

SPOTLIGHT ON:

METROPOLITAN SCHOOL FRANKFURT (MSF)

Cultivating Curiosity and Community in the Heart of "Mainhattan"

BUILDING A VILLAGE IN A GLOBAL CITY

Metropolitan School Frankfurt (MSF) is a school that has truly grown up alongside its community. We recently sat down with Tara Francis, the school's Assistant Director, who has been an integral part of the MSF journey for over a decade.

In that period, the school has expanded from 450 to approximately 770 students, and it is now preparing to celebrate a significant milestone: "next year in 2027 the school will be celebrating its 20th anniversary".

Despite its growth, MSF has worked hard to maintain the intimate, supportive atmosphere that defines it. Tara describes a culture where "we still very much feel like a small school where everybody knows each other." This village feel is central to the school's identity, providing a sense of stability for families in a transient global hub like Frankfurt. With a student body representing roughly 60 nationalities, diversity here is not managed or merely celebrated: it is, as Tara puts it, **actively embraced**.



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*Community is a cornerstone
of who we are*
Tara Francis

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The school's commitment to community extends far beyond its own walls. MSF is a proud and active member of the [Association of German International Schools \(AGIS\)](http://www.agis.de), fostering deep local connections.

VALUES IN ACTION

The school's mission is guided by three foundational values: community, courage, and curiosity. These values are brought to life through a strong focus on student voice and democratic participation.

Recently, MSF redesigned its student council elections to move beyond simple popularity contests, focusing instead on the mechanics of real-world campaigning. Tara explains that the goal was "building understanding of democracy" among the learners.



Learn more: www.m-school.de

REACHING FOR THE SKY

As a city-based school, MSF has had to be creative with its physical footprint, building up rather than out. The most striking example is a brand-new theatre, currently under construction on top of an existing building, which will seat 700 people and be ready in time for the school's 20th anniversary. Tara told us that it will be the largest theatre in the region, providing a dedicated space to highlight the importance of the arts.

Building upwards speaks to ambition; but for MSF, the deeper work has always been about what lies beneath: **the foundations of a community where people genuinely thrive**. Since founding the school in 2007, founder and Director Peter Ferres has sought to provide an outstanding education through excellent facilities, strong relationships and a caring community.



A FOUNDATION OF WELLBEING

Tara's commitment to staff wellbeing is reflected in the breadth and ambition of MSF's approach, which spans six distinct domains: social, physical, emotional, intellectual, environmental and financial. The range is striking: from onsite massages, fitness training and a bike leasing scheme, to internal and externally funded counselling, divisional wellbeing check-ins and an open-door policy with senior leadership.

Staff are supported intellectually through ongoing professional development – including ECIS' [Middle Leadership](#) and [Child Protection](#) courses – alongside peer coaching and language learning. Financial support for staff is equally comprehensive, spanning a private healthcare plan, pension programme, relocation support and annual salary increases. Even the school's environmental conscience feeds into staff wellbeing, with organic lunches, a solar panel scheme and active reduction of single-use plastics. It is a framework that treats staff as whole people, not just professionals.

PROFESSIONAL GROWTH THROUGH ECIS: A FOCUS ON GOVERNANCE



While MSF has utilised the ECIS partnership to deeply embed a culture of continuous professional development (PD), this commitment to growth also extends to the school's governors. Tara tells us that a standout element of the MSF-ECIS partnership has been the focus on [governance training](#). Recognising that a school's success is intrinsically linked to its leadership structure, MSF has worked closely with ECIS to provide bespoke training for its Board and Trustees.

This training ensures that those at the highest level of leadership understand the unique nuances of international education, from financial stewardship to long-term strategic visioning. By aligning the Board's goals with the school's mission of Curiosity, Courage, and Community, MSF ensures a stable and inspired future for its learners. whole people, not just professionals.

Interested in governance training? Strong governance is the backbone of a thriving school. To learn more about how ECIS can support your Board or Trustees with bespoke training and certification, please contact our Executive Director, Kam Chohan, at membership@ecis.org.

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