

# Christmas Newsletter

December 2019



# ICHK

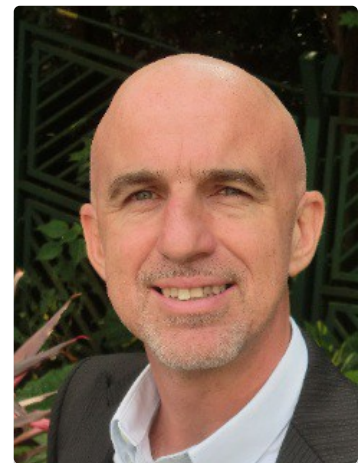
KINDERGARTEN  
PRIMARY AND  
SECONDARY

## Head of School Message

Our previous Winter newsletters have tended to be retrospectives, looking back at - and celebrating - some of the activities in which students have been involved over the past term.

This one is a little different.

It, too, casts an appreciative backward glance at the last several months, but, in announcing a major new initiative at the school, it also looks to the future. And, with this supplementary focus, I am finding it hard to know where to begin ...



You will be familiar by now with Guy Claxton's notion of school as an 'epistemic apprenticeship' - an apprenticeship in ways of knowing, being, learning, and thinking - and our resolution, if we are to fulfill ICHK's mission, that we should offer our students an apprenticeship equal to the challenges set by life in the twenty first century.

In setting the scene for our work on providing such an apprenticeship, there are many things that I want to say ... and I want to say them all *first*. Which, on reflection, is not just hard, it's impossible.

So, I will kick off with some bullet points and then expand below, in the hope that the full story will emerge and make sense to you in the very urgent way that it makes sense to us.

- The pace of social and cultural change is accelerating at an ever advancing rate. We really have no inkling of what 2030 will bring, let alone 2040 or 2050. Our children will become and grow as adults during this period.
- From an article by Lazlo Bock, SVP of People Operations for Google, on the five top attributes that the tech giant looks for when hiring, in order of priority:
  - Ability to learn;
  - Leadership;

- Humility;
  - Ownership;
  - Expertise.
- Mainstream secondary education is very clearly and obviously not fit for purpose: the idea that passing a dozen exams - which are mainly a test of memory recall and almost exclusively limited to skills that can be captured on paper - no longer convinces. These dozen exams are able to tell us, at most, a very narrow tale about ability to learn. And they tell us nothing at all about leadership, humility, ownership and expertise.
  - The leaders of pretty much all secondary schools claim they run institutions that “innovate”, that foster “whole child development”, promote “soft skills” and encourage a “growth mindset”. For the most part, when you ask them how, they cannot tell you. For the most part, when you visit, they feel exactly like schools did ten, fifteen, twenty, fifty years ago.
  - In 2019, humankind is no closer to answering the really big “existential” questions - what is the good life, what does it mean to be fulfilled, why are we here? - than was Aristotle 2,300 years ago, Confucius two hundred years before that, or Buddha a few hundred years earlier still. And when they tried, they all suggested different things.
  - While we are technically and scientifically smarter - and infinitely more powerful - than 50, 100, 1,000 years ago, we are no wiser. And, due to that technical and scientific potency, the mistakes and misjudgments we make now have vastly more significant consequences for our planet and for our species - and every other species, except perhaps bacteria and cockroaches - than they previously did. We are finding this to our cost right now, in every way imaginable.

All of which, taken together, is to say: *secondary education has a duty to change*. The students it graduates to university and the world of work must be differently and more comprehensively equipped. The lessons *in living* they have learned as apprentices in learning need to stick with them at university and beyond. Perspicacity, social purpose, sustainability, the courage to be, and strong ethical coordinates must be foremost among these lessons. It’s a challenging and demanding mandate for schools.

ICHK welcomes it.

And our solution, which has been at least five years in the making, has taken form in an epistemic apprenticeship - an apprenticeship in ways of living, thinking, learning, and being - leading to an ICHK Mastery Transcript.

We are delighted to bring you the elements of how such a transcript, awarded as a supplement and addition to the IB Diploma, can and will be earned at the school in this newsletter.

Taken together, the IB Diploma plus a Mastery Transcript will provide an overall impression of a graduating student that will be richer, deeper, and, in every instance, truly unique.

## The ICHK Mastery Transcript

We are very pleased to unveil plans for a new curriculum strand which will be launched at ICHK next year.

From August we will be offering senior students the opportunity to attain the ICHK Mastery Transcript, developed and structured to meet the provisions of the [Mastery Transcript Consortium](#).

The Mastery Transcript, offered as an additional qualification to the IB Diploma, features no grades, is not standardised, and yet can be processed by the best university admissions officers within two

minutes.

The aim is to value and recognise graduating students for all their attributes, capabilities, passions, achievements, and interests, not just for their academic abilities.

Backed by the Mastery Transcript Consortium, it brings together like minded schools and universities from around the world in seeking a meaningful alternative to standardised testing.

We will be one of a growing number of schools globally which are gearing up to offer this qualification, and, to our knowledge, the first school in Hong Kong.

The experience of readying ourselves has been rewarding and stimulating in its own right, as we have participated in a conversation and process guided by the MTC, which has gradually picked up speed and momentum.

Twelve months ago, the MTC was predicting a time horizon of ten years for the first Mastery candidates to graduate school. This year, they are predicting that Mastery graduates will enter university in 2022. In line with this expectation, our own intention is that all our current Year 9 students will have the opportunity to attain a Mastery Transcript alongside their diploma by the time they leave us in 2023.

We hope, too, that sufficiently interested and self-motivated students currently in Year 10, 11 and perhaps even 12, will be able to take advantage of the opportunities we are crafting, in order to pull together a Transcript on an accelerated timetable. Whether that is feasible remains to be seen, and really will be a test of personal appetite and stamina for individual students.

The genesis of this qualification marks a significant point in the development of ICHK, as we openly and honestly search for better ways to help young people learn and attain their ambitions and aspirations.

It is the culmination of an approach that we have been developing and refining for a number of years, through our innovations to timetable, curriculum and pedagogy. These include Free Learning, Human Technologies, Deep Learning and outdoor learning, all of which serve to offer our students more choice, more flexibility, different work practices and more opportunities to develop skills and attributes which are not addressed by examinations.

The journey towards Mastery will begin in Years 10 and 11, when students will be offered opportunities to become a 'journeyman', through engagement with projects, activities, internships, and other learning experiences.

Successful completion will result in credits, which will be mapped across three domains: Ideas, Actions and People. All of these are encompassed within a Values framework.

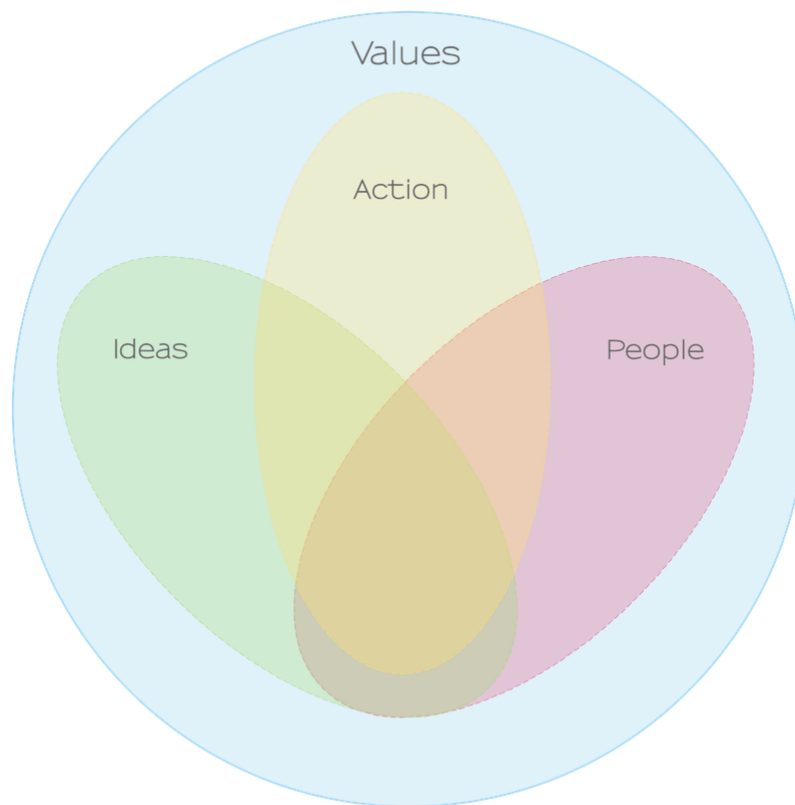
Credit-worthy engagements could include leadership activities, work experience, project management, teamwork initiatives, public speaking, class work, service to others, and other examples of learning which demonstrate the skills and attributes needed to lead a successful life. Students will be invited to use Enrichment and Flow sessions to advance their participation and to identify and hone the qualities they seek to develop.

In Years 12 and 13, students will build on this work to the point where they become Masters and credits can be awarded for substantial, self-directed, verifiable achievements. A combination of credits from one or more of the domains will qualify students for the award. The mix they achieve will be a unique and individual to them - and will be a reflection of the person they are becoming; and of the efforts and energy that go into that project of growth and consolidation.



By the summer of 2023, we plan that committed Year 13 students will be leaving school with an ICHK Mastery Transcript, tailored to their own needs and interests, in addition to the IB Diploma.

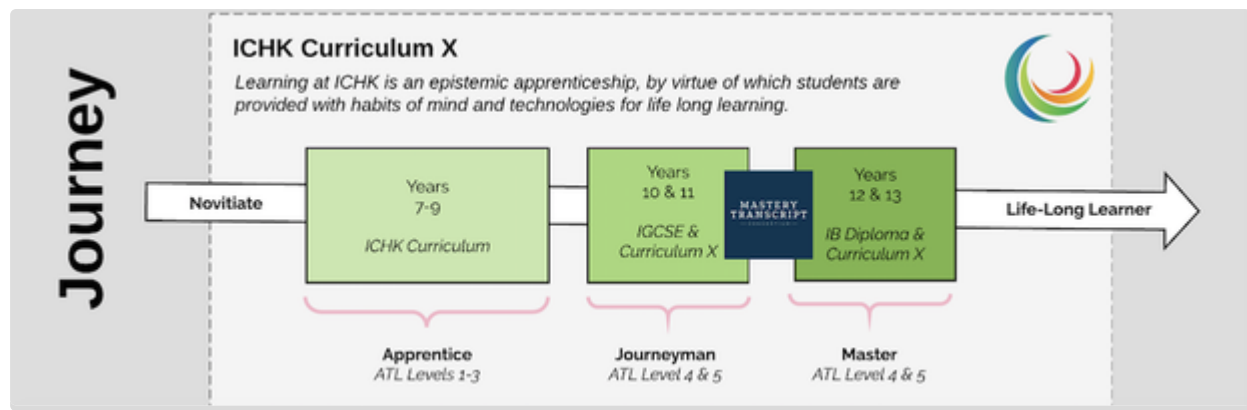
Our longer term hope is that the efforts of a growing number of schools, of which we are proud to be one, will come to promote a wider view of learning. It will be a view that helps bring about a world where the complexity of human potential is genuinely valued and nurtured in the teenage years, and where young people graduate to university or to useful employment having been fully known and recognised by the schools in which they study.



## Credits

Values	Ideas	Action	People
<i>Spelling out and taking responsibility for the decisions which inform ideas, action and relations with other people in line with personal conscience.</i>	Building an argument Research Scientific Method Essay Writing Semiotics Number Sense ...	Project Management Advocacy Service Public Speaking Entrepreneurship Leadership ...	Reciprocity Kindness Sympathy Acceptance Openness Teamwork ...

*Successful completion of projects, certificates, experiences, simulations and other learning experiences result in the issuing of credits, which are drawn from a range of sources. These credits map across the three domains, enveloped by considerations of virtue and ethics. A Mastery Transcript is issued on the strength and breadth of the credits earned, a sample of which are shown above.*



## Deep Learning

Deep Learning enters its third year, and has become firmly established as a pillar of innovation at school.

This term we have extended the number of Deep Learning units and increased the time from four to six days. Students have been engaged in an incredible range of new and creative study units, led by our passionate and dedicated teachers.

The programme has been shared with educators from across Asia at major conferences, and it continues to gain interest from around the world.

New learning opportunities have been added this term, including 'The Guilin Adventure'. This experience has been developed by our newly formed team of Experiential Educators and it has been a great opportunity to build upon the outdoor learning experiences which already form a vital part of life at ICHK.

The 'History of Hong Kong' unit asked students to think critically about significant events within the arc of Big History for making their own film. We were fortunate to work with Hong Kong Polo Development in creating the first ever school polo trip in Hong Kong. 'Sport-E' introduced students to the joys of fishing and snowboarding. 'Moon and Stars' provided a wonderful opportunity for students to learn more about the sky at night with an overnight star gazing camp amongst a range of related experiences from building their own telescope to observing the sun through the solar tower at Ma Wan.

After introducing our Deep Learning Scholarships last year, this term we awarded 10 scholarships to students so that they could pursue their passions. We are proud to support our students' interests and improve the opportunities available to all students at our school.





An amazing CAS+Week was completed, with students enjoying a huge range of diverse experiences and challenges. Students stepped out of the classroom, pushed outside of their comfort zones, and experienced real personal growth as a result.

Our specially designed programme gave them opportunities to show initiative, demonstrate perseverance and develop skills such as collaboration, problem solving and decision-making.

Whether it was camping, taking part in outdoor activities, tackling work experience, travelling overseas, or attempting glass blowing or film making for the first time, every experience offered opportunities for growth, that will be carried with our students into the future.



## English

This term we welcomed Mr Barnes as a full time member of the English department. He has embraced the values of ICHK with great enthusiasm and offers the students a dynamic and exciting approach to the study of English. In the new year, we will also welcome Ms Loges back after her maternity leave.

Clinics have been a strong addition, and thus far, our students have been treated to useful and focused sessions, aimed at improving their accuracy in grammar and, for the Year 11s, their technical skills and approach to the Language IGCSE. There are some interesting offerings in the new year, including 'reading out loud' and sessions aimed at the exam cohort to enhance their performance in the literature papers.

This term has seen the introduction of the new IB Language A: language and literature course. Our Year 12s have been delving into a variety of non-fiction and fiction texts, approaching them through the various lenses of concepts, global issues and contexts of production and reception. They have been working hard in all areas of the discipline, including analytical responses, presentations and reflective work for their portfolios.

This year's creative writing focus for the Hong Kong Young Writers Award is 'Future Adventures of the Greater Bay Area'. This task has asked students to consider a range of exciting possibilities open to them in their area of China. Students have submitted work in the poetry and story categories. The judging will take place in the early spring: watch this space!

## Maths

Much of what we describe as understanding or skill in mathematics is the ability to recognize patterns and that's what mathematicians are good at. To that end, the Maths department has developed a theme for each of the groups in Years 7 to 9 to support students' understanding of mathematical concepts. They are as follows:

**Visualisation:** The Mathematics department believes in 'Seeing as Understanding': the goal of Year 7 is to demystify the behaviour of numbers by visualisation.

**Communication:** The Mathematics department empowers our students to answer the 'Why?': the goal of Year 8 is to build upon the students foundational skills and work with them on methods of communication.

**Relationships:** The Mathematics department builds relationships that allow students to make sense of the world: the goal of Year 9 is to explore the relationships that exist within Mathematics, as well as those that connect to other learning areas.

The three themes: Visualisation, Communication and Relationships (VCR) form the basis of our work and they are the human technologies that we will use to enhance the learning experience for all students.

In Year 7, students are learning to express 'mathematics' as a picture. These pictures will include their thoughts, methods, processes and their mistakes. These pictures allow them to make connections between the concrete and the abstract and allow them to start to appreciate the elegance of Mathematics.

In Year 8, we are concentrating on the ability to explain how a method, process or operation applies is usually more challenging than finding the final answer. Our students' curiosity will be cultivated as they learn to ask questions, discuss their process and reasoning and discover the various ways a problem could be approached. This will, in turn develop their skills of critical thinking and reasoning.

And in Year 9, students are focused on making these relationships between areas of knowledge explicit, using visualisation and communication skills developed throughout Years 7 and 8. They will make connections and express them as models, statements or rules that they can apply and transfer to unfamiliar situations.

The foundational work will equip students with the skills needed in IGCSE and IBDP.

In Year 12, students are enjoying the two new mathematics subjects - Mathematics: analysis and approaches (MAA) and Mathematics: applications and interpretation (MAI). Both SL and HL MAA classes were combined up until CAS+ Week to see each other as 'learning resources'. Joined by Mr. Morgan, students also looked at some specific theory of knowledge questions related to mathematics to develop a curiosity and enjoyment of mathematics. One of the all time favourites is "Is zero the same as nothing?"





## Humanities and Big History

It has been a solid start to the year from all our classes and we have been very pleased with how students have hit the ground running in their IGCSE and IB classes.

There has been great work developed under the guidance of Martin Clark and Alex Hall, aided by our new teacher Simon Tasker and Sammi Chan who is expertly teaching the year 12 Psychology students.

Students in years 7 to 9 have progressed well in the new Big History and Humanities courses. In years 7 and 8 we have incorporated the best of the Big History course to make it much more of an ICHK course. The focus in year 7 has been on four big areas starting with 'Cosmos' and ending with 'Civilizations' and this has helped students to not only see the big picture but also realise the connections between different subject areas.

Year 8 focuses on more on specific elements of Humanities, the development of subject specific skills, but with the same overarching approach and connection to other subject areas as in year 7.

Thanks go to Sean McDermott who started with us this year, and Doug Kidd for the great efforts they have made with both year groups and the students have certainly appreciated the range of experiences that they have had. Simon Tasker has helped the students produce some great work in year 9 as they have tackled weighty subjects, both conceptually and emotionally, from the 20th century.

We look forward to a great new year as our courses develop, the students grow and we can look to develop ever more meaningful learning experiences for the students.





## Languages

It has been another very successful term for the Languages Department, filled with engaging activities and achievements.

We celebrated success at the prestigious HKIEACA Super-Language Recitation Competition and our programme has been shared with educators from all over Asia at a series of major conferences. This term also saw the launch of our new Kingston Chinese Programme.

We look forward to the Chinese New Year week, when we will bring you a special newsletter dedicated to the work of the Languages Department.

## Science

It has been another busy term for the Science department, with students experiencing diverse learning opportunities, both inside and outside of the classroom.

Year 13 Environmental Systems and Structures students have been working with sustainability expert Sole Riestra from EcoEd this term.

The students have been learning about the kinds of daily actions that everyone can take to help reduce our impact on the planet, which will collectively lead to a more sustainable future. They have used their learning to work with Year 7 students, helping to raise awareness about sustainability in school.

A series of Wild Science days has been staged for our primary partner and feeder schools, with scores of students learning outdoors and connecting with nature.

Year 12 and 13 students ran a science day for students from ICHK Primary, organising laboratory activities and helping them to learn about chemicals and chemical reactions.

Year 8 students staged mini 'Global Warming Exhibitions', investigating the environmental impacts of global warming and what actions can be taken to help the planet.



## PE and Sport

It has been another successful term of sport, with the focus firmly on volleyball and football this term.

Many students have proudly represented the school, and students in all year groups continue to learn about the importance of exercise and being active.

Volleyball continues to go from strength to strength. Our teams have increased from two teams last year to four this year with U14, U16, U20 boys and U16 girls. We also won two championships with the U14 and U20 boys, which is a testament to the effort, commitment and practise that the boys have put in. They are often seen during their break time, Free Learning, and any other possible time, honing their skills.

It has also been a time of growth for our football teams, with our girls and boys U14 teams reaching the play off stages this term. This is a great achievement, and we will be looking to build further on these steps next term.


Our U14s girls touch squad enjoyed a successful visit to the Pan Pacific All Schools Touch Tournament in Singapore, and we look ahead to the Schools Touch Championship which will be held in March.

We have also celebrated a number of individual sporting achievements this year, including sailing, and at the Mini inter-school equestrian competition, we took rosettes in dressage and show jumping.





Expressive Arts



Our newly designed and renovated Performing Arts Room has been utilised to the max over the term. Media Studies, Expressive Arts and cross-curriculum links with Human Technologies have seen students explore and experiment with different inquiry models, which has resulted in experimenting and presenting rap-battles, explainer videos, site-specific theatre and photography exhibitions.

ICHK's open and spacious Art Studio is also having its own renaissance. The learning space has been growing organically and will continue to develop over the year by adding different creative areas, flexible working spaces and will offer displays that showcase students inquiry processes over a unit of learning.

Across the school, wonderfully creative artworks continue to be developed, transforming the campus step by step.

Professional artist and art educator, Amy Thibeault has been running a weekly afternoon Arts Workshop, and an exciting partnership is underway with Dr Scott McMaster from EDUHK on a project called "Drawing Elicitation and Diversity in a Hong Kong Classroom".

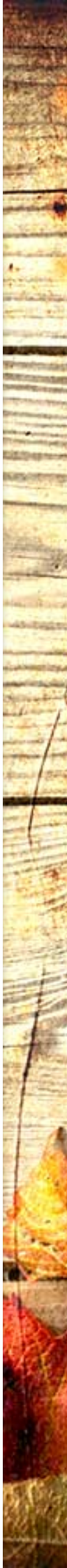
This workshop/pilot study has been created under the larger 'One City One Book Project' led by Dr. Bidisha Banerjee. This is a community reading programme which aims to encourage as many people as possible, to read and discuss a single book at around the same time.

Each year students, scholars, and readers focus their attention on one single book. A series of activities related to the chosen book will be held around Hong Kong, including discussions of the book and its themes, along with exhibitions, film screenings, school events, book discussions, author visits, cultural performances and library events.

The goals of the initiative are to build a sense of community and promote reading, discussion, and civic engagement. The book chosen for the first ever 'One City One Book' initiative in Hong Kong is *The Arrival* (2006), a wordless graphic novel by the Chinese Australian graphic novelist Shaun Tan.

ICHK students have been given a copy of the book to read. Dr. McMaster lead a discussion and drawing activities around the themes and emotional responses to some of the themes in the graphic novel.

The drawing elicitation activities are geared towards enhancing visual literacy and non-verbal communication to showcase imagery as an important, and alternative, way of knowing.







## ICHK Secondary

 Facebook

 @ICHK\_Secondary

ICHK is a school which is proud to embrace innovation in learning and a unique and stimulating curriculum has been developed for students. Our campus is located in a stunning location, providing unrivalled opportunities for outdoor learning.

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