

Christmas Newsletter

December 2019

Head of School's Message

I am very pleased to share with you our end-of-year newsletter, filled with news and celebrations from another successful term.

There continue to be new developments in learning and teaching, and a huge milestone was celebrated this term, as our school was accredited as a Forest School Leadership Centre. Work has continued to embed positive education practices into our curriculum and our new guiding values have been rolled out.

Every day, we see our students develop as creative, confident, caring, resilient and respectful young people, and we have been very proud to witness amazing learning across the school, along with sporting successes and individual achievements.

As another calendar year comes to an end, we are delighted to share and celebrate with you their achievements, together with updates from around the school.



Outdoor Learning

This term, we were delighted to be accredited as one of the best Forest Schools in the world.

We were officially named a Forest School Leadership Centre, which is the highest level of recognition for Forest Schools. This was a significant step for us, as we realised our vision of becoming a leader in outdoor learning and Forest School education in Hong Kong.

Over the past year, more and more of our teachers have trained as Forest School leaders and the programme's philosophy has been deeply embedded across all learning areas. Our innovative and popular Forest School programme resumed, providing students with unrivalled opportunities for investigative play, problem solving, risk taking and creative thinking.



Positive Education

A raft of new initiatives has been launched this term to support student wellbeing.

Our positive education programme has been a key focus, and we have begun to embed restorative practices across the school. Staff have completed training and Year 6 students have been trained as peer support leaders, learning how to understand their emotions and how to develop positive relationships with others.

New FriYay wellbeing afternoons are underway, with students switching classrooms, trying new activities and making new friends during the final lesson of the week. The aim is to build and strengthen positive relationships across classes and year groups. By getting to know students in different classes, stronger relationships are forged and the community is strengthened.

Morning exercise sessions have been staged for students, staff and parents on the basketball court, to help develop positive mindsets. Students have also been learning about emotional awareness, as part of an educational programme led by our new school counsellor.



Creative English

An inspirational new story telling programme started this term, aimed at developing a lifelong love of books and reading in our students.

Creative English Coach Jennie Martin has been creating magic in our classrooms, reading stories and bringing characters and plots to life for our students. In her role, Jennie is spending time with all year groups, introducing them to new genres, and using story telling and drama to stoke our students' imaginations and power their creative writing.



We are pleased to be rolling out changes to our English curriculum this term. The whole curriculum has been completely reviewed and revised, to include a greater focus on creativity.

Visual Art

Our new visual arts programme has been launched under the leadership of specialist teacher Kelsey Long. As we place more focus on creativity, Kelsey has been working across the primary school to promote creative thinking, and stimulate students to express their thoughts in new ways. Students have been engaged in a series of art projects, and their enthusiasm and excitement has been evident in the creative works we have seen on show around the school.



Sport

It has been another term of sporting successes, with students representing the school, and learning about the importance of exercise and being active.

We have competed in, and hosted a number of football tournaments and friendlies, with huge numbers of girls and boys taking part from Y4-6.

We are extremely proud of our footballers this term. Not only have there been competition wins but the sheer number of students wanting to play and the improvements made have impressed our sports teachers.

Our U11 footballers won the cup for the second year running in the Kowloon Boys Football Tournament, and also won the cup in the HKPSSA Boys Football Championships, which is the biggest inter-school football tournament of the year.

Our girls team went through the HKPSSA Girls Football Championships unbeaten but unfortunately missed out in getting through to the cup play offs on points.

Across the school students have been engaged in a range of games and activities through the PE programme, with new Aussie rules, Gaelic football and basketball units built in so far this year. There has been a focus on comparing and contrasting sports and transfer of skills from one sport to another. Students have been looking at personal fitness and setting their fitness goals.

Our swim programme has led to improvements across all year groups and we celebrated amazing results in Hong Kong's adventure race Team Fear.

With the addition of new basketball hoops this year we have been able to include this sport into the curriculum as well as offer a new activity during break times. We look forward to having our first ever

school basketball team next term when the inter-school sports change to basketball, x-country, hockey and touch rugby.



ECAs

A new and diverse programme of ECAs was launched this term. The programme was developed to ensure a broad appeal for all our students, and to broaden and enrich the ICHK experience.

We have been delighted to welcome senior students from our secondary school to support the programme and we look forward to more diverse and exciting activities next term.



Links with ICHK Secondary

Our strong partnership with ICHK Secondary continues to thrive and this term, more and more students have experienced learning opportunities at the school.

Students have made educational visits to the secondary campus, learning about science and the outdoors.

Students from Years 5 and 6 have visited the science labs; Year 5s enjoyed a Wild Science day, have received lessons in Drama and Year 6 students have benefitted from a taster day. Senior students joined us during CAS+ Week, have been supporting our ECA programme and have been acting as touch rugby coaches during our Saturday morning classes.

A Spanish after school club run by ICHK's Head of Languages Nicolas Arriaga has continued to be very successful.

We continue to find new ways to connect our curricula and share expertise and exciting plans are afoot to develop new initiatives over the coming year.



Student Leadership

Our new Year 6 student leaders have been elected and have hit the ground running with their legacy projects. Sports Captains, a Green Team, Reader Leaders, Community Action, Gizmo Gurus, Positive Education, School News and Arts Leaders are initiating new activities in school. They are promoting schemes around sport, reading, positive education, technology, the environment, the arts and the community.

Green Initiatives

This term saw the launch of a major school campaign against plastic pollution.

Single use plastics are no longer allowed at school, as we aim to raise awareness of sustainable living.

We will be looking to build on this work throughout the year, with new green initiatives in the pipeline.

Community

More wonderful events have been staged this term, bringing our families together and strengthening the community spirit that we are renowned for.

Our annual Party in the Park was another huge success, with many reporting it was the best yet. The Christmas market was also a huge hit, with many families joining us for a day of shopping, food, drink and festive cheer.

Once again we thank the Community Events Committee, which carries out invaluable work for our school. This term, members have helped with the running of the second hand uniform shop, organised the school's Box of Hope appeal, with almost 200 distributed to underprivileged children in Asia, and the Get Redressed campaign.

They also ran a very popular picnic BBQ and disco evening and played a huge part in Party in the Park and the Christmas Market.

Throughout the term they have been many other occasions to bring our community together, including a wonderful programme of Christmas concerts, a picnic lunch and games afternoon, and learning showcases in classrooms.

A dress down day for the Home of Loving Faithfulness and other fundraising initiatives including a pyjama day have served as reminders for students to understand the importance of serving the community, and how they can make a difference through their actions.

We look forward to new events next term, including our first outdoor movie night of the year.



Looking Ahead

As the calendar year draws to a close, we look forward to another term of great learning.

We will continue to embed restorative practices further, as we strive to build resilience and confidence in all our students. We will also be revisiting our reporting systems, encouraging staff to specifically report on our guiding values in the future.

Exciting plans are afoot to develop closer links with our secondary school and offer more opportunities for senior students to work on projects and learn from our staff.

Work will continue for our five year review with the Council of International Schools. We will be preparing for our first overseas trip to Chiang Mai, Thailand, and we look forward to celebrating Chinese New Year with our community.

Our sustainability campaign will continue, and we hope to develop a new partnership with Hong Kong Recycles to recycle all school waste. Over the coming year there will also be more opportunities for inter-school competitions.

We look forward to another successful term with your continued support. Wishing you all Seasons Greetings and a Happy New Year.

