ACS | CENTRE FOR INSPIRING MINDS

Part of ACS International Schools

in-house

Number 2 ◼ December 2017

INVESTIGATE
INNOVATE
INSPIRE

Now in its sixth year,

the Centre for Inspiring Minds aims to:

- enhance the ACS International Schools community's capacity to use research methods to advance our strategic aims – improving learner outcomes and developing highly effective teachers;
- build a community of practice across ACS International Schools, and with external partners, that is committed to research-informed innovation in teaching, learning and school development;
- support emerging and established research projects across the ACS International Schools; and
- develop a programme review and horizon-watching function that challenges our thinking and drives a culture of continuous improvement.

To better understand the extent to which the learning experiences we provide contribute to improved professional effectiveness and learner outcomes, CIM conducts an annual programme self-evaluation. Over the years, our evaluation methods have evolved in response to the increasing scope and depth of the Centre's work and its collaborations with others. In the first year, a single survey was used to gauge the extent to which a "research- engaged school culture" was present – a kind of baseline and road map. In the second year, the Centre used a combination of surveys and interviews to gather information about programme effectiveness and emerging professional development needs.

This December, CIM will again conduct a programme evaluation, using surveys designed to collect data from our different collaborators. If you receive a survey, please respond at your earliest convenience. The evaluation results provide data that will be used to frame new questions about the Centre's evolving role and to identify opportunities for supporting our shared strategic education objectives.

December also marks the time when we begin meeting with potential practitioner-led research project leaders for the next school year. If you have a question about improving student learning that you would like to explore with other like-minded practitioners, please contact us. We can help you prepare an effective proposal in time for the 23 April 2018 deadline.

We look forward to learning with you!

Ben and Latifa

Four-school collaborations
provide an opportunity to work with education practitioners across the four ACS International Schools to develop innovative approaches to emerging challenges in international education. This year, there are three four-school collaborations, each exploring ways we can enhance the opportunities our students have to engage in potentially transformative learning experiences. The three collaborations include: learning for sustainability, nurturing a global language community and engaging in service learning.

Activity summaries for each of the collaborations follows. If any of these topics is of interest to you, and you'd like to get involved with your campus-level team, please contact you Head of School to learn more.

Learning for Sustainability activity summary
- <u>27 September 2017</u> – Eight staff members, representing ACS Cobham and ACS Egham participated in a five-hour workshop, designed and facilitated by the Head of the Centre for Inspiring Minds, Ben Hren. The output of this event was a collection of draft elements of "Learning for Sustainability Practice Guidelines for ACS International Schools." A record of the event is captured in the Workshop Summary (available from the Centre for Inspiring Minds).

- <u>7 November 2017</u> – A copy of the draft "Learning for Sustainability Practice Guidelines for ACS International Schools" was circulated to the Heads of Schools (HOS) Committee members for discussion at the 7 November 2017 meeting. The HOS Committee agreed that the ACS International Schools community would be invited to comment on the draft through a school-wide consultation, opening on 21 November 2017 and closing on 7 January 2018. The consultation would be managed by the Centre for Inspiring Minds.

- <u>13 November 2017</u> – Chris Hupp (ACS Cobham) and Latifa Hassanali (CIM) represented ACS International Schools at the UK National Sustainable Schools Conference in London. An informal network was proposed with representatives from Wellington College and Eton College, who are both introducing sustainability programmes. ACS International Schools will work with the charity, Sustainability and Environmental Education (SEEd), to plan and host a networking event in December 2017.

- <u>21 November 2017</u> – the Centre for Inspiring Minds launched the school-wide consultation on the draft "Learning for Sustainability Practice Guidelines for ACS International Schools" (see https://goo.gl/forms/ef8XtRACcafwqauR2). The consultation announcement included a one-minute video (see https://youtu.be/zfvrBBBaKL4) introducing the four-school Learning for Sustainability work. The consultation closes 7 January 2018.

- <u>In the coming months</u>, campus-level working groups will work with their Heads of School to define the role of learning for sustainability in the 2018 – 2019 school development plan.

**Global Language Community activity summary**

- <u>28 March 2017</u> – The Centre for Inspiring Minds, in collaboration with ACS Egham presented a proposal to the Heads of Schools Committee for the development of a four-school approach to the development of a Global Language Community. This proposal was a re-worked and updated version of a plan co-developed by ACS Egham, Native Language Enrichment Coordinator, Jane Fox and consultant Catherine Copeland in May 2016 (for implementation at ACS Egham International School). The response was positive, but the proposal was deferred to the 2018 – 2019 school development planning and budgeting processes for further consideration.

- <u>June 2017</u> – The Centre for Inspiring Minds registered five people to participate in the new ECIS InspirED event, planned for 14 November 2017. The new conference format was designed to bring together school teams working on similar problems of practice.

- <u>13 November 2017</u> – A five-member team, with representatives from all four ACS International Schools, attended a one-day ECIS pre-conference World Languages Symposium in Vienna. The symposium is summarized in the 20 November 2017 Working Group Report (available from CIM).

- <u>14 – 15 November 2017</u> – A five-member team, with representatives from all four ACS International Schools, attended the two-day ECIS InspireEd event in Vienna. The event is summarized in the 20 November 2017 Working Group Report (available from CIM). Among the key outputs of the event were a problem tree, an objective tree and a theory of action for co-developing a four-school multi-lingual framework as a foundation for building and sustaining a Global Language Community. The theory of action was designed so that each campus could consider and define the actions needed at their school to achieve the objectives proposed by the working group.

- <u>In the coming months</u>, campus-level working groups will work with their Heads of School to define the role of a global language community in the 2018 – 2019 school development plan.


The Global Language Community working group in Vienna: Jordana Velasco (ACS Doha), Shelly McClanahan (ACS Egham), Ben Hren (CIM), Karen Axam (ACS Hillingdon), and Denisse Lie-Nielsen (ACS Cobham).

Service Learning activity summary

- <u>March 2014</u> – The Special Projects Coordinator at ACS Doha International School drafted a "Whole School Service Learning" briefing paper for the ACS Doha EDAT team.

- <u>6 November 2017</u> – Consultant Cathy Berger Kaye led a one-day workshop, "Service Learning: Moving from ideas to action." The workshop addressed her internationally-recognised model and key concepts of service learning. The workshop content is summarised in the workshop report (available from CIM). This workshop was originally planned for the ACS Cobham International School teachers and staff, but expanded to include administrators and representatives from all the ACS International Schools.

- <u>7 November 2017</u> – Following the workshop by Cathy Berger Kaye, the Centre for Inspiring Minds facilitated a one-day workshop focused on "Creating a culture of service." This workshop grouped representatives from the three UK campuses in division level teams, where they developed problem trees, objective trees and theories of action (all available from CIM), based on the developmental needs and abilities of learners in their respective divisions.

- <u>In the coming months</u>, campus-level working groups will work with their Heads of School to define the role of service learning in the 2018 – 2019 school development plan.
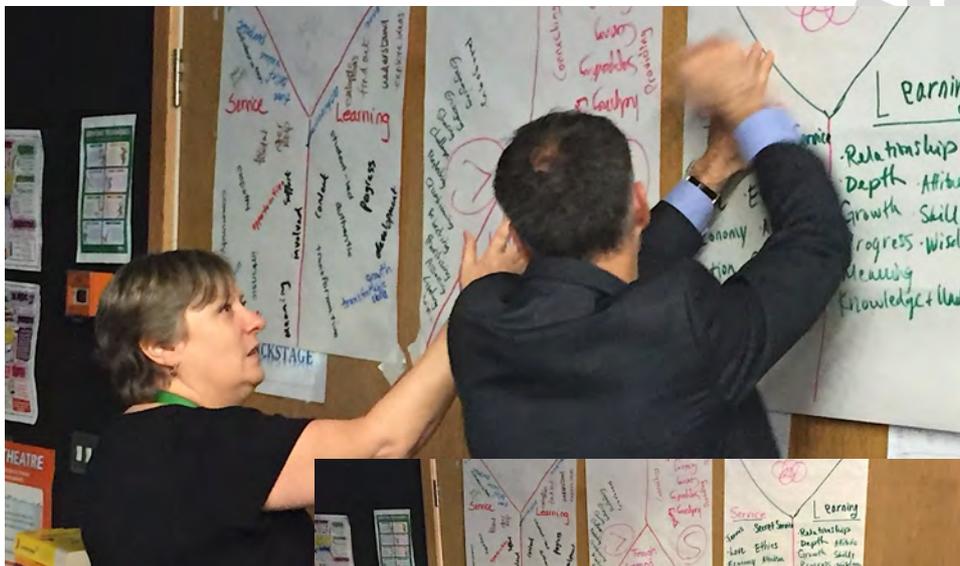
Patricia Shea and Simon Leyshon (ACS Cobham) post participants' definitions of "service learning." (above)
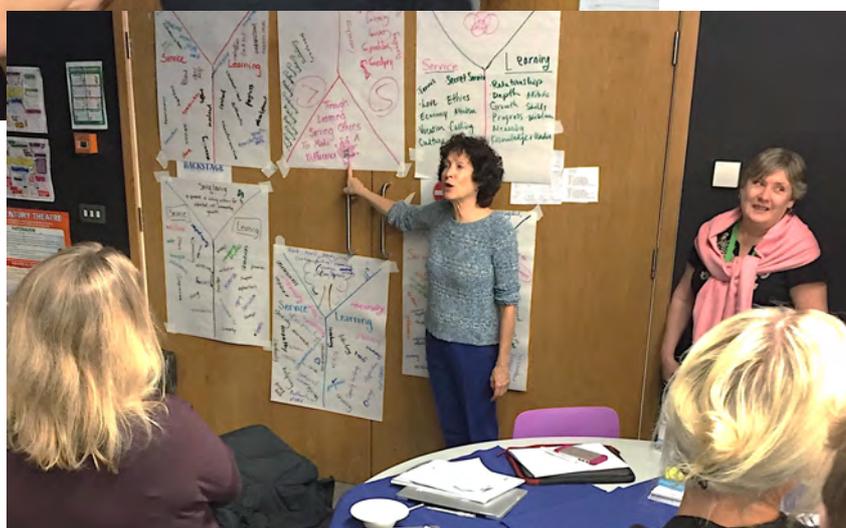
Cathy Berger Kaye reviews small group work. (right)

Three new literature reviews

are now available from the Centre for Inspiring Minds at http://bit.ly/1NvYrTu

The role of technology in self-directed learning

ACS International Schools has embraced emerging computer-based information and communication technologies (ICT) since they first became available to schools. The school has made significant investments in hardware, software, system development and maintenance, and in teacher training.

Programmatically, our schools address technology both as a subject (learning about ICT) and as a tool to support learning across the curriculum (learning with ICT). It is the relationship between these two that lies at the heart of a new action research project based in the ACS Cobham Middle School. At what point does learning about ICT – how to use a range of devices, software packages and applications in teacher-directed or teacher-guided activities – prepare students to self-direct their own use of ICT to curate and support their learning, while also doing this in a way that is safe and ethical?

The promise of technology to support self-directed learning has emerged in the field of education over the last two decades. Historically, schools have relied on the use of technology to support a multitude of efforts in teaching and learning. Rapid innovations in the technology sector have replaced the personal computer as the dominant technology fixture in classrooms with wider and more affordable access to laptops, tablets, and smart phones. Coupled with widespread broadband internet access, the advent of the use of these devices in classrooms has given teachers more flexibility in how they support their learners.

Researchers have also looked to advances in technology to address the variability learners bring to the classroom, and support all learners in more autonomous, self-directed learning (Meyer, Rose, & Gordon 2014). However, they have learned that access alone to technology is not sufficient to support these efforts (Rose & Meyer, 2002). As teachers work to support more self-directed learning in the classroom, they should consider both knowledge of learner variability and use of technology as tools that support more autonomous, or self-directed learning.

To this end, this literature review explores scholarly research focused on the following questions:

- What are the knowledge, skills, and dispositions students and teachers may need to support autonomous, self-directed learning and technology literacy in the classroom?
- How will we know if students are developing the knowledge, skills, and dispositions they would need to use technology for autonomous, self-directed learning?

The role of technology in self-directed learning
A literature review
December 2017
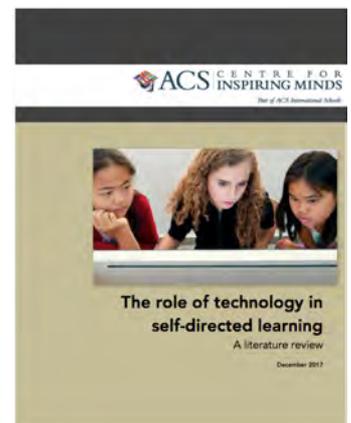
Co-teaching Reading

This literature review was prepared for a practitioner-led action research project investigating the question, "How does the use of co-teaching strategies affect grade 2 reading achievement, engagement and enjoyment?"

An analysis of the academic research articles on this topic yields inconclusive results. Nonetheless, a positive correlation between certain kinds of co-teaching and improved learning outcomes, engagement, and enjoyment is found in a number of studies. These studies, as well as teacher and researcher recommendations, can inform the design and implementation of future research projects on this topic.

At the outset of this discussion of co-teaching, it is important to define the term clearly. According to the academic literature, co-teaching is comprised of two or more professionals delivering substantive instruction to a diverse, or blended group of students in a single physical space. It entails:

- two qualified teachers, often a general education teacher and a special education teacher;
- teaching that is delivered by both teachers;
- a diverse group of students with a range of abilities (typically labelled "regular education" and "special education" students);   and
- a shared classroom

Based on this review of the literature about co-teaching reading in the primary grades, the author offers recommendations for designing effective co-teaching strategies.

Engaging with identity languages

The purpose of the literature review is to inform educators of the relevant background research related to the question of how to improve the reading experiences of EAL students using dual language texts (native language and English) of the same works in middle school Language Arts and EAL classes.

The research suggests that using the students' L1 in dual language texts will benefit their reading and literacy learning. The review includes the work of researcher, Jim Cummins, who encourages a plethora of opportunities for EAL students to engage with books in both L1 and English. He encourages school administration to stock classrooms and libraries with home language materials to enable students to use identity texts to foster their identities in school and to value them in the school environment whist showcasing their linguistic talents.

The review finds that it would be prudent for schools to provide all content teachers with professional development to gain a better understanding of how to effectively use home language materials in their areas of study. Engaging with identity languages and texts will benefit student learning and learning outcomes and will help schools develop a stronger "global language community."

Wednesday, 17 January 2018
University College London's Institute of Education hosts, "Leading Learning – Developing as a Lead Practitioner." This is a professional development opportunity for teacher leaders focused on developing the skills of those who lead learning in their schools. For more information or to register for this training visit the IoE website at **www.lcll.org.uk/leading-learning-developing-as-a-lead-practitioner**

Friday and Saturday, 19 – 20 January 2018
ELMLE hosts its 2017 Teacher's Conference in Amsterdam. Former CIM project leaders Brianna Gray and Jacob Rosch, will be presenting a one-day pre-conference session on Talking in Class II; and Denisse Lie-Nielsen and Vanessa Tarrant will present their work on target language speaking skills. ELMLE. To register for this conference, visit the ELMLE website at **https://sites.google.com/elmle.org/home/amsterdam-2018**

Wednesday, 24 January 2018
University College London's Institute of Education hosts, "Leading Lesson Study Across Schools." The professional development programme will develop expertise so that you have a set of tools to lead and evaluate the lesson study process with other teachers. For more information or to register for this training visit the IoE website at **www.lcll.org.uk/lesson-study**

Tuesday, 30 January 2018
University College London's Institute of Education hosts "Leading Professional Development for Impact." This innovative professional development programme is grounded in the latest research into effective professional development (PD) and reflects the thinking behind the new Standard for Teachers' Professional Development. For more information or to register for this training visit the IoE website at **www.lcll.org.uk/leading-professional-development-for-impact**

Monday, 23 April 2018
The deadline for CIM project proposals, for projects for the 2018/2019 school year is 23 April 2018. It's never too early to begin working on your proposal. Contact Ben or Latifa if you have an idea for an action research project that you'd like to discuss.

Thursday, 17 May 2018
This year's Celebration of Learning will take place on 17 May 2018. This afterschool event, held at Cobham, showcases the work of our 2017/2018 research project teams. Watch your email for further details.