistant General Manager, Mufide van der Hoeven)

We kindly ask our parents to follow this communication process to ensure clear and consistent dialogue between the school and families.

Staff strive to respond to email correspondence received during the business week within 24 hours. Please understand responses to messages sent over the weekend or a holiday might take longer than 24 hours.

FROM THE PRIMARY SCHOOL PRINCIPAL...



Over the last few weeks we have had some great events that have celebrated our learning or allowed for collaboration and communication. In September the whole school joined together for our Sports Day and cheered each other on in the gym with tug of war and relays.



Grade 5 and the preK classes went on field trips as part of their units of inquiry. Such excursions are an important part of making learning extend beyond the borders of the classroom and are one way we bring our school action statements to life.



Last week we had Grade 3 present their learning from their first unit of inquiry at our assembly. They did such a magnificent job of sharing their performance art that we were amazed at their confidence. We love to give our students such opportunities and they always make us proud.



On Saturday we held our parent teacher conferences which gave us the time to share about your child's learning and how they have settled into school. It was so good to see so many of you here.

Today was our fabulous UN Day Parade which celebrated our cultures.

FROM THE SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPAL...



Autumn is here and the first exam week is just around the corner (October 31 - November 4). The Massachusetts Institute of Technology Center for Academic Excellence (MIT ACADEX) has a helpful guide to exam preparation on their website (<http://web.mit.edu/uaap/learning/test/testtypes.html>).

Here is an executive summary of their recommendations:

1. Familiarize yourself with the type of examinations you will have (format, types of questions, expectations, etc.); you might wish to review their helpful section on test types, as it breaks down strategies to the various types of questions (essays, multiple choice, true/false, etc.)
2. Understand the parameters of the exams (date, length, topics covered, weight, etc.); review the curriculum and study guides, as well as your notes and other pertinent materials
3. Create a study plan that prioritizes your exams and provides you with the time to study adequately and on multiple occasions (this section is particularly rich in detail and deserves your perusal)
4. Before the test: check all the details about the test (period, length, content, etc.) and ensure you have these clear in your mind; review the night before and make sure you get a good night's sleep and have all of your materials ready for the exam; have a good breakfast before the exam!
5. Now the time has come. There are some important pointers here:
 - a) listen carefully to the instructions;
 - b) read the instructions carefully;
 - c) review the exam to estimate how long you have for each section;
 - d) answer the easiest sections first;
 - e) do not allocate too much time to problems with low point values: do your best and continue;
 - f) show all of your work;
 - g) monitor the time and leave yourself enough time to check your work

For more information, please see the MIT ACADEX website.

My best wishes to all of our students during the exam period. May you all enjoy success! For more exam pointers, please see below for Mr. Ringo's section.

PRIMARY COUNSELLING



In PSE lessons, Kinder students have worked on how to make and maintain friendships. Pre S students have been working on About Me Booklet, Pre-K students have been working on my family and me booklet, Grade 1 students have worked on “my city, my country, my world,” Grade 2 students have worked on Time management, Grade 3 and 5 have worked on how to express their feelings. We discussed what makes us happy, sad and angry. We have worked on the ways of expression of feelings and they have produced different products about feelings. Grade 4 students have worked on needs, wants, rights and responsibilities. **Pelin Uster**
usterp@mefis.k12.tr

SECONDARY COUNSELLING



During PHSE and homeroom lessons our students have been focusing on mindfulness related to study skills. This technique, which can be applied in all areas of our lives helps us to maintain a positive, creative and active approach. As we lead to our first examination period these techniques can increase success.

Tracey Brereton, Secondary School
Counsellor

OVERSEAS COLLEGE COUNSELLING

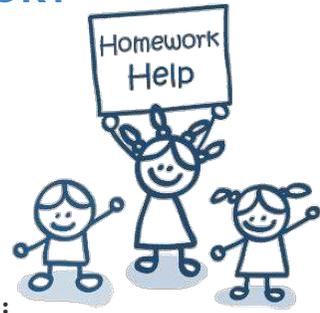


Students (and parents) sometimes inquire as to the difference between the SAT and ACT. They are both external examinations measuring academic achievement. The SAT measures mathematics, reading and writing, with an optional essay. The ACT assesses English, mathematics, reading, and science, with an optional writing test. Thus, the main difference is there is no science test in the SAT. However, the SAT also offers subject tests for students to sit in order to indicate the level of knowledge in specific areas, including science.

THE PRIMARY SCHOOL LEARNING SUPPORT

Helping your child learn at home

Homework is an important part of your child's learning. It not only supports what your child is learning about here at MEFIS, it also gives you a chance to become involved in the process.



Here are a few top tips for good homework habits:

Where - find the right place at home to do the homework. Children learn and work best in different ways, this may be alone in their bedroom, or in the kitchen whilst dinner is being prepared. Ideally, this place should be a calm, bright area set up with everything you know you and your child need. Keep distractions to a minimum by turning the TV off and keeping music low to help you and them concentrate.

How - make sure you are aware how our school is teaching your child. Teaching methods change, so don't assume you can show them how you used to do things. You can always contact your child's homeroom teacher to ask for guidance, if you need it. If your child speaks English as a second language or receives additional learning support you can also contact the ELL teacher (Ms. Elif) or learning support teacher (Ms. Kate), for advice.

Routine - some children work best after school (following a snack and short play!); others may prefer to wait until after dinner. Whenever suits your child, stick to a regular time as many children respond well to routines.

Fuel - make sure they have had a healthy snack or dinner before working so they are less likely to be distracted!

Talk - find the time to discuss your child's homework with them; this will show them you think it's important, and may help them feel confident about what they are doing. If they ask you questions, it's a good idea to help by explaining how to look up information for themselves rather than just providing the answer! If you can see they are always struggling, this may be a sign that they need a little extra help in a particular area or subject.



Further reading

<http://www.pta.org.uk/Parents/Supporting-my-childs-learning>

THE SECONDARY SCHOOL MFL DEPARTMENT

Bonjour! ¡Hola! Welcome to our MFL newsletter.

We hope to bring you information about upcoming events and key dates for this academic year in our Languages Department.

This year our Languages Department is staffed by 6 fantastic well-qualified language teachers, and we teach French and Spanish up to the final year of the IB programme.

Lately, our team has been working hard, supporting students to learn about the Spanish and Francophone languages and cultures in a variety of ways, encouraging them to be creative and to take charge of their learning.



COMING SOON

EXAM WEEK 1 (31st Oct.- 4th Nov. 2016)

Tips for students:

- ★ Make post-it with vocabulary you find difficult to remember and put them around your room or house, a few seconds going over something throughout the day will really make a difference. Push yourself further and write short paragraphs to memorise.
- ★ Use the study guides provided by your language teacher to prepare well for your exams

MFL WEEK (14th Nov.- 18th Nov. 2016)

We hope our students will look forward to the variety of linguistic and cultural activities taking place during MFL week. Activities will involve creating an altar for "el dia de los muertos" (day of the Dead), organising a French breakfast, setting up a pub quiz about Francophone and Hispanophone countries and much more!

MFL FIELD TRIPS (10th June- 16th June 2017)

The MFL team is currently in the process of finalising the itineraries and arrangements for our France and Spain field trips from Grade 6 to Grade 11. More details will be coming out shortly from Languages teachers.

PRIMARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM



Dear Parents,

The IB programme encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

We at MEF IS support international mindedness and the school curriculum reflects this. As our school community comes from over 50 different countries it is important for us to acknowledge this within the classroom.

An internationally minded person strives to demonstrate the IB Learner Profile attributes and we encourage our students and community to demonstrate these attributes actively. Teachers actively promote discussions about local and world issues while making connections between the student's home life, school life and life around the world.

The past few weeks we have been focusing on the learner profile quality of being effective and active communicators. We are teaching the children to understand and express ideas and information confidently and creatively in more than one language and in a variety of modes of communication. We have been focusing on simple greetings- Hello,how are you and goodbye. This greeting and response can be said in any language and we still understand it's meaning.

In a PYP school, we embrace different languages and try and use our voice to communicate effectively while demonstrating we care about others by acknowledging when people speak to us.

It is our mission to gain an understanding of our self and how we learn whilst also recognising the commonalities and differences amongst us. This is to be embraced. What a rich life we lead when we can respectfully live our life purposefully and when we are empowering others to be themselves also.



UN Day Parade

SECONDARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM



Examinations: Steps toward Success - The footsteps of the rapid march to Exam Week 1 slated for October 31-November 4 are audible. This arduous trek can be lonely. However, it doesn't have to be this way. If students take certain precautions, this walk can be transformed into a coordinated march that etches desired marks into gradebooks.

Basic Tips: Students should

Learn intrinsically rather than extrinsically; Revise skills and topics over a long period of time several times per week; Take regular breaks to maximize levels of concentration; Chart which subjects have been studied, studying each subject several times per week; Utilize a variety of study methods to learn more (e.g. rewrite notes, highlight notes, solve problems, use flashcards); Practice exam-style questions; and Visit teachers as questions arise.

Reducing exam anxiety: Students should

Approach the exam with calculated confidence by being prepared; Choose a comfortable location for taking the test; Exercise, eat healthy and sleep the night before the exam to sharpen the mind; Read directions carefully, budgeting time on the exam; Skip questions not remembered; and Never panic, using the entire time (Study Guides and Strategies at <http://www.studygs.net/tstprp8.htm>)

So, there you have it - the pathway to success. We wish your child the very best of luck on the examinations!



Edvard Munch



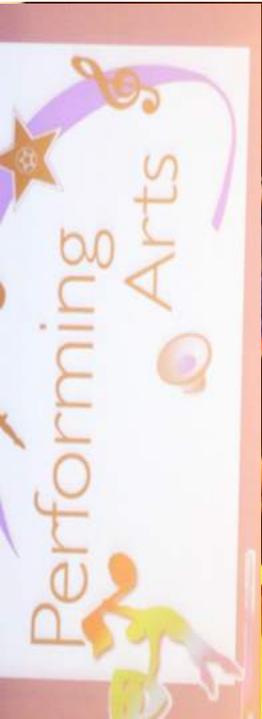
usnews.com

PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWS AND EVENTS

Sports Day - 23 September



Grade 3 Assembly Performing Arts



SECONDARY SCHOOL NEWS AND EVENTS

Secondary students have been enjoying working with one another in a variety of contexts!



Skills Day



Gr. 9/10 Bolu Trip



Sports Day



PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION

Dear MEF IS Community,

This past Saturday we spent the day selling cakes, crepes and drinks at the PTA Bake Sale during the Parent Teacher Conferences. We wanted to give a big **THANK YOU!!** to all of you who supported the bake sale by donating delicious cakes and drinks, volunteering to assist at the PTA table, and of course eating! It was so nice to see so many of you stop by the table. With your help the PTA was able to raise gross proceeds of 1210TL!

Net proceeds will go towards supporting one or more of the following designated charities: Project Lift, Ayazağa School, the Blind Association (Körleri Eğitim ve Kalkındırma Derneği) and the MEFIS Animal Care Club.

UPCOMING EVENTS

25 October - Orientation Walk with Monica Fritz for Parents

Monica Fritz is a photographer from New York who has lived in Istanbul for 25 years. She will lead these walks for MEFIS parents. If you want to join her walks, please e-mail her directly at info@alternativecitytours.com.

Starting at Taksim, we visit the quaint neighborhoods of Cihangir, Çukurcuma (the antiques quarter) and walk over to Galata and Karaköy with a stop for lunch in the ex-Ottoman Bank where we will go over maps, Turkish phrases and other details of daily life. We will also stop in a local mosque, some hidden restaurants with spectacular Bosphorus views and much more. Cost: 60TL (pay Monica in cash on the day of the walk).

27 October - Scary Movie Night for Primary School

PTA will screen Casper's Scare School for Grades 1-3 and Monster House for Grades 4-5. Permission slips with further details will be sent out on Monday.

2 November - PTA Executive Board Meeting at 13:30-14:30 (venue TBA).

Come to this meeting if you are interested in joining the PTA Board or if you are interested in hearing what we do.

15 November - Golden Horn Walk with Monica Fritz for Parents

We will meet in Karaköy to board the ferry up the old Greek and Jewish neighborhoods of Ayyansaray, Balat and Fener. We will visit two ancient Byzantine churches, one with 12th century mosaics. Bring your museum card, if you have one, cameras or phones and good walking shoes. Cost: 60TL (pay Monica in cash on the day of the walk).

Join our Facebook page ['MEF IS-Istanbul PTA Community'](#) where you can receive PTA happenings and updates or **contact us on pta@mefis.k12.tr** with any queries or suggestions. We look forward to seeing you at our events!

Sincerely,

MEF IS PTA

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In doing so, the school endeavours to empower its students with a life-long passion for learning. Students are encouraged to become confident, balanced and socially responsible individuals who will contribute positively to local and global communities.”

For the latest news and events check out our website:

<http://www.mefis.k12.tr>

MEF INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

“Building Bridges between Countries and Cultures”



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