

The Referral Guide for SINGAPORE

JUNE 2015

expat **LIVING**

Mini-Guide

29 **PRESCHOOLS**
AND KINDERGARTENS

We talk to the
parents

LOCATION
MAP

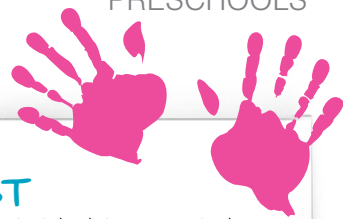


**PULL
OUT
AND
KEEP!**

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For many of us, selecting the right school for our children is, after choosing where to live, the most important decision we

have to make when moving to a new country. Fortunately, there are dozens of preschool options in Singapore, offering a wide range of learning experiences, opportunities and facilities.

A visit to a school is often the best way to make an instinctive decision based on the individual needs of your children, but hearing the opinions of other families about their experiences can be invaluable. The following pages feature referrals from 32 *Expat Living* readers to help you in the decision-making process.

CHECKLIST

Here are a few things to take into account when choosing a preschool:

- ✓ Check the location of the campus, convenience to home and transport options.
- ✓ Ensure the curriculum fits your child's education needs and your future plans; the right fit may minimise the disruption of moving to another country and changing schools.
- ✓ Class sizes and teacher-to-child ratios vary from preschool to preschool.
- ✓ Mandarin is widely taught as a second language.
- ✓ Extracurricular activities can provide a balance to the academic experience.
- ✓ Most international preschools come with a higher price tag than expats may be accustomed to in their home countries.
- ✓ School holidays and term dates vary from preschool to preschool.
- ✓ Depending on the age of the child, schools often encourage parent participation; if work commitments allow, this can be a wonderful way to meet new people and get to know the school.
- ✓ Because of the tropical climate, outdoor experiences feature in most preschools; check the facilities available.
- ✓ Most schools are flexible regarding the number of days per week that a child attends, depending on age.
- ✓ Find out about the preschool's daily and weekly programmes, and the activities the children will be engaged in.

NEED TO KNOW

LEARNING CENTRES Singapore is awash with learning centres, also known as enrichment centres or educational play centres. Babies and children can get involved in music, Mandarin, arts and crafts, maths, dance, drama, gym classes and more.

PRESCHOOLS Before beginning statutory education at age six in Singapore, many children attend preschool from the age of 18 months upwards. In Britain, a preschool is known as a nursery school or a playgroup, while in the US the terms preschool and pre-K are used.

KINDERGARTENS In Singapore, many international schools use the term kindergarten to describe the first, and sometimes the second, year of primary school education. However, the Singapore Ministry of Education uses the term kindergarten to mean a preschool that provides a structured three-year preschool programme for children aged four to six. Children do activities that develop language and literacy skills, basic number concepts, social skills, creative and problem solving skills, appreciation of music and movement, outdoor play, English as a first language and Chinese, Malay or Tamil.





Australian International School

*Cassie and Kieran, Australian
Heidi (10), Anika (8), Greta (6) and Chloe (4)*

“We’ve been living in Singapore for around three and a half years. Our children have been attending AIS since 2012 – Chloe is currently in her second year in the Early Years Centre (EYC), while Greta attended the EYC for two years before starting in Prep last year.

We have always heard positive feedback about the school from our Australian and international friends alike. We visited the school and liked its philosophy, the IB programme, the EYC learning approach and the facilities. We liked that the EYC had its own campus within the bigger school. The children have their own dedicated playground space, library and learning centre. The fact that all of the girls are able to attend the same school was an added bonus.

AIS offers a great mix of international and Australian culture, so it gave the girls a touch of home with a global outlook. We couldn’t be more pleased with our choice – we are often reassured by how much they are learning there. The flexibility of the three-, four- and five-day programmes also helps families decide what works best for their schedules.

The school offers a daily Mandarin programme that engages the kids in learning songs, words and numbers in that language. Gym sessions occur weekly and all gross motor skills are covered. There is also a weekly book-borrowing programme in which kids get to interact with the teacher librarian at the Inquiry Centre.

We would definitely recommend AIS EYC to our friends. The curriculum and nurturing environment really get the children prepared for the next stage of their schooling.”

1 Lorong Chuan
6653 2958 | ais.com.sg



Avondale Grammar School

*Michi and Tad, Australian
Aimee (8) and Sofia (4)*

Both Aimee and Sofia are currently at Avondale Grammar School. Aimee enrolled in 2012 and is now in Year 3, while her sister Sofia has been attending preschool classes since January 2014.

We particularly wished for our girls to have an Australian curriculum-based education, so Avondale was a great choice as it combines both the UK and Australian systems into its preschool curriculum. The school is also perfect in size – not too big and overwhelming as some of the other international schools – and conveniently located near Orchard.

We are very proud of our girls' progress at Avondale. We love how the classes are small in size and are constantly filled with exciting activities. Sofia is learning so much – her literacy and numeracy skills have improved tremendously. Every day, she loves telling us about the 'sound of the day' and we are impressed with how much knowledge she has acquired from her classes. She also enjoys the daily Language Other Than English (LOTE) lessons where she learns the words for new objects and numbers in French.

We like Avondale's approach in encouraging parents' involvement. Not only do we receive daily updates from Sofia's teacher and weekly newsletters from the school, there are also useful workshops organised for us to understand our kids' learning at home.

We're very happy with Avondale and would recommend it to anyone who likes having a close school community. The school has a great ethos and their academic focus, while strong, does not miss out on fun. Our girls are growing to be confident and independent children thanks to Avondale Grammar School.

318 Tanglin Road, Phoenix Park
6258 8544 | avondale.edu.sg

Bibinogs Preschool (King's Arcade)

*Jane and Cédric Petitpas,
Singaporean and French
Chloée (3)*

“Chloée has been attending Bibinogs since August last year. We came across the school while researching bilingual preschools that provide a holistic teaching curriculum with a small student-to-teacher ratio. After seeing our daughter enjoy her trial class, we knew it was the right school for her.

When Chloée first joined Bibinogs, she'd had limited exposure to the Chinese language. In a short period of time, we noticed tremendous improvements in her language grasp – she could understand questions, read words and speak in Chinese! She has developed a passion for the language and it is clear that her Chinese form teacher Hui Lun Laoshi is dedicated to making the learning process interesting.

Looking at our girl's development over the past eight months, we are very pleased with Bibinogs and would fully recommend it. Originally shy and reserved, Chloée has grown to be more outspoken and confident in communicating her thoughts and emotions. We think that the school's curriculum, The Multiple Intelligences programme, has kept her well engaged in her learning. She comes home happy, reciting stories and singing songs in both English and Mandarin.

We love the biweekly newsletters that update us on class lessons and activities. I like how it keeps us involved in our child's learning progress. The school also provides opportunities for parents to participate in certain class activities and we absolutely adore these bonding moments with Chloée. We would definitely recommend Bibinogs to other families, as we believe its curriculum will help nurture bright young minds to attain their fullest potential.”



Bibinogs has three outlets:
King's Arcade, Serene Centre and UE Square
6466 8015 | bibinogs.com



Brighton Montessori

*Celine and Stephen, British
James (18), Harry (15), Zoe (13) and Ella (6)*

“We have been living in the East Coast area for eight years. Ella has been enrolled at Brighton Montessori in Frankel Avenue for four years. Before that, she attended an international school for a while, but we were unhappy with the education she was getting there so we moved her to Brighton. While we looked at several schools for Ella, Brighton was our first choice. Not only was it well located, but its happy learning atmosphere stood out.

We are very happy with the education Ella is receiving at Brighton. She loves it there and always goes to school with a spring in her step. The classes are small and the Montessori curriculum is both varied and challenging. We also like how Ella has Mandarin sessions conducted by native speakers, for up to two hours a day.

As there are no school holidays at Brighton, the school always makes arrangements to keep the kids occupied. Some of the fun activities organised by the school are water-play sessions, farm trips and outings to the theatre.

The highlight of the year has got to be the graduation concert. Hours of practice go into making the concert a success, and kids of all ages are involved. Kudos to the staff at Brighton for always doing a fantastic job!

Apart from offering a first-class education, Brighton also emphasises interaction between the school and the families. We feel that Ella is now prepared for the next stage in her school life, and are very happy that we made the decision to keep her at Brighton.”

Brighton Montessori has six schools island-wide
6588 3883 | brightonmontessori.com.sg



Canadian International School

*Evelyn Carvajal M. and Mauricio Avalos M., Costa Rican
Matias (7) and Luciana (5)*

We moved to Singapore when our son Matias was two months old. When he turned three, we enrolled him at CIS after visiting several schools. Luciana also started attending CIS at the same age. We chose the school because of the warmth and attention they gave us on our first tour there. The staff were very welcoming and took us around to visit the different classes.

Our CIS experience has been a great one. All the teachers are very professional and we can see that they really love what they do. CIS offers its students an opportunity to develop through a diverse and challenging curriculum. The International Baccalaureate curriculum is perfect for the kids as they get to learn through inquiry and play. There is a wide range of hands-on activities, so both Matias and Luciana were always engaged in learning new things. Both of them really enjoyed the bilingual classes – the Mandarin teachers always have a way of making the classes fun and interesting.

We definitely recommend the school for its wonderful teachers and great learning environment. CIS is a big cultural community where lots of learning and development take place.

Lakeside Campus, 7 Jurong West Street 41 | 6467 1732
Tanjong Katong Campus, 371 Tanjong Katong | 6345 1573
cis.edu.sg



Dover Court International School

*Elizabeth and Dougal Watts, British
Mollie (7), Annabelle (5) and Barnaby (2)*

“We’ve been living in Singapore for two-and-a-half years. We moved from Kuala Lumpur, where my eldest girl had been to three different schools.

The experience at Dover Court has been great so far. As soon as Mollie got there she settled in very quickly and happily. I credit that to the welcoming teachers and friendly environment – the school is indeed lovely. The kids are really happy when they go to school each morning, and always wave at the staff when they arrive. I also like how Dover Court accounts for each child – whenever I give them a call they know exactly who I am and who my kids are.

We chose the school because we really like the environment; it’s not overwhelming and the small class size is great for young kids. We are very happy with the teachers and the spacious grounds. Since Nord Anglia took over last summer they have invested in areas where there was previously little investment. A new infant library opened in April, and the kids have come home talking about the new radio station – that is exciting! As of August, they will have daily Mandarin practice, which we are really pleased about.

It’s an exciting time for the school with its new investment and improved facilities that we can look forward to. The pleasant and nurturing learning space is definitely a winning factor as well.”

301 Dover Road
6775 7664
nordangliaeducation.com/our-schools/singapore

EtonHouse International School (Thomson)

*Sarika and Rohit Chulani,
American and British
Rayaan (6), Shayne (4)*

Shayne has been enrolled in EtonHouse since August 2013 – he was at the Orchard branch until last June when the school relocated to Thomson. Rayaan is currently studying at the Singapore American School, having attended EtonHouse Orchard from August 2012 to June 2014.

Our experience at EtonHouse Thomson has been wonderful for the whole family. The teachers are truly dedicated; they make sure to give the students hands-on experiences by bringing their ideas to life. The curriculum, as inspired by Reggio Emilia, focuses on inquiry-based, child-led learning through the play approach, encouraging students to discover their curiosities.

Our regular involvement in the classroom, along with open communication with the teachers, makes us feel like part of the EtonHouse community. I have the comfort of knowing that my children are in a happy, safe and nurturing environment.

EtonHouse was highly recommended by many of our close friends whose kids had been enrolled there before. As for us, we were impressed with the diversity of the school and its large, vibrant community of students and teachers. We knew how fantastic the bilingual English and Chinese programme would be for our children, especially having lived in Hong Kong and realised the importance of a second language. We also love the campus – the lush greenery, the huge outdoor



garden and the large yet cosy classroom that provides ample space for the children to move around in.

To top it all, we really appreciate the warmth and personalised attention given by the staff. We would definitely recommend the school to our friends.

EtonHouse has multiple outlets island-wide
6746 3333 | etonhouse.com.sg

Go-Go Bambini

*Wendy and Craig Riddell, Scottish
Charlotte (6), twins Cameron and
Jonathon (4) and Brodie (2)*

When we arrived in Singapore in November 2012, the twins were still small and I was expecting Brodie. We heard of Go-Go Bambini through friends who had previously lived in Singapore – they told us it was a great place for kids. We also decided to give it a go as we ended up staying pretty close to Dempsey Hill.

I liked how helpful the staff were with the children, especially the older children, when I was not in a position to climb and run around. While all the ladies were really sweet and treated my children like family, my daughter Charlotte was especially fond of Flora.

When our kids were younger, we went to Go-Go Bambini at least three times a week. Nowadays, although they're at school, we still enjoy heading there on a weekend.

We would recommend Go-Go Bambini to our friends and family as the staff are great and the atmosphere is friendly. They are also known for doing a good job of hosting fun yet stress-free birthday parties.

Another important factor is the size of the space – it isn't too large, so we can easily see how our kids are doing and feel more at ease about their safety. Finally, the great thing about this play centre is that it has a great restaurant, so parents get to relax and have a good meal while the children run off some energy!

#01-15 Block 8D Dempsey Road
6474 4176 | gogobambini.com



GEMS World Academy (GWA)

Jennifer and David Nodine, American Jackson (6), Vance (4) and Tripp (3)

Jackson is attending Mrs Jamaludin's K2 class at GWA, while Vance has been in Mrs Orlowski's Pre-K class since January. Tripp is currently attending the free Mommy and Me playgroup on Monday mornings and will be attending GWA next year.

My husband David learned of GWA through an internet search and we eventually set up a meeting. We immediately fell in love with the state-of-the-art facility as well as the warm and welcoming staff. We feel very fortunate to have found such an amazing and encouraging environment for our children to learn in. Everyone at GWA makes a real effort to know and understand each child. We also like how the school charts mini-buses to transport kids to and from school. Not only does this save us having to make an extra journey, it also gives the children more time chance to interact with one another.

From personal experience, I know that my kids' teachers have an open-door policy where parents are welcomed to join the class. I like being able to practise reading with Jack and his class on Mondays, and to join Vance's class for a story after lunch. Mrs Lin, the Chinese teacher, is always coming up with creative ways for the children to learn. My kids have taken to it so well that even at home they'll say their colours and numbers in Chinese! All the teachers are kind, patient and dedicated – it's a joy to have them teach our kids.

2 Yishun Street 42
6808 7300 | gwa.edu.sg





German European School Singapore (Junior School)

Vivi Magnussen and Morten Egan, Danish Anton (8), Fie (6) and Naja (3)

Anton and Fie have been attending GESS since September last year. Both of them started at the school two days after we arrived in Singapore. Their younger sister stayed at home for six months before we decided to put her in a local preschool, and she will join GESS when she gets older.

We did not get a chance to visit the different schools in Singapore, as we'd always lived in Denmark and neither of us had ever been to Asia. But we did spend many hours on the internet reading up on the curriculums, the rules and reviews of various schools. We ended up choosing GESS for several reasons – their website was very informative, for one thing, and the environment looked welcoming. Furthermore, they had a Danish programme, which would make it possible for our kids to continue practising their mother tongue. I also liked the focus on European cultures.

GESS is a great school with a relaxed and friendly atmosphere. The skilled teaching and administrative staff welcome any questions and are passionate about what they are doing. We like the teaching style and the curriculum that incorporates our mother tongue.

The kids are happy in GESS and they are learning so much. They also get to choose from a wide selection of after-school activities that are fun and engaging. I would recommend this school to anyone, especially other families who are relocating to Singapore from Europe.



300 Jalan Jurong Kechil
6461 0802 | gess.sg

International Community School

*Claire and Todd Gentzel, American
Xander (12), Emery (9), Avery (6)*

“All three of our kids began school at half-term in January last year, two weeks after we arrived in Singapore. Xander is now in Grade 6, Emery in Grade 3 and Avery in Kindergarten. We're thankful for how the school helped make our transition to Singapore easier.

Todd served on the board of the kids' school in Houston, and consulted for a number of the area's private schools and universities. We knew exactly what we were looking for and found it at ICS, an international school with an intellectually



rigorous American curriculum and a Christian worldview.

On our visit prior to the move, we had the opportunity to see a number of schools. Not long after we arrived at ICS, we encountered a second-grader on his way to class. He stopped, politely introduced himself, inquired as to the ages of our children and assured us that our kids would love the school. Over the course of the next hour, we encountered many bright students who were joyful and genuinely engaged.

We would highly recommend other parents' sending their children to ICS, for so many reasons! Not only are our kids getting an above-average academic education, we truly believe their lives are being enriched in other ways too. ICS offers many varied extra-curricular activities such as Model United Nations, Creative Dance and Creative Writing. Sports-wise, soccer, volleyball and basketball are among the many that are available. Our children remain occupied and well-rounded because of the incredibly well-planned and well-executed curriculum.”

27A Jubilee Road
6776 7435 | ics.edu.sg

ISS International

*Maria and Stephan Alveflo, Swedish
Mathilda (20), Sebastian (16), Jesper (12)
and Elliot (5)*

“We moved to Singapore with just four months' notice and arrived in October last year. Jesper and Sebastian started at ISS in the middle of the term, but we decided to take it slower with Elliot, so he was enrolled in January this year.

Since we had to quickly decide on a school for the kids, we only visited the few schools that were recommended to us. Although there were other schools with better facilities, we selected ISS because of how open and welcoming it was. Additionally, the school is slightly smaller and the teachers seemed to know all their students well, which gave a positive impression.

We are very happy with the school. There are lots of activities offered here and we know that Elliot is in good hands. The teachers keep the parents updated on what happens during the day, so we don't have to worry about our children's wellbeing. We also like the way the curriculum is built around the students – this engages them in their learning as they get to find out more about themselves. Elliot really likes his homeroom teacher Ms Allison and her assistant Ms Mano. Ms Allison is excellent at documenting



the children's learning progress and often gets them involved in the process.

I would recommend ISS because of its welcoming atmosphere and good location. There is diversity here, and everyone is treated equally. We are also looking forward to the upcoming new facilities that will make the school a better learning space.”

25 Paterson Road
6235 5844 | iss.edu.sg

Kinderland Educare Services

Dorine de Lopez and Romain Percevault, French Penelop (4.5) and Nino (2.5)

Penelop has been attending Kinderland at MOM (Ministry of Manpower) for more than two years, and we enrolled her brother Nino at the school when he was 19 months old.

The school is located next to the hotel where we stayed after arriving in Singapore. The principal, Ms Susan, received my daughter and me with a warm welcome and we felt very comfortable with the friendly teachers and the relaxed atmosphere. After visiting other schools, we chose Kinderland without hesitation.

The school has dedicated time for both learning and playing – there is a clear routine with structured timing for the kids to follow. The outdoor playground has slides, bikes and cars, which are fun for playtime. There is also a kitchen play area with real cooking utensils to play with.

Learning-wise, Kinderland stresses bilingual learning by having two teachers in the class – one for English and the other for Chinese. Enrichment classes include speech and drama, abacus and art. The children are also treated to regular outings to the zoo, charity events and supermarkets.

I particularly like how the teachers care for the children and shower them with love. Our kids have formed a strong bond with them. What's more, they always take the time to speak to the parents, even when they're busy. The staff, both teaching and admin, are definitely the outstanding asset of Kinderland MOM.

I would recommend the school to those who want their kids to gain a strong learning grounding in a safe environment. I can't say enough how grateful I am to the teachers.



Numerous locations island-wide
kinderland.com.sg



MindChamps Preschool

Louise and Kevin Donaghey, Australian and Irish Trinity (5) and Zara (3)

Trinity was enrolled in MindChamps Preschool at Paragon until she was three years old, while her younger sister Zara still goes there. Both our daughters have been attending the school since they were 18 months old.

We discovered MindChamps while researching preschools in the Orchard Area. The first thing that attracted us was how bright and clean the school was. The staff were friendly too, and that's what sealed the deal.

Every teacher has shown amazing care towards our daughters and nurtured their development well. As the school believes in communication between teacher and parent, we've been kept regularly informed of what's happening. Neither of our daughters has ever been reluctant to go to school – this was important, as we wanted them to be happy in their learning environment.

We particularly liked that our girls could learn in both Chinese and English. MindChamps values and celebrates the developmental needs of each child. Gym, play, music, drama, language, reading and exploration are all considered important.

There's also a sense of community at MindChamps that wasn't evident in the other schools we considered. This has continued throughout the three years we've been a part of the MindChamps community. One yearly highlight for us is the CNY celebration. For the girls, the highlight is their weekly Gourmet class, where they get to make a snack.

We would definitely recommend MindChamps to other families because our girls have blossomed there. They have developed confidence, character and a sense of community.

MindChamps has 26 centres island-wide
 8233 4400 | mindchampspreschool.org



Melbourne Specialist International School



This special needs school has an innovative curriculum that aims to develop each individual's capabilities and maximise their potential. Principal JULIET COOPER tells us what sets MSIS apart from other schools.

Describe the student experience at the school.

The school is special as it uses dance, music, art and drama to engage the students. The visual and performing arts are our tools in helping children learn. MSIS also uses an integrated approach to therapist services, whereby therapists are immersed in the classrooms, working alongside the classroom teachers towards the goals of the students. This model is based on an approach developed at Port Phillip Specialist School in Melbourne.

What are some of the school's strengths?

The Visual and Performing Arts Programme, the Individual Learning Plans and the partnership between Melbourne Specialist International School and Port Phillip Specialist School. The experienced staff are another important aspect of the school.

What's your favourite thing about working at MSIS?

We love watching the students develop; the statements they make, and their innocence

and vulnerability all make our role hugely important. We need to help them build as many life skills as possible, in order for them to be independent individuals who do not completely rely on their caregivers. Our programme is also inclusive – we accept all students as individuals, no matter how they are disadvantaged.

What activities would you say the students most enjoy?

They really enjoy the arts: dance, music, art, drama and community access. They also like communicating and building relationships with their peers, and making friends who share common interests with them.

75C Loewen Road
6634 8891 | msis.edu.sg



One World International School

*Angeline Mathews and Aitor Castano, Singaporean and Spanish
Isabel (4) and Claudia (2)*

Isabel started at One World in August 2014; she is just about to complete her first year there. Her sister is excited about joining the EC1 class this coming August.

After hearing about the school from our friends, we did our research online and eventually visited One World. We decided that it was the perfect fit for our girls, as we liked the IB programme and the school's modern, safe and comfortable learning environment.

Isabel has been really happy since her first day at One World. She has made many new friends at school and is always looking forward to going back to see her 'EC1 friends'.

We are very pleased with the way the teachers (Ms Reema, Ms Nikki and Ms Laoshi) work with the kids; they have instilled a sense of community and belonging in them. They are dedicated and loving – inspirational role models for the children.

Isabel's class friends form a very important part of her life and she differentiates them from her 'other friends'. She's also keen on Physical Education lessons, which are held twice a week, and Sports Day is one of her favourite school events of the year. She also loves Library Book Day, when she goes to the library to borrow new books to read at home.

We like the fact that the school is like a big family; all the teachers are very involved in creating a homey atmosphere and genuinely care for the children. Even the principal knows the names of all the kids.

696 Upper Changi Road East
6542 2285 | owis.org

Odyssey (Fourth Avenue)

*Shannon and Darren Cole,
American and English
Chloe (2) and Sean (7 months)*



“Chloe has been at Odyssey since the start of August last year; we are planning to register Sean for intake when he reaches 18 months of age.

When we were planning our relocation to Singapore, we identified a list of preschools we were interested in after reading multiple websites and parent blogs, and then arranged to visit our top choices. After visiting Odyssey, The Global Preschool at Fourth Avenue, it became apparent that the school had the best facilities – the spacious classrooms and dedicated art and music rooms were great.

We are delighted with Chloe's progress since she started at Odyssey. There is a full-time Mandarin teacher who is fantastic; after being immersed in the language, Chloe can respond to basic instructions in Mandarin. She has also impressed us with the Chinese songs she learns in school! Additionally, the small class size allows her to feel more connected to her teachers.

This preschool's approach to learning is very dynamic, with lots of hands-on activities to keep the kids engaged. Because the children are exposed to art, music and movement, we have seen Chloe's creativity increase.

Odyssey promotes a high level of parent engagement through regular events like Sports Day, as well as showcases where the children perform for the parents. During the parent-teacher conference, we are updated on Chloe's progress through the teachers' feedback and observations.

I would recommend the school to anyone without hesitation. Chloe's development has been tremendous; she has grown so much intellectually, verbally and socially.”

Odyssey has three outlets:
Fourth Avenue, de Loyang and Wilkinson
6781 8800 | theodyssey.sg





Overseas Family School

*Erin and Owen Michaelis, American
Emma Kate (8) and Owen J. (5)*



Emma Kate has been attending OFS for the past four years; she began in K2 and is currently in Grade 3. Her brother Owen was enrolled there when he turned three and he's now in K2.

Before we moved to Singapore in 2011, several repatriating American expat families had recommended OFS to me. I was looking for the IB PYP curriculum, a diverse student body, as well as excellent teaching credentials. Being an early childhood educator myself, I understood that another essential value was an emphasis on play – OFS provides plenty of playtime, which young children require for social and emotional development.

OFS has been one of the best parts of our lives here in Singapore. The teachers are highly trained and qualified, and the character-driven, inquiry-based IB PYP curriculum has made learning a joy for our children. Rani Suppiah, the Kindergarten principal, is one of the finest early childhood administrators I've encountered. The Mandarin education programme is particularly excellent, and the introduction of chess as a core part of the curriculum is a good way to encourage strategic thinking. Most importantly, OFS Kindergarten promotes a degree of happiness, kindness and acceptance that I believe is unparalleled in the international schools here.

I would recommend the school without hesitation. Not only is the curriculum outstanding, our children are also happy and deeply involved in learning. Additionally, parents are always welcome to visit their children in school and to read to the classes – OFS truly is a place for families.

25F Paterson Road | 6738 0211 | ofs.edu.sg

Pegasus International Preschool

Rebecca and Brian Hallett, Australian Twins Jack and Annalisa (5)

“We moved to Singapore in June 2011. Jack and Annalisa are in the same class at Pegasus, where they’ve been enrolled since September last year.

We heard of the school from *Expat Living* and from some of our friends who are parents too. I did quite a bit of research online and came across *EL*’s Preschools and Kindergartens 2014 Guide, and Pegasus was one of the featured preschools. After touring the school, I found it to be friendly and secure, with a multi-cultural learning environment. I love the school’s creative way of teaching, which focuses on inquiry-based learning. I feel that Jack and Annalisa have also benefitted from the well-structured daily timetable, which features a great range of activities both within and outside the classroom.

The communication between the teachers and parents is as fantastic as the variety of learning and creative activities offered. There is a great online portal where learning stories and photo galleries are uploaded by the school so the parents get to see what their kids have been doing during the day. I especially like the pictures, as they show us how much fun the kids have during their outdoor activities at the school and on excursions.

The twins love going to school each day and have made many friends of various nationalities. Pegasus also offers Mandarin lessons, which is important to me; I want to immerse the family in the culture of Singapore, where over 70 percent of the population is Chinese.



26 Evans Road
6735 2494 | pips.com.sg



Raintrees International Kindergarten

Melissa and Stuart Foskett, Australian Isabelle (7), Cooper (6), Joel (4) and Camilla (3)

“Both Joel and Camilla have been attending Raintrees since August last year. I’ve always stayed in and around the Kheam Hock area during my nine years in Singapore, so I knew of the school. We were looking for a place with a warm and nurturing environment, small classes and a good support system. As Raintrees offers an international-school-style teaching programme and doesn’t have an overwhelming number of students, we knew that it was the perfect fit for our two younger children.

The first thing I noticed was how Raintrees saw each child as an individual: the teachers are aware of your child’s personality. They provide a myriad learning experiences: our children play with structured toys, sand and construction sets; they also get to paint, draw, bake and cook.

If you’re looking for the old-fashioned ‘three Rs’, the teachers at Raintrees read daily with the children, and the school follows the Jolly Phonic curriculum in teaching reading. This has been fabulous for Joel – his reading skills are more advanced than those of his older siblings at the same stage; Raintrees and Ms Gail have given him a wonderful introduction to books.

By emphasising the importance of learning through play and inquiry, the school has been a wonderful learning place for our children. Every morning, they race each other to see what’s on the activity tables. To be honest, even I am excited to see what they’ll be doing for the day!

60 Kheam Hock Road
6474 6181 | raintreeskindergarten.com



Shaws Preschool (Katong Post campus)

*Carla and Patrick Bowe, Irish and British
Dillan (8) and Erin (6)*

“My daughter Erin has been attending Shaws for two years, and Dillan has been at the Canadian School since we arrived here three years ago. Many of the parents we met during the first weeks of settling in had children enrolled in Shaws, and they could not praise the school enough. Because of the rather long waiting list for the Shaws Preschool opposite our condo, I enrolled Erin at a preschool next to my son’s international school. Six months later, it was announced that Shaws had been invited to take over the preschool – how lucky were we?

Shaws has been the perfect introduction to school life for our daughter. There is a real feeling of family: we know all the teachers and they know us too. Erin has thrived at Shaws because of its safe and friendly environment, as well as the great curriculum.

Erin learns in a bilingual class (Mandarin and English), where the children get to sing and put on performances for the parents in both languages. They also take part in superb activities, from cookery and Zumba to football and gardening. As Shaws focuses on play-based learning, the children are learning through having fun. The school also has an outdoor space with shaded play equipment, so during their playtime they get to go out and have fun without getting sunburnt.

Apart from the great learning environment, the school is also open on most days, except for national holidays and a few training days – so busy parents don’t have to worry about school holidays.”

There are five Shaws centres island-wide
shaws.com.sg



Singapore American School (SAS)

*Huma and Omar Lodhi, Pakistani
Twins Ali and Laleh (15), Amani (8) and Taimur (6), American*

“All four of our kids go to SAS. It's the twins' fourth year and Amani and Taimur's third year. Ali and Laleh are in Grade 9, Amani is in Grade 2 and Taimur is in Kindergarten.

We chose SAS as we heard it was a well-established school with a strong academic focus. I had no idea that it has the most incredible sports, music and art facilities until we went there for a school tour.

We are so fortunate to have Taimur start his schooling with the inspiring and supportive Mr Mark Lewis, who continues to teach him in Kindergarten class. Not only did he instill in our son a passion for learning, he also helped in his emotional development by encouraging class interaction and communication. The Early Childhood Center (ECC) is such a warm and nurturing preschool. Curriculum-wise, the children have Mandarin and perceptual motor classes every day. During their free time, they explore their creativity in the block room, where there are blocks of all shapes and sizes to play with.

When Taimur was in Pre-K, the class grew their own plants and looked after their little garden. They were successful in growing the most amazing pumpkins! They also played soccer on the field and experimented with water and soap in the outdoor play area.

SAS has allowed our kids to discover and pursue their interests through the wide range of courses and electives available.

40 Woodlands Street 41
6363 3403 | sas.edu.sg



Sir Manasseh Meyer International School

*Juliana and Beny Diamant, Brazilian
Laila (3) and Leon (22 months)*

“We’ve been living in Singapore since September last year. Both our children are attending SMM: Laila joined the pre-nursery class in August 2014 and Leon joined Tiny Tots after he turned 18 months in January this year.

We heard about SMM while researching online for a school that would let our children learn about Jewish culture. Initially, we were worried that our daughter might have difficulty in communicating, as she spoke only Portuguese when we arrived in Singapore. However, the staff dealt with the situation easily and Laila was quickly included in the group.

Our experience at SMM has been absolutely incredible. Since the very first day, we have felt like part of a big family – it’s been an extension of our home. All the teaching and admin staff were friendly right from the start. The teachers are affectionate, always taking care of the needs of every child and making sure they are learning well.

Besides all that, the school has every parent’s concerns on education covered; the classrooms are well equipped to encourage learning. Apart from attending language and music classes, the children also develop motor coordination skills through the play activities, which are always supervised by teachers.

I would recommend SMM to other families because of the friendly environment. Every teacher knows each student by name, and the entire team at the school is as concerned about our children’s educational development as we are.”

38C Belvedere Close | 6737 9746 | smm.edu.sg



SJI International Elementary School

*Kerry and Jon Allen,
Australian
Grace (9), Matthew (7) and
William (5)*

All three of our children have been attending SJI International Elementary School (SJIIES) since Prep 1. Gracie is now in Grade 3, Matt in Grade 1 and Will in Prep 2. Having looked at several schools in Singapore, I knew that SJIIES was the one for us after visiting it in 2009. The school was recommended to me by close family friends and I was attracted by the feeling of community, the Catholic Lasallian ethos of the school and the strength of the virtues programme that is projected throughout all aspects of school life.

We felt that SJIIES was very welcoming right from the start. Additionally, it's one of the first international schools to offer the Singapore Maths curriculum combined with an international humanities programme and Mandarin. This felt like the best of all worlds.

My children thoroughly enjoy their school experience. The teachers are enthusiastic and committed both in the classroom and beyond the academic aspects – they put a lot of effort into extracurricular activities, too. They are professional and nurturing at the same time.

We have been very happy with the school's excellent teachers and learning environment. The school has also continued investing in its facilities, recently completing an indoor sports facility and an outdoor pool.

490 Thomson Road
6871 5202
sji-international.com.sg



Stamford Kindergarten

*Tine and Bjorn Westerlund, Norwegian and Swedish
Olivia (5.5) and Oscar (2.5)*

“We’ve been in Singapore for nearly two years. Both our kids are enrolled at Stamford, with Olivia currently in Kindergarten 1 and Oscar in Pre-Kindergarten from August.

Before moving to Singapore, we asked Crown Relocation Singapore to provide us with a list of high quality international schools; Stamford was one of them. After visiting several other schools, we quickly decided that Stamford was the right school for us.

So far, our experience with the school has been excellent. The teachers are dedicated and the curriculum is outstanding. Our children learn through inquiry and this educational model feels exactly right for us, especially in this ever-changing world. The amount of knowledge our children have amassed is impressive. They are learning to be explorers, thinkers, and innovators.

Furthermore, we consider Stamford’s daily Mandarin classes, as well as the physical education programme, vital for our children’s development. We also like the musical training they receive. From Pre-Kindergarten, they learn to play the violin.

Every day we can follow our children’s activities on MyStamford, a web portal developed for communication between parents and the school. Through pictures and posts from the teachers, we know how their day has been.

Stamford is helping prepare our children for dealing with change and challenges in a confident way. Most importantly, both Olivia and Oscar are genuinely happy when they go to school! We feel that the inquiry method is a key reason for why they are learning so much and enjoying it. After all, children are inquisitive by nature.”



1 Woodleigh Lane
6602 7247 | sais.edu.sg

Sunflower Baby House & Preschool (Bukit Timah)

Wiebke and Benno Klingenberg-Timm, German Paul (10), Henri (5) and Theodor (3)

This is our fifth year in Singapore, but we also lived here from 2006 to 2007. Theodor has been at Sunflower since he was six months old; Henri was there from the age of 10 months to two-and-a-half years.

A friend recommended the school to me. Choosing the school was an easy decision after I met the owner and manager, Angela, and toured the premises with



her. She is very friendly and always goes out of her way to ensure that the children are well taken care of, and that the parents are kept well informed.

Our experience at the school has been pleasant. I treasure the flexibility of the timetable, which offers morning and afternoon sessions that can be booked separately. Sunflower has also been the most supportive when

we needed extra help – this is much appreciated, especially for an expat mother of three, who needs a trustworthy fallback option during family emergencies and other unforeseen circumstances.

I most certainly would recommend Sunflower Baby House & Preschool to other families. Henri and Theodor love their Chinese teacher, and going to the school is a joy for them. It's incredible how much they are learning at this age! Apart from all the positives I mentioned earlier, the standout factor for me is how the teachers show genuine affection and care for the children.

200 Turf Club Road,
#04-300 Turf City
(Second branch at Clementi,
38 Sunset Heights)
6463 1303
sunflowerbabyhouse.com

Swallows and Amazons

Liz and Matt Overbeck, American Luke (4) and Samuel (9 months)

Our son Luke has been attending Swallows and Amazons since we arrived in Singapore slightly over a year ago. I heard about the school through school listings – *Expat Living's* school guide was helpful.

We were initially drawn to the school because of its small size and nurturing environment. Its play-based approach appealed to us, as we really wanted our son to have fun in preschool. What we weren't prepared for was how effective this learning approach would be – we have been absolutely astounded by Luke's academic growth since joining Swallows and Amazons! The school goes above and beyond when it comes to pre-reading and reading skills, as well as Mathematics. In addition, the Mandarin immersion programme is fantastic – Luke attends it two afternoons a week.

Apart from all that, the school also places importance on the EQ side of things; good manners, social skills and kindness are not things you only read about in the brochures – these values radiate throughout the school as soon as you step in.

The array of extracurricular activities at and around The Grandstand area is also a great plus. Kids can choose to stay an hour longer each day for activities like soccer, tennis and swimming.

Lastly, we like how the experienced teachers make the effort to understand every kid, and keep the parents updated about their child's progress by means of weekly newsletters. I would absolutely recommend this school to other families, especially those who are looking for a smaller preschool.



200 Turf Club Road
6762 8158 | swallowsandamazons.com.sg

Swiss School

*Patricia and Jonathan, Irish and British
Lauren (7), and
twins Beatrice and Isabelle (5)*

“Our three daughters have been attending the Swiss School since we arrived in Singapore last July. Currently, the twins are in the Early Childhood section, where classes are in English and German, while Lauren is in the Primary school, which follows the Kanton Zug curriculum.

We heard about the Swiss School from my husband's colleagues. Their children were enrolled there, so we kept hearing positive reports about it.

In choosing a school, I wanted one that was conveniently located and easily accessible. I also wanted an environment in which my kids would not only thrive and be happy, but also continue learning a second language.

We are really pleased to have chosen the Swiss School. It is situated in the grounds of the Swiss Club in Bukit Timah and is surrounded by greenery. It has a wonderful village vibe and the teachers are lovely. With the preschool, specifically, we have been impressed with the small class sizes and play-based learning. We also like the idea of thematic learning – when Beatrice's class had an open day on the theme of oceans, you could see how much the kids had learnt from making the posters and presenting them to their friends.

We lived in Switzerland for nearly three years before coming to Singapore, and I have really enjoyed seeing how some of the Swiss traditions have been continued in the school. One particular event is the Lantern Evening, where the children get to make lanterns and sing the special songs that go with the Feast of St Martin.



38 Swiss Club Road
6468 2117 | swiss-school.edu.sg

Tanglin Trust School

*Amina and Paul Redman,
British
Aimee (4) and Sara (2)*

“We arrived in Singapore from London in 2011. Aimee started Nursery at Tanglin Trust School (TTS) in August last year and is now in her final term. Her sister Sara will start Nursery in August next year.

We did a fair bit of research on schools prior to moving to Singapore. Tanglin appealed to us, as it follows a British-based curriculum but still has an international environment with a diverse range of students from different backgrounds. After visiting the school and seeing classroom upon classroom of happy and confident children, we were convinced it was the right choice. It also helped that the facilities were well-equipped and the teaching staff enthusiastic.

The registration process provided ample opportunity for us to connect with the teachers and the other parents as the school term drew closer. This helped Aimee become familiar with the place and settle in almost seamlessly. The first year of learning was challenging but fun – exactly what we’d hoped for. We have seen a phenomenal change in her social development and learning progress.

As her class prepares to make the transition to Reception in August this year, the teachers are proactively taking the time to introduce the children to their new environment, making it an exciting and enjoyable experience for them.

Starting a new school can be an incredibly stressful and challenging time for both the child and the parents, but the Tanglin School community really stand out in how they provide support during this period. One word of advice for parents is to register your child early – many of our friends left it to the last minute and were inevitably disappointed.”



95 Portsdown Road | 6778 0771 | tts.edu.sg



The Winstedt School

*Esther and Andrew Smith, British
Charlie (8) and George (6)*

George started at Winstedt in October last year. Although the facility may be smaller than other schools, its value was clear to us – we like that class sizes don't go above 12 students, and we feel that the small student-to-teacher ratio aids learning. The combination of first-rate teaching and onsite learning support also provides a nurturing approach tailored to fit each child's needs.

Before Winstedt, George was at a large international school. Its scale had overwhelmed him – he lost confidence and wasn't learning. We saw the advertisement for The Winstedt School in *Expat Living* and decided to sign him up for their three-day trial. Within those brief three days, not only did the team manage to understand our child, they also identified his educational frustrations and challenges, and then determined solutions for him.

George entered the Integrated Therapy Department, where he received intensive learning and social skills support for three months; they re-built his confidence and his interest in learning. Then, in January, he joined the main classroom. His teacher sets a pace that challenges the students without pressurising them, and he's quickly catching up to Grade Level in the IPC Curriculum. What's more, he's happy – he literally bounces to school every day – and he's making great friends!

Winstedt offers customised learning in a small, caring environment that maximises every child's educational development. For a variety of reasons, some kids struggle to cope at larger international schools; Winstedt offers a much-needed and much-appreciated alternative. We could not be happier with the school's approach and the progress George is making.

10 Winstedt Road Block C #01-16 | 6836 1128 | winstedt.edu.sg



UWC South East Asia (East Campus)

*Stella and Sameer Advani, American
Priyanka (6) and Amiya (4)*

Both our daughters are enrolled in UWCSEA East Campus: Priyanka is currently in K2 and this is the end of her second year, while Amiya is in K1 and is finishing her first year.

We chose UWC as it had been strongly recommended by our external family. In addition, the school places equal importance on academics, personal and social education, physical education, and service – this is closely aligned to our family values.

As parents, we feel that UWC has harnessed our children's love for learning and sense of curiosity. The curriculum is organised around an inquiry-based approach, which involves real-world problem-solving by collaborating with peers through projects and presentations.

We especially enjoy the student-led conferences, during which our kids get to present the various skills they've learnt throughout the academic year. Academics apart, they enjoy the after-school activities like swimming and gymnastics. We also like the buddy system, whereby students in the older grades are paired with those in the infant school for various assignments and activities, as well as on field trips.

Although our girls have different dispositions and are a year and a half apart, both of them are thriving at UWCSEA. We would highly recommend the school as the teachers understand that the students come from various cultural backgrounds, and that each individual student comes with her own set of challenges and learning goals. In short, the school doesn't accommodate solely one type of learning ability, nor does it try to mould the children into a certain type of student.



East Campus, 1
Tampines Street 73
6305 5344
uwcsea.edu.sg

Dover Campus
1207 Dover Road
6775 5344
uwcsea.edu.sg



White Lodge (Loewen Gardens)

*Mayali and Dharshaka Peiris, Sri Lankan and Australian
Rheyan (3.5) and Shanouk (2)*

“Rheyan has been attending White Lodge Loewen Gardens for two years, and Shanouk just started last year. We have been living in Singapore for around two-and-a-half years.

When we arrived in Singapore, the preschool system here was new to us. We didn't know what we wanted for our then 21-month-old. During our research, White Lodge stood out from several other schools we visited. We were won over by the professional and friendly staff, as well as the lively classrooms.

In choosing a school, we placed importance on it having a learning-through-play approach. The classrooms at White Lodge are full of activities; they were a great place where our sons could learn, explore and grow. We also wanted our boys to be exposed to other languages – at White Lodge they have the opportunity to learn Mandarin through songs and games. In addition, class sizes are small and the student-to-teacher ratio is just right.

We appreciate the constant interaction between the staff and parents. This was highlighted when Shanouk was having issues adjusting to his new class – the school allowed me to stay with him until he was settled. They also publish a weekly report so we're kept up to date with what's going on. As parents, our main concern is whether the kids are happy in their environment.

When we asked Rheyan how he felt about the school, he replied, 'I like my Mr Keemi (Mr Keem, his teacher) and my friends.' Knowing that our sons are getting a great foundation while having fun is truly comforting.”

White Lodge has eight locations island-wide.
whitelodge.com.sg

Singapore Map

SCHOOL LOCATIONS

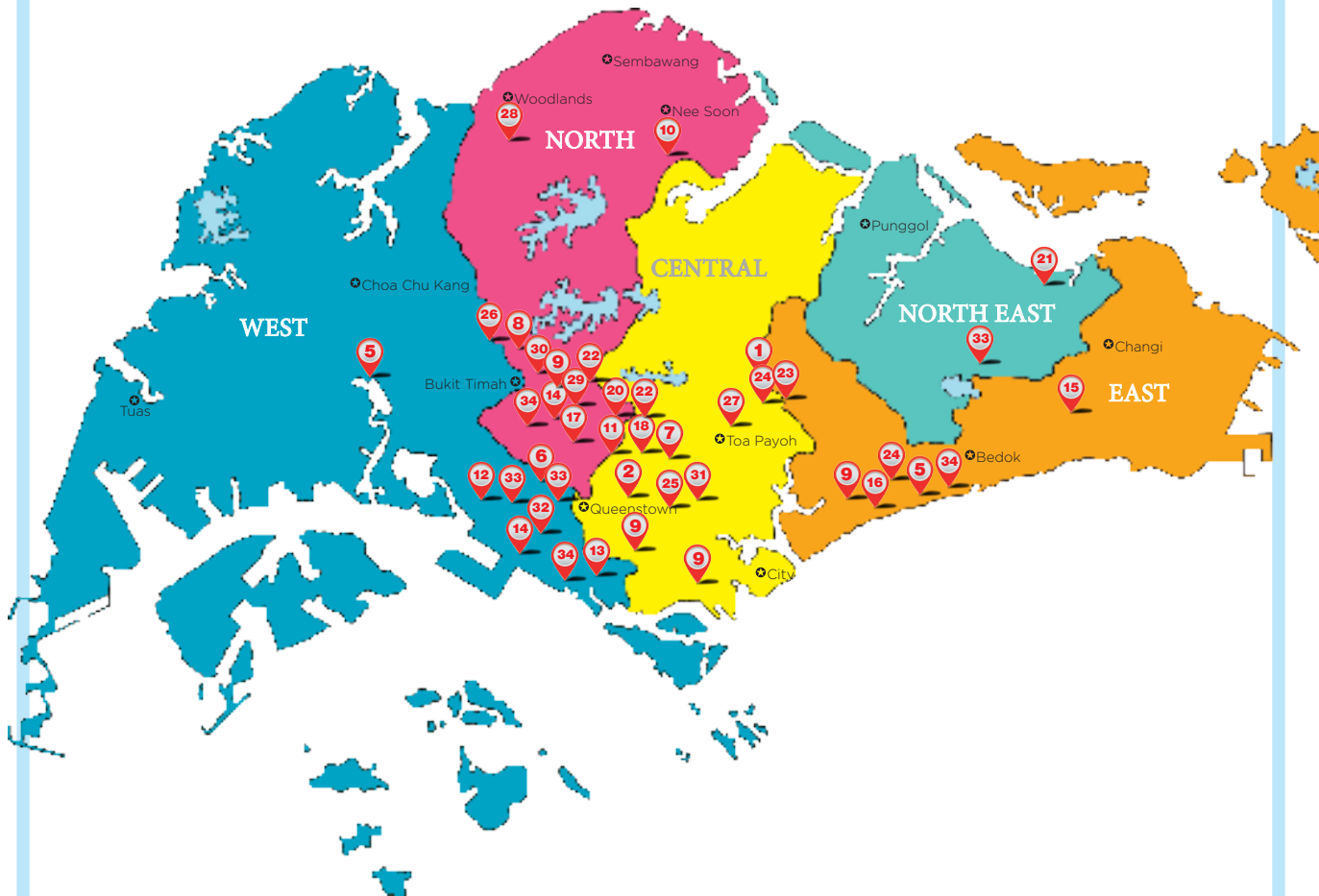
■ WEST

■ NORTH

■ CENTRAL

■ NORTH EAST

■ EAST



- | | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 - Australian IS | 13 - ISS | 25 - SMM |
| 2 - Avondale Grammar | 14 - Learning Vision* | 26 - Swiss School |
| 3 - Bibinogs* | 15 - OWIS | 27 - SJII |
| 4 - Brighton Montessori* | 16 - Kinderland | 28 - SAS |
| 5 - Canadian IS* | 17 - Odyssey | 29 - Sunflower |
| 6 - Dover Court | 18 - Pegasus | 30 - Swallows & Amazons |
| 7 - Chinese IS | 19 - Mindchamps* | 31 - Winstedt School |
| 8 - GESS | 20 - MSIS | 32 - Tanglin |
| 9 - Eton House* | 21 - OFS** | 33 - UWC* |
| 10 - GEMS | 22 - Raintrees | 34 - White Lodge* |
| 11 - Go-Go Bambini | 23 - Stamford | |
| 12 - ICS | 24 - Shaws* | |

* Multiple locations; refer to individual websites for more details.

** New location from August 2015.

Note: Map not to scale, approximate locations only.



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