

An aerial view of a city skyline, likely New York City, with a prominent red overlay. The Empire State Building is visible in the background. The text is centered in a white rectangular box.

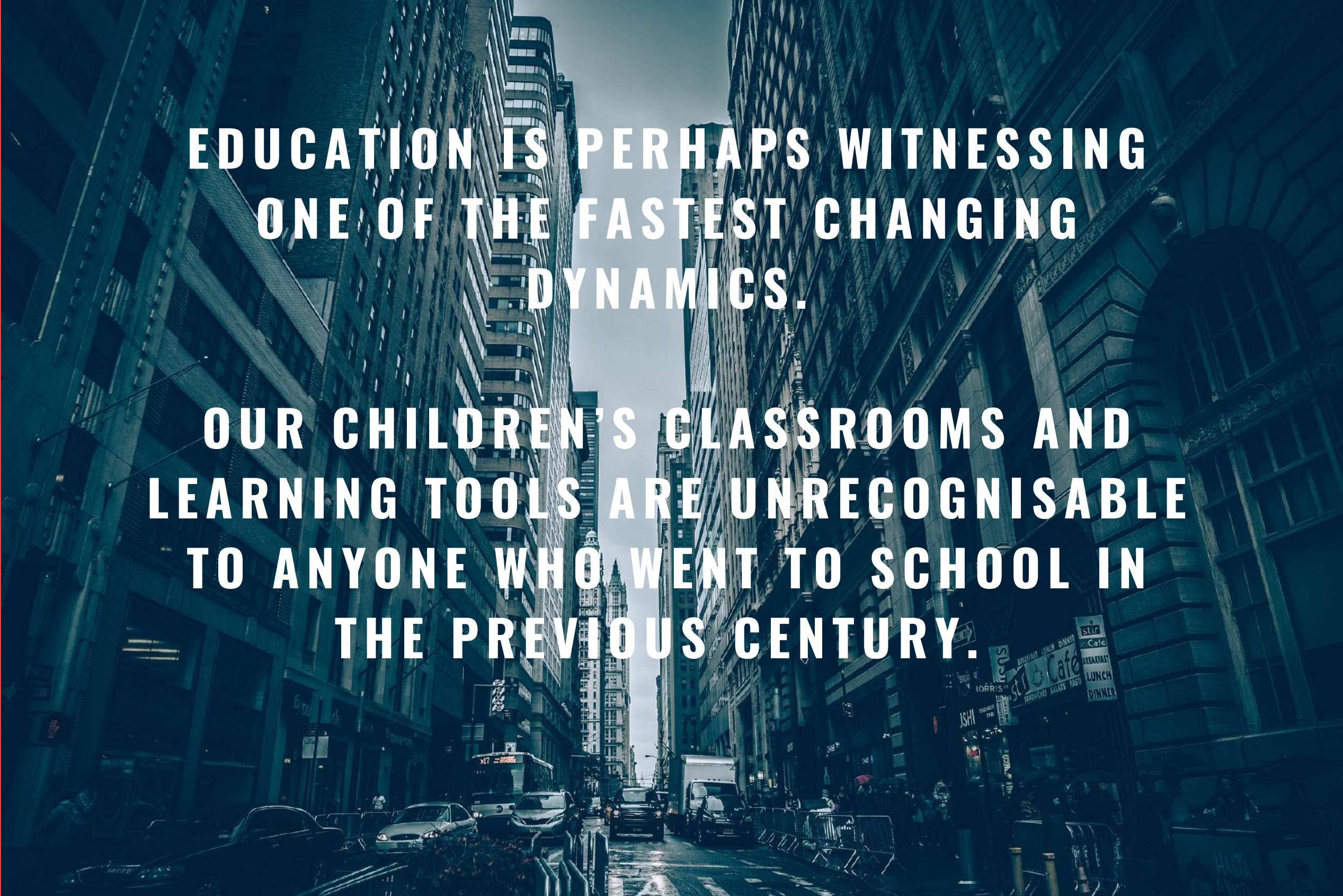
TOP TRENDS IN EDUCATION

THAT EVERY PARENT SHOULD KNOW

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**EDUCATION IS PERHAPS WITNESSING
ONE OF THE FASTEST CHANGING
DYNAMICS.**

**OUR CHILDREN'S CLASSROOMS AND
LEARNING TOOLS ARE UNRECOGNISABLE
TO ANYONE WHO WENT TO SCHOOL IN
THE PREVIOUS CENTURY.**

Technology, changing social dynamics, collaboration, access and opportunity are the defining parameters for the year.

What is it like to be a student now? What are the developments in education that every parent should know? Here are some trends to look out for.

1.

Tinkering

2.

Blended
Learning

3.

Metaliteracy

TINKERING

Don't be misled by the traditional definition of tinkering. Tinkering is not just children experimenting or fiddling around casually with electronics. It is way more than that. Tinkering is a phenomenon sweeping classrooms globally and is seen as a serious yet playful endeavour – where students combine and experiment with materials, technologies and tools and in the process, innovate and invent just about anything, all while embracing a “can-do” ethos.

Students realising their own ideas and driving their own learning.

Tinkering interweaves and spans many disciplines and subject areas, promoting strong connections between art, science, and technology. Students explore questions that interest them, taking things apart and then building something new, in a process that involves planning, designing, creating and failing.





I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work.
- Thomas Edison

Through the process of exploration, testing their own theories and learning from failures, students become incredibly engaged, motivated and inspired to innovate. This process also opens up a wide range of possible answers rather than any “right” one, particularly for exploring STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) concepts.

What does tinkering look like in a school?

Hear from
Lexi Larcher,
teacher at
EtonHouse
International
School.

“Stepping into our Makerspace, you would observe students working joyfully and obsessively making things like colourful pencil cases, LED picture frames, squishy circuits or taking things apart like a scooter, disco light and an iPad.

Says Keoni, a Year 4 student, "In Art class, we are learning to express energy through art, so that is why we wanted to use various materials like wires, batteries, motors and recycled materials to make a moving car."

There is something satisfying and magical about the process of tinkering. Testing and retesting, questioning, experimenting and finally having the *Aha!* moment when they figure out how to properly form a closed circuit to make the motor whiz.”

A photograph of three young students in a classroom. Two girls in the foreground are looking at a computer screen, with one pointing at it. A boy in the background is also looking at the screen. The room has computer monitors and headphones on desks.

Blended Learning Communities

Blended learning combines online digital media with traditional classroom methods. But it's not merely adding computers in classrooms or uploading learning materials online.

In a blended learning environment, technology not only supplements learning, it also transforms the entire learning process. It's a fundamental change in the way teachers and students approach the learning experience.

Students as active pursuers of knowledge

Some learning involves teachers providing instruction in a physical classroom, and some involves students learning independently at computers or digital devices.

Students are no longer passive recipients of knowledge. They can choose how, where, when to learn, and at a pace they are most comfortable with. As they become active learners who have control over their learning, they come to recognise and appreciate that they are responsible for the decisions they make and the successes they achieve. This sense of empowerment makes them highly enthused.

Teachers as facilitators and motivators, rather than transmitters of knowledge

As students learn part of the content independently on digital devices, teachers no longer need to communicate a huge amount of information to a whole class. Instead, during class time, teachers can observe students more closely, work with small groups, and identify an individual's challenges and struggles. This allows teachers to provide timely guidance and personal coaching.

Rather than a taskmaster or disciplinary figure, a teacher becomes a facilitator and motivator. The enhanced and personal interaction between teachers and students builds a stronger rapport, making learning spontaneous and meaningful.

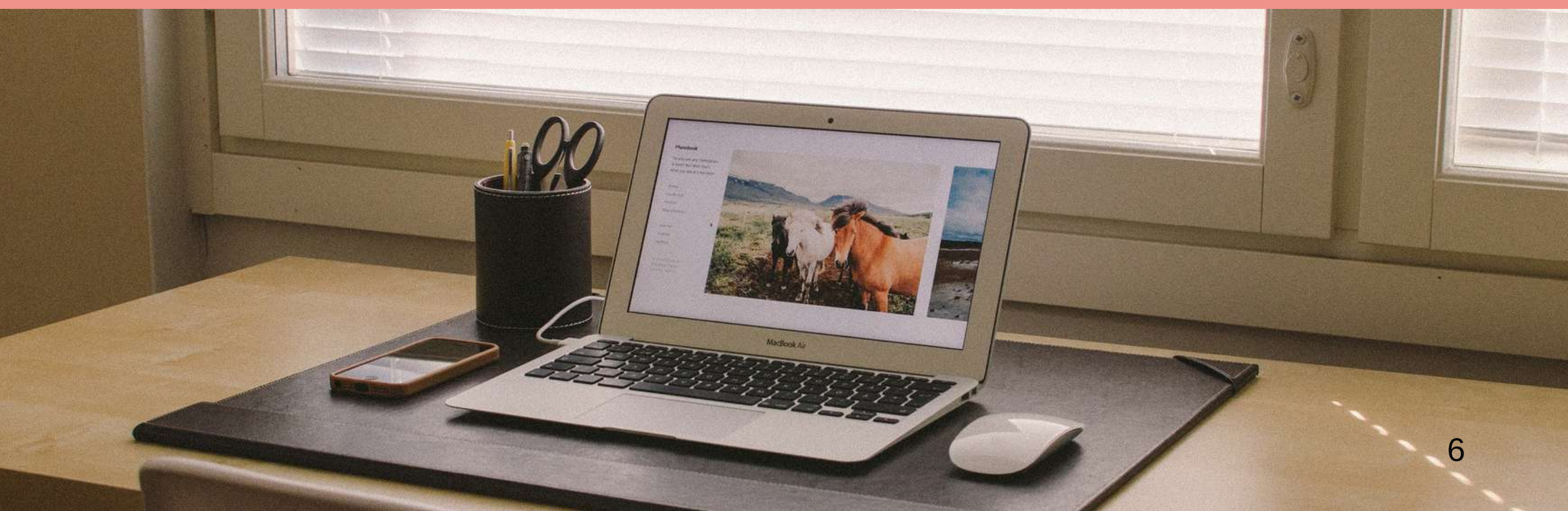
Professional development of teachers is also changing drastically and becoming available to all. Micro-credentialing and digital badging will help more teachers to upgrade and enhance their skills.

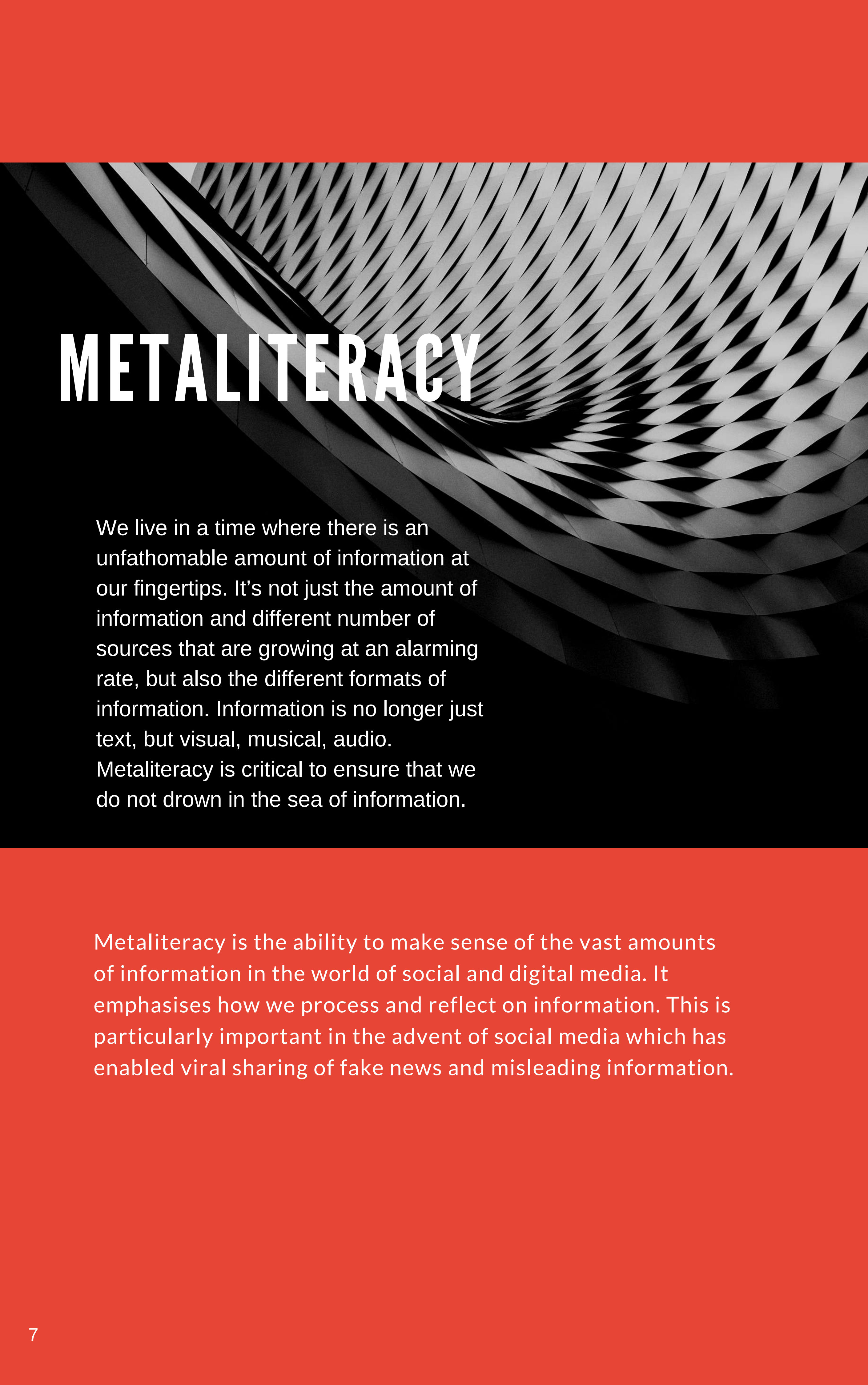
With technology integrated in almost all aspects of our lives, the concept of 'classroom' has shifted and learning communities are no longer confined to physical spaces. Interactions migrate to online discussion forums and interactive multimedia experiences, beyond school hours.

Learning happens anywhere, anytime.

In contrast to ad hoc sharing on social networks, online learning communities are deliberately set up with the purpose of achieving intended learning goals. There is a strong sense of community as members depend on one another's support and participation to achieve learning outcomes.

**ONLINE
LEARNING
COMMUNITIES**





METALITERACY

We live in a time where there is an unfathomable amount of information at our fingertips. It's not just the amount of information and different number of sources that are growing at an alarming rate, but also the different formats of information. Information is no longer just text, but visual, musical, audio. Metaliteracy is critical to ensure that we do not drown in the sea of information.

Metaliteracy is the ability to make sense of the vast amounts of information in the world of social and digital media. It emphasises how we process and reflect on information. This is particularly important in the advent of social media which has enabled viral sharing of fake news and misleading information.

CHALLENGING ASSUMPTIONS

Students must learn to question and understand all sources of information. They examine the validity of information from multiple sources without any prejudice on different sources, e.g. information from a formal TV news source may be just as inaccurate as someone's Facebook post. Students also learn to consider if packaging or professional design is used to disguise misinformation.

By reflecting on the way we think about a news story, we move beyond our emotions to challenge our preconceptions and actively seek additional information so as to fact-check and do a critical assessment.



Students must know how to contribute responsibly in digital and social spaces and recognise the ethical considerations and outcomes involved when sharing information and participating online. They need to understand that whether they are posting a tweet, blog, Facebook post or writing a response to others online, it is important to think carefully about what they are saying and to be fair and accurate.

Students also need to gain an understanding of personal privacy, and intellectual property issues in digital and social media.

EMBRACE THE NEW WORLD!

When we think of technology and the digital world, we often think of the potential negative effects on our children, and we try to protect our children against them.

Certainly, these fears are very real and as parents, we must be aware of these risks.

However, more importantly, to successfully guide and support our children through this new world, and to continue to connect with them, we must learn how to embrace the wonderful advantages of new technology.

As we move forward with modern advancements, let's not lose our focus on putting our children's interests at the heart of what we do!



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The Group runs several primary and secondary schools offering the International Baccalaureate PYP, MYP, DP and IGCSE programmes. The Group is deeply committed to research and professional development and excellence in educational practice. It has an in-house research and professional development centre that provides continuous training and pedagogical support to its teaching staff.

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