



Shanghai, China

Dulwich College Shanghai Pudong

**Why academic success is only
one part of a happy, healthy life**



**WORLD'S
BEST SCHOOL**
Supporting
Healthy Lives

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**WORLD'S
BEST SCHOOL
PRIZES**

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Introduction

Dulwich College Shanghai Pudong was founded in 2003 and accepts children from ages 2 to 18. The first British Independent school to open in China, it started with just 23 students and has now expanded to over 1600 students. As an English-speaking institution, the school follows the English National Curriculum, and students in Year 10 and Year 11 follow a two-year IGCSE programme, while students in Year 12 and Year 13 follow The International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme. The school has a reputation for strong academics and matriculation in leading universities around the world.

The school community is made up of families from over 40 different countries, with an increasing number coming from Chinese and North-East Asian families who consider academic excellence non-negotiable. However, academics are delivered through a wellbeing ethos, and Dulwich College Shanghai Pudong pursues an educational model that centres on the child and makes strides to incorporate healthy living into every aspect of everyday school life.



Profile:



Country:

China



Region:

Shanghai



School type:

Private school



Location area:

City



Student population:

1501 to 2000



Prize Category:

Supporting Healthy Lives

“If you have great relationships with your staff, if you have great relationships with parents and with students, it does enable us to have this foundation that we can bring forward. I think we’re very careful about whom we hire and, in some respects, careful about who comes onto our campus in terms of parents because we want them to have the same values as we do. And we work really hard on our relationships all the time.”
– Victoria Foster, Head of Junior School



In-depth look


CONTEXT AND CHALLENGE

The ethos of Dulwich College Shanghai Pudong is the vision that its students “will have the skills and motivation to make a positive difference in the world”. Decisions that impact students and faculty members are based on three key statements: 1) Value every voice 2) Do the right thing and 3) Make a difference. Those principles are part of almost every aspect of school life and are applicable to every student or member of staff, regardless of a person’s nationality, age and or role in the school. There are co-curricular activities in dance, music, drama, service, sustainability, robotics, film and media. Global Citizenship and Wellbeing are focus areas with not only student prefect teams leading these initiatives, but also Directors hired to specifically lead in these areas.

The school’s main challenge was to clearly articulate the importance of healthy living, research best practices, take action and then embed it into every aspect of school life.

With input from teachers, students, support staff and parents, the three key value statements were articulated as guidelines through assemblies, and workshops. Processes were put in place to ensure that any concerns or issues raised by community members could be identified and raised at any point.





“With ‘Value Every Voice’ as a core value of Dulwich, it is important for us to address diversity issues through the creation of opportunities for people to share and listen to each other, hence bridging our differences.”

- Cherry Liu, a Year 12 student at Dulwich College Shanghai Pudong

EXPERTISE AND APPROACH

Dulwich College Shanghai Pudong, valuing the need to create a safe space for every member of the community, made an environment where everyone has a voice including teachers and students in the classrooms, support staff in operations and IT, catering staff in the kitchens, parents at home, the guards at the gate, cleaning staff, and senior leadership.

For the past four years, the school has been committed to creating a happy and healthy environment for its students in order for them to thrive academically, socially and mentally. One way in which it achieved this was through an inclusive culture and a fully articulated curriculum from Early Years through to Year 13. It put in processes, safety checks, parent support systems, and student and staff training to ensure healthy living is fully embedded in everything it does. In recent years, due to changing global events, the school implemented a focus on digital safety, and sustainable food solutions, as well as increasing awareness and providing tools to support those within the community with their mental health.

A self-care framework for its early years students was created, which would follow the student through their time in Junior and Senior school, with age-appropriate topics that cover diet, relationships, body and mind, sexuality education, mental health, digital intelligence, and growth mindset. The purpose was for children to have the vocabulary, self-awareness and tools to take care of themselves. Aside from annual events such as Kindness Day, Diversity and Inclusion Week, and Paralympics sports day, students and staff have initiated multiple projects to create long-term change in the school.




A student-led initiative saw pupils swap boy-girl ties out for gender-neutral versions, whilst the school's operations team re-configured bathrooms to allow for gender-neutral options to ensure every child felt included.

Most importantly, the school created space for the students to have a voice and to be enabled to influence healthy living initiatives launched by the school. Wellbeing Prefects gather feedback from the student body and work with the School Leadership Team to review and action initiatives. This includes input into the school's wellbeing curriculum. The student (and parent) Food Committee meet regularly with the catering team to advocate for balanced healthy meals, including alternatives to meat.

Finally, the school's support staff in operations, IT, HR, and catering prioritise health and safety above all else. Whether it's through air filtration systems, launching Qustodio for screen time monitoring, UV light sterilisers, dedicated food safety personnel, safer recruitment or even cleaning robots, the safety of all within the school takes special priority.



A group of children are playing outdoors with a pink ball. One child in the center is reaching up to catch it. They are wearing green and blue sports jerseys. The background is a blurred green field.

**“We’ve shown the parents
that we go above and beyond
to show that the environment
their children are in is a safe
environment.”**

**– Katherine Weir-Davis,
teacher at Dulwich College
Shanghai Pudong**



OUTCOMES AND RESULTS

Annually, staff, parent and student surveys are conducted to provide the school with critical feedback on how their healthy welfare programme impacts the lives and performance of the school community.

Parental feedback saw that the school was reviewed was highly positive, despite having an inclusive focus that did not solely limit itself to value high academic success. 89% of parents felt their child is 'safe and well-cared for at school' and 82% agree we have a 'strong sense of community. A majority of students felt safe, with 95% stating they believed they were protected and well cared for and 93% expressed being happy in the school environment. Finally, 86% of staff were satisfied with their work experience, 85% feel valued in the community and 83% feel energised by the working environment.

Other initiatives launched by the school to encourage other forms of healthy lifestyles such as exercise proved successful, in particular when they were student-led. The 'wear a bicycle helmet for cycling' project had almost 100% compliance.



Key Steps



CREATING A FULLY ARTICULATED CURRICULUM

The school's Heads of School and Deputy Heads met regularly to ensure a rigorous vertically articulated curriculum, with healthy living embedded throughout. This ensured smooth transitions as students graduate from Kindergarten into Junior School and then into Senior School. Consulting with external experts, such as Susie March (sexuality education), David Vinegrad (Positive Education) and Matt Hall (Inner Leadership), was done frequently to ensure the school was up to date on the latest education pedagogy and best practice in this field. The curriculum is reviewed annually and modified to ensure age-appropriate content. The wellbeing curriculum starts in the early years and is both broad and deep. Topics include diet, relationships, body and mind, sexuality education, mental health, digital intelligence, and growth mindset. In the Senior School, e



students have individual university and careers counsellors who offer personalised support from Year 10 as students prepare for life in higher education or in the world of work.



NURTURING PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENTS

Research has shown that outdoor play and calming nurturing environments are important for physical and mental wellbeing, and the school's spaces have been designed to offer that comfort and safety. The Bubble' is a student-led initiative to create a space for Senior School students to 'just chill'. Decorated with bean bags, calming lights, and gentle music, and close to the counsellor's office, students find a place to retreat.



STUDENT AGENCY

Students have led a range of initiatives from road safety, healthy eating, inter-House sports events, mental health awareness, and Kindness Days that all contribute to the wellbeing agenda. The school enables these initiatives through support and coaching in different ways



from academic staff, support staff and parents. The catering company hired by the school worked closely with students and parents to review the lunch menus, track food safety, provide dietary information as well as track and reduce food waste. Other events typically arranged by senior faculty are student-led, with just coaching from the PE department.



PHYSICAL HEALTH THROUGH DIET

The school employs a full-time food safety expert to ensure high standards, nutritional value and food quality. They work closely with the operations team, parents and students to ensure tasty, healthy food. Every day, there is a range of international cuisine options and meat-free options and a salad bar. In Early years they embed learning about healthy food handling through cooking/baking CCAs and the new Food Lab offers opportunities for our Junior and Senior students to learn healthy food preparation and critical cooking skills that can use when they leave home.





EDUCATING PARENTS

There is significant investment and resources poured into workshops, information sessions and parent-teacher meetings to ensure a joined-up approach in academics as well as student wellbeing. Staff often consult with students as well as parents before deciding the topics we will cover and which experts are best placed to deliver them. There are internal and external counsellors who run training sessions, partnerships with medical and dental providers, parent-to-parent sessions and of course sessions led by academic staff and Heads of Schools.



DIGITAL SAFETY

Gathering feedback from parents, students, and staff during online learning, the school identified many pain points and sought out research and best practice to maximise student engagement, personalised teaching and assessment. One of the positives from the situation in the last two years was an improvement in some of the assessment tools and teachers now make much use



of online tools, such as quizzes, pulse checks, and feedback tools. Bespoke online learning timetables that could balance synchronous and asynchronous learning to minimise screen time to ensure good independent learning habits and physical activity even when learning at home.



UNCOMPROMISING HEALTH AND SAFETY

UV sterilisation lights, air filtration systems, one-way systems, and mask and glove provisions have been utilised by the school to ensure high health and safety standards. For students in Kindergarten, Dulwich robots (known as D-Bots) ensure a systematic deep clean daily. Temperature checks at the gate and vaccination programmes are all in place and a team of certified on-site nurses keep the community safe and well. The school works closely with partners United Family Hospital to deliver health advice pertaining to common childhood ailments and COVID-19. Healthcare professionals come to the school to speak to parents and students on age-appropriate subjects.



Advice and Guidance

There is deep importance to cultivating a culture that ultimately focuses on the complete mental, physical and emotional welfare of the students and incorporates those values throughout every aspect of school life. Another component that is very easy to implement is a strong rapport between staff, other members of faculty, parents, students and other members of the wider community through social events and being inclusive.

More information

 **Dulwich College Shanghai Pudong**

 **@dulwichpudong**

 **<https://shanghai-pudong.dulwich.org/>**

**Learn more about their work by
watching their event at 2022's T4 World
Education Week: [watch here](#)**

