

THE BRITISH SCHOOL, RIO DE JANEIRO

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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 2200 students (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 around 300, 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 trialling 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 strands 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 has a tradition of 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 well-used across the school and is an integral tool in normal lessons as well as being taught as a separate subject. Library and media services play an important 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.



TBSRJ MUN



The Duke of Edinburgh’s International Award

There has been 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 around 800 students and over 120 educational staff and has always had an excellent reputation for its organisation, high academic standards and quality of teaching. Some year groups in the Botafogo and Urca sites are currently over-subscribed. The pressure on space has been great and the school has been undergoing redevelopment of its facilities, where feasible.



Botafogo Site



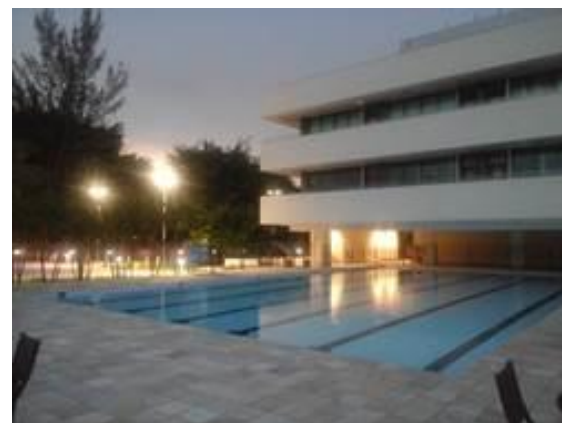
Urca Site

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 440 students working towards IGCSE examinations in various subjects and the 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 Class 11) was opened in Barra, a western suburb of Rio, in February 2006 and now has around 1000 students. 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. The construction of a purpose-built unit for the Secondary section was opened in July 2017. It was used as the base for Team GB at the Rio Olympics. 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 graduated in December 2014.



Barra Site



For students experiencing additional learning needs, 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 students whose difficulties are English language-related. Strategies, including the support of the more-able and EAL students, are currently being reviewed and redefined. Educational Psychologists appointed for each site provide support to students with emotional and learning needs.

The School places a very strong emphasis on staff development with associated professional performance appraisal. Around 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 experienced staff 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 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 Second Conference, “Crossing Frontiers in Leadership and Language”, was held in April 2017 and our Third Conference, “Think, Imagine, Inspire” took place in April 2019. The conference now takes place every other year although the COVID-19 pandemic meant that the 2021 conference (Reflecting, Redefining, Reimagining) was online.

The School’s overall development is driven by its statements of Vision, Mission and Core Values. 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.

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. The British School was most recently fully re-accredited in January 2018 by a large team of CIS Evaluators, where the school met or exceeded all 57 standards, with no conditions set. The school is in the process of COBIS membership.



Urca Site Graduates



Barra Site Graduates

University Destinations

FINAL UNIVERSITY DESTINATIONS

- UK 7%
- USA 42%
- Brazil 35%
- Other 7%
- Undecided 9%



John Nixon MBE
Director
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