

BORDEAUX INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL
NEWSLETTER / BULLETIN D'INFORMATION - N° 6 - FEB 2010
2nd Term 2009 – 2010

ACCREDITATION OF BRITISH SCHOOLS ABROAD

The British government appears to be anxious about the quality of schools abroad teaching in English - going under the name of "International" schools (cf the article in the "Telegraph" kindly given to us by a parent at BIS :

http://www.telegraph.co.uk/expat/expatnews/7079522/Mark-of_quality-for-British-schools-overseas.html

Control mechanisms have nevertheless been in place for some fifteen years now, thanks to the thinking behind the definition of an international school, its methods of evaluation and its criteria of definition.

BIS ACCREDITATIONS (1)

- **International:** In 1980 we chose the Council of International Schools (CIS –website: www.cois.org) as our counseling and monitoring body. CIS had already a strong international dimension, which balanced out the rather British dimension of our community at the time. We then began the process with CIS in 2000 to become an accredited member and obtained such status in 2002. Following the 5 - year report an inspection was carried out in 2006. A "pre-accreditation" visit in November 2007 deemed the school apt to begin the process once again as required after a ten year period. We have been carrying out this procedure since the start of this school year. BIS is one of the 281 schools accredited by CIS out of more than 5000 "international" schools. (Another organization exists called the Council of British International schools COBIS, which is equally valid).
- **French:** Simultaneously, BIS is also developing its French "accreditation" : a dossier has just been presented to the Préfecture asking for recognition under "contrat d'association". BIS is already under "contrat simple" with the French Education Authority. This latest procedure would enable the Town Halls to associate themselves to BIS and contribute to a part of our educational expenses. In short, we are asking the Ministry of Education to grant BIS the status of a "regular" French school in order to be legally able to have more subsidies from local authorities. We have already requested that a second teacher in Primary be recognised by the State.

BIS ACCREDITATION (2)

The process of self-evaluation according to well-defined criteria in all aspects of the school has mobilized everyone at BIS: teachers, management and administration. All schools, and in particular a small school such as ours where the weight of work is heavily loaded and shared between only a few people, need to be careful to preserve the quality of teaching as well as dedicate more extra time and energy in describing and analyzing our practices. An impossible task? In any case, there is a delicate balance to achieve and sometimes the work pressure on the team is such that it limits our availability. Please keep this in mind and we rely on you to tell us if you feel that we have overstepped the limit.

BIS ACCREDITATION (3)

We would appreciate your contribution at this stage and are asking you to help us by filling in a questionnaire (approx 20 questions), designed by us, to collect your views on various aspects of the school. We are attaching it to this newsletter in advance but would prefer you to come to school and fill it in, on the same day as the next PTA meeting on, **Monday 8 February at 15.30**. We will also be looking for a few volunteers to come to school for an hour to provide some input into the accreditation process by reading over our findings and giving their views. If there are any parents who would like to be involved but who are unable to attend the meeting then please contact me at the school by e-mail.

LINKS BETWEEN BIS AND OTHER SCHOOLS

- Schools abroad: the fact that BIS is accredited by CIS gives recognition to the quality of our teaching and the reliability of our reports. However, in order to orient our new students better and organize coherent groupings, certain schools choose to evaluate their new pupils according to their own criteria particularly in the main subjects - just as BIS does at the start of the year.
- French schools: As BIS is under contract with the French education authority, the passage of a child from Primary into a French state school takes place after an evaluation dossier is made by BIS at the request of the parents (end of 2nd term). This evaluation by BIS is sufficient. However, for students wishing to integrate the French state system after the age of 11 the next school will carry out its own evaluation as BIS is not under contract with the French education authority. For private schools under contract, the procedure should be the same. In practice, the advice of BIS is not always requested and this renders the chance to move from BIS to a French school more slender. To our knowledge, the integration of BIS students having spent at least two years with us is excellent (the school reports confirm this).
- Procedures: in all cases it is advisable to inform BIS and the other school as soon as possible. BIS can help you to determine the school which would best suit your child, serve as intermediary, facilitate the procedures in Bordeaux or abroad (CIS international school network and others.)

ENROLMENT RENEWAL 2010/2011

In a few days, you will receive the form asking you whether or not you wish to renew your child's enrolment for next year (contractual procedure to take effect on the 1st March). This procedure was put into place in order to enable everyone to better organize themselves for next September (see above).

PTA

Next meeting **Monday 8 February at 4.15pm** with the following agenda : Accreditation; Readathon; finances; other items

BLOG DE BIS

The contributions have begun. Please encourage us by reading them and posting your own comments.

OPEN DAY

Tuesday 16th March will see our annual Open day : the occasion for prospective parents and visitors to see the school in operation. Do not hesitate to spread the word around you.

WINTER HOLIDAY DATES

Last day of school : Friday, 19 February

School starts again : Monday 8 March

Christine Cussac
Director
03.02.10