

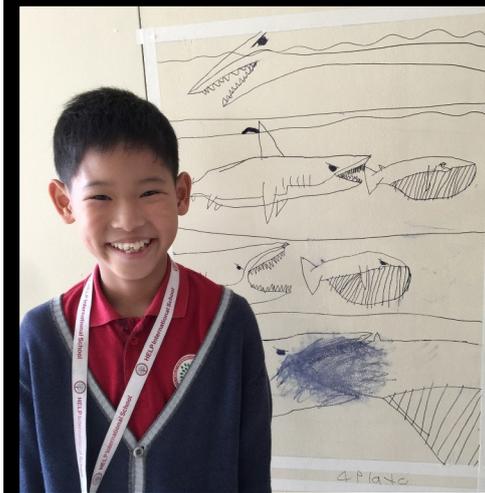


HELP INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

"Life in all its fullness"

HIS NEWSLETTER

Issue: 2015 / May



Cover

Collage of students and their work in the school cafeteria walls.

The Zentangle art designs were developed during their CCA art lessons with Mr Michael Quah, HIS' Artist-in-Residence.

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Message from the Principal



In our Week of Gratitude, it was so lovely to see our Charity Club members, prefects and others taking an active role in organising events. Students also assisted us in showcasing our school during our Open Day on May 23 and they did a fantastic job as ambassadors for our school. The prefects are really stepping up and meeting their social responsibilities, helping to collect donations for some of our guards who had lost their family homes due to the earthquake in Nepal. I am certainly grateful to have such civic-minded students and also grateful for my staff, who work such long hours and dedicate their time to the students in our care.

In the past month, our current teachers have been undergoing lesson observations and taking part in professional development to help us enhance the quality of teaching and learning at the school. We are continually looking at ways to develop our team's expertise and skills. This month, our primary staff were involved in training in Singapore Maths and Koobits Maths.



HIS has a good record of retention of reputable teaching staff because of our investment in staff training, and high standards continue to be set for teaching and learning.

Since our last newsletter, we have enjoyed, as usual, a fun-filled, action-packed month. In this edition, we are sharing photographs and reviews of the Book Week, Science Week, Career Month and from our school excursions (including our first Scout Camp). Our House Swimming Galas and Preschool Sports Day have concluded our half term events with a flourish. These events are FUN-damental to school life at HIS! Please do browse our Facebook pages as we have posted items on school activities and photographs from recent events.

Thank you to all our staff who have been involved in coordinating these events and visits. I know that it provides our students with great opportunities to learn and grow and develop fond memories of the school.

Looking ahead, we have our school production, the musical "WICKED" which will be staged on July 3 and 4 and our A-Levels graduation on June 12. We also have a school audit by the Ministry of Education this month, which we will share feedback from. The Cambridge Exam Board has just completed an audit and we were awarded 'full compliance' for our programme.

We have Activities Week coming up in July after the end-of-year exams and this will be an opportunity for students to be exposed to programmes that will benefit their learning. This could be preparation for IGCSE with some additional maths booster sessions; a workshop with a theatre group; our Model United Nations event; or day trips to museums. We will have a variety of school-based activities for parents and students to select from, along with some possible excursions to outside venues.

Finally, I want to announce the new head prefect and deputies. The elected head prefect is Theo Barrett-Marshall and his deputies are Christine Lee and Vikneswaran Raj. We owe a debt of gratitude to Rachel and Joshua who have fulfilled the role as Head Boy and Head Girl and I'm sure our new prefect team will continue to uphold the high standards that they have set.

Vita ad Plenitudinem

Davina McCarthy

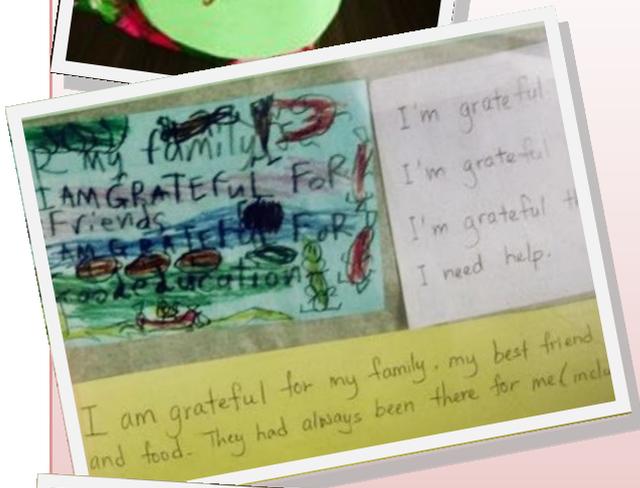
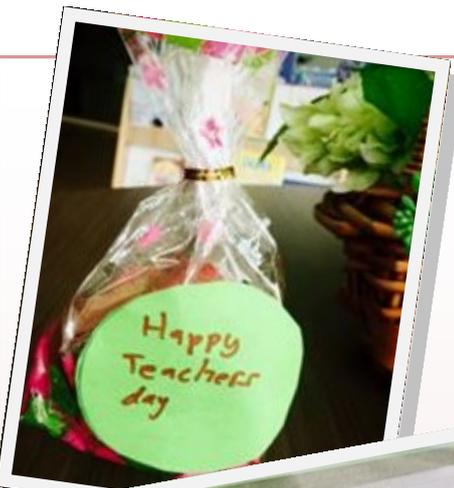
WEEK OF GRATITUDE & TEACHER'S DAY

The week beginning Monday, May 11 saw HELPIans celebrating Gratitude Week. Many activities were organised to give opportunities to students, admin and teaching staff a platform to express gratitude to the community around them.

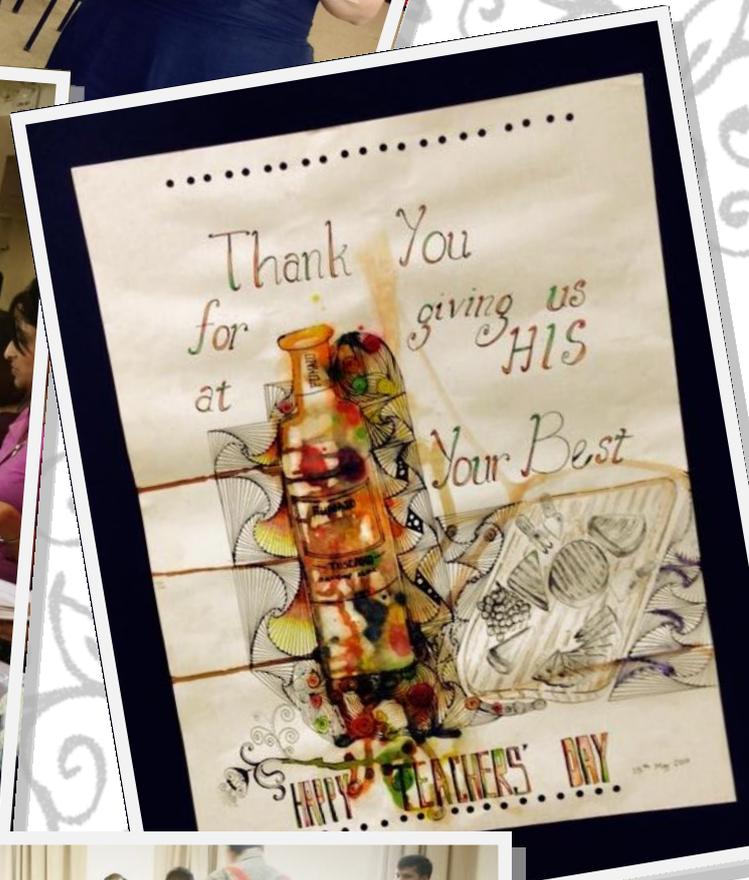
The week culminated with a Teacher's Day celebration on Friday, May 15. Teachers and staff at school were treated to a delicious breakfast and lunch spread.

The breakfast spread was generously put together by our parent volunteers, and teachers were lined up as early as 7:30am for freshly brewed coffee, pastries, cake, and local breakfast favourites.

This year the prefects took the initiative to organise a special assembly — which included performances from all year groups. They also collected funds from students and pooled that to cater lunch and purchase gifts for all the teaching staff.



HAPPY TEACHER'S DAY



They Guide Us ...
They Support Us ...
They Inspire Us ...
They Teach Us ...
Today is the day to thank them and say
Happy Teacher's Day!



Message from the Deputy Principal

Firstly, I would like to start by sincerely thanking the 130 plus parents that attended the CAT4 workshop last month. It was fantastic to see so many supportive parents there and I hope the workshop was useful and informative. The CAT4 results have given us all plenty of data to analyse as well as providing us with some interesting general statistics about our students. I am very pleased to announce that the overall level of attainment of HIS students, compared to children of a similar age in the UK, is significantly above average and predictions indicate that we should expect a high percentage of A and B grades in future IGCSE and A Level exams. Staff are now busy with a detailed analysis of the CAT4 results and we will be using this information, together with our own observations, internal assessments and external exam results to set realistic but aspirational targets for our students ready for the start of the new school year in September. In this way, we can ensure our students' progress is carefully tracked and monitored and they are motivated to reach their full potential.

Staff are also busy making plans for our end of term Activities Week from July 6 — 9. As with many international schools, we hope this can become a really successful annual HIS tradition and an excellent way for teachers and students to come together in an informal and relaxed atmosphere, and an opportunity to celebrate the many successes of the past year. Activities will include a wide variety of school based events as well as trips to various venues locally. More details to follow!



I would like to extend my thanks and congratulations to Mr Hammonds and the PE department for their recent successful application to join the prestigious inter-schools sports league run by the KLISS groups of schools including British International School KL (BSKL), Taylor's International School (TT), Tenby International School Setia Eco Park (TIS), The International School @ ParkCity (ISP), and Nexus International School (NIS). Participating in this league will be a fantastic addition to our extra-curricular sports programmes from September and will provide our students with even more wonderful opportunities to compete in a variety of sports against highly respected opposition. A number of other schools applied to join this league, but not all were successful, and I feel this clearly demonstrates the strong and growing reputation of HIS locally.

Finally, I would like to report that our commitment to offering leadership opportunities to our students remains a high priority. Mr Moreton's prefect team continues to grow and develop following the successful prefect camp a few months ago and recently with the appointment of our new team of Head and Deputy Prefects. Pupils from Year 6 upwards are involved in this scheme and it is great to see them acting as positive role models to their peers. The Scouts programme is also now in operation and a few weeks ago a group of 40 Year 8 students enjoyed a weekend Scout camp in Tapah, Perak. They enjoyed a full range of outdoor and adventurous activities and the wilderness setting was only enhanced by the lack of Wi-Fi or a mobile phone signal!

In September, we will offer yet more leadership experiences for our Year 9 and 10 students as we introduce the highly respected Duke of Edinburgh's International Award. This award scheme is regarded as the world's leading youth achievement award and it focuses on commitment, doing, delivering and supporting. For more information please visit their website at www.intaward.org.

Overall, it has been a whirlwind first six months for me since joining HIS in January, but I am thoroughly enjoying the challenge of working at a growing and evolving school as we prepare and build for the years ahead.



Our intrepid campers posing for a group photo before breaking camp.



Presenting the 2015 / 2016 Prefectorial Board

Up Close and Personal: Mr James DeGazio, the man behind “WICKED”

Mr James, producer and director of “WICKED” sheds some light on the upcoming production.

Why did you choose “WICKED” as this year's school production?

I chose “WICKED” for a number of reasons but primarily for its message and themes which I feel resonate especially deeply with all students no matter what their backgrounds. It also provides more opportunities for our talented female students as the production is female-character driven. And lastly, but equally important, the music is genuinely amazing. The musical is a very clever telling of the origin of many of our favourite characters from “The Wizard of Oz” with a deeply moving twist.

The challenge is that it is an extremely complicated piece of work that is currently being performed internationally, on both Broadway and in the West End. Attempting that here was brave, perhaps foolhardy and some might even say, frankly insane but it offered my team a challenge that they have risen to and it has been an extraordinary rollercoaster of an emotional ride from "What have I done!!! Why? Why? Why? to...Hey, this is looking pretty good, You know we just might have something here...to Wow, this is going to be really good!" It's all part of the creative process we as a team have gone through, and I am extremely fortunate to be able to work with such talented, good humoured and driven staff. We did it together and that includes the creative input and suggestions of the students.





Tell us about this year's cast members and the roles they play. Are they all up to the task of doing justice to this very challenging musical?

We have a cast ranging from Year 6 students through to A-Levels. In fact, one of our leading couples is Han Ying who has just turned 13 and an A-Level student and head prefect Theo Barrett. It's our job to make sure they are up to the task despite being aware that the task we have set them is an extraordinary one. The music is highly sophisticated, the dance routines challenging and the acting must be pronounced but refined. They have to do all three at once.

It has always been my philosophy from the start, students if not told how impossible a particular task is will not be held back by thinking it is impossible. They will see it as challenging, difficult, frustrating but in the end rewarding because they would have grown beyond any boundaries we might impose on them or indeed they on themselves. Why can't a student perform a West End caliber performance with the right training, environment, support and enthusiasm? The answer to that will be clear to any who see our production. They can do it!

What are the underlying messages in "WICKED" that will resonate with HIS students?

There are many underlying messages in this production about the foolishness of judging a person by their looks to what is the real price of getting what you want; what are we prepared to give up or allow to happen to others in our to achieve our own ends. The cast is tremendous, and it has been a long process with one 2 hour rehearsal session per week since late September last year. The amount of sustained focus and commitment has been impressive. We have seen some actors drop off along on the way but the ones who have stayed have learned that there are no small parts in this production and have come to understand the value of working as a member of a creative team.



What can the audience expect from HIS school's "WICKED" production?

The audience can expect to see a story of a young woman's struggles against prejudice, bigotry and a totalitarian regime tightening its grip on the populous as they target specific groups and races for removal. It is also a fascinating insight into the origins of one of the most beloved musicals of all time, where we learn how the Tin Man and Scarecrow were born. You can expect an amazing story sung and danced with intensity, creativity and skill.

What would you say to the students to encourage them to come watch the production?

I would say you should come because it not only supports the school and your friends in it, and because you'll really, really like it and be impressed with what we have achieved.

It might inspire you to join us next year for "Macbeth"!



Acting in a musical is so much harder, it requires a different skill set as it has to be combined with carefully choreographed dances and music. Standing and singing is one thing, dancing rock and roll or the cha cha while acting your character and singing is another.

Behind the Scenes: WICKED the Musical

Backstage with Ms. Deborah Bull, Musical Director and Han Ying, who is playing the role of Elphaba

Ms Deborah Bull, or better known as Ms Debbie, the music teacher, walks into the room and her megawatt smile instantly brightens up the rainy day. It's easy to see how her enthusiasm for her craft rubs off on the students, whom she is immensely proud of. Since joining HIS in August last year, she has been tasked with getting the cast prepared vocally for their parts in the much-anticipated musical, "WICKED".

"When I first heard that James had picked "WICKED" as a choice for this year's school production, I had my reservations. From a vocal and musical point of view, it is a very challenging musical. For example, we have the role of Elphaba, played by Han Ying (Year 7) which requires an ability to sing a two-octave vocal range. The musical scores are complicated and requires a high level of technical abilities which our very own Hou Wei Chook from Year 10 (on keyboard and piano), is trying hard to do justice to. I'm pleased that we are at the point where we can see it all coming together now, thanks to the dedication that the cast and team has put into this show."

Ms Debbie is no stranger to the world of performing and singing. She is a graduate of the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (formerly known as the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama), majoring in classical singing. She grew up in a very musical family where her parents and grandparents played various musical instruments and there was always music and singing at home. She was part of the



National Youth Choir of Scotland (NYCOS) and her ambition from a young age was to be a singer.

Upon graduation, she spent two years teaching music in a secondary school in Glasgow before moving to China to teach in an international school. During both her teaching stints, she was involved in staging various types of school productions including musicals such as "13", "We Will Rock You", Roald Dahl's "Jack and the Beanstalk", "Anything Goes" and a Christmas musical that she co-wrote. She is testament to the belief that music should be exposed to children from a young age. The pride she has for her students is evident when asked if they are up to the challenge of doing justice to "WICKED".

“The cast of “WICKED” are super talented and so hard-working! I find that at HIS, and generally in Asia, when I ask students to try a new approach, they listen and really try hard to improve. They are so eager to learn and I’m so proud of how they have developed vocally over the last few months. Han Ying who is playing the role of Elphaba is very committed and I see huge improvements. Natasha (Year 10) who is playing the role of Glinda is like a big sister to Han Ying and the younger cast members and has been working extremely hard too. Theo is perfectly cast as Fiyero, but in reality they are all really nice and supportive of each other.”

Understandably, Ms Debbie is very nervous as the countdown begins to July 3 when the curtains will rise for the premiere of Wicked at HIS. She will be playing the piano during the show, backed by Hou Wei on Keyboard and a team of professional musicians including a Bassist and Guitarist. Mr Kevin and Mr Iwan together with a few Year 8 students will be responsible for the sound engineering and sound effects. Musically, it promises to be a fun and enjoyable experience for the audience.

“I hope students will come watch the show and support their friends who are taking part in the production. They will be able to see their friends in a different capacity playing parts that show a different side to their character. For those who want to be in a production next year, this will give them an insight to what is involved.”



The planning for Wicked started since last year when several auditions were held to find talents who are able to perform the very challenging roles that this musical requires.

When Han Ying was told that she has been picked for the role of Elphaba she was surprised, given that the rest of her co-stars are older than her. The 13-year old is nervous yet excited to be given this chance to play a lead role in a musical.

“Playing Elphaba’s role is very challenging to me as I have to portray her evolution as a character. I would say Elphaba’s character will connect with students my age as we often feel misunderstood. Hopefully, I can do her character justice by showing the range of emotions she goes through.”

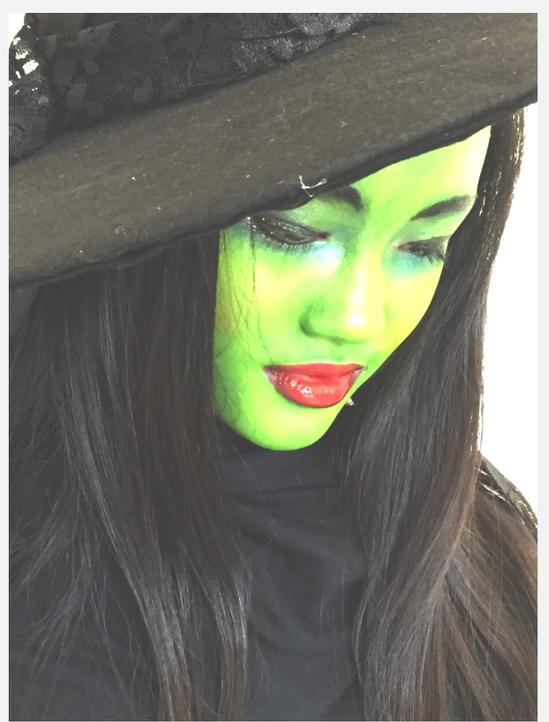
In the acting department, she has been getting lots of help from Mr James in developing her skills. *“Mr James helped me to relate to Elphaba’s role. He’s been directing the cast well and we are now off-script and fine-tuning each scene.”*

Even though this is Han Ying’s first foray in a musical production, she is no stranger to the stage as she has been singing in various school competitions since the age of 7. She has been working hard with Ms Debbie, getting one-to-one vocal coaching 3 times a week, in order to prepare for her role.

“Ms Debbie has really helped me develop vocally and ways in which I can better express the emotions that the role requires. I’m also learning how to ‘belt’ and really looking forward to singing “Defying Gravity” while flying.”

There is certainly no trace of any diva behavior from this leading actress as she is quick to credit the cast and people behind this production.

“So many wonderful people are involved in this show; the teachers guiding us, the fellow students who are all so supportive of each other, Ms Hifza who is making a few of the dresses for the main cast, the parent volunteers helping with our wardrobe and make-up and many more people working hard behind the scenes. The audience will be blown away by the emotional quality that the students are trying to put into the show.”



“The real challenge for me is to understand the emotions that Elphaba is experiencing and to act and sing it out. I could relate to the ‘nerdiness’ and awkwardness that Elphaba’s character starts off with, as at my age, all of us go through this process of discovering our true self.”

THE DATES OF THE SHOWS ARE JULY 3 AND 4. TICKETS WILL BE ON SALE IN JUNE AT THE ADMIN OFFICE.

DON’T MISS OUT ON HIS’ FIRST MUSICAL PRODUCTION!

SCIENCE WEEK

May 18–21





CAREER MONTH JOB

For Career Month at HIS in May, students from Preschool to A-Levels were given the opportunities to learn about different careers and vocations. The fabulous programme put together by our Career Counsellors include "Show and Tell" and job shadowing for younger students; and for older students: 2-minutes lunchtime boom box "I Have A Dream" and career talks by a pilot, psychologist, financial analyst, musician, photographer and anesthetist.

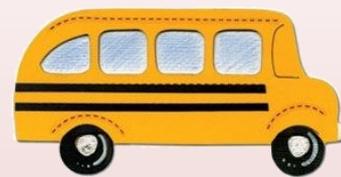




YEAR 2

KidZania
Kuala Lumpur

field trips



YEAR 3



PETROSAINS





YEAR 4



**A LITTLE FARM ON THE HILL,
JANDA BAIK**



YEAR 9

SKYTREX ADVENTURE



**YEAR 10
&
A-LEVELS**

SHAKESPEARE OTHELLO

FEATURING
LIM KIEN LEE
LIM SOON HENG
GRACE NG
SANDEE CHEW
DAVID H. LIM
ARIEF HAMIZAN
KGIA LOONG

DIRECTED BY
LIM KIEN LEE
QAHAR AGILAH

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Angkasa 2, Blok
 22 - 15 Apr 2015
 @ 8.30pm
 25 - 25 Apr 2015 @ 8pm

18 - 18 Apr 2015
 @ 8.30pm
 19 Apr 2015 @ 8pm

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YEAR 8 SCOUTS CAMP

Our trip began, like most camping trips do, with food! We arrived to a brilliant lunch before setting up the tents and getting unpacked.

After a tour of the site and grounds, we decided to get ready for the night hike. It was a challenge as our local guides led us in the dark forest for a night hike.

During the morning we broke into groups and we all tried some fantastic activities lead by our teachers. Mr Mark was showed us his fire-making skills, Ms Stacie showed us her obstacle-course running skills, Ms Ruth thrilled us with her cricket-playing skills and I taught archery. We have some great archers in Year 8.

After 3 hours of activity, it was time for lunch and the raft stick race. All students and teachers were given a wooden stick to decorate and then we had to have a race and the losing team had to do the dishes for the entire camp! Well, not surprisingly, the teachers won!

The next activity we did was stream trotting and climbing. It was an activity that left everyone tired but with an immense smile of satisfaction knowing that they managed to climb a waterfall and walk the entire river back to the camp surrounded by the jungle on all sides!

That evening, we had a barbeque and toasted marshmallows in the camp fire.

The next morning, we all packed up and left the camp site for home after a group photo with the local guard dog who took a shine to both pupils and teachers.

Paul Snoddy
Leader in Charge of Explorer Scouts



Our young Scouts working on their archery badge.



WORLD BOOK DAY WEEK

April 27 — 30

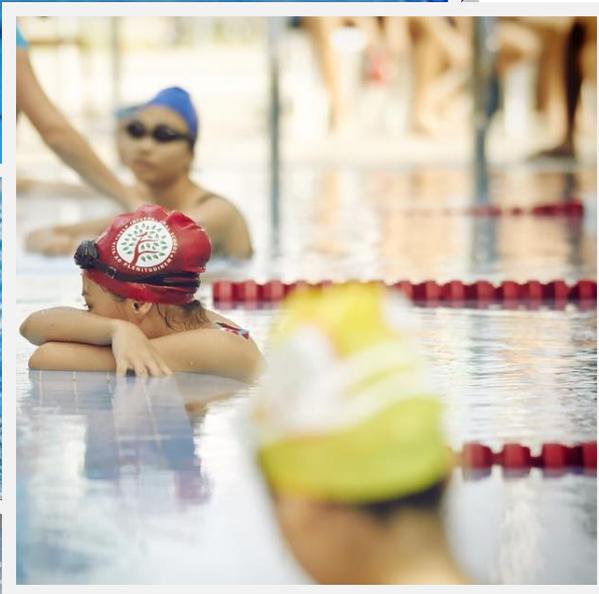




SWIMMING GALA

May 26—28





PRESCHOOL SPORTS DAY



May 29







STUDENT CORNER

In front of a crowd of 3,600 people, **Wong Yu Yuan** (Year 2 Tagore) singing a duet with a renowned classical soprano at the "Chung Hwa Wei Sin 1515 100th Anniversary Celebrations" in Kuala Terengganu.



Year 1 IPC Learning Unit: "Seeing the Light" — students were encouraged to explore light and darkness and how it impacts our life and world. Teachers organised a Pyjama Party in the Ciarán Hinds Theatre where students wore their pyjamas to school and brought their favourite soft toy. Even the teachers dressed down to their pyjamas too to get into the spirit of exploring darkness.

The children were read a bedtime story and had a lot of fun experiencing the ambience set with nightlights and candles.

