

Speech given at Early Education Symposium
17-18 May 2011 at ES Mol

Parents' voice

My name is Jutta Weber and I am a parent at the European School Culham where my oldest son joined in 1999 aged 3 years and 9 months.

As every parent, I know how important it is, to feel welcome, in a happy environment, when your child starts school life, especially in a foreign country.

The Early Education webpage (www.schola-europaea.eu/ELC) will ease parents' worries, which they naturally have, when their child enters an education system.

Now parents have a window to see best practise and all background information around Early Education at once.

The webpage makes you smile and creates a desire to enrol your child.

I feel honoured to be a member of the working group for this new Early Education curriculum.

What you see today, is the result of the hard work of every very committed members of this group, which I only joined in January 2010 after most of the outlining work for this curriculum had already been done.

This is the first curriculum being presented on an interactive webpage of the European School system and it is most welcoming.

It gives wonderful examples how to support the development of a creative, curious, healthy, happy, friendly, cooperative child. Allowing space to develop personality, abilities and building respect for others and the environment.

The webpage is also a point of reference when things are not running smoothly. It aims to give information about support and best practise.

This Early Education Curriculum stands at the beginning of a life long learning process.

It puts the child in the centre and supports growth and social interaction while building knowledge and skills.

It has the flexibility for the teacher to get to the same result in different ways and requests a cross sectional approach on the local level of every European School.

It acknowledges the partnership that should develop between parents as prime educator and the school. Creating this trustful and respectful relationship is important for a learning environment where children do better, are healthier and can achieve.

The Early Education Curriculum follows the mission of European education described by Jean Monnet:

“Educated side by side, untroubled from infancy by divisive prejudices, acquainted with all that is great and good in the different cultures, it will be borne in upon them as they mature that they belong together. Without ceasing to look to their own lands with love and pride, they will become in mind Europeans, schooled and ready to complete and consolidate the work of their fathers before them, to bring into being a united and thriving Europe.”

I am proud to have my children educated in the European School system and do believe in European education.

Thank you for listening.