



PROMOTING EFFECTIVE LEARNING

Central to the IPS Senior Curriculum is a commitment to a liberal and humane education such as has underpinned the development of Western civilisation for centuries. We are fundamentally conservative in our educational outlook and we believe in the primacy of the traditional academic subjects as essential devices through which our pupils can build an understanding of the world.

Although we recognise that the acquisition of skills is of critical importance in the fulfilment of our School Aims, we hold also that the assimilation of knowledge is of inestimable value. In order to support our pupils as they acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed, we reflect continuously on our practice in order to make our pupils' learning more effective. Our work in this area is led by Paolo Canonica, Master in Charge of Learning, who works in consort with the Heads of Faculty and individual subject teachers in order to promote good practice and ensure a consistently high quality of teaching.

Underpinning our approach to the promotion of effective learning is a belief that pupils learn best when they actively process what they are learning. This approach aims to build pupils' understanding rather than simply 'spoon-feed' facts which will be forgotten shortly after the examination. To achieve this, teachers push pupils to think about where and how their newly acquired knowledge fits with their existing ideas, and build learning opportunities which require pupils to apply their knowledge in real-life situations.

Teachers work continuously to develop ways to support the pupils. In this sense, our approach to teaching and learning is constantly evolving, taking as its frame of reference not just the latest findings in psychological and pedagogical research, but also from the longer view of history and its venerable dialogue on the makings of a 'good education'.

Beyond the three processes, we further recognise that in order to be effective learners, pupils also need to possess appropriate attitudes towards learning and to School. As such, we seek to create a school environment in which learning is understood to be of paramount importance. Here, the Tutorial Programme, Assemblies, the Co-curricular Programme and the very culture of our School are just as important as that which happens in the classrooms.

In particular, we have distilled recent educational research in this area into five habits of mind which we know to be of tremendous importance in promoting good learning. From the earliest opportunity we therefore exhort all our pupils to:

- Be clear
- Think differently
- Not give up
- Consider consequences
- Go for it!

These phrases and, even more importantly, these dispositions suffuse the IPS curriculum and inform its entire approach to learning.