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Prague 1

PARKLANE

International School

'As a fourth year medical student at Imperial College London, one of the most prestigious higher learning institutions in the United Kingdom, I feel that my experience with the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) programme has provided me with the essential research skills and creative tools necessary in such a lively and competitive environment.'

Tareq Ammari
IGCSE scholar from Amman, Jordan

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Principal's Note

Dear Parents,

A very warm welcome to Park Lane International School, a flourishing and vibrant learning environment situated in the majestic city of Prague.

The main purpose of this brochure is to give you a flavour of our school's philosophy, values and vision. We also wish to highlight many of the key features which distinguish Park Lane from other international schools in the Czech Republic.

Few things are likely to have more influence on a young person's future than the quality of the school they attend and the educational opportunities and experiences provided for them. In this regard, Park Lane International School consistently seeks to develop each young person's spirit of independence and intellectual curiosity, together with a strong understanding of personal and collective responsibility. We also aim to develop each student's sense of self-worth and self-belief, and actively promote his/her capacity to think creatively while working collaboratively. As a consequence, our young learners take much pride in their academic and extracurricular achievements, share high aspirations, bright ambitions and a genuine love of learning.

With our broad curriculum and learner-centred study programme, we continually aim to nurture a culture of excellence, dedication and team spirit in all areas of school life, while striving to equip our young people with the necessary skills and attributes to become independent, self-assured, caring and responsible members of the global community.

Best wishes,

Paul Ingarfield,
School Principal



Our School

Park Lane International School's Primary and Secondary branch, which caters for students from 6–18, is situated in a spectacular location directly alongside the walls of Prague Castle in the historic quarter of Malá Strana (Valdštejnská 151, Prague 1).

At Park Lane we focus on quality first. This is reflected in our teachers' qualifications and skills, our beautiful building, our stunning location and our thoroughly modern equipment. Moreover, we always place quality before quantity in relation to class sizes and are therefore able to maintain extremely favourable student-teacher ratios.

Our smaller scale enables us to sustain a genuine family atmosphere where each individual is valued and known to everyone in the school. It also allows us to bring out the best in each student, to work with him or her, and her or his family, to plan and monitor academic progress and maximize potential. Moreover, as they progress through the different stages of the school, our students will have ample opportunities to interact with a larger number of peers through our participation in contests, youth conferences, exchange schemes and partnerships with other schools, both locally and internationally.



Our Mission

*....educating the students of today
for the unknown occupations of tomorrow.*

At Park Lane International School we sincerely believe that every young person, irrespective of race, cultural heritage, faith or ability, is entitled to lead a happy, safe and productive life. However, we realise that in today's ever evolving world, the future that our young people are working towards is entirely unpredictable. We understand that when our students reach adulthood, they are likely to be engaged in occupations and tasks that do not currently exist; utilising technology which has yet to be invented. Moreover, if they are to compete, thrive and survive in the decades to come, their mindsets will need to become fully attuned to international developments, global issues and other cultures.

Although the students of Park Lane are able to extend their horizons through the academic programme itself, they also have much to gain from a range of leadership and enrichment opportunities which aim to develop capable, resourceful and resilient individuals.

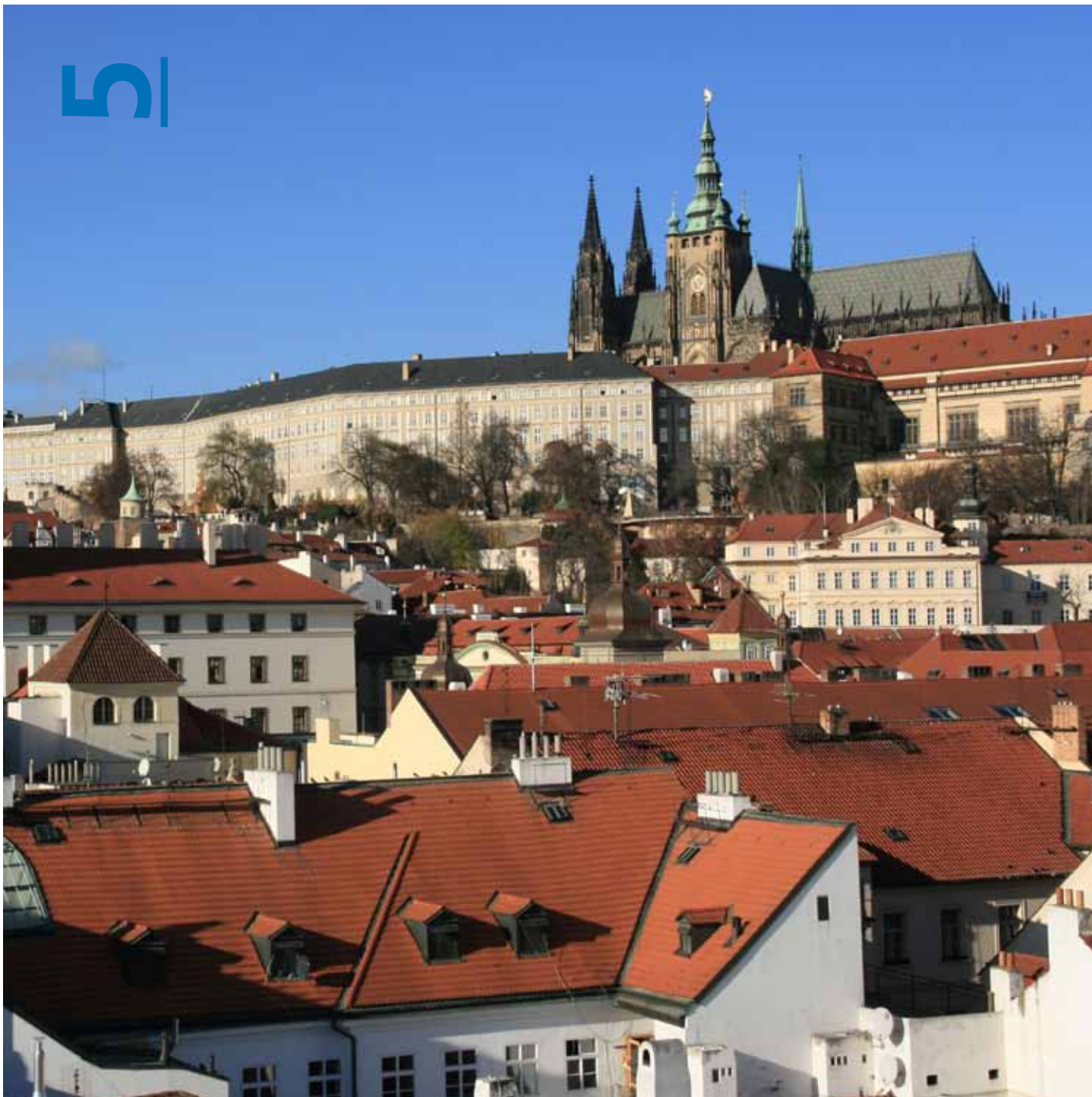
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Our School Aims

At Park Lane we are committed to creating and sustaining an environment where children and teenagers are:

- successful learners;
- industrious and curious;
- respectful and empathetic;
- co-operative and collaborative;
- honest and trustworthy;
- knowledgeable and competent in the use of ICT;
- aware of environmental issues;
- resourceful and responsible global citizens.



Location and Transport

Our Prague 1 campus is situated in the heart of Malá Strana ('Lesser Town'), a historic central district boasting attractive architecture and sculpted gardens. Park Lane International School is housed in a beautifully-appointed former embassy building which sits within 3000 m² of walled gardens and terraces directly adjacent to the walls of Prague Castle. Views from the upper floors of our school building, including the library, are simply exquisite.

With the Belgian Embassy on one side and the Polish Embassy on the other, and with the senate and parliament buildings close by, our district is very well protected. Close to the River Vltava but away from the bustling commercial centre, we enjoy all the benefits of central Prague without being *too* central. However, several famous sights such as Charles Bridge are only a short walk from the school grounds. Numerous cafes and book shops may be found in the quaint streets and arcades nearby.

In terms of public transport, Park Lane's Prague 1 branch is extremely well served as the Malostranská tram stop and Metro station are a two minute stroll from the school gates.

For parents whose sons and daughters do not use the school bus service or the various public transport possibilities, we have an assigned pick-up and collection zone and reserved parking area in front of the school entrance in Valdštejnská Street. Our reserved parking is also available for school visitors.



Facilities and Equipment

- A palatial school building (- a former embassy) surrounded by its own gardens and terraces in a beautiful plot measuring 3000 m²
- Bright and spacious classrooms
- Large multi-purpose halls
- A purpose-built, 21st Century science laboratory
- A well resourced library
- Various zones for learning support and independent study
- Ultra-modern and versatile classroom furniture
- State-of-the-art learning resources, including the latest Mac computers, visualisers and top of the range Smartboards
- Playgrounds & Astro turf sports pitches
- Music and Drama facilities
- A spacious dining room



Staff

Park Lane is administered by a **School Board**, an **Academic Board** and a **Board of Governors** comprised of international and Czech citizens from the professional and business worlds, as well as the school principal and other staff representatives.

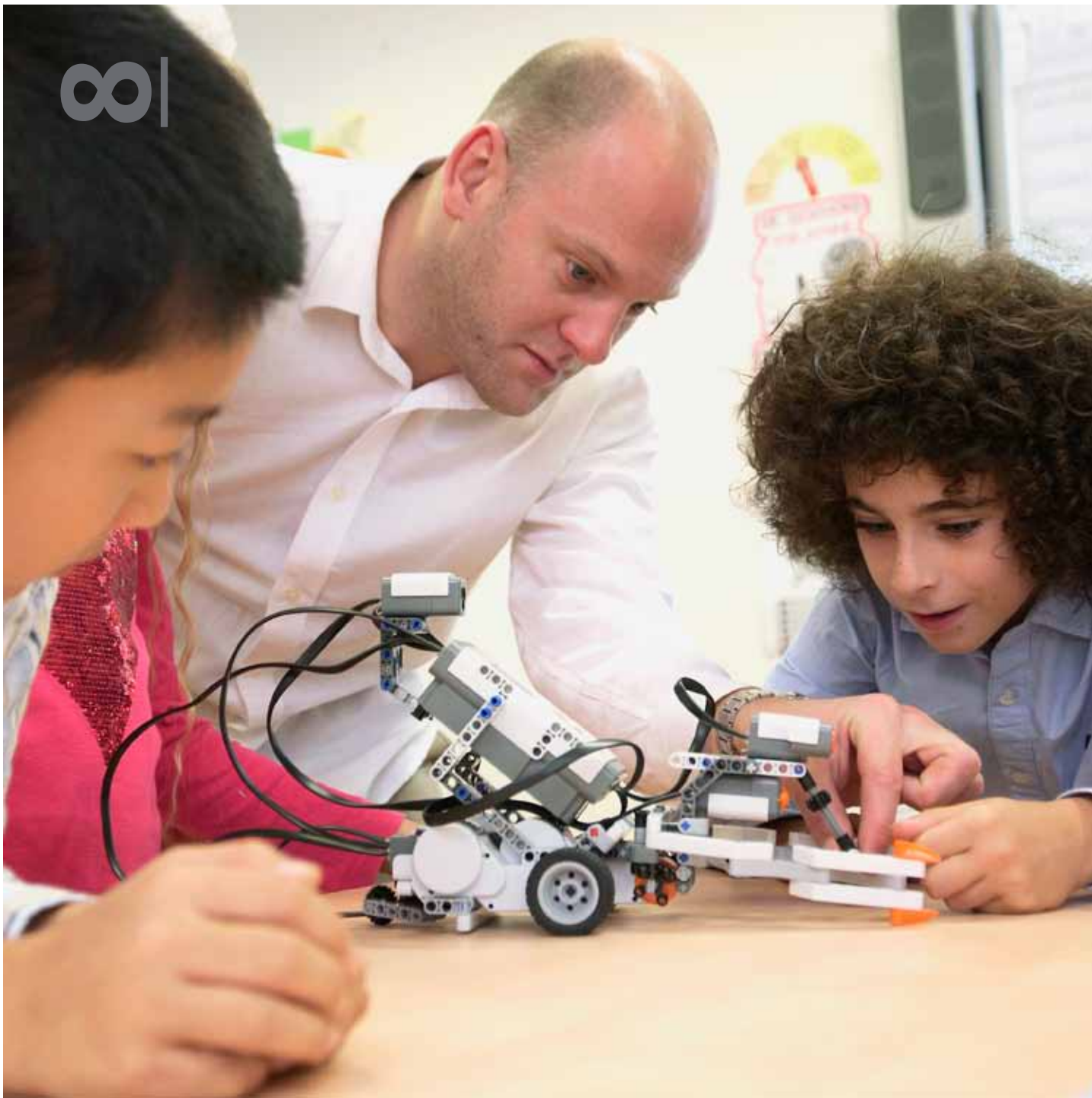
Our teachers have been trained in Primary or Secondary education and are all UK-qualified with experience of teaching in international schools in the Czech Republic and across the world. Our secondary teachers are qualified to teach one or more specialist subject in the 11–18 age range, while all of our primary teachers are trained to teach a range of subjects, including English, Mathematics, Science, History, Geography and Information & Communication Technology. In the primary stages we additionally employ specialist teachers for Czech, Music, PE, Art & Design, German and Spanish.

All staff, including teaching assistants, undergo a stringent selection process. We require that they hold the necessary qualifications to be successful and dynamic teachers, but also ensure that they possess the necessary personal qualities to work with children and young people.

Park Lane International School provides ongoing professional development training for all teachers to keep them up-to-date with current educational practice.

Our Staff:

- Experienced and resourceful professionals;
- Dynamic and caring;
- UK-qualified;
- Native English speakers.



21st Century Learning

Developing minds for an ever evolving world.

At Park Lane we believe that to be successful and truly memorable, learning must be enjoyable and participatory. We place much emphasis on developing our students' thinking skills and consistently cater for a variety of learning styles, e.g. auditory, visual and kinaesthetic. We therefore deploy a wide range of teaching strategies during our lessons and use every opportunity to connect learning experiences from one subject area to another. In keeping with this approach, ICT is used extensively as a cross-curricular learning tool.

At Park Lane, we believe that ICT should not only be a lesson, but part of our pupils' daily lives. This is why we have interactive whiteboards in every classroom, and MacBooks and PCs available for our students' daily use. Our learners use computer technology across the curriculum as well as receiving specialist lessons - thereby ensuring that they learn a vast range of skills which will undoubtedly aid them in their higher education and future careers.

At Park Lane we believe that ICT should be at the forefront of education at all age levels. Thus we continuously invest in top quality hardware and software to challenge our pupils' ever-developing skills. One of our recent acquisitions is the **LEGO Mindstorm Robot**, a 'next generation' product which enables students to build, programme and test their ideas using robotics technology.

Park Lane is one of the first schools in the Czech Republic to introduce Fronter, a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) used by students, teachers and parents. Fronter enables us to extend teaching and learning beyond the physical classroom while also enhancing home-school communication for the good of the whole Park Lane community.



Our Primary Curriculum

At Park Lane International School, we offer a broad and balanced curriculum, based on the National Curriculum of England, with a strong emphasis on Literacy, Mathematics and Information and Communication Technology. Here at Park Lane, we are in the fortunate position of being able to adopt the best of the National Curriculum and modify it to suit the needs of our international learners. Our aim is to give the children the confidence, skills and enthusiasm to become lifelong learners.



Our Secondary Curriculum

Key Stage 3 (Years 7–9) will be linked, from September 2013, to the Cambridge International Secondary 1 programme for English, Mathematics and Science and the associated Cambridge International Checkpoint tests taken by our students at the end of Year 9. For all other subjects, we use the curriculum guidelines and assessment standards determined by the UK national curriculum.

Key Stage 4 (Years 10–11) will be dominated by the world-renowned Cambridge International GCSE (IGCSE) courses.

Key Stage 5 (Years 12–13) will be designed to match the academic requirements and general philosophy of the **International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP)**.

The IB Diploma is fully recognised by prestigious universities across the globe and is preferred by many of the top-ranked universities due to the rigorous nature of the IB approach, the breadth of study involved and the compulsory 'core' element: Creativity, Action and Service (CAS), Theory of Knowledge (ToK) and the extended essay.



Methodology

I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand. (Confucius)

We deliver our curriculum according to the principle that learning must be exciting and stimulating, personalised and reflective; it must happen on a social/emotional level, as well as academically, and our students' accomplishments must be praised.

Objectives are introduced through a variety of hands-on and exploratory activities which utilise a range of resources and technology. Our activities are also tailored to the individual needs and interests of students in order to ensure that each learner is appropriately challenged, engaged and progressing. To ensure that they take an active role in their learning, students are taught to reflect on their own performance and suggest how it can be improved. This emphasis on 'self assessment' helps to establish clear targets for future development and enables students to know exactly what they must do to succeed.

At Park Lane, we recognise the importance of developing self-esteem, emotional competence and social skills. Students engage in group tasks and paired work on a daily basis. Consequently they develop their ability to work as part of a team, help others, negotiate and consider the needs, ideas and opinions of their peers. We believe that students are best motivated through praise and encouragement. In addition to ongoing, positive verbal reinforcement, we celebrate good behaviour, excellent citizenship and academic successes with rewards such as merit certificates and commendations.



Assessment

An inherent feature of school life at Park Lane, assessment is an ongoing process of feedback and reflection involving students, teachers and, to some extent, parents. Assessment informs future planning through target setting and allows for the celebration of effort and achievement.

Our students learn to evaluate their own work (self-assessment) and the work of others (peer assessment) in accordance with well understood learning objectives and success criteria. UK national curriculum levels provide a clear framework for assessing and monitoring student's progress. In the secondary school, all students will learn to identify their present levels of attainment for different subjects and will thus have a clear understanding of the skills and knowledge required to move on to the next rung of the 'learning ladder'.

The National Curriculum Standard Assessment tests (SATs) are used for Years 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6. The tests taken by our Year 2 and Year 6 students are end of Key Stage SAT tests for KS1 and 2 respectively. These standardised assessment tests cover the core curriculum areas of English and Mathematics. Teacher assessment and the test results are formulated to provide a national curriculum level in each of these areas.

At the end of Key Stage 3 (i.e. Year 9), our students will take the Cambridge International Checkpoint Tests in English, Mathematics and Science. Assessment is once again based on UK national curriculum levels. Our Year 9 Checkpoint candidates will receive a diagnostic report from the Cambridge International examiners. This report provides an analysis of the student's performance and helps to identify the student's strengths and weaknesses ahead of the IGCSE programme.

In Key Stage 4, assessment of each learner's progress continues to be based on UK national curriculum levels, but is modified to suit the specific requirements of IGCSE courses.

In Key Stage 5, for the IB Diploma Programme, assessment standards and criteria are set by the International Baccalaureate Organisation (IBO).



Czech Programme

The Czech programme is a significant part of the education of our students at Park Lane and we also offer Czech for Foreigners. From Year 2 upwards, Czech lessons enable our Czech children to fulfil their obligatory school attendance required by the Ministry of Education. **From Year 2 Czech children are formally registered at our partner Czech schools where they take their exams each year. Our children are also regularly assessed by their teachers during lessons.** In addition to this, our students receive a twice-yearly Czech report.

With the opening of our Prague 1 campus and the start of our secondary school, Park Lane's dedicated provision for Czech studies will continue to provide more than is currently offered by other international schools in the Czech Republic. Our Czech Programme prepares students for compulsory national examinations in Czech language, plus history and geography, at the end of Year 10 (age 15). In Year 11, Czech students will sit for IGCSE First Language Czech and in Years 12–13, as part of the IB Diploma Programme, Czech students will study Czech Language and Literature within the A1 Languages module.

In the secondary school, our main objectives are to aid Czech students in their university preparations and to ensure that they stay connected to their national roots and culture.



Universities

Although academic qualifications are very important, qualifications alone will not produce innovators, leaders or highly resourceful young people. Academic qualifications, while crucial for university entry, are not the only guarantor of success. It is our job to ensure that Park Lane's graduates will be qualified academically, personally and socially to apply for admission to the world's premier universities. Indeed, with a suitable combination of IGCSEs, followed by the IB Diploma and with plenty of opportunities to participate in a tailor-made enrichment programme, including Model United Nations conferences, community and charitable service, school leadership positions, work experience placements, etc., our graduates will be ready for anything.

You can find more information about how we help our senior students with their university applications and ambitions in our separate university guidance leaflet.

“IB students are terrific learners. They’re inquisitive and don’t just question what they’re learning, but *why*.”

Martha Piper
former president, University of British Columbia, Canada

“Diploma Programme students are well-rounded, multifaceted, multiskilled and have studied in depth. They have good time-management skills. They score higher than students in other national systems, and the IB score is worldwide the same measure.”

Hrilina Lock
undergraduate admissions manager,
London School of Economics, UK

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