The International School of Monaco

SCHOOL SPECIAL

Experts in multi-lingual education

When it comes to multilingualism, the International School of Monaco (ISM) is a world leader. This goes hand in hand with a diverse international student body. By the end of primary, English and French are well established in the brain. This is when the third language is introduced. The Secondary curriculum requires a third language, which can be Spanish or a number of Mother Tongue classes that ISM offers. These classes are designed for students who speak an additional language at home. Together with other students of similar nationality, they complete in-depth coursework on reading, writing and culture.

Currently, ISM offers these Mother Tongue courses in Italian, German, Russian, and of course, French. Mr. Bonson emphasises an important point that is sometimes forgotten or neglected in formless who speak another language at home: literacy. "We have four very well-stocked, multi-lingual libraries," he says, "and they are very popular with the students, who are avid readers." He is also emphatic about the goal of complete literacy in both taught languages and those spoken at home.

It is a common problem with multi-national children who speak another language at home to not read or write it to a fluent level. Many times, this is simply due to parents not considering the importance of literacy because the child speaks fluently. Tania Osborne, an ISM parent tells us: "Bringing up bilingual children is a privilege although it could become a struggle when they try to preserve their mother tongues. I'm Italian and my husband Australian and we both always spoke to our daughters in our mother tongues while living in France. But we never taught our girls how to read and write in Italian. When I saw that ISM proposed Italian as a third language support for mother-tongue students, I thought it was pointless because they already spoke perfectly. What I didn't know, was how excellent the language department at ISM and now both my daughters have reached a level of reading and writing in Italian that they would have not otherwise reached."

International Exams

Academic rigor is one of the foundations of ISM. Students sit for numerous international exams, including IGCSE (University of Cambridge) and IB Diploma, which offers the French Baccalaureate (IB) because it requires the knowledge of two languages. There is also the option, if the student has two first languages, to pursue a "bilingual diploma" with their two first languages plus a third. For students who may want to return to their home country for university, the "bilingual diploma" can give an extra advantage not only in university applications but also for future employers

This has been invaluable to many students who have graduated from ISM. Laura Schleuth is a German parent with three children at ISM, one of whom has already graduated: "My eldest daughter was able to take Higher Level German in her IB and then went to university in Linz, Austria. She speaks five languages today and uses all of them! Now my son is taking Higher Level German for his IB and hoping to study in Vienna next year. My third and youngest child has chosen Spanish for her third language, so it really depends on the individual child. Most of all, I feel this is a gift you give to your children, whether they go into our family business or choose their own path, they have their languages and are really cosmopolitan young people with a totally international outlook."

In today's world, the ability to speak multiple languages is becoming a necessity. Multilingual skills enhance cognitive abilities, memory, coordination, and emotional intelligence. The multi-lingual school allows students to have a well-rounded education and helps them develop intellectual understanding, facilitate harmony and are highly valued by employers. ISM graduates are working in every field ranging from Europe and North America and around 90% speak at least three languages.

The International School of Monaco

Established in 1994

- Students aged 3 to 18 years from 50 different countries
- Internationally accredited bilingual programme
- Wide range of extra-curricular activities
- Excellent IGCSE and IB results
- Strong pastoral care provision

to find out what ISM can do for your child

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