

THE PEAK OF LEARNING

● The Swiss education system is revered for its incredible facilities and high quality, future-facing programmes – and for UAE parents with means, the country is a huge draw

BY EMMA PROCTER
Special to GN Focus

A multicultural, multilingual country with a high standard of living, Switzerland also boasts a robust educational tradition and a healthy social environment.

It's a place of harmony, ideal for studies and a

balanced education. Indeed, delivering a premium service to students and parents has always been a priority in Swiss education and the way schools are managed is still perceived as a real benchmark worldwide in the private sector. And because of all this, foreigners who can afford it often consider giving their offspring the advantages of a Swiss education including UAE parents.

"UAE parents have trusted our schools for decades and we feel very proud and honoured to have welcomed hundreds of children and teenagers over the years," says Alexandre Gademann, Managing Director, Institut Monte Rosa, one of Switzerland's leading international boarding schools.

"At Monte Rosa, for example, our relatively small community gives a unique family atmosphere to the school and students feel very safe in this environment. The individual care, attention to details and flexibility of the school combined with our un-



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derstanding, extended experience and respect for different cultures make it a very attractive destination for many parents in the UAE." Voted as the best education system in the world by the World Economic Forum 2016, Switzerland has a reputation for excellent private schools at all levels. Sending youngsters isn't cheap of course; it's very much

an exclusive affair. But with extra-curricular activities like horse-riding, yachting, spa treatments, yoga and photography, it's easy to see why learning there would be a rounding experience.

Switzerland is also a great hub for various industry-specific programmes, such as business studies, management, public relations,

hospitality, and tourism. "Innovation is key, and we understand that we need to prepare our students for jobs or sectors that sometimes don't even exist yet," says Gademann. "That is why we focus on developing as many soft skills as possible, challenging them on a daily basis to get them to reach their full potential."

It is the mindset that sets Swiss education system apart, says Zabeen Mirza, Country Director – North America at the Schraner Negotiation Institute, a revered Swiss global negotiation think-tank and advisory. One of its closest educational partners is ETH Zurich, a top science, technology, engineering and mathematics university.

"Swiss education system is very much aimed at arming students with necessary skills to navigate an every-changing planet successfully," says Mirza, a former UAE resident. "Children in this education system are given a very future-forward, global perspective." ■



Alexandre Gademann

Institut Monte Rosa



Zabeen Mirza

Schraner Negotiation Institute

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ZURICH INTERNATIONAL LIFE

Helping the local community to be ready for life

Zurich International Life (Zurich) has been in the Middle East for more than 30 years, serving customers of 170 nationalities. It leverages its global expertise, capabilities and financial strength to provide market-leading products to its customers and distributors, while supporting these solutions with world-class customer and claims services.

Zurich is proud of its Swiss heritage but the company is very much embedded in the local

communities in which it lives and works. It wants to empower, not just protect. It wants to give people the means to achieve something, to make them stronger and more confident. The company's corporate responsibility strategy aims to create value for both its company and for the society as a whole. It uses its core skills, risk and investment experience, to have a positive impact on both. Its primary focus is to support people of determination. It is also com-

mitted to helping the local community to be fully equipped to control their financial future, while supporting financial literacy in the region. One example of this is Investars, an innovative programme created in the Middle East, for its people. Partnering with GEMS Wellington International School, it has designed an after-school programme to help students understand financial markets and how to invest. It is also passionate about health and well-being.

In addition to prevention roadshows for the public on topics such as nutrition, fitness and mindfulness, Zurich has developed a comprehensive sports sponsorship programme to support the community to be ready for life.

Joining its successful annual Zurich Touch Rugby tournament is the brand-new Zurich Cricket Sixes, which takes place on Friday, November 9.

Zurich is also an official sponsor of the DP World Tour Championship Dubai,

which runs from November 15-18 in the emirate. The championship isn't just about golf – it's an event that brings the whole community together. Zurich is delighted to provide ten lucky winners a unique opportunity to win an exclusive golf clinic with Tommy Fleetwood, the reigning Race to Dubai champion and one of Zurich's golf ambassadors, through its Play with the best competition on the Zurich Middle East Facebook page.