

The New MTK Newsletter

THE FUTURE STARTS
HERE

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June 21 2024



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Every Ending is a New Beginning

As yet another school year has come to an end and I am grateful to everyone who has contributed in making it an exceptional one.

For 23 years our Complex has been ardently following the recommendations given by our National Leader Heydar Aliyev. Our motto "The future starts here!" perfectly reflects the ambitions of our educational centre and directs us in constantly changing environment. The basis of professionalism, knowledge and intelligence is laid in schools and our aim is to train young people who can take their rightful position in their community.

This year, as every year, the students of our Complex have won various medals in Olympiads and competitions, and with their achievements, they have honored the name of both the Complex and of our country. These achievements are the result of the hard work of the MTK family including important stakeholders such as teachers, students and parents. Each teacher has contributed their best effort in achieving the highest learning outcomes.

Dear parents, taking this opportunity I would like to express my gratitude to you for entrusting us with the education of your child. Your children have always been in safe hands.

Have a wonderful summer and see you in September!

Warm Regards,

Aygun Mikayilova
Executive Director of The Modern Educational Complex
Named in Honour of Heydar Aliyev

Generation Alpha and Beyond: Restoring Ecological Balance in Karabakh Through SDG

By Rena Alasgarova, Head of Cambridge Advanced Programme

As the MTK community, we firmly believe that education is the most powerful tool we can use to change the world. It is not enough to merely teach our students about the environment: we must empower them to take concrete actions.

"Generation Alpha and beyond: Restoring ecological balance in Karabakh through SDG" is a multiphase project aimed at empowering students to evolve into well-rounded citizens, enhances their self-esteem, and fosters an understanding that, despite their youth, they have the ability to make a meaningful impact.



The project consists of five phases – milestones – each of which consists of a number of tasks. The milestones include but not limited to the MTK SDG Days, SDG awareness raising training events and workshops with school students and teachers in Karabakh region, research and development of the action plan by KERC (Karabakh Ecosystem Restoration Committee) and creating an SDG toolkit for teachers and students.

The teachers of our Complex have already visited two schools in Fuzuli and Zangilan districts as part of the "Alfa Generation and Beyond" project. During their first visit, the teachers conducted interactive training on the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals, planned for implementation until 2030, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The students

who participated in the training sessions got extensive and detailed information about the above-mentioned issues and reinforced the new knowledge and skills they had learned through the interactive games they played with the MTK trainers.

The feedback we received from the students was nothing short of inspiring. Their ideas and thoughts were insightful and profound, showcasing their enthusiasm and readiness to embrace positive change. Hearing their voices, we were reminded of the immense potential these young individuals hold. These responses



reaffirm our belief in the power of education to transform lives and communities. Our utmost goal was to raise awareness and spark a sense of responsibility and action in these students, and their feedback assures us that we are on the right path.



Our second interaction with students in Fuzuli and Zangilan was particularly touching, as we discussed the vital importance of restoring our ecosystem, emphasizing how every small effort contributes to the greater good. Planting trees together was a moving moment, symbolizing hope and the promise of a greener future. Each sapling planted was not just a tree, but a testament to our collective commitment to healing the land. We also initiated a pilot composting project, teaching students the value of reducing waste and recycling nutrients back into the soil. These activities created a sense of community, reminding us all that restoring our ecosystem is not just a task but a shared journey.

To all the students in Zangelan and Fuzuli, thank you for your openness, your ideas, and your commitment to building a better future. Together, we can achieve a lot! The future starts here!

Music School's End-of-Year Concert

By Elnara Majidova and Nazrin Babayeva, Music teachers

Music school No. 39, operating under our school, gave its end-of-year concert to music lovers on June 3. The concert program included the works of both classical and Azerbaijani composers, as well as modern pop music. The audience enjoyed the children's enthusiasm, their colorful and interesting performances.

The music school has recently achieved notable success. In the international competition "Deutschland Music Grandprix," our student Aylin Aliyeva has won the 1st place, Ayan Mehdiyeva has secured the 2nd place, and Artemiy Romanov was awarded the 3rd place. Additionally, teachers Shalala Ahmadova and Nazrin Babayeva have received letters of appreciation.



MTK Summer School 2024

As we approach the summer season, we are excited to announce the launch of our highly anticipated MTK summer school program. This program aims to provide your children with a rewarding and engaging educational experience during their summer break.

At our summer school, we have carefully designed a curriculum that combines academic enrichment, hands-on activities, and fun-filled adventures. Our primary goal is to create a nurturing and stimulating environment where students can continue to learn and grow while enjoying their summer vacation.

Here are some key features and benefits of our summer school program:



1.English Language Enrichment: Our experienced and passionate team of educators will offer a wide range of courses designed to reinforce and enhance core language skills. We strive to create an engaging learning atmosphere that fosters curiosity and critical thinking.

2.STEAM Classes: We are thrilled to introduce our STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) classes as part of our summer school program. These classes will provide hands-on experiences and encourage creativity and innovation. Through engaging projects and experiments, students will explore the exciting intersections between these disciplines, developing problem-solving skills and a deeper understanding of the world around them.

3.Experiential Learning: We strongly believe in the power of experiential learning. Our program will feature outdoor activities and interactive projects that allow students to apply their knowledge in real-world scenarios. These experiences will enhance their understanding and help them develop essential life skills such as teamwork, problem-solving, and communication.

4.Physical Activities: We recognize the importance of physical activity for children's overall well-being. Therefore, our summer school program will incorporate regular sports and recreational activities to promote a healthy and active lifestyle. Outdoor games, swimming, and other physical exercises will ensure that your child remains energetic and refreshed throughout the summer.

We believe that our summer school program will not only support your child's academic growth but also create lasting memories and ignite their passion for learning. It is our commitment to provide a safe and nurturing environment, following all necessary health and safety protocols.

Venue: The Modern Educational Complex Named after Heydar Aliyev

Dates: July 1-12, 2024

Time: 09:00-16:30

Age group: 6-8; 9-12; 13-15

Students per groups: 15

Language of instruction: English

To register your child please call: 055 208 62 99

Thank you for your continued trust and support. We look forward to welcoming your child to our summer school and making this summer an unforgettable learning adventure.

Preschool

Reception Group's Trip to Azerbaijan State Puppet Theatre: "Karlson on the Roof"

By Ms. Adila Aliyeva Preschool Stage Leader

On Friday, May 31, our students had the wonderful opportunity to visit the Azerbaijan State Puppet Theatre and enjoyed a captivating performance of "Karlson on the Roof." The experience was not only entertaining but also educational, providing our students with an immersive cultural experience. They were enthralled by the performance and had a delightful time exploring the magic of puppetry while witnessing the beloved characters from the story come to life on stage. Thank you to all the staff and organizers who made this trip possible. We look forward to more such engaging experiences for our students in the future.



Completion of End-of-Year Assessments



Throughout the assessment period, our dedicated teachers diligently observed and evaluated each child's progress across various developmental domains, including cognitive, social-emotional, physical, and linguistic skills. These assessments not only help us to understand each child's individual strengths and areas for growth but also inform our planning and programming to better support their continued learning and development. As we conclude this assessment period, we look forward to sharing individualized feedback and progress reports with you in the coming weeks.

These reports will provide a comprehensive overview of your child's achievements and milestones, as well as personalized recommendations for continued growth and enrichment.

International Children's Day Celebration

We are thrilled to share the joy and excitement from our recent celebration of International Children's Day at our Preschool. It was a day filled with laughter, games, and unforgettable memories as we honored and celebrated the precious children in our care.

The highlight of the day was the special visit from our delightful clowns, who brought boundless energy and entertainment to the event.

They enchanted the children with their playful antics, colorful costumes, and engaging performances, creating a magical atmosphere that filled the hearts of everyone present.

Throughout the celebration, the children had the opportunity to dance, laugh, and participate in a variety of fun games and activities organized by our talented entertainers. From musical chairs to balloon animals, each moment was filled with laughter, joy, and endless fun.



Teachers' Performance in Assemblies

On Fridays, our Preschool hosted engaging Assemblies themed 'Fun Games' for the EYFS and Transition group children. Throughout the day, the children actively engaged in various activities aimed at promoting teamwork, enhancing motor skills, and fostering creativity. They enthusiastically participated in interactive games carefully selected to develop their coordination and cooperation.

One of the highlights was the tower-building activity using LEGO bricks, which not only stimulated their imagination but also encouraged problem-solving and collaboration among peers.

Overall, it was a lively and enriching experience for our young learners, and we are thrilled to witness their growth and enjoyment throughout the sessions.



Primary MTK's International Children's Protection Day: A Celebration of Culture and Diversity!

By Ms. Zulfiya Rasulova Primary Stage Leader

MTK was happy to celebrate international Children Protection Day! This is the biggest event for the Primary section of MTK and this year was made more special by inviting other schools in Baku to join in our celebration. Baku Oxford School, School 6, and Education Complex 132/134 participated and gave dazzling and energetic performances representing Türkiye, Italy, and Romania. Our Primary students were happy to demonstrate their hard work by showcasing dances representing nations from all over the world, highlighting the importance of culture, diversity, and how every nation celebrates their children with dancing, laughter, and love. A special thank you to Ms. Turan, our dedicated dance teacher, whose incredible effort and guidance helped our students shine on stage.



Celebrating Success: Primary Students Earn Picnic Rewards for Positive Behavior!

Our Primary Students have been working hard this semester to earn marbles for their Marble Jars. Our Primary class earn marbles by demonstrating important skills: teamwork, positive behaviour development, and developing a welcoming classroom community. Each class selects their own rewards and works towards them. A few Primary classes have decided to enjoy the nice summer weather and have picnics outside in the MTK Peace Garden. We congratulate them on achieving their Marble Jar rewards and enjoying the rewards for their commitment to building better classroom communities and a better school community.



Science Fair: Showcasing Student Innovation and Enthusiasm!

MTK was happy to host a school wide Science Fair in May. Students across our complex created posters, interactive displays, and models to demonstrate their scientific knowledge and learning from this year. Primary Section was represented by our Grade 5 students and supported by Ms. Gulaya and Ms. Aygun. The students were enthusiastic to speak about their projects to staff members, showing their passion on the topics of space, body systems, ecosystem food webs, and scientific devices.



Immersing in Arab Culture: Primary Students Shine at ADA University Event



On May 31, primary school students participated in the "Arab Culture Day" event held at ADA University. They performed poems and songs at the event. Additionally, our students got closely acquainted with Arab culture, including the national costumes and cuisine of various Arab countries. They listened to Arab music and poems performed by students from ADA and APU universities and watched skits. Our students also interacted with the university students, engaging in dialogues in Arabic.

PTCs and Summer Projects

As we are reaching the end of our current academic year, it is time for the last round of Parent Teacher Conferences starting on June 6th. These PTCs will be highlighting the growth of our students, celebrating their successes and how much they have achieved during this academic year.

In addition, MTK students will be given some fun summer projects to work on during the holidays to help keep their skills sharp and engaged for the new school year starting in September.

Cultural Diversity Day: Student Interviews and Reflections

On Cultural Diversity Day, our primary students Mariya Young and Suleyman Ilyasli from grade 5A interviewed the guests and participants to gather their thoughts on the event. You can watch the entire video through this link to see how competent our students are.

<https://youtu.be/f-jpb0ICUGA>

Secondary

Climate Change and Sustainability Assembly

Led by COP29 Experts

By Mr. Atabay Guliyev Secondary Stage Leader

On 29 May, we were honored to host Communications Coordinator, Narmin Abdullayeva, alongside their dedicated Sustainability Coordinator, Fatima Fataliyeva from COP29 (29th conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change) Azerbaijan Operating Company at our school.



The company's mission is to educate and inspire the next generation on the critical issues of climate change and sustainability. During their visit, our guests provided valuable insights into climate change and sustainability, aiming to raise awareness among the students. We had the privilege of hearing insights on COP - its significance, history, and the meticulous preparation process behind this vital conference.

Witnessing the curiosity and engagement of the students was truly inspiring. Their thoughtful questions underscored the importance of empowering youth with knowledge and fostering a sense of responsibility towards our planet.

Movie time

On June 6, English Department organised a movie time (with free popcorn) at the Auditorium for the Secondary students. The students watched "Wish", an animated musical fantasy film produced by Disney in 2023. The film follows the story of 17-year-old Asha who lives in a land where residents share their greatest wish with King Magnifico in the hope it will come true.



However, over the course of an hour and a half, Asha realises she must save her kingdom from the king's sinister purpose of wish gathering and granting. The movie shows the importance of having wishes and not relying on anyone else to realise them. The wishes are yours and you can achieve them with the help of family and friends!

Journey Through Time: Students Experienced History at Gala State Historical and Ethnographic Reserve

On a sunny day last week, 611 students embarked on an enriching journey to the Gala State Historical and Ethnographic Reserve. This trip provided a unique opportunity for our students to dive deep into history and experience traditional crafts firsthand.

The day was filled with excitement as students engaged in a variety of activities designed to immerse them in the rich cultural heritage preserved at the reserve. One of the highlights was the pottery workshop, where students had the chance to try their hand at creating their own pottery pieces. Under the guidance of skilled artisans, they learned about the ancient techniques used in pottery-making and discovered the patience and precision required to craft these beautiful artifacts.



In addition to pottery, the students explored numerous historical exhibits that showcased the lifestyle, traditions, and artifacts of past civilizations. The guides provided fascinating insights into the history and significance of each exhibit, making the learning experience both educational and engaging.

"This trip was an eye-opener," said one of the students. "It was amazing to see and learn about the history that shaped our culture. The pottery workshop was especially fun and gave us a real sense of the craftsmanship of the past."

Teachers were also impressed by the educational value of the visit. "Experiential learning is crucial in helping students connect with history," commented one of the teachers. "The hands-on activities at the Gala State Historical and Ethnographic Reserve allowed our students to engage with history in a meaningful and memorable way."

Overall, the trip to the Gala State Historical and Ethnographic Reserve was a resounding success. It not only provided our students with a deeper understanding of historical and cultural heritage but also sparked their interest in traditional crafts and historical exploration. We look forward to more such enriching experiences in the future.

Summer Learning: Closing Gaps and Setting Goals for Success

Macro-assessments are now over and it's time to review the students' progress and set goals to close the learning gaps. We encourage our students to get feedback from their teachers on areas for improvement and spend some time on doing the summer assignments to ensure a successful start in the upcoming academic year.

English Department has already prepared Summer Reading lists with relevant tasks to be done over the summer holidays. You will soon receive some assignments from Maths and Science departments. We look forward to your cooperation in supporting your children in their learning journey. As you may know by now, active parental participation has been shown to improve students' academic performance and helps them reach their full potential.

Grade 8i1 and 8i2 Students' School Trip to the Palace of the Shirvanshahs in Icherisheher

On 29th of May, the excitement was tangible among the Grade 8i students of our school as they boarded the bus for a field trip to the Palace of the Shirvanshahs, located in the heart of the Old City in Baku. This trip promised not just a break from routine schoolwork, but an enriching experience into the depths of Azerbaijan's rich history and cultural heritage.

Arriving at the entrance of the Old City, or Icherisheher as it is locally known, the students were immediately captivated by the ancient stone walls that seemed to whisper tales of bygone eras.



Inside the palace, the students marveled at the vast collection of artifacts, each piece telling a unique story of the past. The students listened intently as their guide explained the significance of each artifact and shared fascinating facts about the lives of the Shirvanshahs.

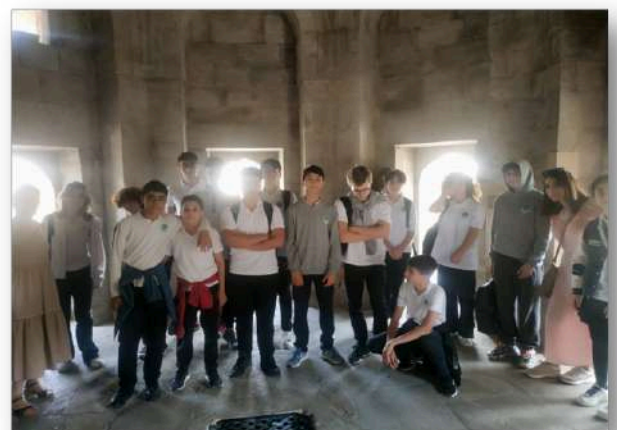
One of the highlights of the trip was the visit to the mausoleum within the palace complex. The students were stunned by the beauty of the structure. The guide explained that the mausoleum was built to honor the Shirvanshah rulers and their families, and its design reflected the Islamic architectural influences of the time.



As the tour concluded, the students gathered in the palace courtyard, their minds brimming with new knowledge and a deeper appreciation for their country's rich heritage. The trip to the Shirvanshahs Museum had not only been an educational experience but also an inspiring journey through time. The students left the Old City with a sense of pride and a newfound connection to their cultural roots.

Back at school, the students couldn't stop talking about their adventure. They eagerly shared their experiences with their classmates and teachers, reliving the highlights of the trip. The visit to the Shirvanshahs Museum had sparked a curiosity and enthusiasm for history that would stay with them for years to come.

This trip was a perfect blend of education and adventure, and it undoubtedly enriched the students' learning journey in the most meaningful way.



Celebrating Excellence: Success Stories

By Sahiba Allahyarli, Deputy Head of Secondary

We have reached the end of another school year... We, as the Modern Education Complex named in Honour of Heydar Aliyev are very happy and proud! Our Complex, who set on a journey with the slogan "The Future Starts Here!" presents you the noteworthy young people raised for our country and our society!

As an exceptional student for his hard work and sharp intelligence, Mirhabib Asgarov won a silver medal in 2022, a silver medal in 2023, and a gold medal-the first place in 2024 at National Subject Olympiads. He managed to

raise Azerbaijan's name to the summit not only within the country but also in the international educational environment. Mirhabib was awarded a bronze medal at Junior Balkan Mathematical Olympiad (JBMO) in 2022, and appreciation certificate in 2023 at the International Mathematical Olympiad (IMO). As a result of 11-year sustained hard work, our student has been recently admitted to KAIST University in South Korea.

One of the intellectuals of our complex is Mehdi Najaf. Mehdi has won a bronze medal in 2022, a silver medal in 2023, and a gold medal-first place in 2024 at the National Subject Olympiad. Mehdi's achievements are not limited within the borders of our country. He also successfully participated in the International Chinese Summer Mathematical Camp in 2023 and the Balkan Mathematical Olympiad in 2024. Mehdi Najaf has taken the next step on his way to his success with being admitted to the university. He has been offered a place at the University College London for the 2024-2025 academic year. Therefore, on April 8, both of our students attended a meeting for students who attended Olympiads and were admitted to top universities with the Minister of Science and Education Mr. Emin Amrullayev.

There is no doubt that the path to the peak of science is through school. It is the knowledge gained in high school which determines the success of those who choose the path to science as well as those who are willing to contribute to the future of the country. In recent years, actions taken by the Ministry of Science and Education to encourage scientific research among schoolchildren have resulted in a new generation of talented people who have developed their own thinking and intelligence. The "Scientists of Tomorrow" Contest is one such activity which exposes such young people. We can proudly say that our 11th-grade student, Dilara Huseynaliyeva, also won a bronze medal (III place) in the chemistry contest on "synthesis of new 4-azido reproductions of triazoles used as anti-tuberculosis and cancer drugs."

Grade 10R student Daniz Taghiyeva and Zahra Valizade took part in "Future's Scientists" project under our Biology teacher Leyla Galandarli and were awarded the 3rd place.



We can proudly say that some of our Grade 11 students - Imran Nesibov, Khalid Nesibov, Mohamed Hajili, Safiya Orucova, Sofia Karibova, Joseph Yadigarli, Emil Karimov, Zeyneb Rzayeva, George Adil Hand - have already been admitted to TOP international universities.

As the Modern Educational Complex named in Honour of Heydar Aliyev, we have never had any doubt that our students would have high results. The demands of our teachers, parents and the attention they give to the education of their children have played a major role in achieving this success. These achievements are the result of years of hard work. Parents, school leadership and teachers are constantly working hard to ensure students get a quality education. In general, our Complex has always been exceptional in a positive way, both for its quality education and its discipline.

Our pupils are delighted with their success and note that they achieved such a result only through hard work: "To achieve high results in exams, you need to work regularly, do the tasks assigned by teachers thoroughly, and strive for high accomplishments. Above all, by studying systematically and consistently during school years, we need to build a foundation for knowledge so that we can conquer the peak of success!"



Book review: “Wonder” by R.J. Palacio

By Nilufar Sadigli, 7i2 student

One of my favorite novels is called “Wonder” by R.J. Palacio. The main reason that makes me like this book is undoubtedly the narrative, in my opinion the author does a great job with describing the complexities of the human mind making the story very relatable. The heartwarming tale of R.J. Palacio follows Auggie Pullman, (the main character) a young boy with a facial deformity, as he struggles to navigate the challenges of attending the school. The book includes various point of views, including the point of views of the protagonists. Palacio explores the themes of empathy, kindness, acceptance etc. In my opinion one of the novel's greatest strengths is how skillfully the author managed to portray such a young character, delving into Auggie's insecurities, fears, and struggles. Even though Auggie goes through many hardships his story finds a happy ending. In conclusion “Wonder” is a heartwarming tale that teaches the reader a very valuable lesson of not judging people based on their looks. I am sure many would agree that R.J. Palacio has created a modern classic. If the concept has intrigued you, I would definitely recommend reading the book.

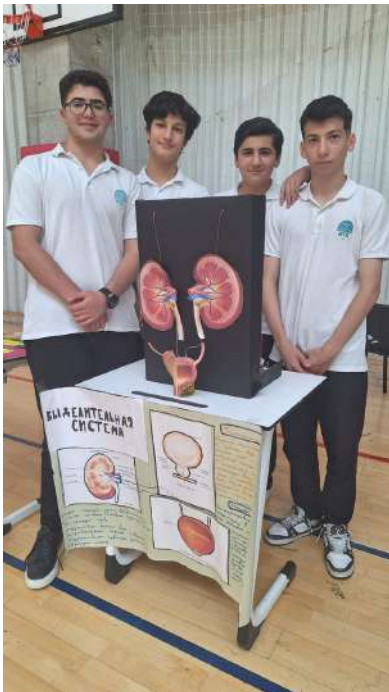


All smiles for MTK International School's first science fair!

By Mrs. Simone Blake, Science Coordinator

The Science Fair overall was a tremendous success because the pupils and the staff who made up MTK's school community made it happen! It was sincerely both a delight and an honour to have seen the development of thoughts progress into a reality, witnessing the transformation as they worked innovatively and creatively to bring their ideas to life through their projects.

May 30th and 31st marked the beginning of a new chapter under the auspice of STEM and Science Education here at MTK International School.



A remarkable collaboration between the Primary stage and Azerbaijani, International and Russian Secondary streams, Grade 5 pupils along with Grade 6- Grade 9 pupils worked hard to design presentations, projects and practical demonstrations covering different areas within science that they have learnt or were interested in.

From an outward perspective, the pupils enjoyed the challenge of working with their hands and doing something different by collaborating with their classmates. Others were driven by the opportunity to 'be the best,' competing for 1st, 2nd or 3rd place. Whatever the motive, they were all happy and looked forward to the event as a break from their macro assessments.

Congratulations to all the winners from each grade. A huge 'thank you' goes out to all the pupils who participated in the fair with their projects along with the Science Fair committee.



The Duke of Edinburgh's Awards

By Mr. Mark David, Humanities Coordinator

It is planned that at the start of the next school year that this school will become the first in Azerbaijan to deliver the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award. The Award is a non-formal extra-curricular framework supporting young people to find their 'purpose, place and passion in the world'. Through the programme, each young person becomes part of something special while developing their individual interests and skills, as well as supporting their academic ambitions. It is currently available in more than 120 countries and is open to all 14 to 24-year-olds, inclusive of background, location, culture and ability. The Award was founded in 1956 and today there are over a million young people taking on the Award's challenge to believe in the power of their potential, make a difference in their community and take control of their future. It is said that that this results in 'entire generations of innovators and changemakers who are truly world-ready'.



The opening Award will be at the Bronze Level, which involves, for those over 14 years of age, at least six months minimum participation, completing four sections: Physical Recreation, Skills, Voluntary Service and an Adventurous Journey. The Physical Recreation section of the Award encourages young people to participate in sport and other physical recreation for the improvement of health, fitness and wellbeing. The Skills section of the Award encourages the development of personal interests, creativity or practical skills, offering the participant the opportunity to either improve an existing skill, or to try something entirely new. The third section is Voluntary Service, and for this section participants are required to give volunteer over a set period of time, enabling them to experience the benefits that their service provides to others in their community. Lastly, participants take part in the Adventurous Journey, which takes place over two days and one night, including an average of six hours of purposeful effort per day. If students are interested in taking part in the International Award then please notify Mr. David, your home-room teacher, or any member of the school management team. Thank you.

Scan the code to get more
information about the
Duke of the Edinburg
Awards



Profile: Meet our Head of Operations Mr. Tural Abbasov Interviewed by Mr. Nelson Urrego, School Principal

NU- Mr. Tural, good day. Thank you very much for accepting this invitation and connecting with the Newsletter readers, we know you are a busy person. How are you?

TA- Good day, Mr. Nelson. I feel energetic and enthusiastic as I try to enjoy the sunny days in Baku. Thank you for giving me the chance to connect with the school community. I greatly appreciate this opportunity.

NU-Thank you Mr. Tural. For our readers' awareness, Mr. Tural and I met a few years ago when we worked in a different school in Baku. Back then you were (and still are) a kind and approachable leader. How do you think that kindness makes the difference in a working environment?

TA- I remember the days when we had an amazing school year working hard on the school accreditation in CIS. Thank you for your kind words. I always made an effort to be open to discussions with members of the school community. To be honest, it can be challenging to communicate with people on a daily basis when you are a business manager. But I remember what my finance course trainer said, he repeated it twice a day; a business team is successful when their work is effective in the classroom. My team and I try to be present in every corner of the school, supporting the teachers, staff, and students to ensure their teaching and learning journey is effective.

NU-Clearly, and that is precisely what the leadership team has in mind when projecting MTK as a positive, dynamic and optimistic workplace.

What is the importance of the Headship of Operations in a school like MTK?

TA – We always envisioned MTK as a learning hub where students acquire 21st-century competencies. Personally, I believe that in order to maintain this goal, Operations and Academics should collaborate and coordinate all their efforts and actions. As the direct supervisor of nine enthusiastic department leaders (finance, admission, IT, maintenance, procurement, storage, marketing, security, and HR), I have a great responsibility.



However, we are fortunate that these leaders in the operations team, as well as all team members, are dedicated, with some of them having even seventeen years of experience at MTK. This demonstrates their love and sense of belonging to our community. My role is simply to inspire them and help them realize their power in supporting the teaching and learning process.

NU-How do you work collaboratively with other areas of the school, like academics?

TA - MTK underwent a restructuring process at the start of this academic year. We implemented a span of control system for each pillar of school management.

Each pillar now has its own mid-level management team and platform for discussions. The Executive Team (ET) and Executive Planning Team (EPT) serve as the platforms where we collaboratively plan school academic and operational activities. Our school is a dynamic place with a primary focus on learning. With this motto in mind, we continuously strive to adapt and align our teams to effectively serve the school community.

NU-You have been at MTK much longer than some school leaders, what makes MTK so special and attractive for students and parents?

TA- MTK is Azerbaijan's first private school, named in honor of our National Leader. Located in the heart of the beautiful city of Baku, the school boasts fully renovated premises with a unique architectural design.



Every member of our school community takes pride in their special identity and firmly believes that the Future Starts Here!

NU-Our school has the privilege to be named after a remarkable leader like Heydar Aliyev. How is his legacy present in the school today?

TA- Great question. It is a really big responsibility for all of us as we work in the school named in honor of our National Leader, Heydar Aliyev. Heydar Aliyev personally participated in the opening ceremony of the school and set the targets for the future. We remember this in all our activities, and while implementing our daily duties, we believe that we are serving the future of Azerbaijan, as clearly defined by the National Leader, and further developed by our victorious President, Mr. Ilham Aliyev.

NU-We are both convinced that MTK will soon be the best international school in Azerbaijan and the region. How are we progressing in that direction?

TA- I think we are making good progress. We have completed our restructuring process and now have stable financial operations in place. The financial and admission reports and data from the past three years indicate a promising future. However, there is still a lot of work to be done. We must continue to focus on our strategy and establish more collaborative platforms for teachers, parents, and students to engage in discussions. I firmly believe that every member of our community has the invaluable ability to contribute to the school's transformational journey. Our goal is to obtain CIS accreditation, as we believe it will bring us renewed energy and new commitments. Our deep sense of belonging to our roots will enhance this incredible journey with a passion for learning and growth.

NU-I admire your love for education. In such a passionate journey, you must keep learning and updating your knowledge. Please tell us about this adventure you have embarked on at the prestigious University of Columbia?

TA- Thank you. I believe we all have a love for education. The key indicator here is the passion for learning - the more we learn, the more our love for it grows. This passion for learning led me to a place I hold dear, Columbia University in New York city. I had been dreaming of attending this university day and night for the past three years. I even imagined myself on Broadway 114th street, passing through the Columbia University area, and taking pictures in front of the Butler Library. When I finally arrived, I spent the first week exploring every corner of the university and going on listening walks. Our academic advisor, Dr. Furlonge, assigned us to go on listening walks almost every day and write about our experiences on our Canvas pages. Another crucial factor that contributed to my success was the support and belief of the people and colleagues around me, who encouraged me to apply for the university. I would like to express my deep gratitude to the person who believed in me (although she prefers not to be named), as well as to my family, wife, and children for their unwavering emotional support, and to my school board and colleagues for their invaluable assistance. And, of course, I must thank my faculty for believing in me and granting me acceptance.

NU-How does your research and findings support our school's growth?

TA- Thank you for your question. Let me provide you with some details about my program. It is a Private School Leadership program at Teachers College Columbia University. This program offers a unique and specialized opportunity for educators who work exclusively in private and international schools. My program is the Two Summers Master program, which is supervised by the Klingenstein Leadership Academy. It also allows for the transfer of previous MA credits towards an Ed.M. degree. The program consists of 32 credits and offers 10 main majors. During the Two Summers, there are extensive 80-day in-person lessons. The Fall and Spring semesters are dedicated to the Practicum period, which involves an action-research project focused on a problem of practice in the school where you

work. In my case, the topic of my research was the Teachers' efficacy in integrating National and International Curriculums for Enhanced English Proficiency in Elementary School. To address this topic, I conducted in-depth interviews with 5 Elementary English Language teachers as well as a survey with all Primary teachers. I used a mixed methodology for my research. The key findings showed that factors influencing teachers' performance are directly related to their efficacy, personality type, and experience in teaching English. Additionally, teachers expressed a deep understanding of the importance of collaboration in multicultural environments and their eagerness to cooperate with each other.

The data analysis suggests that MTK is committed to both national values and international learning programs. It is crucial to apply theories and evidence-based practices from the summer program to MTK's context. The course on "Transformational Change in Independent Schools" has provided valuable insights into Organizational Development, including organizational diagnosis, team dynamics through self-development, leading change, and fostering an inclusive culture within the school. These aspects are particularly important for MTK as it undergoes a transformational change during the 2023-2024 academic year. Considering MTK's change history over the past six years, I propose adapting the BART model (Green and Molenkamp, 2005) and identifying adaptive challenges (Heifetz and Laurie, 2001) throughout the school. This approach will foster personal growth and contribute to the development of a strong school culture, providing individuals with greater flexibility in their actions.

NU- Would you recommend your graduate course to other members of the staff?

TA- Definitely, this program is the only one that provides in-depth knowledge for educators in private and international schools. By the way, I would like to mention something here. One of the requirements for my Ed.M. degree was a book review. I reviewed M. Fullan's latest book, and it was selected to be published in the Klingbrief portal with the "Of Note" feature. Please visit the link for more information: <https://www.klingensteincenter.org/klingbrief-issues/vol-123>

NU-Thank you for setting the example that even the most demanding enterprises can be achieved with discipline, sacrifice and passion. On a more personal level, what made you fall in love with education?

TA- My major in both my BA and MA was International Relations. It had always been a childhood dream of mine to become a diplomat. When I first entered the International School sector eight years ago, I became acquainted with OECD reports on education. That day, I made a promise to myself to delve deeper into this field, as diplomacy is closely connected to these reports. The OECD can provide a prognosis for education for the next 20 years, and these prognoses often come true. This self-motivation fueled my passion for education, and I developed a strong love for it. Additionally, I have a great affection for children. They serve as my main source of inspiration. I firmly believe that the key to future prosperity lies in a holistic educational model that not only imparts cognitive knowledge but also emphasizes social and emotional development.

NU-Our seniors will be soon celebrating their graduation ceremony, any advice for them?

TA- I believe that the younger generation is much more knowledgeable about the world's current problems. There is much we can learn from them. Instead of underestimating them, we should provide them with a platform to address these issues, as their efforts now could potentially save humanity from disasters in the future. I hope they will critically evaluate what they believe is beneficial for all of humanity. It is evident that they possess the capacity and knowledge to pave the way for a brighter future. All they need is to have dreams, big dreams, and work diligently every day to turn those dreams into reality.

NU-Mr. Tural you have been very flexible with your time. Thank you very much again for letting our readers know a little bit more about you, your role and the amazing experience at the University of Columbia.

TA- Again, thank you so much for giving me a chance to share my thoughts with the school community. Good luck!

Descriptive Writing: The First Meeting with the Dearest One

By Maryam Amiraslanova, 9i Student

On an mundane freezing January dusk – when the stars were still wide awake and the air was crisp and cool, filled with the smell of pine and cinnamon – the usual ‘post-new year’ scent that felt unusually homely and refreshing – a certain family was wide awake, tired lines around their puffy eyes indicating that they would rather be sleeping at this time. Despite their worn out looks, they felt nothing but relief as if they stood amidst the aftermath of a storm they had long dreaded, ready to build something new—with someone new—from the ruins. It felt rewarding to say the least – to huddle up on the couch beside each other with an eccentrically newfound sense of clarity and calm – as if they had not felt it for years. The worn out woman – who was now proudly carrying the title of a ‘mother’ – a word that was so unfamiliar for her to be referred to as, as she was just 22 – still a kid, still too young for all this – hardly awake, laid lifelessly in her hospital bed, her expression alone heart-shattering, warm liquid staining her flaming cheeks and blurring her vision.



She was beautiful – the first human I ever laid my eyes on – and the most ethereal I have ever seen to this day. Although I hadn’t known how to differentiate colors back then, I was in awe – my breath completely taken away by her warm, loving brown orbs – that felt like they fit the whole milky way and beyond in them, and the vague freckles that were worth marveling over - as if her eyes weren’t able to hold every star so they spilled onto his face and disguised as freckles. She took me in her hands as I wailed, more tears trailing over her face, a subtle tremble running down the length of her arms and converging into all her fingers as she hesitantly lifted up a hand to run it over my cheek, tracing the outline of a cheekbone under the soft, cool skin. She felt like a kid picking up a pencil for the first time and marveling at the way squiggly lines and scribbles seemed to appear out of thin air with a stroke of the hand. This—feeling her own kid’s porcelain skin under the tip of her fingers—felt like a marvel in itself and she wanted to keep doing it over and over until the last breath left her fatigued body. She glanced up at the night sky through the fogged window, wondering if this was love—this earnest desire to know if this little baby she was holding would soon have a favorite constellation of her own too, if she would grow to be willing to spend an eternity with her. This absurd longing to raise her under those very same stars.

My shrieks calmed and were now replaced by tiny snuffles. It was strange, worthy of being studied and researched, how I had just met this person but had felt like I couldn’t let the tiny grip I had on her finger go until I had gifted her every star in the universe and dragged both the moon and the sun up down from the sky for her– even if my hands melted and body burned and turned into nothing but torrid ashes. It felt like all my peace, all my calm lay in this woman’s arms, as she cradled me in her soft arms as if trying to hide me from the world, mantle my little body from all the harm and people – let me cloak in this heaven for eternity. The woman’s cries soothed as she stayed hushed, seemingly content to keep on exploring the softness of the my skin under her fingers and hands, looking at me with so much awe and longing that it made me feel vulnerable under this new touch. It felt like her mind had finally been anchored at the shore, no longer drifting without aim or reason, and she pressed herself closer, cradling my face with her hands, no longer shaking with fear – hugging me softly and humming contently as the first smile made its way up my lips causing the whole family to squeal in delight and clutter up closer to my mother, their smiles so wide as they hugged, hugged and hugged.

They lost and found themselves all over again with every smile that turned into a wide grin, every breath that turned into a laughter, every small touch that turned into a gentle caress as the stars watched, almost sparkling a bit brighter in response.

Recipe of the Week: Strawberry Tart

By Nuray Huseynova and Aisha Hajiyeva, 7i2 Students

Strawberries are currently in season. The Azerbaijani strawberries are bursting with flavor. So let's make a strawberry tart! To make this tart even more decadent, completely cover the custard base with 600g strawberries.

FOR THE RICH SWEET SHORTCRUST PASTRY:

2 medium free-range egg yolks, mixed with 1 tablespoon ice-cold water

175g plain flour a pinch of salt

2 tablespoons icing sugar

110g unsalted butter, chilled and diced

FOR THE CUSTARD CREAM:

300ml milk

finely grated zest of 1 medium unwaxed orange

4 medium free-range egg yolks, at room temperature

60g caster sugar

2 tablespoons cornflour

150ml double or whipping cream, well chilled

FOR THE TOPPING:

200g ripe strawberries

4 tablespoons good strawberry jam a 22cm loose-based deep flan tin



To make the pastry by hand, sift the flour, salt and icing sugar into a mixing bowl. Add the cold diced butter and rub into the flour using the tips of your fingers until the mixture looks like fine crumbs. Using a round-bladed knife, stir in the egg yolk mixture to make a firm dough; if it seems dry and crumbly, stir in a little water a teaspoon at a time. To make the pastry in a food processor, put the flour, salt and icing sugar into the processor bowl and pulse a couple of times to combine. Add the cold diced butter and process until the mixture looks like fine crumbs. With the machine running, add the yolk mixture and process until the mixture comes together. If there are dry crumbs, add more water a teaspoon at a time.

Wrap the dough in clingfilm and chill for 20 minutes. Roll out on a lightly floured surface to a circle about 28cm across, then carefully line the flan tin - this rich pastry is less robust than regular shortcrust. Prick the base of the pastry case, then chill for 20 minutes. Meanwhile, heat the oven to 190°C/375°F/gas 5. Line the pastry case with greaseproof paper, fill with baking beans, and bake 'blind' for 15 minutes, until the pastry is firm. Remove the paper and beans and bake for a further 5 to 10 minutes, until the pastry is crisp and golden brown. Remove from the oven and leave to cool completely.

Meanwhile, make the custard filling. Heat the milk with the orange zest in a medium pan. In a heatproof bowl, whisk the egg yolks with the sugar and cornflour with a wire hand-whisk until smooth - about 1 to 2 minutes. Whisk in the hot milk. When thoroughly combined, tip the mixture back into the pan and set over a medium heat. Whisk constantly until the mixture boils and thickens to make a smooth custard. Tip the mixture on to a plate and press a piece of dampened greaseproof paper on to the surface to prevent a skin forming as it cools. Chill for at least 20 minutes.

Wipe the berries with damp kitchen towels, then hull. Heat the jam in a small pan until boiling, then push through a sieve. Return the sieved jam to the pan. Whip the cream until it holds soft peaks. Transfer the custard to a mixing bowl, stir until very smooth, and fold in the whipped cream. Set the pastry case on a serving plate and fill with the custard cream. Arrange the berries on top. Reheat the jam until it starts to bubble, then brush over the berries.

Nuş olsun! ❤️

Graduation Ceremonies 2024

Transition

We are thrilled to share the joyous moments from our recent Transition Groups Graduation Ceremony, where our young learners showcased their talents, creativity, and enthusiasm. The event was a delightful celebration of their growth, achievements, and the wonderful memories they have created during their time with us.

During the ceremony, the children captivated the audience with their heartfelt performances, including singing songs, lively dances, impressive gymnastic activities, and various entertaining acts. It was truly heartwarming to witness their confidence and enthusiasm as they took to the stage, radiating joy and excitement throughout the venue.

Thank you once again to everyone who contributed to the success of the Transition Groups Graduation Ceremony. We look forward to continuing our journey together, inspired by the boundless potential and bright futures of our students.



Primary

This has been a busy time of the year for our Grade 5 marking an important event: graduating Primary School! Our students were excited to participate and act out a play for their parents. The two stories picked were King Arthur and Charlie and the Chocolate Factory. All Grade 5 students showed their dedication and hard work in practice and rehearsals leading up to the performances. We congratulate our Grade 5 students on their success in Primary and wish them the best as they embark on their educational journey, entering Secondary.



Graduation Ceremonies 2024



Secondary

The graduation ceremony of the Grade 11 students took place on 14th of June in the courtyard of our Complex. Graduates celebrated their achievements and shared their feelings of joy and pride with the members of our school community, including their teachers, families and fellow students.

The members of the leadership team, teachers and parents delivered speeches that acknowledged the students' success gained during the school years and wished them best of luck in the life beyond school. Homeroom teachers, subject teachers and SLT members as well as proud parents of our students presented their gifts in the form of a song to show their love and respect for the graduates.

Towards the end of the ceremony, the knowledge key was traditionally passed from graduates to Grade 10 students to cherish it and work hard to carry it with honour to pass it to the next class. At the end, on behalf of whole staff, the Executive Director of the Complex, Aygun Mikayilova delivered her heartfelt gratitude to all who took part in the organization of the Ceremony.



MTK MUN 2024

By Aydan Abbasli, 10i Student

MTKIMUN24' took place on June 16th and 17th, in 2024. It was the third conference our school held in a single academic year. Over 1000 people have applied to be a part of Media, DAIS, admin and delegate team, from which we selected the best candidates and in the end, hosted 350 people at the conference.

The Secretariat team with The Secretary General Kamran Ibrahim and Deputy Secretary General Aydan Abbasli as well as Organizational team, led by Imran Nasibov put a lot of effort, spent sleepless nights and showed strong dedication to make this conference happen.



Our admin team, the backbone of the conference, was led by the esteemed Head of Admins, Jalal Isgandarov and the Deputy Head of Admins, Ravan Musayev and was the largest in the whole history of MUNs held in Azerbaijan, consisting of 40 people. Our utmost respectable and creative media team led by Teymur Eyvazov and Mikayil Huseynov, involved 25 media team members produced two final video projects, as well as social media engagement on different platforms. Moving on to the conference itself, it consisted of 8 different committees, one of which was the special COP'29 committee, in which delegates got engaged in fruitful debates on the topic of the aims of Paris agreement. At the end of the two days, to commemorate the efforts, a party took place at the Marriott Hotel. To sum it up, the conference would not have taken place, if the teams hadn't worked as one, which brings us to the final point that exemplifies how important working side by side in a community actually is and that we are all UNITED and consequently, to take big steps in history - you have to stick together.

Thank you for reading!

And thank you very much to our contributors in the editorial committee for their hard work and dedication:

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Nuray Huseynova and Aisha Hajiyeveva 7i2 students
Aydan Abbasli 10i student

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