



Principal's Newsletter – 31st March 2010

Dear Parents,

The holiday seems a rather distant memory but I hope that you will enjoy the opportunity of a couple of days break over the Easter weekend. Certainly it has been a busy start to Term Two and this promises to be a newsletter full of information and celebration.

ACADEMIC MATTERS

You should, by now, have received an e-mail explaining the new parents' portal on the website through which you can gain access to the end-of-term reports for your children. I do hope that these reports will be positive ones but, of course, please do not hesitate to contact the relevant teacher or tutor should you have any concerns with which you feel you need assistance.

Examinations loom again and I would intimate a change to the published schedule: the written prelim. exam for Mandarin Chinese at IGCSE will take place on the **12th April at 9am and will last until 1pm.**

I am pleased to be able to report that because of the success of last year's Higher Education Fair we will be repeating the exercise in May with an even larger group of institutions attending. The details are noted below and I would encourage parents of students in Years 4, 5 & 6 to consider attending. All Year 4, 5 and 6 students will be attending.

When : Tuesday, May 4, 2010
Where: Main Hall
Time : 1.00 pm – 5.00 pm

Participating Institutions

National University of Singapore (NUS)	Representative: Study in Canada Information
Nanyang Technological University (NTU)	James Cook University (Singapore Campus)
Singapore Management University (SMU)	Curtin University (Singapore Campus)
Singapore Institute of Management (SIM)	DigiPen Singapore
Ngee Ann Polytechnic	Kaplan (Private College)
Nanyang Academic of Fine Arts	LaSalle College of the Arts
British Council (Study in the UK)	Menlo College - USA
USEIC (Study in the USA)	Saint Joseph University - USA
IDP (Study in Australia)	Broward Community College – USA
Representatives of University of Adelaide Australia	Testtakers – SAT preparation for USA universities

For more information, please email Ms Rita Kaur at rita.kaur@acsinternational.com.sg.

Obviously, we hope that all of our students will proceed to university at the right time but, inevitably, there will be occasions when this is not possible because of insufficient progress in a particular year. We have spent some time reviewing the arrangements for progression to the next year group and full details of these appear in a separate letter in the appendix to this newsletter. A further letter explaining how transcripts can be obtained from the school is also included for your information.

Enrichment continues to be an important part of the education and our Year 1 history trip provided much in this respect. The students participated in a hands-on workshop about life in Ancient Egypt (and the mummification process) before they visited the exhibition itself. The fact that they actually saw five real mummies was enough for some but many were fascinated by artifacts like the book of the dead and the mummified cat. They learnt about the key Egyptian gods and pharaohs and Egyptian superstitions. Many ancient Egyptians had shaved heads to keep head lice away and others were fascinated that if a cat was killed then the custom was that the person who killed the cat would be executed. Such was the Egyptian belief in god like cats!

The trip is highly recommended by the students. As Adithama Chiuman from 1W said ‘it was a tiring but exciting and thrilling afternoon’. Interested students are entitled to a discounted ticket if they present their ACS card.

Our ToK students had the opportunity to listen to an inspirational talk hosted by the Royal Geographical Society’s Explorer-in-Residence Mr Wade Davis who had been introduced earlier at the IB conference – to considerable acclaim – by one of our students Rupinder Singh Ahluwalia. He was assisted most ably by Nikita, Pham Hoang Lan, Subha Khullar and Serena Zhang Boya. It was marvellous to see our students distinguishing themselves in front of hundreds of School heads and other senior staff.

THE CO-CURRICULUM

Several of our students participated in the Model United Nations conference in St. Petersburg and, happily, both distinguished and enjoyed themselves. Being the only school from the south-east Asia region, it was encouraging to note that we had resolutions passed and that special mention was made of Mariska Dharmajaya's debate and resolution.

The School also took part in the national individual chess championships with one of our students – Amos Choo – gaining special mention as he finished in the top 30 out of 137 by gaining 20th place; Cai Di finished in 63rd place.

Another example of the more academic CCAs could be seen in the success of our junior debating team of Anand Mohan, Maxine Tan and Ashvin Niruttan who won the third round of the Secondary School's Championship: as a result they are now in the quarter-finals which will be held on the 9th April. In addition Maxine was awarded the title of best speaker in the most recent competition.

VACATION TRIPS

As you know the School was able to organize several trips over the holiday week and the reports below indicate the success and enjoyment that our students experienced. The music and art tour to Tokyo was an enriching one where our students were involved in art and music appreciation through workshops arranged at the Tokyo International School; there were also visits to a number of museums and participation in music workshops. In the other trip to Japan, Kyoto was the destination. Visits to ancient shrines, temples and castles were complemented by sights of geishas and ninja warriors. The group also enjoyed experiencing Japanese cuisine and visiting the Toyota factory and museum.

The Christian Fellowship enjoyed a few days of team-building in the Cameron Highlands of Malaysia. This year our goal is to raise and equip students to be leaders for Christ's ministry of love. We started off this process by having our first training at Cameron Highlands, Malaysia on 12-16 March 2010.

The training programme included team-building and leadership training through jungle hiking, games, theme talks and worship. Throughout the four days of training the students were constantly challenged to reflect upon the call of biblical figures such as Abraham and Nehemiah and to make a similar personal response to God calling them to lead the CF ministry. Indeed the grace of God prevailed at the last day of the camp. In unity, the boys responded positively as evidenced by their sharing and worship.

The training was not without time of recreation. The boys visited several exciting places: the largest flower in the world (Rafflesia), swam at the waterfall, Orang Asli village and experienced the blow-pipe shooting, Boh Tea plantation, and the butterfly farm where they personally came in contact with exotic insects and scorpions. Above all, there was the refreshing strawberries and strawberry ice-cream/shake at Raju's strawberry farm!

Last but by no means least, our geography students did some valuable fieldwork in the mangrove swamps and beaches of Malaysia.

The next major trip will be in June this year and is a return to Africa. 30 students will be traveling to Mosi-Oa-Tunya High School in Zimbabwe to build and equip a science lab for the future doctors, nurses and researchers of Zimbabwe's main tourist province. So far, the school doesn't have a single test tube yet they still manage to achieve an 88% pass rate at A-Level, thanks to the dedication of the (severely underpaid) teachers. If you would like to contribute to this cause, you can email paul.west@acsinternational.com.sg to arrange to make a donation, or come and make a purchase of Zimbabwean hand-made gifts on International Day on 30th April.

Every cent you donate will be used to purchase lab equipment, chemicals and hardware in order to improve the learning environment for science at Mosi-Oa-Tunya. I would also remind parents that there will be an important meeting about the trip at School at 6 pm on Wednesday 14th of April.

SPORT

There have been a number of sporting successes over the last few weeks with badminton demonstrating particular progress. In the international schools' individual competition all of our students were placed, with doubles pairing of Alban Leong and Jacky Wang achieving second place. Not surprisingly, a number of team victories have followed: the boys under-sixteen side beat Tanglin Trust 5-0, the girls also achieving victory 4-1; against the Canadians the under-nineteen boys won 5-0; OFS succumbed to our under-sixteen boys' side 5-0; and the under-nineteen boys beat Emaar 4-1.

In golf Nicholas Gan participated in the National Junior Tournament and achieved fourth place; six of our students will be playing in the International Schools' Competition in early April.

Rugby has had further success with our girls' touch side winning their pool in the under-eighteen competition by beating Republic Poly 3-1 and Crescent Girls 7-0. Unfortunately the boys' B Division side went down in a narrow 8-10 defeat against Jurong despite fiercely competitive play and several frustrating missed opportunities to clinch victory. Later in April some 40 players will travel to K. L. for friendly matches in both touch and rugby: all consent forms and deposits are due now and should be lodged with Mr. Smith.

Netball is developing well and our under-seventeen girls took part in a recent competition against much older opposition: they were able to win two of their matches and gained much experience thereby.

CHARITIES

I am not sure whether the Spring Dance might be regarded as a charitable event but it went off in fine fashion bearing rich testimony to the efforts of this year's Student Council. Elections for the new council are now imminent and we have enjoyed the

hustings at morning assemblies; I look forward to the work of the new council and hope that it will build on the success of the fifth one.

The School participated in Earth Hour organized by the WWF, albeit a day early: we switched off our air conditioning and sweated gently as the morning heat built up on the Friday before.

I am pleased that our links with the Methodist church continue to be positive ones. We have enjoyed some excellent and thought-provoking contributions from Youth for Christ as part of our religious emphasis week which coincides with holy week. Our Collection for the Methodist Welfare Services produced the remarkable sum of S\$5041.05 out of a total raised in Singapore of S\$72,000: my thanks are due to all who contributed.

It would also be appropriate of me to remind you of the parents' prayer group which meets on the **first Tuesday of the month**; a father's prayer group has also been formed which meets on **the second Saturday of the month at 7.30am**.

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

The issue of fees is never a particularly savoury one but given that this is the School's only source of income, it is important for them to be paid on time. Unfortunately, the fees for many of our students have not yet been paid: any student whose fees remain unpaid by the **15th April** will be suspended from the School until the debt has been cleared. Please make contact with Mrs. Ivy Teo without delay to ensure that I do not have to follow such a path.

I would also ask for your assistance in ensuring that your sons and daughters attend school on a daily basis and do so punctually: this is important to avoid any form of disruption to their education. So, too, is adherence to the term dates which are published well in advance and provide ample opportunity for rest and recuperation: it would be much appreciated if parents could avoid taking their children away from School outside the published holiday periods. Of course there will be occasions when it is impossible to avoid such a clash and, with the appropriate notice and explanation, you will not find me unsympathetic.

In many ways, I am pleased that this has been a long newsletter because it indicates the vigour, vitality and variety of life at ACS (International) which I continue to enjoy to the full.

With every good wish
Yours sincerely
P. Kerr Fulton-Peebles
Principal

Appendix for Criteria for Student Progression and Application for Student's Transcript/Testimonial are attached together in this newsletter as separate documents.