

June 27, 2014.

***Reference for Heidi LOTHSPPEICH***

To Whom it May Concern,

I have had the pleasure of working with Heidi Lothspeich since September 2009, when she was hired for the position of Lead Teacher for the Extended Support Programme (ESP) at Campus des Nations – Pregny, the International School of Geneva in Switzerland. Pregny offers a high level of support for up to 8 students with moderate to more serious learning difficulties such as Down's Syndrome, children who have been diagnosed as being on the autistic spectrum or have global developmental delays.

During the course of a very rigorous interview process, Heidi proved herself to be poised, articulate and very knowledgeable in teaching children with special learning needs. She quickly established a solid team of teachers and assistants in her department and worked tirelessly to put best practice and organization in place.

She established individual timetables for her 8 young students to allow them the best possible mix of time spent in mainstream classrooms and time spent with the ESP staff in the quieter environment of the learning centre. Heidi always puts the needs of the student at the centre of all she does and she has been a great advocate for the children's inclusion, not only within the school including after school and extra-curricular activities, but also in the wider Geneva community. Heidi successfully established a therapeutic horse riding programme for our students which has been extremely successful not only for the students but is very much appreciated by the parents as well.

Heidi has managed the ESP budget and has arranged relevant professional development opportunities for her staff as well as teachers throughout the school on a diverse range of topics such as Makaton and Numicon maths, which help them enhance teaching and learning.

Heidi communicates clearly and effectively with the students, colleagues and parents. She includes everyone involved in the child's education in her IEP meetings. She manages her time very well and she possesses excellent organizational skills. She has encouraged her colleagues to take on additional responsibilities and has fostered their professional growth.

In 2011 Heidi was appointed to the role of part-time Assistant Principal, taking on additional responsibilities which she has managed with equal skill. She took on the supervision of the classroom assistants, timetabling, organizing replacements for absent staff as well the paperwork that must be completed to ensure their payment. She instituted regular meetings with the classroom assistants and played an integral part in organizing training for them to enhance their skills and therefore empower them in the school. The regular meetings gave



assistants a new voice in the school and resulted in the reorganization of the outdoor play space and new initiatives such as Playground Pals and the Golden Rules which were adopted by the whole school. Heidi has a very collaborative approach in her interactions with colleagues and she is well respected as being fair and open.

She has regularly participated in the weekly Student Support Group meetings and offers sound suggestions and advice to colleagues. She has worked diligently to strengthen the link between Learning Support, the ESP, and English as an Additional Language (EAL) and schedules biweekly meetings with the Principal and Learning Support and EAL Coordinators. Heidi is an active listener, reflective thinker, and innovative problem solver.

She creates the school timetables in consultation with the teachers and Principal. She also organises room use and outdoor supervision. Heidi is organized, consultative, and highly skilled in strategic planning.

She has regularly participated in interview panels for a variety of posts both at Pregny and at the primary and secondary school. She exhibits good instincts, asks pertinent interview questions and contributes to choosing appropriate staff for vacant posts.

Heidi readily avails herself of professional development opportunities. She has attended numerous PYP, SEN, appraisal and leadership/management workshops and conferences. She has embraced the PYP and participates in and contributes to collaborative planning with colleagues. She has also undertaken French lessons and has made significant progress. Heidi is committed to professional growth and life-long learning.

In my absence over several months this school year, Heidi has taken on all the responsibilities of the Principal. She has very competently handled the additional duties and has very impressively kept the school running smoothly. She has exceeded expectations and has worked tirelessly to juggle her many roles and has continued to meet her own high expectations of herself.

Heidi has a great sense of humour and a reliable and steadfast nature. She meets timelines, anticipates where she can be of help and never fails to come through when needed. She has excellent leadership qualities as well as being an outstanding special needs teacher. Heidi is a great asset to the school and has made a considerable contribution to Pregny. I greatly appreciate her dedication to duty, to the students and the school. I would not hesitate to recommend Heidi to any other school considering her for a post.

Sincerely,

Lisa Belfry  
Principal of Early Years