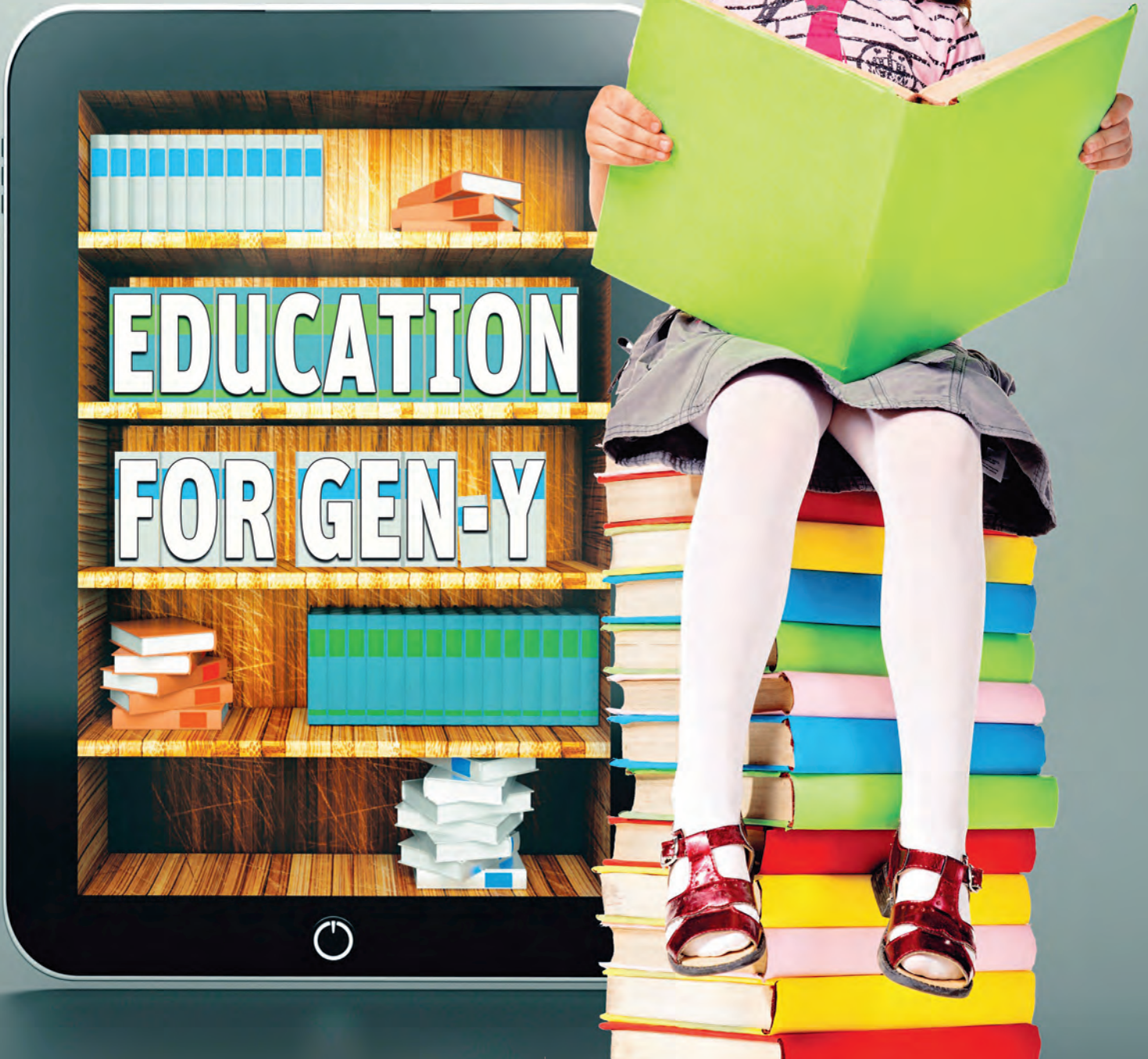


mid-day THURSDAY, JANUARY 29, 2015

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THURSDAY, JANUARY 29, 2015

C O N T E N T

## Aditya Birla World Academy

**4** 'A child's emotional well-being comes first'

## Bombay Cambridge Gurukul

**6** BCG: Where excellence matters...

## Nahar International School

**8** A step forward

## Dr. Pillai Global Academy

**10** Education is a journey

## Ryan Global School

**12** It's time to think global

## JBCN International School

**14** Embracing diversity

## Bright Start International Fellowship School

**15** Where the East meets West

## Bunts Sangha's S M Shetty International School and Junior College

**16** 'Global schools sensitise children to the modern world'

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## An overview of the IB programme

**2** The way ahead

Interview with Farzana Dohadwala, IB Advisor



**13** A look into IGCSE

## AS AND A LEVEL BASICS

At the forefront of international assessment; the Cambridge International Examinations are a better option for a student at the junior college level. It insures that the student is assessed through a unified process that enables him/her to be ranked among students appearing for the examinations universally. Here's a look at the AS (Advanced Subsidiary) and A Levels (Advanced Level), which are equivalent to junior college in the national curriculum:

The AS and A Levels are recognised by universities across the world for their rigorous curriculum and assessment.

Cambridge International AS and A Level are beneficial as they encourage students to study topics in great detail, do research, think independently and present information in a logical manner. This gives a strong foundation to those who want to pursue graduation in foreign universities.

Cambridge International Examinations offers 55 subjects in varied combinations. Schools can easily develop a curriculum tailored to their needs. Students can select a subject or a range of subjects as per his or her plans. The main subjects are Cambridge English, Mathematics, Sciences, Languages, Humanities and Social Sciences, Technical and Vocational courses.

The A Level is generally a two-year course while the AS Level is for a year. Some subjects can be started at AS Level and carried forward to the A Level. The content of the AS Level is half of that of the A Level. Students can give these exams separately. Exams are held in June and November.

Grades for A Level range from A\* to E (minimum required performance) and from A to E for the AS Level. There are clear guidelines to explain the level of achievement.

Students appearing for the exam have the option of attending universities in the UK, Ireland, USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, India, Singapore, Egypt, Jordan, South Africa, the Netherlands, Germany and Spain. The above was agreed at the Lisbon Convention that brought together signatories from 50 different countries, facilitating the recognition of the results of the AS and A Levels. The Cambridge exams are taken in over 450 US universities, all UK and European colleges.



## Profile



Aditya Birla World Academy at Tardeo

## Indian at heart, global in outlook

The Aditya Birla World Academy is an international school with an Indian soul. It is a symbol of progressive and quality education. Their mission is to nurture the innate potential of students and mould them into passionate, committed, competent, sensitive, value-based individuals with leadership qualities. The motto, "Learn Achieve Inspire" captures the essence of their spirit. Chairperson, Neerja Birla believes that "there is a symbiotic connect between children and teachers. They are blessed and truly in a position to mould the lives of so many children. Teaching is a huge responsibility and should be a calling. The most critical task today is that of building character."

**Boards offered:** CIE (Cambridge International Examinations) and IB (International Baccalaureate).

**Programmes offered:** Cambridge Primary (LKg to Gr 5), Cambridge Secondary 1 (Gr 6 to 8), IGCSE (Gr 9 and 10), A Level, IB DP. It's the only school in South Mumbai to offer both A Level and IB DP options in Grades 11 and 12.

### Contact

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# 'A child's emotional well-being comes first'

**A**ditya Birla World Academy has established a niche for itself in the fast moving world of global schools. The school gives an all-round education that includes academics, sports and creative arts. An integrated curriculum, with fun-filled activities and a 'hands on' approach to learning makes school an enjoyable experience for children. The teaching-learning process is child-oriented and focuses on 'active and joyful learning'.

Some of the best practices and unique features include an excellent student-teacher ratio; highly trained, experienced faculty; value-driven school with a focus on emotional well-being; holistic development of the students along with academic excellence; the spirit of community service; experiential, joyful learning as a hallmark.

To develop learning, the school has in place an enriching professional development programme for the staff, which lays emphasis not only on generic skills but also helps them to transcend individual subject areas and chart out their professional as well as personal growth. Radhika Sinha, Principal, Aditya Birla World Academy talks to us about the school. Excerpts...

### Q. How do you foresee the future of global schools in India?

The world today, is reaching out globally. To be abreast with the best, each member of the world community needs to be in touch with the reality of this fast-paced growth. Opportunities are galore; it is for us to sift and pick the ones that best suit us.

Schools that are truly global offer an education that lays emphasis on a global outlook. In an age that's fraught with cross-cultural barriers and a lack of respect and tolerance, it is this education that will enable children to widen their perspectives and to be sensitive to the needs of the global society. It will also teach them to be aware and to care; to accept and respect and to give back to the community. There is great potential in the Indian learner; for our tradition and culture keeps us grounded, yet gives us the strength and confidence to take on the challenge of change; to fly, to explore, to acquire new learning at every step and to keep pace with changing times.

### Q. What are the qualities you

### look for in a student?

We believe there's innate potential and uniqueness in every child. Our focus is on the holistic development of the child and there must be a curiosity that prompts learning, a willingness to explore and extend beyond any pre-set boundaries, the passion to live their childhood to the fullest. We want our children to have a 'spark' in their eyes!

### Q. What do parents expect from a global school and how do you fulfill them?

A school that offers an international education is metaphorically a "world in miniature" where one receives training for life; where one learns to take on challenges; where one shares camaraderie; where effective, meaningful and joyful learning takes place. It is here that one is encouraged to think, to question, to give expression to curiosity, to look beyond, to analyse and to evolve as independent learners with global perspectives. This is the ethos of an international education.

It is our earnest endeavour at Aditya Birla World Academy to provide a platform where our students have the opportunity and the challenge to do the things they are capable of and rise to their potential, whether it is on the curricular and co-curricular side.

We pride ourselves for being an international school with an Indian soul, wherein we want our children to not only remain connected with their identity but also to experience learning from a global perspective. The emotional well-being of our students is a priority. Fun-filled experiential learning and a warm atmosphere enables our children to make relevant connections to everyday life. We encourage our children to believe in themselves and realise their full potential. The school's open minded and warm atmosphere is well-known. The school is where our children grow in confidence; where there is joy in learning and where they raise the bar of excellence in everything they do.

### Q. How does Cambridge International A Level help a student who wants to study abroad?

From the Ivy League schools to the IITs, the Cambridge A Level qualification has a proven reputation for being an excellent preparation for university, employment and life. To add further credence, Stuart



Radhika Sinha, Principal



Chairperson Neerja Birla with students of Aditya Birla World Academy

Schmill, Dean of Admissions, MIT says, “One of the things we find with students who have studied Cambridge International AS and A Levels is that they have a real depth of understanding of the subject matter that they have had classes in, and a real engagement with it. Those are some of the things that we find really help students succeed once they get to our campus.” Thousands of learners use Cambridge International AS and A Level every year to gain places at universities worldwide. There are over 4,35,000 Cambridge International AS and A Level entries in more than 125 countries every year. Cambridge International AS and A Levels are available in a choice of 55 different subjects.

**Q. Does the A Level take into account the working of universities worldwide when it formulates its curriculum?**

CIE programmes and qualifications set the global standard for international education. They are created by subject experts, rooted in academic rigour and reflect the latest educational research. The curriculums provide a strong platform for learners to progress from one stage to the next, and are well supported by teaching and learning resources. CIE revises qualifications to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of learners, schools and higher education institutions

around the world. In making and revising the syllabuses, CIE takes feedback from teachers, universities and ministries of education to develop the content and assessments. They also provide regular courses for teachers to upgrade their knowledge in the subject.

**Q. Which countries accept scores of A Level for their universities?**

Cambridge International A Levels have formed part of the Cambridge qualifications framework for over 50 years and are widely recognised for entry into higher education by over 450 US universities, all UK and European universities, and other universities around the world. Universities in the United States and Canada can offer up to one year of university course credit for four-year degree courses as long as students have good grades in carefully chosen Cambridge International A Level subjects. Richard C. Levin, President, Yale University, USA states, “The depth of knowledge displayed by the best A Level students makes them prime targets for America’s Ivy League universities.”

**Q. What kind of scope does A Level have for kids who want to pursue Fine Arts?**

The Cambridge International A Level Art and Design syllabus considers expression and communication. Learners gain an

understanding of visual perception and aesthetic experience, and the ways in which art and design creates a language of its own.

Most of the work for this syllabus is practical or studio based, so that learners can develop their abilities of observation, analysis, sensitivity, skill, personal expression and imagination. Students also engage in research on a topic of their choice that culminates in a 3,000-word essay.

**Pre-University Choices of International Curricula**

Students of Grades 11 and 12 have the choice of two equally acclaimed international programmes depending on their career interests. The curriculum at the A Level is meticulously crafted at Aditya Birla World Academy to incorporate life skill components of Student Social Responsibility, the Career Education Programme and the Internship/Mentoring Programme as integral parts. They help students develop learning and management skills as well as universal values of empathy.

The IBDP at Aditya Birla World Academy endeavours to deliver a student-centric, dynamic, relevant and rigorous global curriculum in a safe environment that fosters imagination, problem-solving, and innovation to create a better world.

The school has a highly motivated and dedicated faculty with a range of talents, interests and disciplines. Many of the IB and A Level subject specialists are accredited examiners and workshop leaders. Comprehensive three-week internship programmes are held for all the Grade 11 students to gain first-hand experience in relevant industries of their choice. The aim of this programme is to enable students to transfer knowledge from a classroom to a workplace setting.

An independent career guidance and counselling team, advises students on career choices and university placements after Grade 12. Visits from University Admissions teams to orient and interview these students are organised. Graduating students have found placements at prestigious Universities such as Imperial College, London School of Economics, University of Toronto, McGill University, Brown University, Carnegie Mellon and Duke University; and in India, St. Xavier’s College, HR College, Jai Hind College and Shrishti College of Art and Design.

The advantage of having a wider choice at a crucial juncture of a student’s education is what Aditya Birla World Academy understands and offers. Be it the A Level or the IB Diploma Programme, all students are nurtured and encouraged to be lifelong learners. For that is the most important asset they carry with them when they graduate!