

ACS (International)

SUMMARY REPORT November 2011

INTRODUCTION

ACS (International) is now in its seventh year of operation, a year which has seen it continue to grow from its original complement of students numbering some 150, to its current roll of over 840. It is viable commercially and is surprisingly well-established educationally for such a young school: this was vindicated in its accreditation earlier in the year by the Council of International Schools (CIS), the only school in Singapore to be recognized in this way. Their report was very complimentary whilst identifying areas for further development in-line with the School's own strategic plan. CIS were struck forcibly by our clear and unequivocal mission of *Nurturing Future Leaders and Global Citizens in a Christian Community*, and the goals and targets set to support this. We therefore believe that we are providing an education of genuine breadth which prepares our young people for the world they will live and work within, by providing them with the qualifications, skills, interests and attributes needed in the 21st Century. We believe that this also matches Singapore's aspiration to develop as an educational hub in the wider region.

FINANCIAL SITUATION

The School is financially secure. Of course we have to rely entirely on our own resources in meeting the costs of our lease, initial start-up costs and new developments: we have no foundation to support us. Healthy student numbers to provide the fee income necessary for all of this is therefore an absolute priority; the steady growth in student numbers has been heartening although we are now close to the limit of around 950 imposed by our facilities and space.

In the 23rd June 2011 Valuation report, Premas Valuers and Property Consultants Pte Ltd valued the Open Market Value of the School at S\$40 million. It was based on a total gross floor area of 16,438 sq m.

Re-financing of our loans with EDB and SLA will allow us to reduce our interest payments and help to reduce our costs in the future.

A recent audit of our financial and administrative procedures under the auspices of MoE was a valuable process and will allow us to develop a clear set of policies and procedures to match the best of current practice elsewhere. This is entirely consistent with an organization growing and developing systems to cope with the needs caused by such growth.

CAPITAL WORKS

The School continues to invest in facilities to ensure that these support the education offered. A refurbished music and drama area now provides two specialist music studios/classrooms, a dance & drama studio, individual practice rooms and a music-technology room. The canteen has also had an upgrade. Construction on the new library and classroom block has begun with the S\$5 million development due for completion in July 2012. We are currently investigating the feasibility of constructing a 300-bed boarding house to provide proper residential facilities and pastoral care for our many students from overseas.

STUDENTS

Numbers have risen this year by some 8% with recruitment from a wider range of countries as part of a deliberate policy of widening our recruitment within the region.

China	17.6%	HK	0.6%	Japan	0.8%
S.Korea	1.7%	Taiwan	2%		
Malaysia	4.9%	Ind'esia	7.8%	Laos	0.5%
Burma	0.2%	Nepal	0.1%	Ph'pines	0.4%
Thailand	2.4%	Vietnam	6.7%	Cam'dia	0.1%
B,desh	0.6%	India	2.3%	Sri Lanka	0.1%
Hungary	0.1%	Germany	0.2%	Italy	0.1%
UK	1.1%	USA	0.7%	Nigeria	0.2%
Australia	0.7%				
Singapore	49%				

ACADEMIC MATTERS

We continue to open our doors to a wide range of ability with our entrance requirements set at 200 as a minimum PSLE score (Express) and 20 for O-level. We are pleased with the standards achieved by our students in IGCSE and IB examinations but we believe that we can raise standards further through the development of innovations in teaching and learning. These developments will be aided by a number of initiatives:

- The appointment of a co-ordinator for continuing professional development
- An integrated programme of CPD to support innovations in teaching and learning
- Plans in place for 20% of teaching staff to study for a diploma in teaching and learning offered by the University of Cambridge International Examinations Board
- Improvements in the provision of ICT facilities and software; the appointment of a Head of ICT, and a working group on developing the use of ICT in teaching and learning has begun to reap rewards
- A new library will provide a full range of resources including digital media and will be led by a new Teacher Librarian building on similar successful initiatives in Australian schools

Exam	Grades %	2007	2008	2009	2010
IGCSE	A* to C	92	92	94	95
	A* and A	58	47	57	57
IB Dip	Pass	91 (A level)	96	97	97
	Average	n/a	30	33	34

	40 plus	n/a	10	13	14

We are also very fortunate to have a dedicated full-time university and careers adviser who has an intimate and first-hand knowledge of the university systems in the countries to which our students go to further their studies after school: Singapore, Australia, Canada, the UK, and the USA. Courses in business/economics, engineering, law and medicine have proved to be popular this year. We were also delighted to have our first student accepted by the University of Cambridge to read land economy; our inaugural programme to assist students who are likely to be eligible for entry to Oxbridge and Ivy League universities should see more such successes in the future. Lower down the school, at IGCSE level, two of our students were awarded Top of the World in their November 2010 IGCSE examinations. Thanapol Jiratanakij topped the world in two subjects, Additional Mathematics and Elementary Mathematics and Ho Ren Chun topped the world in first Language English. This builds on the previous year's success when Joshua Griffiths topped the world in IGCSE Geography.

PASTORAL CARE

As a Methodist Institution we set considerable store in the nurture and support we provide for our students. This year has seen the successful introduction of a fully integrated and comprehensive House system. Each student is assigned to one of eight co-educational and all-year-group houses which is led by a Housemaster or Housemistress, and a team of Tutors. Students register in their Houses, have daily devotions, meet with their Tutors in small year-group sets and participate in a full range of co-curricular competitions (e.g. sport, music, drama, charity projects). Students play a pivotal role in the running of the Houses through a variety of leadership roles. A dedicated team of curriculum co-ordinators ensures that each year group's academic progress is monitored and supported. In a school which has grown rapidly the House system will allow a greater sense of family and will, undoubtedly, lead to improved pastoral care and academic progress as the system becomes fully embedded; the results of initial surveys of staff and students have been very positive.

The School has also developed a comprehensive programme of leadership training for staff and students which supports our Christian ethos and our vision. Many staff are now qualified to run these programmes and over a two-year period all students will have received such training appropriate to their age.

THE CO-CURRICULUM

CCAs are a vital part of the education we provide and all students are expected to take part in activities which provide the balance assumed by the IB programme: creativity, active pursuits and service provide this.

Of particular note over the past year has been the dramatic increase in the involvement of our students in service programmes here in Singapore and overseas. Our students work in the local community through partnerships with the Holland Village Preaching Point - they help with the Sunday School, teach English and run games for the local children; they also pay home visits to less-fortunate families and work in homes for the elderly. Overseas trips have seen schools in Thailand, Cambodia, Malaysia, Indonesia and Zimbabwe benefit from help with construction projects, teaching and the provision of clothing and other materials for learning.

The international dimension is fostered by our regular (and successful) involvement in the Model United Nations, international conferences on leadership and development issues, and overseas cultural trips to countries as diverse as the UK, the USA, India, Japan and Korea.

Our PSHE programme helps students to learn about and develop important social skills and traits of character. We have also organised, linking with our parents' group, a variety of speakers on issues as varied as sleep, positive thinking and well-being, which helps to support our ethos.

As well as the leadership programmes referred to earlier we have also developed a progressive and integrated outward-bound programme for Years 1, 2, 3 and 5. There is nothing quite like learning about yourself when pushed beyond the normal comfort zone. The NYAA also complements this programme very neatly, integrating with it in certain aspects.

It takes time to build up sporting traditions and success but we are pleased with the level of involvement in local competitions as well as those organised by international schools. Teams in badminton, basketball, football, girls' touch rugby and netball have all achieved good results.

The performing arts is also strong with student-produced plays, musicals and interdisciplinary performance all figuring strongly. Our first-ever performance in the SYF showed how well this aspect has developed, a bronze medal emphasising this.

STAFFING

Providing an education of genuine breadth with an international dimension requires committed staff with a wealth of varied experience. We are fortunate to have a good mix of local and expat. staff each providing opportunities for the other to develop the strengths inherent in their indigenous systems of education. Roughly 54% of the teaching staff are Singaporeans with the balance coming from a variety of countries, notably the UK, USA, New Zealand and India.

SUMMARY

The School is in good heart. It has developed strongly from its initial foundations some seven years ago, and has exceeded initial expectations in many respects not least in the growth of student numbers, the development of facilities and its financial strength. It is a testament to the vision, faith and commitment of the pioneers who established it.

P.Kerr Fulton-Peebles
Principal
November 2011