

THE BRITISH SCHOOL, RIO DE JANEIRO

INTRODUCTION

The British School (TBS) was founded in 1924 and has been emerging in recent years as one of the leading British-based curriculum schools in Brazil and Latin America. For almost half a century The British School remained a small institution serving the needs of the British expatriate population, mainly at Primary level. The school now has some 2170 pupils (aged 2 to 18) on three sites (Botafogo, Urca and Barra). The school's initial expansion was associated with the development of the International Baccalaureate Diploma in 1991 and the consequent effect of providing a full education to age eighteen for both expatriate and local families. The increasingly strong reputation of the school ensures that demand for places remains high and the Board of Governors has a robust and measured strategy to meet demand through an appropriate building and refurbishment programme.



Botafogo Site

The present student population consists largely of Brazilians (around 85%) with British, Commonwealth and American children forming the majority of the international students. The school is an independent, co-educational and non-profit making school with an education staff of over 270, including teachers and assistants, a few of whom are part-time. The school is not a bilingual school in the traditional sense but is bi-cultural and takes advantage of its location in Brazil whenever appropriate. English is the language of instruction and most of our Brazilian students display an excellent command of the language. Portuguese is taught as a specialist subject throughout the school at different levels from beginner to native speaker.

The Primary sections of TBS began trialing units of the International Primary Curriculum (IPC) in 2012 and the full programme has now been implemented throughout the Primary sections. The IPC encourages enquiry-based and investigative learning yet promotes strong numeracy and literacy skills through separate stands of core subjects.

In the Secondary sections, the curriculum is broadly based on the UK programmes for Key Stage 3 leading to International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) examinations and the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma in the last years of the senior school. The British School is developing a tradition for academic success, establishing a very good record in both IGCSE and IB examinations and most students go on to study at universities in Brazil, North America and the UK.

The Lower Primary classes in TBS (ages 2 to 7 years) comprise: Pre-Nursery; Nursery; Reception; Infant 1; Infant 2. However, TBS has traditionally numbered its Upper Primary and

Secondary classes slightly differently to the UK with Class 1 equivalent to UK Year 3, culminating in Class 11 at the end of secondary, equivalent to Year 13 in the UK, or US Grade 12!



Barra Site



Urca Site

ICT is being developed across the school and is becoming employed as an integrating tool in normal lessons as well as being taught as a separate subject. Library and media services have also been undergoing development in recent years and are playing a more integral part of school life. The school has placed heavy emphasis on the performing arts, and music, art and drama have developed strongly in both the taught and extra-curricular contexts.



An outdoor activities programme is also extremely popular – with large numbers of students pursuing The Duke of Edinburgh’s International Award - and a wide range of fieldtrips and international visits take place. A House System is well established in the Upper Primary and Senior sections and is designed to promote opportunities for healthy competition in a range of activities. In the Senior School, Model United Nations is thriving and a very active community service programme is established. Despite its lack of modern sports facilities the school is also remarkably competitive in local sporting competitions. This reflects the hard work, community spirit and strong sense of purpose that pervades the school.



MUN 2015



Duke of Edinburgh’s International Award expeditions

There is a significant demand for places in The British School. The Botafogo Site (from 3 to 12 years of age) is not far from the centre of Rio and lies in the shadow of the statue of Christ for which the city is so famous. The site currently has some 840 pupils (from 3 to 12 years of age) and over 100 teaching staff and has always had an excellent reputation for its organisation, high academic standards and quality of teaching. The Botafogo and Urca sites have many year groups currently over-subscribed and there are waiting lists for places in most year groups. The pressure on space has been great and the school has been undergoing the whole-scale redevelopment of its facilities. These developments include improvements on the original site in Botafogo where the Primary School is situated along with a 4-storey building project and a Pre-Nursery facility.



Botafogo Site



Urca Site

The Secondary School facility was opened in February 2000 in Urca, a high status residential area of Rio de Janeiro. The Urca Site (13 to 18 years) has some 480 students working towards IGCSE examinations in various subjects and the prestigious IB Diploma. Currently this section has around 60 teaching staff recruited both locally and from overseas. In the last three years of the Secondary School students also undertake the Brazilian Extension Course (BEC) which supplements some of the IGCSE and IB programmes to ensure that students meet the requirements for High School graduation within the Brazilian system.

A new school unit (from Pre-Nursery to Year 13) was opened in Barra, a western suburb of Rio, in February 2006 and now has over 900 pupils. Whereas the Botafogo and Urca sites are clearly urban, the Barra site is in a beautiful location and was originally a sports club. The development of the Barra site has involved converting the original sports club buildings and constructing blocks for the Primary students. Currently, design and planning for a purpose-built unit for the Secondary section is underway and the new buildings should be completed by 2017. The Barra site has steadily and progressively increased in student enrolment and the first cohort of IB Diploma students commenced their studies in February 2013 and have graduated in December 2014. Ultimately, it is envisaged that the Barra site will accommodate up to 1200 students across both Primary and Secondary.



For students experiencing learning difficulties, TBS has well-staffed Learning Support Departments on each of the three sites. Support is available for students with specific learning difficulties as well as for those pupils whose difficulties are English language-related. Strategies, specifically in support of the more-able, are currently being defined and will be implemented within the principles of 'enhanced learning'. Recently, two full-time and two part-time Educational Psychologists have been appointed to provide support to students with emotional and learning needs.

The School places a very strong emphasis on staff development with associated professional performance appraisal. One percent of all fee income is reserved to support staff development, creating a generous annual budget. A dedicated Staff Development Coordinator leads the programme and two experienced teachers run a very effective training programme for assistant teachers. One important element of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is a growing relationship with certain UK universities, particularly for Masters programmes. The Heads of Site also work with the Staff Development Coordinator to organise weekly after-school inset. TBS has proudly hosted its first Education Conference in March/April 2015, "Inspiring Learning: Taking the Initiative", with leading speakers and presenters in the field of education. Around 400 delegates from Brazil, Latin America and beyond, along with all of our own education staff attended the conference.

The School's overall development is driven by its statements of Vision, Mission and Philosophy. A whole-school Strategic Plan sets out intents and strategy for up to the next ten years. This is backed up by long term development plans for Education, Human Resources, Facilities and Finance. A set of agreed School Goals, approved by the Board, are developed each year and the Director is accountable for seeing that these are achieved. You will find the School Goals for 2015 on the School website (www.britishschool.g12.br)

The Director of The British School is a member of the Latin American Heads Conference (LAHC) and attends its annual conference as well as taking opportunities to network with schools across the region. LAHC also provides staff development opportunities for teachers and some opportunities, such as MUN for students.

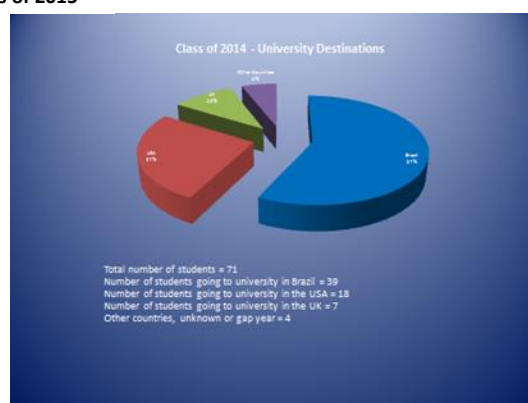
In addition to being an IB World School, The British School has been accredited by the Council of International Schools (CIS) since 1999 and is visited by teams from CIS every 5 years in order to assess the quality of operations and programmes across all sites.



Urca Site Graduates – Class of 2015



Barra Site Graduates – Class of 2015



John Nixon MBE
Director
February 2016

