

ISA Awards 2022 Case Study: Excellence and Innovation in Early Years



INDEPENDENT
SCHOOLS
ASSOCIATION

CASE STUDY: DWIGHT SCHOOL LONDON

DATE: MARCH 2023



DWIGHT SCHOOL LONDON
Celebrating 50 Years in Education

Background to the School

Dwight School London, formally known as Woodside Park International School and the North London International School, opened its doors in 1885 and after a few name changes, has rightly gained authorisation and reputation as one of the leading International Baccalaureate World Schools in the UK and is a school that values diversity and innovation. They are blessed with a wonderfully diverse community with families from many countries and cultures and are proud to provide their children with an environment where they can be themselves and learn to respect and celebrate each other, enjoying their many similarities and differences.



Little Lions Nursery is part of the fabric of Dwight School London, who have been supporting children's learning for nearly 50 years. They are one of the few schools in the country to offer an early years International Baccalaureate education, which is focused on letting children's curiosity guide them through their early exploration of the world and creating caring, resourceful and creative young people. This philosophy and practice seamlessly flows into the Reception year where opportunities to investigate and explore enhance their learning opportunities. Technology is also integrated into their curriculum which is enthusiastically engaged with.



Dwight School London has embraced innovation in the early years and is focused on promoting inquiry and creativity through the use of technology. A number of initiatives have been implemented and each child is seen and valued as a unique individual with a personal learning journey.

Dwight School London was very pleased to receive the ISA Award for Excellence and Innovation in the Early Years in November 2022.



Chris Beddows
Head of School



AIMS

- To have the foundation of the curriculum in our three educational pillars of personalised learning, community and global vision.
- To create a culture of innovation to support children's learning and help them inquire about the world.
- To enable students from an early age to be inquiring, knowledgeable and caring, while fostering their academic growth.
- To create a purposeful classroom where children learn while deeply engaged in their play.
- To value the thoughts and feelings of each child.
- To actively promote an outdoor curriculum, encompassing Forest School and so offer all children the opportunity to learn through experience.
- To develop each child's self esteem within a woodland setting.
- To use the language of technology to help all children look at the world with new lenses.

ACTIONS

- We use the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (IBPYP) within the Early Years and Nursery.
- To plan the effective use of technology within the everyday experiences of the students.
- We taught the students how to use digital cameras and microscopes to look at minibeasts and at plants to learn more about these living things.
- We taught the students to use the easi-scope camera (digital microscope camera), to explore nature in detail.
- They have also used these cameras to take photos of the minibeasts we found in our garden, investigating and learning their characteristics. That also helped children to make drawings full of details.
- In our Innovation lessons, our early years students have been practising pre-coding skills using Sphero Indi, a robot that helps children learn how to code and solve problems.
- Within Forest School lessons our early years students learn new skills and further develop their understanding of the natural world. They have the opportunity to learn how to use simple tools and have the agency to choose the activity they want to do, scaffolded to look after themselves.
- During our Steam Experience, our early years students were introduced to the Design Thinking Process and invited to create their own prototypes to find solutions to deforestation.
- We provide daily opportunities for them to be engaged and explore through play, as well as sensory, craft and other enriching activities.



OUTCOMES

- Our Nursery and Reception students have explored and learnt how to use different tools that facilitate and help expand their learning possibilities.
- Our students have shown that they are learning how to become digital citizens: "Pupils' ICT skills are exemplary and expertly applied to all aspects of the curriculum." (ISI)
- Each student's encouraged inquisitiveness and creativity supports them as they learn new concepts.
- New learning engagements, integrating and using technology and innovative practices have been successful.
- Each student's knowledge base has been broadened through the variety of opportunities and experiences made available to them.
- Students' skills across all areas of learning are extremely well-developed.
- Students are independent thinkers and have inquiring minds, due to independent learning being rooted in the school's IB philosophy.
- From a very early age, students are not afraid to ask pertinent and probing questions when seeking a solution for themselves.
- The positive impact of this innovation in our early years has impacted our students as they progress through the school as in all years they are highly creative in how they apply their knowledge and they demonstrate greater understanding of often difficult concepts.

NEXT STEPS

We have been able to create an environment where we can nurture students' creativity and passion for learning within our Nursery and Reception year groups that is impactful on their continued journey through the school. By teaching them to learn how to learn and to select and use the tools they need to inquire about the world around them, without putting limitations on the resources we make available to them, we believe that we help our students become global and responsible citizens who will change the world. We intend to continue this journey of engagement and embrace new technologies as they become available. We will continue to follow the interest of our students and engage them in a wide variety of experiences.

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