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PROMOTING A CULTURE OF THINKING IN THE ISL COMMUNITY

As part of ISL's on-going commitment to creating a culture of thinking among students, teachers and parents, Dr Ron Ritchhart of Project Zero at Harvard, was invited to spend a week at the International School of Luxembourg (ISL).

Ron Ritchhart has been a researcher at Project Zero, Harvard Graduate School of Education since 1994. His research focuses on understanding how to develop, nurture, and sustain thoughtful learning environments for students, teachers and parents.

During his week at ISL Ron worked alongside students and teachers in classrooms, using thinking routines to help students to further unlock their inquisitiveness and ponder more deeply. He also hosted a parent workshop and facilitated a school Leadership Team meeting. This was so everyone in the ISL community could become more involved in the approach to thinking. It encourages all students to consider different viewpoints, reason with evidence, make connections, uncover complexity, build explanations, describe situations, be adventurous with their curiosity and form their own conclusions. This approach is not just intended for learning at school - it's for life, and provides students with the skills they need to be successful citizens in a global society.

In an opening comment during one of his seminars at ISL, Ron said: "Any curriculum good or bad is going to sink if the culture is not right in the classroom and the purpose of school is not to help children to do better at school. It is to help them do better in life."

Prior to joining the Project Zero research group, Ron was a math's teacher for fourteen years. Ron was frustrated with the way maths was taught and noticed his students were not able to make strong connections between math's and science because they were not being encouraged to think deeply about the subjects and how they can intertwine. This is where his career in human development and psychology stemmed from. Much of his research is classroom and school-based, as he sees teaching as a complex art and science that must be understood in context.

ISL Director, Nicki Crush, said: "The culture of thinking framework has been influential in shaping education in schools throughout the world. We encourage our students to be open-minded and we must be too – we are constantly looking for innovative ways like this to help them, not only to learn, but to understand and apply their thinking practically."

Background

- Photos are available here: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/cRswMWIdGREblok72>

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