



Newsletter

Issue: 2015 / December



Seasons
Greetings

Cover

Preschool staged a charming Christmas concert entitled “Santa’s Workshop”. The children were adorably decked out in all their festive outfits—we had elves, reindeer, Christmas trees and of course, our little drummer boys and girls.

Contents

Message

- * Principal 3

Special Feature

- * Up Close & Personal with Mr Matthew Marson 11

Academic Corner

- * KS1 & KS2 Curriculum Update 5
- * Preschool and Year 3 IPC Update 7
- * Year 4 IPC and Year 5 Mandarin Excursion Update 8
- * Career Bazaar 9
- * TAYMUN 2015 9
- * KS3 Humanities Update 10
- * Art Showcase 14

School Events

- * Christmas Assembly 15
- * Preschool Christmas Concert 17
- * Musical Concerts 18
- * Universal Children’s Day 20
- * Primary House Music 21
- * Secondary House Music 22
- * Deepavali Celebration 23
- * 24 Hour Race (The Race Against Trafficking) 24

Student Corner

- * Student Achievements / Work 25

Alumni News

- * YSEALI Reflection by Loh Rachel 30

DISCLAIMER:

This newsletter including any attachments may contain confidential & privileged information and is intended solely for the use of the recipient(s). If you have received it in error, please notify the sender and delete all the contents permanently from all kinds of storage devices. Unauthorised distribution or dissemination of this newsletter is strictly prohibited. Please be informed that views or opinions found in this email are solely that of the author and do not necessarily represent HELP Education Services Sdn Bhd. HELP Education Services Sdn Bhd disclaims all warranties to the content of this email and shall not be liable for any loss or damage to the person and /or their property caused by this email.

HELP International School

No 2 Persiaran Cakerawala,
Subang Bestari, Seksyen U4,
40150 Shah Alam, Selangor.

Tel: 03-78097000 • Fax: 03-78097014

E-mail: enquiry@kl.his.edu.my

Website: www.his.edu.my

Facebook: facebook.com/HELPInternationalSchool



Message from the Principal



The contemporary school is, of course, no longer blackboard and chalk. Change has always been an issue in education and when new developments are introduced, the challenges are not only to do with cost and resources but also about developing new pedagogy for the classroom. In recent years, the effective use of new technologies has become a vital element in teaching and learning. When used effectively, all technologies can enhance learning. At HIS, we are committed to using iPad technology in the classroom – we are an Apple School and have a dedicated education technology (EdTech) team.

Many now believe that students today need transferable skills and knowledge. It appears that we are going through a revolution in education and that students require new and different skills – they are, after all, fully immersed in new technology in their day-to-day lives, using social media, smartphones, applications and so much more. It has always been necessary for students to learn how to think, how to approach learning and remain creative. The benefit of content and access that the technology gives us has to be supported by the appropriate skills and a holistic approach to learning.

"We are at the ground floor of a new world full of imagination, creativity, innovation and digital wisdom. We are going to have to create the education of the future because it doesn't exist anywhere today."

~Mark Prensky, Educational Theorist

Throughout this emphasis on EdTech and the digital world, it is important to stress the irreplaceable impact of inspirational and dedicated teachers and I am sad to be losing our Assistant Primary Principal, Ms Nisha Suchak, to the pull of home in the UK. She won't be severing ties with HIS completely though as we will be able to avail ourselves of her expertise as a consultant. Ms Nisha will be supporting our team in this role over Term 2. She will return to the school to undertake teacher training with a two week programme after Chinese New Year and will also be running her excellent parent workshops again

at this time. I would like to thank her personally for making this journey with me in the first years of HIS.

It has been such a busy, non-stop first term. Among the many things that HIS has been involved with this term I would like to mention:

HIS has been the host for training for Cambridge Checkpoint, for primary and secondary for the second year in a row now and a few, select members of our staff have been appointed as Cambridge Trainers, selected from schools across Malaysia, to train other teachers. We have enjoyed visits from Iranian and Indonesian school teachers and leaders, looking at the HIS model and environment and we welcomed 8 home-school visiting teachers from Johor Bahru. We have started some Saturday morning educational development classes for our teaching staff, facilitated by Dr Gerard and Dr Frances from HELP University.

Additionally, eight of our staff have attended Apple Visionary training sessions in Kuala Lumpur.



For our students, we have seen them take part in various sporting competitions, with a good deal of success and I know we're all proud of their achievements. Our A-Level students have completed their AS-Level examinations. We have held our Deepavali, Christmas and Universal Childrens' day celebrations; the latter with the theme of *Diversity is Our Strength*. Students have given us some wonderful performances in the House Music, Musical Concerts and Preschool Christmas performance. We have also held a successful fire drill, which was quickly followed by a couple of false alarms, that reassured me that our evacuation procedure is working smoothly. For parents, our workshop programme has continued and our new café has proved very popular with the wider school community. I would encourage parents to keep up to date and review our newsletters, bulletins and our Facebook page as they are records of what our students and teachers are doing to participate in life in all its fullness.

This January, we welcome new staff and students to HIS. I would like to take the opportunity to thank our School Manager, Ms Susan, who is moving on from her administrative role. Ms Susan has been a dedicated and capable member of the school administrative leadership. Ms Ju Yit will be our new School Manager. I would also like to mention two additional admin team members that have joined us during Term 1 : Senior IT Manager Mr Jonathan Chong and Admin Assistant Ms Deborah Adison.

Finally, a big thanks to all staff and parents, as well as our wonderful students, for an energetic, engaging and excellent first academic term. I hope that you all have a restful break and safe travels for everyone returning home. I look forward to seeing you all in the New Year.

Vita ad Plenitudinem – "Life in All Its Fullness".

Davina McCarthy



Updates on recent KS 1 & 2 curriculum initiatives

By Nisha Suchak, Assistant Principal
(Primary Teaching & Learning)

In line with our rationale in the recent change in our approach to the KS 1 & 2 curriculum, we have introduced a few new initiatives into our KS 1 and 2 timetable.

English

Guided Reading for KS 1 & 2

Guided reading has been introduced into our primary timetable. Teachers are expected to deliver guided reading sessions between 8.00am- 8.30am every morning.

Guided reading is a method used to teach individual and groups of students to become fluent in reading and comprehension skills of inference and deduction. Students can apply these skills learnt across the curriculum.

One hundred and fifty sets of guided reading books have been bought covering the 1-20 international reading band levels. The school has also purchased subscription for "Bug Club" which is an online reading resource, where teachers can allocate books to students according to their ability. Students may listen or read the books and answer comprehension questions. Teachers are able to access information about students' strengths and areas that they may need to work on.



"Students enjoy guided reading. It enables them to have one-to-one time with me. I am able to ask them questions to check for understanding. Students who do not normally speak in whole class situations are more confident to share and discuss ideas in this small group setting."

Year 2 Teacher

Talking Partners

Teachers are actively using 'Talking Partners' in lessons. In using 'Talking Partners', teacher asks a question and each student is to discuss his or her answer to the question with a partner. This is believed to encourage student involvement and participation in a safe whole class situation. Students are able to voice their understanding of ideas more confidently as it also provides an opportunity for rehearsal of words and phrases before contributing to a larger audience. It also develops coherent thinking, process talks (thinking through talk), collaborative and cooperative skills. Teachers, on the other hand, are able to observe and assess students' understanding.



“Play is important for them to socialise, learn how to play together and share. The afternoon is too long without a playtime and children need it.”

Grade 1 Teacher

Afternoon Play for KS 1

Having time and space to play gives children the opportunity to meet and socialise with their friends from various backgrounds. This not only provides opportunities to learn about their environment and wider community, it also keeps them physically active, and gives them freedom to choose what they want to do.

Research shows that play has many benefits for children, families and the wider community, as well as improving health and quality of life. Recent research suggests that children's access to good play provision can increase their self-awareness, self-esteem, and self-respect as it develops new skills and nurtures their imagination, independence and creativity. Children also learn to build resilience through risk taking and challenge, problem solving, and dealing with new and novel situations

As such, play time has been introduced in KS1 from 2:00pm—2:20pm. This is 90 minutes after their lunch time. During this time, they are allowed to have some fruit and play.

Playground equipment such as skipping ropes, hoops, balls, frisbees have been purchased to ensure that play is more of an enriching experience.



Preschool IPC : Food

Special thanks to a parent volunteer who contributed these beautiful pots of dill and rosemary. She shared with our little ones how such herbs can be added to our meals to make them taste better.



Year 3 IPC: Bright Sparks Learning about electricity and how it works



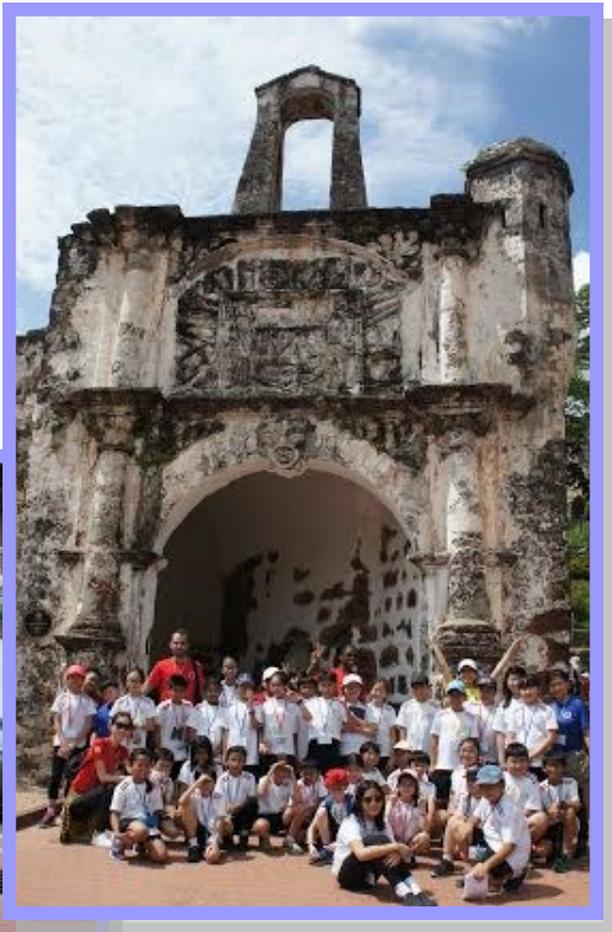
Year 4 IPC:

How Humans Work



Year 5 : Mandarin Excursion to the historical city of Malacca

Students were exposed to the rich historical and multicultural heritage of Malacca and learnt all about the culture in Mandarin.



CAREER BAZAAR

On November 22, eleven Year 9 students were selected to attend a career bazaar at Honsbridge school. The Honsbridge students gave interesting presentations about various occupations in criminology, forensic science and child welfare. Later, our students visited career booths to learn more about each field. Overall, the experience was interactive, informative and fun.

Here are some students' comments about the trip:

"The students there were very friendly and enthusiastic. It was interesting to learn from someone else's perspective." ~ Caitlin Baptist



"The students provided a lot of information and there were a lot of things that were new to me. I gained a lot of experience just from that trip." ~ Jessica Leong

"The bazaar was very interesting, and I really liked their informative presentations. This event made me pretty interested in criminology and forensic sciences." ~ So Zao Qi

"Overall the presentations were informative. I definitely left Honsbridge with a better idea of what occupation I may pursue in the future." ~ Nur Sameera Shaik

"The career bazaar had lots of interactive stations where you could learn about different jobs." ~ Jacqueline Kan

TAYLOR'S MODEL UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE (TAYMUN) 2015

Taylor's College, Subang Jaya, November 27—29

Students from various schools and universities gathered to debate about issues such as child marriage, freedom of speech on social media, the MERS outbreak and universal education at the Model United Nations Conference.

For Aletheia Goh (Year 8), it was her first ever. Tasked with representing Libya in the Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Affairs Committee (SOCHUM), she definitely rose to the challenge:

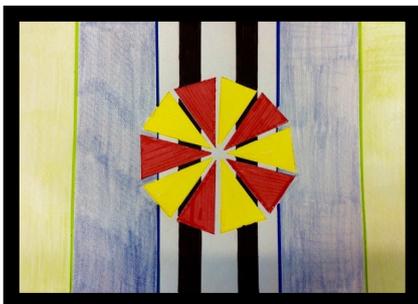
"The whole idea of debating and speaking publicly amongst university level students petrified me! It felt like I had neither skill nor maturity. Nonetheless, I made it through with the assistance of my fellow HIS MUN-ers. After the forum, I felt more confident, accomplished and proficient."



KS3 HUMANITIES

As part of International Week, KS3 Humanities students explored what it means to be part of ASEAN (The Association of South East Asian Nations) and what its values represent. They were set a challenge to design a new flag for ASEAN. Working in pairs or individually, students considered an alternative design that would still reflect the values of ASEAN.

These are our winning entries.



Chantelle Foo

7 Da Vinci

Design Rationale:

The colours of the flag are all the colours of the flags in ASEAN and the triangles – which represent the ten countries – are pointing towards the middle to show that the countries will help each other in times of need in terms of economy and war. The alternating black and white stripes shows that there is stability between the different countries, while the blue section shows that there is harmony between the countries. The green outer border is a reminder that the countries are surrounded by greenery and should be eco-friendly.



Hannah Sufia Zuraimi

8 Morrison

Design Rationale:

There are six stripes to represent all the colours of the ASEAN countries' flags and each colour has a meaning: red, unity; green, peace; red, tranquility; white, everlasting purity and virtue; black represents the leaders of all the countries and yellow shows solidarity. I chose a flower with ten petals – each resembling a country – because there is life in a flower and the same goes for ASEAN; when one petal wilts, the rest of them will too. The star means that the people in all the countries of ASEAN can reach for the stars and always have hope.



Mayha Surendren

9 Mozart

Design Rationale:

The globe represents unity of the ASEAN community, of which each star represents a different country. The black outer circle shows the strength and courage of the community while the yellow represents its warmth and happiness. I chose green to highlight how ASEAN can act to preserve the environment.

In general, all the colours represent the colours from the ASEAN flag and red is the background because it is the most common.

Notable mentions

- * Katrina Susai Nathen (7 Da Vinci)
- * Kavya Balaji (7 Da Vinci)
- * Precious Hong (7 Da Vinci)
- * Elissa Foong (8 Verne)
- * Alethia Goh (8 Verne)
- * Brendan Low (8 Morrison)
- * Rahil Selvaratnam (8 Morrison)
- * Hannah Yoo & Olivia Ng (8 Verne)
- * Suhaib Shahrul Azhar & Byran Lim (9 Beethoven)
- * So Zhao Qi (9 Xinghai)
- * Chantelle Lee (9 Benedetti)
- * Nur Sameera Shaik (9 Mangeshkar)
- * Emily Chew (9 Beethoven)

Up Close & Personal

MATTHEW MARSON

Find out more about the man behind our ICT as we speak to HIS' Learning Technologies & Systems Coordinator ...



How would you describe your job?

I have worked in schools in the UK and internationally for over 10 years, in a variety of roles, with the last seven years in senior leadership positions. My most recent role before joining HIS, was Director of IT and Head of Sixth Form – a whole school strategic role and a pastoral role where I was responsible for the pastoral and academic wellbeing of students studying A-Level.

I would describe my current role at HIS as one where I wear a few different 'hats'. In technology, strategic planning is essential to ensure that equipment and infrastructure is fit for purpose and regularly updated. Then there are the day-to-day systems and software that ensure the smooth running of things like the timetable, or the reports that parents receive each half term. Finally, there is the effect that technology has on students - how it impacts learning and teaching.

I enjoy the fast-paced nature of educational technology, that no one is an 'expert' and that those who truly grasp contemporary learning are open to new ideas, adapt to rapid change and are not afraid to take risks. It is like a never ending journey where the landscape is continually changing.

What is the most challenging part of your job?

The most challenging aspect of my job is also the most engaging aspect of my role : measuring how technologies impact learning, teaching and the curriculum, as well as working with practitioners to harness technology to redefine the process of learning for students who are digital natives.

How did you end up in the technology education line?

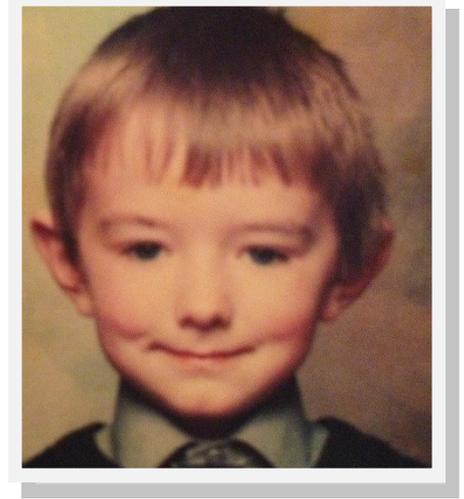
Throughout my childhood I had a keen interest in technology and computers. I remember using a computer at the age of 3 in Reception Class at primary school. My first computer was called a 'BBC Micro' and was in the corner of the classroom on a moveable trolley. We played a game called 'The Crystal Rainforest' in groups on a rotation basis throughout the year – a world away from the kind of access students have here at HIS. It became clear from a young age that I had aspirations to become a teacher; I helped out in the ICT Department and ran clubs for younger students as an 'IT Senior'. As I was leaving secondary school, we were just getting PCs that eventually replaced the Acorn computers. I was first introduced to Apple Macintosh computers while studying for my A Level and have been an enthusiast ever since.

My interest and passion for technology has permeated almost every aspect of my education and career. After completing my degree in Business Management, I trained 'on the job' to become a secondary school teacher, specialising in Business and ICT. Just a few years later I was managing and leading eLearning in an urban inner city UK state school.

What advice would you give to someone who wants to go into this line of work?

Many people say that teaching is a vocation, and from a young age I was lucky that I knew what I wanted to do as a career. I enjoy seeing a student having that ‘Eureka!’ moment when the penny dropped and the light bulb lit up for a concept or topic that was being taught.

It is my personal educational philosophy to aspire to make a difference in the lives of young people, hopefully preparing them for a future where their chosen careers might not exist yet – I believe technology and innovation in education has the power to do this. However, teaching and leadership in education is not for everyone.



Can you recognise me?

How would you describe your stay in Malaysia so far?

Before joining the team at HIS, I worked in the only international school in the Seychelles — a small island and a developing nation in the Indian Ocean around 1,000km off the coast of Africa with a population of around 100,000 people. After four years on a remote island, the hustle and bustle of Kuala Lumpur was a bit of a culture shock as I had become accustomed to visiting one small mall, a cinema with only one screen, one highway, three ring roads and only three sets of traffic lights.

However, I have adjusted well and am enjoying city life, the excellent cuisine and the wonderful travel opportunities throughout South East Asia. So far, I have visited Malacca, Penang, Langkawi and Bali.



Mr Marson and Snoop exploring all that Malaysia has to offer.

What do you do during your free time?

I have been in Malaysia now for nearly nine months. The initial ‘rabbit in the headlights’ period has subsided and I am now settled and feel more at home.

I enjoy film and comedy, live music and am attempting to cook. My dog, Snoop, which I rescued while working in the Seychelles also takes up a lot of my time.

What is your vision of EdTech in HIS?

I have to be careful when selling my vision for technology at HIS as it is essential for any vision to be the voice of the students and the staff. We have planned some visioning sessions in the new year.

Generally speaking, I would say it is about building capacity to ensure teachers, parents and students are confident and responsible users of technology and that they are able to identify and find for themselves the tools to help them redefine, extend and promote learning.



Look out for HIS EdTech issues from Mr Matt Marson to keep yourselves up-to-date on how students, teachers and our school community are using technologies to support learning and teaching at HIS!

Fun Facts

Date of Birth : 6th February

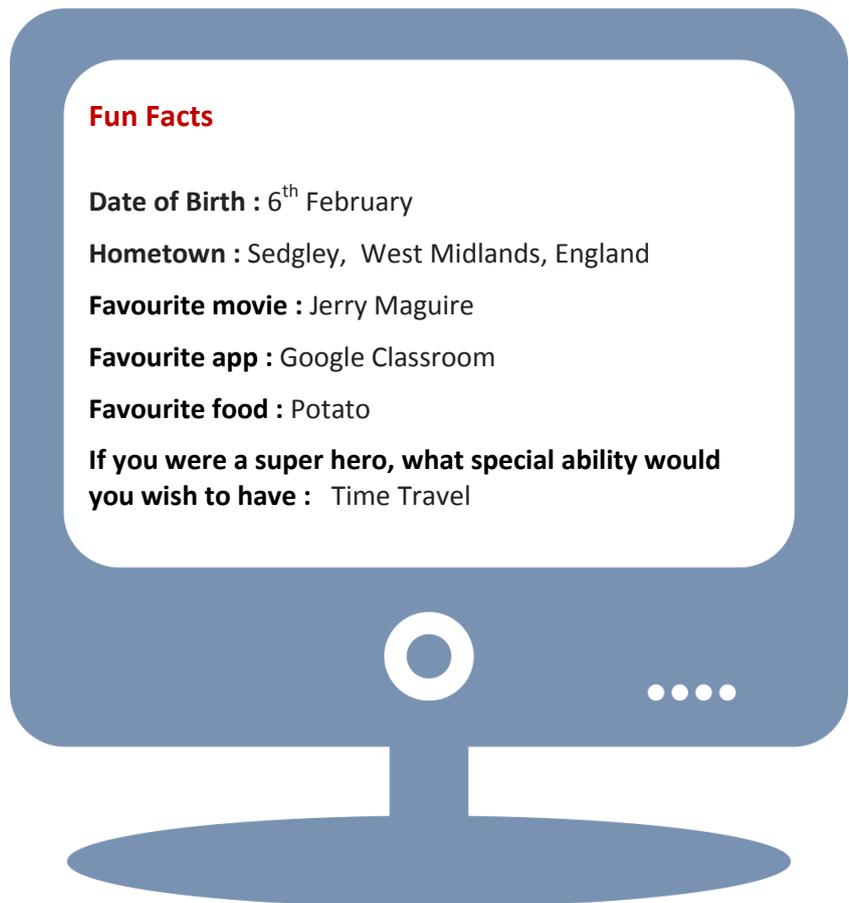
Hometown : Sedgley, West Midlands, England

Favourite movie : Jerry Maguire

Favourite app : Google Classroom

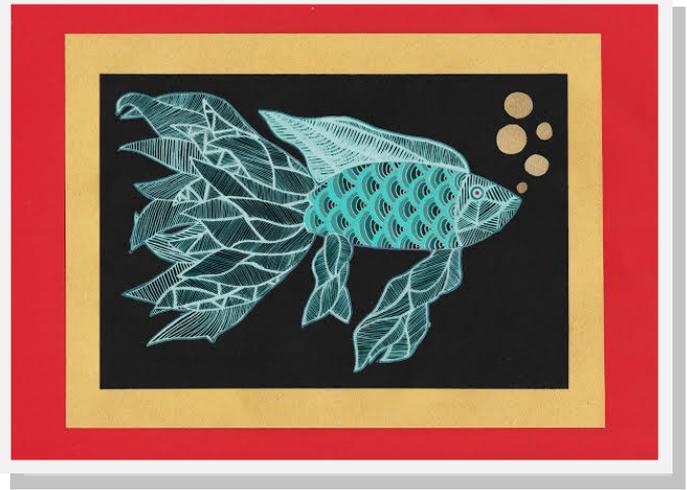
Favourite food : Potato

If you were a super hero, what special ability would you wish to have : Time Travel

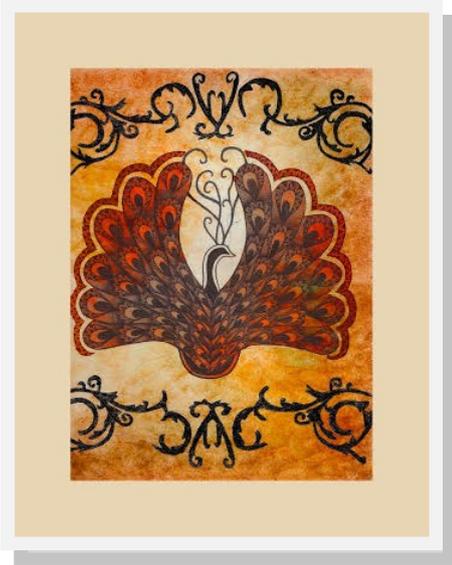


ART

Art Deco
Teoh Ting Hao (Yr 10)



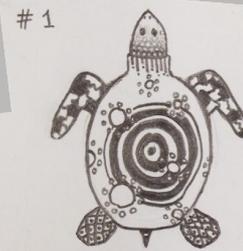
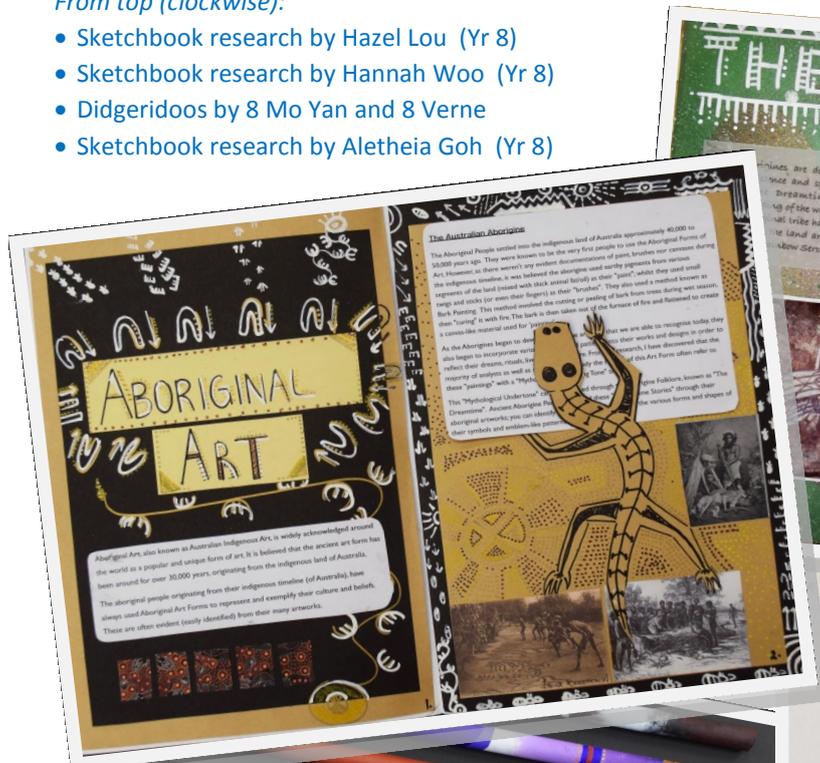
Art Nouveau
Teoh Khai-Xiin (Yr 10)



Oil pastel Cubist composition
Alif Riad (Yr 11)

From top (clockwise):

- Sketchbook research by Hazel Lou (Yr 8)
- Sketchbook research by Hannah Woo (Yr 8)
- Didgeridoos by 8 Mo Yan and 8 Verne
- Sketchbook research by Aletheia Goh (Yr 8)



Evaluation =
I've made it much more simple, but still stylish.

Evaluation =
I've drawn different type of shapes to make it look unique.



CHRISTMAS ASSEMBLY

December 10

Students and staff heralded on the last day of term dressed in red, green and gold at a special Christmas assembly filled with songs and performances.

The Christmas Shoebox project was a resounding success. Gifts for each refugee child have been carefully selected and wrapped by their adoptive classes. Generous donations of basic necessities from staff, teachers and parents have also been collected for the ZEC Myanmar refugee centre. All gifts and donations were delivered to the centre where HIS students led the children in a caroling session. The children were overjoyed at the sight of such warmth and generosity shared with them during this season of hope and joy.

Wishing one and all Blessed Christmas and Happy New Year!



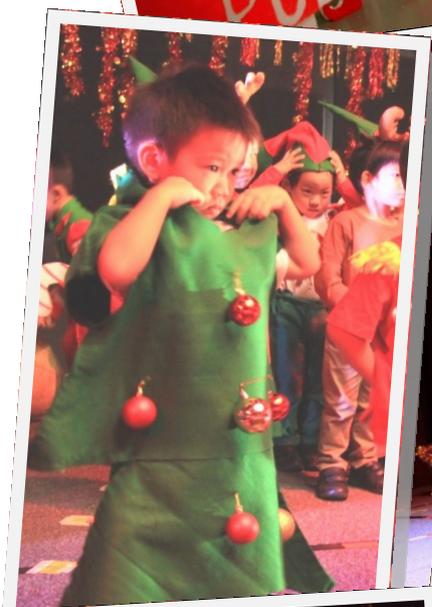




PRESCHOOL CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Santa's Workshop

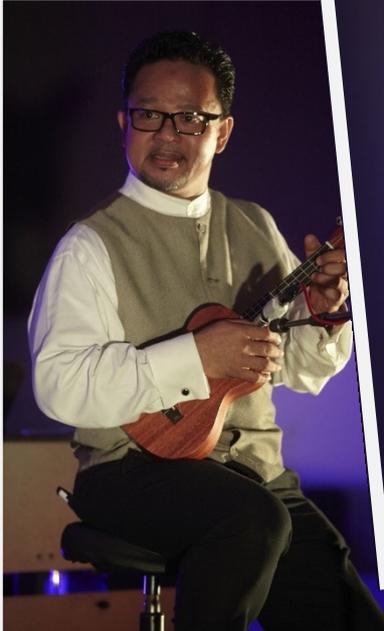
December 4

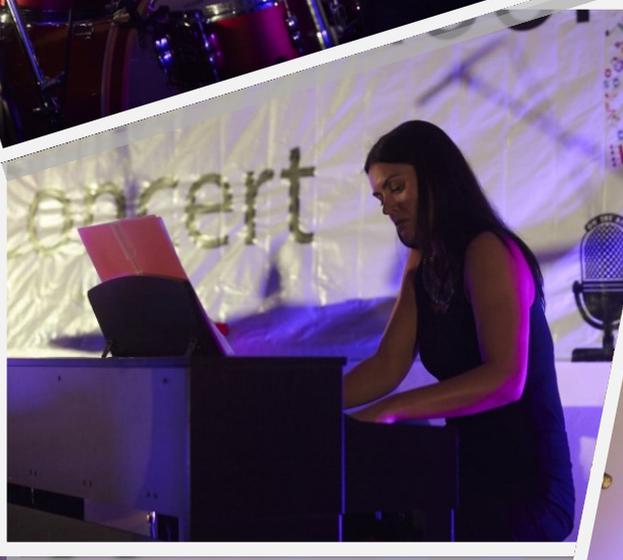




MUSICAL CONCERT 2015

December 3





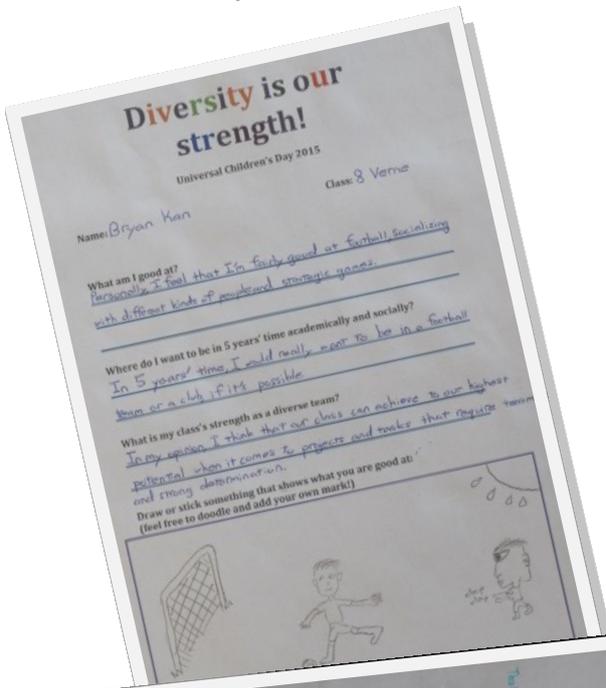


UNIVERSAL CHILDREN'S DAY

Diversity is our strength

November 21

For Children's Day this year, students learnt how everyone learns differently, but as a team we all offer our own unique strengths and help one another to overcome our weaknesses. Students worked on their Time Capsules worksheets and reflected on what they hope to achieve in 5 years' time. The Time Capsules will be stored and opened during the 2020 Universal Children's Day celebrations!





HOUSE MUSIC — PRIMARY

December 9





HOUSE MUSIC — SECONDARY

November 27





DEEPAVALI CELEBRATION

November 13



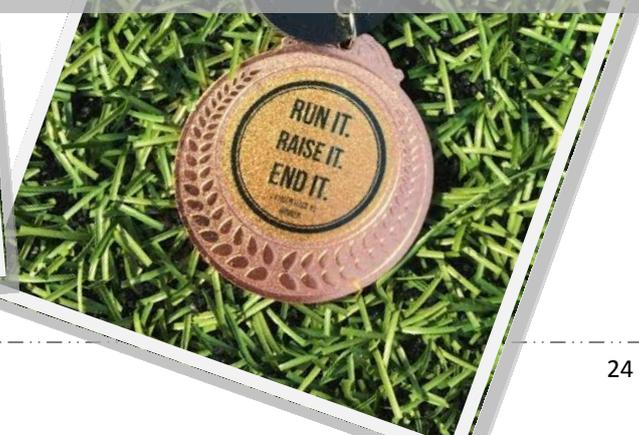


24 HOUR RACE

The Race Against Human Trafficking

November 14 & 15

Thank you to all students, parents, teachers and staff that have supported 15 young runners from HIS who participated in the race and raised over RM5,000 to stop human trafficking."



STUDENT CORNER

Linus Theo Dengah (Year 8) President's Cup (National Swimming Event)

- 50m Breaststroke Gold medal winner
- Personal best time of 33.59 seconds



Linus Theo Dengah (Year 8) Misc. Mathematics Competitions Awards

1. Kangaroo - Gold Medal
2. CMC - Distinction
3. SASMO - Gold Medal & National Top Scorer
4. ICAS - High Distinction
5. AMC - High Distinction



Aidan Wong Yoong Xin (Year 8) Misc. Mathematics and Science Competitions Awards

- ICAS Science - Gold Medal
- ICAS Maths - High distinction
- AMC - High distinction
- OMK - Sijil Sanjungan Kehormat

Tan Yu Shen (Year 3) International Competitions and Assessments for Schools (ICAS)

- ICAS Maths Gold Medal
- Top scorer in Malaysia for the Year 2 paper



Yap Seng Kuang (Year 9)

Misc. Mathematics Competition Awards

1. SASMO - Individual Gold; Team Silver
2. Kangaroo - Silver
3. ICAS - Distinction

Yap Xin Wei (Year 8)

Misc. Mathematics Competition Awards

1. Kangaroo - Individual Bronze
2. AMC - Distinction

Shebanee Devadasan (Year 11)

Toastmasters Speech Contest

November 22, Tropicana Golf & Country Club

- 1st runner-up in the speech contest which was part of the Crystal Toastmasters youth leadership programme.



The National Fencing Championships 2015

November 14 - 15

- **Natasha Tai (Year 11)** won a bronze medal for Foil
- **Natania Tai (Year 9)** won gold for Sabre



Teh Dee Wei (Year 4)

32nd Penang Open International Juniors' Age Group Tennis Championship 2015

November 27

U10 Boys Doubles category, Dee Wei (Selangor) together with his doubles partner Ryan Lim (Sarawak), played and knocked out the pair from India in the Quarterfinals.

The boys lost their match against the top seeded pair from Korea in the semifinals.

Zaira Rahman Abdullah (Year 4)
Kejohanan Artistik Gimnastik Sirkuit Remaja Kebangsaan 2015 (National Competition)

Category: 9-10 years

- Floor routine—3rd place
- Beam routine—2nd place
- Individual—4th place
- Team—gold medal



Ryan Koh (Year 7)

27th ASEAN Summit 2015, Kuala Lumpur

- Violinist in the Malaysian Permata Seni Muzik (Istana Budaya) / Malaysian Youth Orchestra
- Performed for the Heads of States at the recent 27th Asean Summit in Kuala Lumpur

"We played thirty songs, which were localised adapted compositions from the various ASEAN countries. The highlight was presenting 'A Thousand Million Smiles' hugely popularised by Sudirman; Malaysia's most loved artist.

The highlight of this event was seeing in person, Mr Barack Obama, the President of the United States of America. I thought he looked good, and was very immaculately dressed."



Students were asked to justify why the apps they've downloaded are educational.

A Year 3 student replied, "I need to play Memory Blocks so that I can remember to do my homework."



Wong Zi Yue (Year 5)
MSSS Chess Tournament
November 18

Champion U11 category
with full points in 6
rounds

Muhammad Danial Zailan (Year 10)
Winter Guard International (WGI) Malaysia Regional Championships 2015

- Played snare for the ensemble Battery Headz, a marching band based in Mont Kiara
- Competed in both the National and the Open International category
- Judged by about 8 WGI jurors from WGI USA and several music professors and professional instrumentalists
- Won 1st place in both categories and will head to the US in March 2016 for the tour and competition

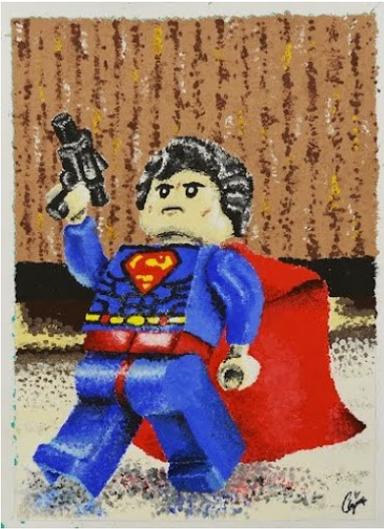
Rubin Saini (Year 11)
Photography — "The Great Migration"

"Around the same time, every year, the Great Wildebeest Migration begins in Southern Tanzania, East Africa. These wildebeests migrate according to the availability of grazing. In order to get to these grazing fields, they have to cross treacherous rivers with predators waiting to attack.

These crossings are very rare, and difficult to see, you just have to be at the right place at the right time. It's one of nature's most exciting events. These animals create art without even noticing."

**** Entry for the 2015 Melbourne University
Photography Competition**





Hazel Lou (Year 8)
Art

Hazel has always produced work of an exceptional quality and clearly devotes a great deal of time and care to her work. Her "Pointillist" painting of a Lego character is an example of this. (Mr Sathi)



Lee Hui Jin (Year 3)
Art

"I like drawing animals and cartoon characters best. I don't like to add colour though so that every drawing is the same."



Isabelle Low Jia Ern (Year 5)
Music

"I like the harp best because the music you can play with the harp is the most beautiful. I prefer string instruments."

** Isabelle started playing music about three years ago but she is already at Grade 7 harp, Grade 6 piano and Grade 1 violin.

Yap Ven Wei (Year 6)
Music

"I love the sound of piano. I love to play romantic songs like 'The river flows In you'."

** Ven Wei started playing the piano when she was seven years old, she is now at Grade 5 piano and Grade 3 Violin. She also plays the clarinet with the SKOC (Selangor Kuala Lumpur Orchestra Choir) in Puchong.



YSEALI REFLECTION

by Loh Rachel

On November 19, I had the opportunity to represent Malaysia as a digital delegate (very much like a social media ambassador) at the [Young South East Asian Leaders Initiative \(YSEALI\) Summit 2015](#).

The summit brought 500 youth leaders from all over ASEAN to the hustling and bustling city, Kuala Lumpur. President Barack Obama started this initiative in 2013 with the objective to strengthen leadership development and networking in Southeast Asia, with a focus on four main themes: civic engagement, economic development, environment and education.

Throughout the summit, I have learnt so much from my fellow friends from ASEAN who have started their own initiatives (that have been generously funded by the U.S. Department of State, mind you) to combat issues in the above mentioned themes. A great example would be Luis Efriani from Indonesia who founded her "Batik Girl" programme with the aim of empowering women prisoners through the art of doll making. Wow, right? We also experienced talks by leading experts from companies like Microsoft, Intel, Coca-Cola and U.S. leaders and ambassadors.

Another pivotal moment for most of the YSEALI Summit delegates was the town hall with President Barack Obama!



Rachel (5th from left) with other YSEALI Summit 2015 Digital Delegates

All in all, the YSEALI summit has served as an amazing platform for me to connect with many youth leaders to solve social issues across ASEAN. I am truly honoured to have represented Malaysia at the summit and am excited for what is to come in the future.

Side note:

I am currently writing this short essay at the airport, bound for Tokyo for the COY11, Conference of Youths on Climate Change, where I will be representing the Malaysian Youth Delegation.

What a great way to end the year!

Rachel, top left, at a town hall meeting with President Barack Obama.

Source: Reuters-Johnathan Ernst