



Principal's Newsletter – 2nd June 2010

Dear Parents,

I can hardly believe that we have now reached the end of the first semester. Typically it has been a busy few weeks with so much to commend and celebrate. Indeed I am touched that to recognize that, almost imperceptibly, my family and I have begun to become part of this very special community: a fact which simply underscores its great strength.

THE CO-CURRICULUM

This special dynamic could not have been better illustrated than in the production of *Twelfth Night*, which saw a cast and crew of over 50 involved for weeks in preparation of a production which certainly bore rich testimony to the considerable efforts of all involved. As I commented in assembly, I have seen many such School productions and this must rank among the best, with the cast able to interpret the complex language of Shakespeare as he intended, and to act the words with meaning and impact. It is always invidious to single out individual people in an activity which epitomizes what teamwork is all about, but I must pay tribute to the director Mr. Daniel Toyne who did so much to inspire his team of staff and students. There is no question in my mind that the play really showed how our students epitomized the Christian philosophy of the School in looking not only to their own interests but to the interests of others without selfish ambition or vain conceit.

Yet it was not just *Twelfth Night* that illustrated this to good effect: our Languages Festival, which celebrated the diversity of the languages studied in this school, saw many of our students involved in a variety of sketches and productions which again demonstrated their ability to work together. The week culminated in the Chinese singing competition in which nine finalists sang their hearts out with real feeling and linguistic skill. Brenda Wong and Liang Minghao compered the evening with considerable skill and aplomb leaving the audience with the feeling that they had experienced something very special.

I was also pleased to be able to recognize the winners of the intra-school chess competition: Amos Choo Zhong Sheng (Gold), Cai Di (Silver) and Vu Ngoc Hoang (Bronze) richly deserved the applause they received when they collected their medals.

Medals of a different sort will be awarded in July to students who have participated with success in the NYAA Scheme: 32 students will receive bronze awards, and six will receive awards at the silver level. The NYAA Scheme is an excellent one which teaches our youngsters much about themselves and I hope to provide even more opportunities in this regard next year if the plans I have in mind for adventurous activities come to fruition; I will be having further discussions with the relevant people about this during the coming months.

The richness of what we provide in the co-curriculum will be reinforced this summer vacation as many of our students participate in overseas trips. Our historians face a gruelling schedule as they traverse the sites of interest in countries such as Germany, Belgium and France; no less gruelling will be the African trip which will also provide a rich opportunities for service to others; so too our service trips to Cambodia and Indonesia (although regrettably the trip to Thailand had to be cancelled). It is pleasing to note at this point that the Vietnamese booth on International Day was able to provide over S\$150 for the Indonesian trip. New York will also welcome our students who will learn not just about the sights of the city but something too about education in universities in the U.S.A.

SPORTS

Not to be outdone our sportsmen and women have again excelled in particular arenas, not least that provided by Clementi Stadium on Sports Day: a most enjoyable and successful afternoon of spirited competition on the track. A great pity then, that so many deliberately avoided turning up to support their peers: a much less positive feature.

It really was a joy to present medals to the badminton men's teams for their success in the International Schools' League. The under-nineteen team members achieved bronze medals, and the under-sixteen boys lifted the gold awards and trophy; the girls' under-sixteen team narrowly missed the medals finishing in fourth place. In the under-fourteen boys' competition the team lost narrowly to the Overseas Family School but then went on to beat the Canadian International School 5-0, before trouncing the Singapore American School (the strongest in the competition and unbeaten until they met ACS International) 5-0. As a consequence of winning five out of our seven games the team has been confirmed as silver medallists in the league, three points behind UWC.

Our netball team at under-nineteen level have been playing with quiet and unassuming commitment. That they have been doing so very effectively was confirmed when they achieved the first-runner-up position behind ACS Independent.

The skill of the girls in linking and passing was also seen in the Singapore All Schools Touch-Rugby Competition: they went through the whole tournament without conceding a single try and, after dispatching ACS independent 1-0 in the semifinals, they then went on to beat Temasek Poly 2-0 to be crowned champions.

ACADEMIC MATTERS

Champions of a different sort were recognized in the effort and achievement grades for May: a quite-remarkable 162 students received the accolade of *Very Highly Commended*, a further 61 being highly commended. I do not believe that we are making it particularly easy to obtain such awards so these students clearly deserve particular praise for their application and achievement. That so many of these were involved in the various activities which have just drawn much praise is a tribute to the value of the School's philosophy in educating the whole person; it also confirms that academic achievement can co-exist happily alongside a rich and varied life. Indeed universities and employers are increasingly impressed by such a variety and the higher education fair certainly revealed the opportunities available in this regard.

Following the encouraging level of interest shown in the Morrisby Profile at the recent HE Fair, it is intended to invite Mr. Chris Marley to run a Profiling session in late August.

The Morrisby 'test' will provide a valuable addition to the careers programme at ACS (International): it is a process designed to highlight the student's strengths and support the coming academic and vocational decisions.

A reminder of the Profile's features is provided below:

- A full Morrisby psychometric profile administered in school – this will take place in **August**
- A comprehensive 21-page report including career suggestions
- A 40-minute group feedback session – which parents are welcome to attend
- Individual interviews or small group seminars with a careers adviser during which the student can discuss his/her report and impending career/academic decisions – this will take place in **October**
- Dedicated E-mail support for students and parents until the student leaves school
- The service is provided by an experienced occupational psychologist who is also a careers adviser and who worked in independent schools for 15 years
- Each student's profile is compared with the profiles of individuals who have been successful in over 500 careers. 12 careers are then selected for each student as being good matches with their profile. These '**Suggested Careers**' are put forward as options the student may wish to research further.

Please inform Ms Rita – rita.kaur@acsinternational.com.sg as soon as possible if you wish your son or daughter to be included.

Details on payment: \$230 (please check with Ms Rita on the mode of payment)

Of course examinations still must figure large in the life of the School and I hope that the following information on the O-level Chinese oral examinations will be helpful to those involved.

Exam: O-Level Oral Examination (for year 4 Express Chinese students)

Date: 1st and 2nd July 2010

Time: 1400 to 1700

Venue: School Library

Things to bring: Student pass, passport or IC and entry proof

Exam: O-level Oral Examination (for year 3 Higher Chinese students)

Date: 6th and 7th July 2010

Time: 1400 to 1700

Venue: School Library

Things to bring: Student pass, passport or IC and entry proof

STAFF NEWS

We bade farewell to several members of staff at the end of the term. Ms. Chong Lee Lan left us after nobly stepping in to the breach for one term in the chemistry department; Ms. Hilda Toh left on a one-term leave-of-absence to accompany her husband to Japan; and Ms. Michelle Liew Li-Lyn is expecting a baby a very soon indeed. We are also sorry that Mrs. Evelyn Teoh from our Chaplaincy Team has been called back to Barker Road Methodist Church. She contributed much to our chapel services, was instrumental in setting up the Christian Fellowship and of course also played a pivotal part in the preaching point. We are not yet clear as to who her replacement will be but we look forward to welcoming them in due course.

We will also welcome in July two new members of staff to the science department: Ms. Komathy Kuppusamy and Ms. Lim Pai Lin Grace. I am also delighted that Mrs. Shiva Sharma will be staying-on on a permanent basis, also in the science faculty.

PRIMARILY FOR PARENTS

I did value the opportunity of meeting and speaking with so many of you at the recent parents and teachers meeting; I viewed the proceedings with interest and was encouraged by the many positive comments which I received. I hope too that you felt the occasion to be a useful exercise in informing you of the progress being made by your children and allowing you to build up a positive relationship with their teachers.

This was the first occasion on which the new sports hall was used and we have certainly learned much about the logistics of doing so. We certainly intend to make some changes to the arrangements within the hall for the next such occasion; your comments which I and my colleagues received in this regard were very much appreciated.

I would also appreciate your assistance in emphasizing to your sons and daughters the importance of responsible use of mobile telephones, particularly i-phones, during school hours. Although these 'phones are incredibly useful, their usage during lessons and activities is disruptive and cannot be accepted. None of my colleagues wish to be put in the position of having to confiscate such items for misuse, so your help would be very much appreciated.

The Bursar, Mrs. Ivy Teo, would also appreciate if fees for the next semester could be paid by the end of this month on June 30th; thank you.

As I have commented, it has been a busy semester and I think we all viewed the holidays with a sense of relief and anticipation. Although there will be work to be done by year four and year six students I hope that everybody will have the chance for some genuine rest and recuperation before a safe return in July. As I said to the school in the final assembly (in quoting from a hymn) 'God be with you 'til we meet again.'

With all good wishes

Yours sincerely,

P Kerr Fulton-Peebles
Principal