

# The Navigator

A Levels at  
Compass  
International  
School

---

On choosing the  
right school for  
your children

---

Students that  
make us proud

---

Why you  
should focus on  
education in  
your child's  
younger years

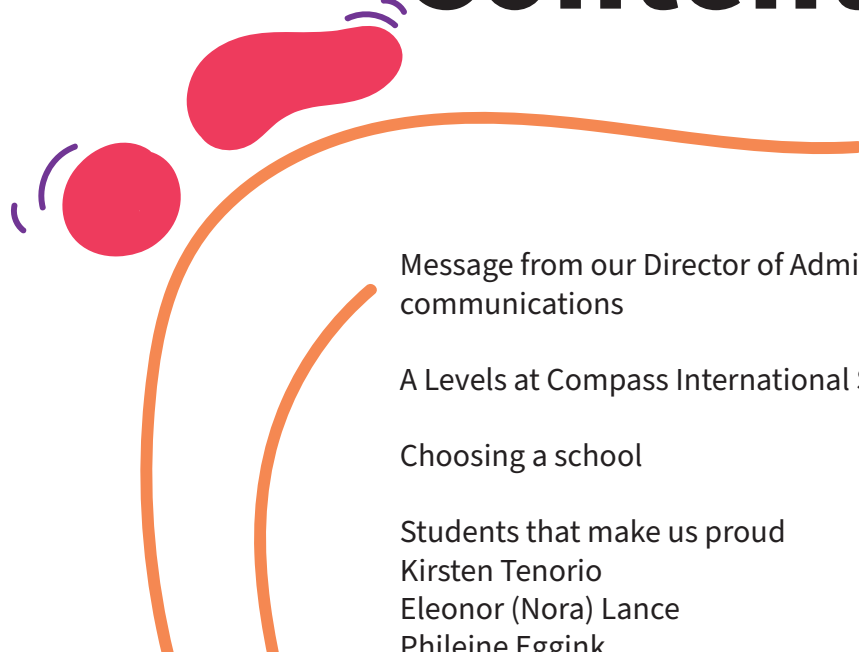
---

Discussing Early  
Years with  
Sarah Reid




COMPASS INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL  
A NORD ANGLIA EDUCATION SCHOOL

# Contents



Message from our Director of Admissions, Marketing and communications	3
A Levels at Compass International School	4
Choosing a school	6
Students that make us proud	
Kirsten Tenorio	9
Eleonor (Nora) Lance	10
Phileine Eggink	11
Reya John	12
Reem Al-Maadeed	13
Qatar National Day 2020	14
An interview with Aisha Serpedin - Compass Alumna	17
Why you should focus on education in your child's younger years	19
Discussing Early Years with Sarah Reid	21



*Dear friends and partners of Compass,*

I am delighted to share with you our first edition of the Navigator – a Compass International School Magazine.

Founded in 2006 as a small, one campus primary school, Compass has grown to four campuses and 1800 students across Primary and Secondary, mirroring the rapid growth of our dynamic host country, the State of Qatar, as it prepares to welcome the world at the FIFA World Cup in 2022.

While Compass has grown to meet the demand for a premium British international education in Qatar, we have never lost sight of what has always made the school so appealing to our families, past and present, namely the close-knit sense of community that exists at each of our campuses.

This emphasis on community also informs our approach to your child's education. Through parental involvement, personalized learning plans and a range of bespoke educational opportunities tailored toward the individual, we ensure that each child's educational experience is unique and there are no limits placed on what they can achieve.

We have had a busy few month as we have welcomed back some of our students while we have also continued to deliver insightful and meaningful online lessons. Colleagues across our four campuses have been active in several activities that allow our students to engage to rich and lifelong learning experiences.

As you look through this term's magazine, you will see we had a busy start to our 2020-21 academic year with much to celebrate.

Our outstanding students have again made us proud by receiving outstanding examination results, writing poetry and by becoming students at prestigious international universities.



Restrictions have not stopped us coming together as a community to enjoy activities such as the Nord Anglia Education Global Sports Competition and our own virtual events. It has been fantastic to see all our participants sharing their experiences via our social media channels.

It has been delightful to also see the students and staff across the school celebrate two very important days in Qatar: National Day and National Sports Day. Students were able to enjoy a variety of activities across the two days and celebrate the heritage of the country we all love and call home.

Finally, we would like to take this opportunity to wish all our families a safe and relaxing spring break.

*Warm regards,*

**Shazim Husayn**  
Director of Admissions,  
Marketing and Communications

# A Levels at Compass International School



A levels are normally referred to as the “Gold-standard” as they are the highest pre-university course in terms of standard (higher than AP for example) and many universities, especially in the US, will allow good A level students to proceed to the second year of university.

A Levels are generally worked towards over two years. Normally, students take between three and five A Level courses in Year 12 (11th grade), commonly known as “sixth form” in the U.K. Most cutting back to three or four in Year 13 (12th grade). This is because university offers in the UK are normally based on three A Level grades, and taking a fourth or fifth can have an impact on grades.

Unlike other qualifications, such as the International Baccalaureate, A Levels have no specific subject requirements, so students have

*'A levels are normally referred to as the "Gold-standard" as they are the highest pre-university course in terms of standard'*

the opportunity to combine any subjects they wish to take. However, students normally pick their courses based on the degree they wish to pursue at university: most

degrees require specific A Levels for entry. This gives great flexibility, especially to students who have very defined strengths and interests. The wide range of subjects required to be studied at International Baccalaureate for example (first language, second language, a humanity, a science, Maths and one other subject possibly include an Art based subject) do not suit all students

**P**arents face a bewildering range of choice for pre-University education, especially in the last 2 years of school. International baccalaureate, A levels, AP, BTEC, amongst many national systems too. For seventy years, the “gold standard”, in the UK and thus internationally because of our renowned world class universities, are “A levels”. Introduced in 1951, an international version of these qualification is now available so students from all over the world can access the best pre-university qualification.



*Being part of the world's top premium school organization, Nord Anglia Education (NAE), gives Compass unequalled staff development opportunities and support from schools throughout the world.*

who have developed very specific strengths in literature, Sciences or Arts for example.

Compass International School offer a range of subjects that should meet all or most students needs. We have specialist teachers in all Sciences and Maths, the most popular subjects, as well as English, languages and the humanities. Our experienced British trained teachers are uniquely qualified to guide students through this internationally recognized “gold-standard”. Our state of the art facilities at our brand new Themaid campus, including seven Science laboratories, specially designed examination hall, drama studio, music suite, swimming pool and gym, mean teachers and students are supported to the highest level.

Being part of the world’s top premium school organization, Nord Anglia Education (NAE), gives Compass unequalled staff development opportunities and support from schools throughout the world. Teachers have the best expertise around the world to draw on. Many of our teachers have completed Masters courses funded by NAE, and many of our teachers have come to

us from Nord Anglia schools in other parts of the world to share their expertise. Our reputation for staff development in Doha means that many of our teachers have come to us from other schools in Qatar.

*Simon Porter has been teaching for 31 years and has written extensively for the Times Educational Supplement. He has also contributed to Professor Deborah Eyre’s, of Oxford University, recent book on High Performance Learning.*



# Choosing a school

Simon Porter, Times Educational Supplement “Subject Genius” and Head of Secondary at Compass International School’s brand new Themaid campus gives parents a few tips on choosing the right school for their children.

In many respects, choosing the right school for your child is one of the most important and daunting decisions that parents have to make, especially here in Doha where there are so many schools jostling for attention, all apparently having unique features, and many calling themselves “international”. I hope to help parents in their choice by focussing on the most important features to look for.

## Teachers

Bill Clinton’s advisors famously helped Bill focus by telling him “It’s the economy, stupid”. For parents without a doubt the most important thing to focus on is “It’s the teachers”! Are the teachers from a wide range of countries? For example, Ireland in particular produces excellent international teachers. What professional development opportunities do the school offer for teachers? For example does the school sponsor teachers to do Masters Degrees? Do teachers cooperate with teachers in other schools or indeed teachers in other countries? Does the school allow you to actually talk to teachers when you are being shown around? Do you get to see inside actual classes during a lesson? Do the teachers’ own kids go to the school? The answer of course for Compass international school to all these questions is a resounding “Yes!”.

## Curriculum

Does the school offer internationally recognised and respected curriculum such as the “gold-standard” UK A levels or the International Baccalaureate? Research shows that University admission tutors believe the International Baccalaureate (IB) is the best curriculum for preparing students for University. IB students are less likely to drop out and are seen by universities as well-rounded students who have the organisational and academic skills to cope with the jump to university education. However, many students find A levels are better suited to their needs, especially if they have skills that lie in one particular area, such as Science and Maths. UK universities in particular still favour A levels when assessing a student’s entry. Does the school you are looking at offer both of these world-class curricula? Compass does.

## Ethos

Does the school truly believe that all children can succeed with support and hard-work, or do they just pay lip service to this? The acid test is to ask whether they set by “ability” in Mathematics. If they do, they don’t truly believe every child can be good at Mathematics. Incidentally, most research suggests that “setting” doesn’t work, and in fact harms the progress of most children. Ask how ambitious they will be for your child. Compass promises not to label your child and to give them every opportunity to truly fulfil their potential.



## Outward looking

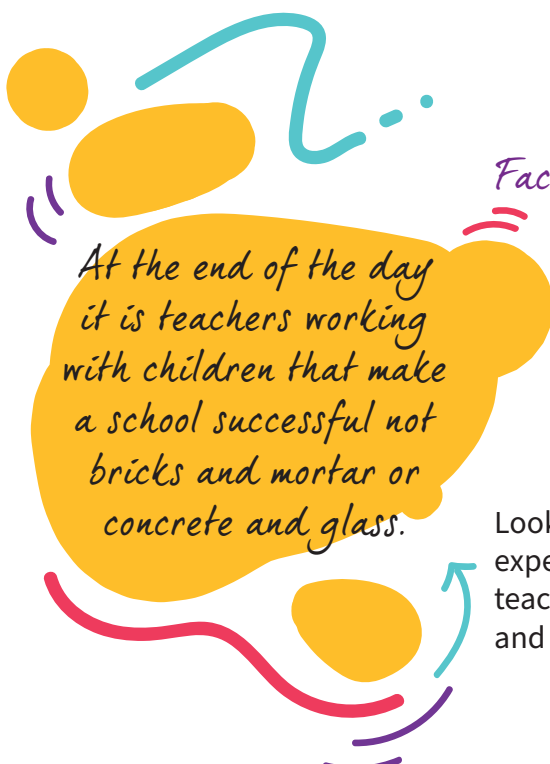
Does the school have links with other organisations to enrich their curriculum? Do they have a vibrant music and performing arts programme? Do the students do STEAM projects highlighting skills in Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts and Mathematics? Are they on the cutting edge of these developments? Do they engage in links with social programs such as the UN global sustainability goals? Again, many schools will say they include these aspects, but what evidence is there that they are acting on this? Compass's unique links with organisations such as the Juilliard school the world's best performing arts college, and MIT, the world's top university, are strong indicators that these things are taken seriously at Compass.

## Students

Does the school have a diverse range of students from a variety of backgrounds and countries? If you are looking for an international school, how "international" is it really in terms of its students and teachers? Does it have an international, inclusive curriculum like the International Primary Curriculum, IB or international A levels? Does it have students from 72 different countries like Compass?

## Facilities

Providing that the facilities are at least adequate, I believe this is the least important aspect. Many parents are blinded by state of the art facilities, and only later find out that the school they have chosen does not develop teachers, or labels their child, thus stemming their potential.



*At the end of the day it is teachers working with children that make a school successful not bricks and mortar or concrete and glass.*

Look beyond the gloss and the marketing and try to understand how the experience of learning will be for your child. At the end of the day it is teachers working with children that make a school successful not bricks and mortar or concrete and glass.

*Simon Porter is Head of Secondary at Compass International School's Theraid campus here in Doha. To find out more about Compass International School and Simon go to their website at <http://www.cisdoha.qa>*




# Kirsten Tenorio Year 6



Kirsten has produced outstanding work for her classes, including English and Maths. She has written beautiful poetry pieces in English class and understands how to write from multiple perspectives, a great achievement in Year 6. In Maths, she works diligently to logically work through problems and frequently completes work aimed at Year 7. She also comes to school with the right attitude every day, and is always polite and courteous to both her peers and teachers.

Kirsten is ambitious, a true team player, and keeps pushing herself to strive to be the best she can be. We believe she will enter secondary school with a great attitude and the right mindset to achieve great things both in and out of school.

## The Musical Vampire



Have you ever seen a musical creature?  
I play my little maraca which goes clickety-click.  
My triangular head sways with my music.  
But what they don't know, it's a sign,  
For death will soon arrive.  
While they danced, I lunge for a bite.  
Licking my tongue of sapphire, I crawled away,  
Gracefully, like a ballerina, I pirouetted through the air.  
'Til next time my friends, come and join me in my lair!

*By Kirsten Tenorio*

# Eleonor (Nora) Lance Year 6

Eleanor (Nora) is one of many outstanding students in Year 6 at our Themaid campus. This year, Nora has continued to excel in all aspects of her school life. She thrives on challenges and shows resilience when completing new tasks. She is determined to succeed and shows ambition towards academic achievements. She is also an exceptional writer and loves to spend her spare time keeping diaries or writing exceptional stories. Keep an eye out in the future for novels written by her!





# Phileine Eggink Year 4

Phileine is one of many exceptional students in Year 4 at our Gharaffa campus. This year, she has continued to excel in all aspects of her school life. Each day, she approaches her learning with a steely determination and resilient attitude and takes pleasure from gaining new knowledge and skills. Not only does Phileine apply her curious nature to her daily schooling, but she has also taken advantage of the extracurricular activities that Compass has to offer.

Phileine has participated in every Global Campus event, with all her submissions being of high quality, and has demonstrated this superb quality in the MIT Space Challenge which was featured in Nord Anglia Education's video of the top global entries and winners, with an incredible review from Dr. Ariel Ekblaw herself.

# Reya John Year 6



Reya is an outstanding student and an asset to Compass. Even under the current circumstances, she has excelled both socially and academically. Although still in Year 6, she is already accessing the Year 7 curriculum in Maths and frequently writing outstanding pieces of work, from detailed stories to diary entries. Additionally, she has a very caring and thoughtful character, regularly checking on her classmates and offering support to both her teacher and peers. Her teacher has no doubt that Reya will continue on her outstanding journey as she travels up to secondary school and beyond.

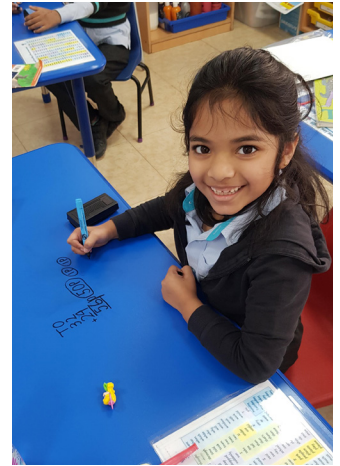
# Reem Al-Maadeed Year 5

Reem is a wonderful success story from Rayyan Year 5. Through remarkable resilience, exceptional effort and a positive attitude to learning, Reem has made incredible progress in all areas of the curriculum. Bilingual in both Arabic and English, she is able to access learning in both languages equally and we are very proud of her achievements. Her smile is known to light up the class and she always has kind words and encouragement for her friends.



# Qatar National Day 2020





and  
we



are



loving



it!





# An interview with Aisha Serpedin

## *Compass Alumna*

**1. How long were you a Compass student and at which campus(es)? What year did you start?**

I attended Compass from 2007-2011, and then again from 2015-2019. The first time around I was a primary

student at the Gharaffa campus, then the second time around I was a secondary student (Y10-13) at the Madinat Khalifa campus where I completed my IGCSEs and the IBDP.

**2. If someone who had never heard of Compass were to ask you to describe your experience at the school to them, what would you say?**

I would say that the people – both staff and students – are incredible and diverse. I have met some of my favorite teachers at Compass. I can still remember my days at the Gharaffa campus and being taught by Mr. Burt (he used to be the head of primary at Madinat Khalifa a few years back). Some of my favorite days of my childhood was during International Week at Gharaffa. There was so much joy during that one week of each year: everyone would dress up, bring food, and perform. My positive experience during my primary school years is what drove me to attend ‘high school’ at

*I would say that the people – both staff and students – are incredible and diverse. I have met some of my favorite teachers at Compass.*

Compass again (at a different campus the second time around).

High school was different, although it was still very memorable. My favorite memories include the trips. In Year 10, I had traveled to Tanzania with many people in different classes, where we all helped build a home for a local teacher. In Year 12, I had the chance to do my Silver Adventurous Journey in Nepal. Neither of these trips were “luxurious,” the reason why they were perfect was because they pushed us out of our comfort zone which led to stronger friendships being formed.

**3. When did you graduate from Compass and where and what are you currently studying at university?**

I graduated in the summer of 2019 and I’m currently attending the medical program at Weill Cornell Medical School here in Doha, Qatar.

**4. How was your last year at Compass?**

I completed the IB diploma programme, so the last year was quite hectic with many exams, essays, and internal assessments. Personally, I had the additional burden of self-studying for the SAT and SAT subject exams.

**5. In your opinion, how has the IBDP at Compass prepared you for success and university and in your chosen field specifically?**

In general, the independent nature of the IBDP and having to write essays alone enabled me to be able to stand on my own two feet. Medical School

*...some of the teachers at Compass have forever impacted the way I work and the way I treat myself.*

is hard and arguably requires more tenacity than pure knowledge.

Unfortunately, I am attending an American University, and therefore not all of my courses align with the curriculum. For instance, although HL Chemistry and HL Biology provide a decent base in their respective subjects, there are certain topics that are not covered (and vice versa with topics being covered in the IB subjects but are not relevant to Medical school).

On the other hand, I can say that the internal assessments for chemistry, biology, and psychology, as well as the essays/ writing assignments for English did help for lab reports and essays.

## **6. What did you enjoy about the IBDP?**

IBDP experience at Compass: The people, both the students and the teachers.

I genuinely enjoyed the small class sizes as it meant that everyone knew each other and were able to interact easily. At the end of the day, everyone has to work extremely hard to be able to understand the material well and that means that you need these little moments to stay sane.

Secondly, some of the teachers at Compass have forever impacted the way I work and the way I treat myself. If I could go back in time, I would thank a handful of teachers. From Y10-11, I was blown away by the History department (Mr. Sanders and Mr. Jones) and by Mr. Harrison (Chemistry), Mrs. Harrison (English), Mr. Roberts (Geography), and Mr. Porter (Physics). Then, from Y12-13, I am so grateful for being guided by Mrs. Anderson (Psychology), Ms. Clifton (French), Mrs. Sloczynska (Biology), Mr. Doherty (English), and Ms. Quinn (Chemistry). I don't think I'd be the same person I am today without them.

IBDP alone: The individual work. A lot of education programs teach a lot of material, but what makes the IB special is the emphasis on essays and write-ups. Anyone can memorize books of information,

but not everyone can understand the impact of what they learned and how to link the information that they have learned to a different topic. Another interesting aspect of these essays is that they require so much reflection. Initially, it seems useless, but now I realize that this skill is vital in all professions.

## **7. What did you find the most challenging about the IBDP?**

Time management. Other than trying to keep up with the material taught in class, students must also find time to write their Extended Essay and Internal Assessments, as well as trying to complete their CAS hours.

## **8. If I were a student starting the IBDP, what advice would you give me that you wish someone would have told you when you started?**

Think about what you want to do in the future before starting. If your goal is to become an engineer, it might be better to take Physics rather than Biology. If your goal is to enter a particular university, it might be smart to research their requirements beforehand as certain universities require specific levels (e.g. They might not accept Math Studies). Once your classes match your goals, reflect on the list of subjects in front of you. If you genuinely despise half of the classes on that list, you probably have a lot of thinking to do. Choose your subjects wisely: you'll be staying up until 2 am studying anyways, you might as well choose subjects you like.

## **9. What do you miss the most about your time at Compass?**

I miss the relationships between me, my class, and our teachers. In university, you only have a semester with a professor, after which you'll never see that professor again (unless you're lucky). At Compass, although professors do change from year to year, you do spend more time around them. In some cases, this might be a nightmare, but most of the time it allows you to be more comfortable around them and not be afraid to ask questions/ make mistakes around them. The students (in my class, at least) were pretty amazing - I don't think I've ever had a boring school day.



# Why you should focus on education in your child's younger years

If you want your child to be successful, then the earliest you start them in a school learning environment, the better it will be for their long term prospects.

**S**ome parents only start to consider the importance of their child's education when they are often just a few years away from the formal examinations that will be their entry ticket to university.

In reality, the real building blocks of all learning are formed in those younger years, which is why we call it the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The framework for the EYFS enhances the academic success of the children and helps develop the holistic education of every child that walks through the school gates.

Children at Compass International School are allowed to simply be children by giving them the opportunity to explore, imagine and understand the world around them.

This method for learning helps to create a delight in new skills, knowledge and understanding and creates a commitment in these children to forever be lifelong learners.

We pride ourselves on the achievements and successes of all our students. As can be seen in the results last year, students achieved the highest mark in Qatar for IGCSE Coordinated Science.

The students performed exceptionally well in their other IGCSE subjects, with many achieving A\* to A grades including: 86% in Economics, 64% in ICT, 50% in Business Studies and 43% in Maths. These excellent results could not have been achieved without the dedication and emphasis placed on our youngest learners.

At Nord Anglia Education, we have an ambitious approach to learning, allowing the students to be the best that they can be and reaching potential beyond their own imagination. This, again, begins with our youngest and most enthusiastic children. In the Early Years, we focus on seven areas of learning:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design



Each area covers all the qualities needed to develop the leaders of tomorrow. Every parent wants their child to be challenged to think deeper, think higher and to think broader.

Through our relentless focus on setting challenging tasks and activities, we know that there really are no limits to what can be achieved.

Through carefully planned, continuous provision activities that invoke the children's enquiry-based skills, every child is allowed to embark on their own learning journey. They are guided in their path of enlightenment by highly qualified, expert teachers.

These teachers are at their side every step of the way, helping them, encouraging them and celebrating with them as they develop the skills and knowledge required to achieve.

We know that the longer a child is educated within our school, the better their progress and prospects for success.

So, if you want the best for your child, think about how you can help them build the solid foundations that will enable them to construct their learning with confidence and surety. Start them young to enable them to grow to their full educational height.

*Alfred Creissen is Deputy Head at Compass International School, Rayyan Campus. Compass International School is one of the leading schools in Doha which follows the EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage) framework, a world-renowned British curriculum. If you would like to know more about Compass, please visit our website or arrange a school visit.*

# Discussing Early Years with Sarah Reid

*My name is Sarah Reid and I'm the Deputy Head of our Gharrafa Campus. I've been at Compass for 8 years now and I've worked at both the Rayyan and Gharrafa campuses. I've had a variety of positions in the school - head of Early Years, Milepost leader, and my current role as Deputy Head of the Gharrafa Campus.*



**Q: What is the Early Years Foundation Stage programme and how is it taught at Compass?**

The EYFS is a set of standards that looks after the education, well-being, and the safety of children from 0 to 5 years of age. What we aim to do here in Compass is make our children learn in a safe environment, develop their wellbeing, and to get them ready academically for their primary education in Year 1.

**Q: How does the Early Years 2 at Compass bridge the gap between nursery and Year 1?**

In Early Years 2 we focus on the specific areas of the EYFS program – we really look at Literacy, Numeracy, Understanding The World, and expressive art and design. We build on the communication and language, the PSED (Personal Social Emotional Development), and the physical development that the children focused on in nursery and Early Years 1. Enhancing those literacy skills and mathematics skills throughout the classroom, we really feel that we prepare our children to reach their full potential when entering a Year 1 classroom.

**Q: How does Early Years at Compass ensure that children for whom their first language is not English improve in preparation for Year 1?**

We do many things to support children with EAL (English as an Additional Language) when they begin school. At Compass, we know that children start at different levels of English as well as academics.

What we do is look after the unique child that comes into our classroom, we tailor their education, personalise it and make sure that we really know every child's next steps. When you walk into our classrooms, you'll see a print-rich environment, we really expose the children to words in their environment, and we expose the children to opportunities to write, you'll see that everywhere - in our role play, in our Literacy areas, in Understanding The World areas, etc.

We also have specifically trained EAL teachers on our campus. We have an EAL program specifically for our Early Years 2 children, we also engage through stories, play, library time, etc. there are many opportunities for the children to enhance their English skills here at Compass.

**Q: How do you involve parents in a child's Early Years education?**

We know that it's fundamental for parents to be involved in their child's education, and we know that the child learns best when there's a great partnership between home and school, and that's one of the key areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage. We have a wonderful home online assessment system called Tapestry and that really does share the learning experiences in school with parents at home - they get pictures and videos of the children in school, observations that the teachers have made, and parents are also actively encouraged to take videos and photos of the children doing the tasks at home, engaging, reading, and writing to send them to the teachers. So there's a wonderful partnership there that's developed between home and school. We also have Class Dojo which is a fantastic online platform where teachers send messages, write a welcome message every morning to welcome parents and let them know what's happening that day, and our

teachers are very visible - they're at the gate every morning to greet the children to say good morning to them and our open door policy allows those informal conversations between the class teacher and home. We really encourage and enjoy parents being involved in the children's education.

