

Contents:

- 1. COBIS Annual Conference 2010**
- 2. COBIS Award**
- 3. COBIS poetry competition**
- 4. NPQH discount**
- 5. New COBIS school**
- 6. A-level seen as option for 'less able'**
- 7. More men applying to be teachers**
- 8. Universities could set A-levels**
- 9. Parties committed to 'pupil premium' policy**
- 10. Grammar-style schools**
- 11. Teachers' desk-side manner tested**
- 12. Summer school for overseas teachers - COBIS discount**
- 13. New supporting member**
- 14. News from the schools**

1. COBIS Annual Conference 2010

Schools for Life: Providing learning beyond the curriculum
15-17 May, London

The COBIS Annual Conference is fast approaching. A record number of delegates from more than 40 countries have already registered to attend. The booking deadline has now passed - if you have not yet booked but would like to attend please contact the COBIS office asap.

A draft conference programme is available to download from the COBIS website or by [clicking here](#).

2. COBIS Award

Nominations are invited for the 2010 COBIS Award for British International Schools Students. Each COBIS member and affiliate school can present this award to up to two pupils. Details of the award criteria are attached.

3. COBIS poetry competition

Thank you to all schools that submitted entries for the COBIS poetry competition. We received more than 200 poems and the panel of judges is busily considering the high-quality submissions.

4. NPQH discount

The Cross-Association Leadership Group (of which COBIS is a member) has succeeded in negotiating a discounted rate for teachers wishing to take the NCSL's National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH). If any COBIS schools have staff that are interested in this qualification, please email executive.director@cobis.org.uk for more information.

5. New COBIS school

COBIS welcomes a new school: St Michael's International School, Japan. For more information please visit the school website: www.smis.org

6. A-level seen as option for 'less able'

The TES has reported that the credibility of the A-level has 'suffered a further blow as heads of independent schools say higher-ability pupils opt for the alternatives.' The A-level is becoming seen as an exam for lower-ability pupils in schools offering alternatives such as the International Baccalaureate (IB) and the Cambridge Pre-U.

7. More men applying to be teachers

According to the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA) the number of men applying for teacher training has risen sharply. There was a 52% rise in the number of men wanting to be primary school teachers this year - more than 4,700 in 2009/10, up about 1,500 compared with 2008/09. The TDA suggests that redundancies in the City have prompted the change.

8. Universities could set A-levels

Under a Conservative Government, universities could be given new powers to set A-levels in plans to protect exams from political meddling. Panels of academics, exam boards and learned societies would script A-level syllabuses and test papers to 'restore rigour' to the education system. The Tories said the move would stop main public examinations being manipulated by politicians and counter annual claims of 'dumbing down'.

9. Parties committed to 'pupil premium' policy

The Labour, Conservative, and Lib Dem parties have all pledged to introduce a financial incentive to schools to take on pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds. These policies stem from the fear that top performing schools are using covert selection to ensure an intake of middle class students.

10. Grammar-style schools

The press have been reporting that hundreds of 'grammar-style' schools run on traditional academic values and proper discipline would get the go ahead within weeks of a Tory election victory. About 200 parent and teacher groups who want to set up schools will be given the green light by education spokesman Michael Gove. The vast majority would be 'non-selective grammars'. Teachers, however, are proposing industrial action and a wave of protests to block an expansion of academies and the creation of these new-style 'free schools'. The National Union of Teachers will use its annual conference in Liverpool to warn that Tory proposals to 'effectively privatise' hundreds of state schools would fuel social segregation and undermine local democracy.

11. Teachers' desk-side manner tested

New teachers could be tested for their desk-side manner under government plans to improve the quality of teaching. Trainee teachers in England would be screened for empathy, understanding and passion to ensure they have the qualities to be a good teacher. A trial of a diagnostic test by the Training and Development Agency for Schools in north-west England is due to be tested nationwide.

12. Summer school for overseas teachers - COBIS discount

Teachers in COBIS schools can take advantage of a discounted rate to attend the residential summer school being run in the UK by Karen Ardley Associates. The summer school programme will include CPD courses on Leading Learning from the Middle, Leading and Managing the EYFS, and Assessment 4 Learning. For full details visit www.karenardley.com or email executive.director@cobis.org.uk for a booking form.

13. New supporting member

COBIS welcomes a new supporting member: Schofield & Sims (www.schofieldandsims.co.uk)
"Schofield & Sims are the long-established educational publisher specialising in maths, English and science materials for schools."

14. News from the schools

The **British School of Bucharest** has been awarded the Bronze Level Award for quality teaching in Geography. We pride ourselves in the way Geography is taught here and aim to provide pupils with a very active and hands-on approach to learning geographical skills. Many cross-curricular opportunities help to strengthen and extend these skills. As a rapidly developing city, Bucharest provides an interesting and diverse environment for learning outside of the classroom. The children enjoy observing and evaluating the changes that they see happening all around them on a day to day basis. You can see Year 4 pupils observing organisms in our new school habitat garden and Year 5 students learning about how the landscape of Romania has affected the history of architecture at the local Village Museum. (Stuart Harrison, Geography Coordinator, BSB)



On March 25th **Sir James Henderson School** will be holding an International Baccalaureate Visual Arts Exhibition, hosted by Sotheby's in Milan. The Exhibition is one of the major events celebrating the '40 Years of Sir James'. It is the final stage in the International Baccalaureate Visual Arts programme which will be viewed and judged by examiners from the IB Central Office in Geneva. It is with great pride that Sir James Henderson School presents the work of eight art students, demonstrating a high level of personal growth over a period of 19 months combining cultural diversity with the influence of young emerging talents. The exhibition will include 3D work, relief panels, photographs, collage, painting and drawings as well as sketch and project work books showing the excellent technique they have achieved. It is because of events of this nature that so many Sir James Henderson students are now involved in Art and Design related careers throughout the world. Sir James Henderson School is very grateful to Sotheby's for their generous sponsorship in hosting this event, to The British Chamber of Commerce for Italy for their ongoing support, and to the Parents and Friends of the Sir James Henderson School. A number of the works on display will be donated by the students to be auctioned for charity at a later date.



News from the schools (cont.)

The new Leidschenveen campus of the **British School in the Netherlands** opened last month. Nearly 200 children excitedly made their way through the doors of their new school building on February 24th. The new campus is also home to the brand new Language Centre which offers greatly improved teaching facilities for the range of Dutch and English language courses for both adults and children. The Language Centre classrooms form the outer ring of the 'Community Building' – this impressive structure also houses the BSN Uniform Shop – helpfully located next to a brand new canteen which leads to a viewing gallery overlooking the Sports Hall. All of these facilities are available for use by students and parents from all the BSN schools, as well as for rent by the local community. Also situated on the same campus is the Day Care Centre. The centre opened its doors a couple of weeks before the school and is now a 'home from home' for a growing number of babies and toddlers aged from 0-3 years old.



85 performers, 350 spectators and countless smiling faces... That was the scene at the annual International Family Event held at the Senior School of the **British School in the Netherlands** earlier this month. Songs, dances and performances representing countries from all over the world were followed by an even greater array of international food and drink. All performances and food stalls were run by BSN children and parents coordinated by the school's International Representatives Committee. This year's stage performances were both diverse and engaging, showcasing all kinds of traditions from different cultures. A beautiful Indian dance in traditional dress opened the evening, followed by a first for the event (now in its fifth year) – a 'kimono fashion show' from Japan. The audience was then treated to a series of songs and dances from Poland, Italy, and Spanish and Russian speaking countries. The intermission was followed by a Drum Performance, Nigerian fashion show and more dance and song. The evening was rounded off by the North Americans with a tribute to Michael Jackson. Watching both parents and children parade on the stage with their national flags at the end of the show was a fitting finale. As the evening moved on to its second phase – the food – the atmosphere was one of true community as parents and children of all ages and from all the BSN schools came together and enjoyed the samples of local delicacies prepared by the International Reps and their many helpers.



Any other news from schools or features should be sent by email to: executive.director@cobis.org.uk

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