



CAMBRIDGE



Rethinking education with baseline assessments

The Oxbridge International School (OXIS), established in 2019, is an independent day school in Trinidad and Tobago. As a Cambridge International School, OXIS offers students the full Cambridge curriculum from early years starting at age 3 to advanced post-16 education.

OXIS takes a unique holistic approach to learning that focuses on the individual student and encourages skill development through play and exploration. The school founder Dr Rolph Balgobin explains how they adopted Cambridge baseline assessments to support its mission to unlock every child's potential.

Child-centred learning at OXIS

'Most people think that school is for teaching children, but very often you find that becomes incidental to the other things that schools do, and the child is almost an afterthought.'

At OXIS everything is about the child.

We use baseline assessments from Cambridge not just for the assessment of cognitive development, but as the centre of a radical educational redesign which places the child squarely at the nucleus of what we do and allows us to effectively partner with and build a positive relationship with parents,' Dr Balgobin explains.

'What we've done is to rethink our teaching approach to each particular child.'



The Oxbridge International School
(OXIS), Trinidad and Tobago

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The baseline is what makes the difference.

The baseline assessment gives us the extra insight into a child's ability, so we're stripping back the layers. The cognitive ability is under the content. We marry what the baseline assessment reports tell us with what we see from the child's content evaluation, by way of other classroom assessments like semester or progression tests, and past paper practice, and so on.

The baseline assessment is therefore not standing on its own, it's very much integrated into what we do on a daily basis.

We're getting good results and I think that the baseline assessments from Cambridge has something significant to do with that.'

Teachers at OXIS use the baseline assessment feedback for:

- individual learning plans for each child
- action planning
- planning individual interventions
- engagement and encouragement
- reflection on teaching and learning practices in school
- partnering with parents



Partnering with parents

'We try very hard to work closely and positively with parents. We meet with all parents of all children, and we give them half an hour, or an hour, at least every 8 weeks. The baseline assessments from Cambridge really help with that relationship.

We now use our baseline assessments as a basis for our meetings with parents, which allows us to have proactive, positive, and productive conversations. We get to sit with the parent and teacher and say, "What are we going to do for this child so they continue to grow and achieve their top grade?"

The Cambridge badge becomes very important because it allows us to have an objective conversation about the child, using a credible third-party set of information. That is absolutely invaluable.'

Wellbeing

Dr Balgobin also explains how important having 'an effective counterpart in the parent is for the wellbeing of the child.'

'We've started a dedicated Wellbeing programme. In our lower school, we're doing the Cambridge Wellbeing Check once a month. We are considering increasing using the use to about once a week – the reason for that is a month is a long time in the life of a child, especially the younger ones.

We use it to assess the development of each child.'

Why use baseline assessments as a Cambridge International School?

'I couldn't imagine deploying Cambridge education without baseline assessments – it is that important. It has given us another dimension for education.

We take the best syllabus in the world, the best teaching materials, the best resources, and textbooks and baseline assessments. The baseline is what makes the difference.

The baseline assessment tells you about the child in all of this. Everything else is for projection towards the child – things that they have to learn, to see, to use. What the assessment does is tell you how the child is receiving it all. It's really the missing link for OXIS education. A school that doesn't use baseline assessment is tremendously disadvantaged.'

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To find out more about baseline assessments visit www.cem.org