

THE LION'S ROAR

NOVEMBER 2016



Realising Potential
www.iss.edu.sg



Dr. Margaret Alvarez, Head of School

Welcome to our first e-newsletter of this 2016-2017 academic year. Through this e-newsletter we can keep you up to date with the exciting happenings at ISS International School and share the successes, innovations and unique learning opportunities that empower our students to realise their potential.

During the first quarter of this year, our community has been busy preparing for our accreditation/evaluation visit by the Council of International Schools (CIS), the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) and the three International Baccalaureate Programmes – IB Primary Years Programme, IB Middle Years Programme and the IB Diploma Programme.

We are delighted to report that all three agencies commended ISS for:

- providing a caring, family-oriented approach that produces strong academic results
- the significance and degree of developments to our programmes and operations
- the vision and mission of the school that are well understood and act as a unifying focal point for our programmes and operations
- the global stewardship and multi-cultural awareness demonstrated by our students
- the extraordinary levels of support given to students
- our dedication to being a quality, inclusive learning environment
- the level of commitment and support our students and parents demonstrate for ISS International School

We look forward to receiving the reports from these agencies during quarter two.

In addition, in the first quarter, we held for our annual International Day, a celebration of our diversity and an opportunity for the ISS Community to share its culture. This event took place on Friday October 14th on our Paterson Campus.

We also held many other activities at each of the schools; our Elementary School held its Sports Day, our High School students participated in a "New Age Hackathon", as well as a vertical climb event and our MYP students enjoyed their Swim Gala. Please enjoy the photographs in this edition and many thanks to all involved.

Margaret Alvarez (Dr.)

CONTENT

Getting to Know ISS: **02**
5 Reasons to Pick a Small School

Getting to Know our Board Member: **03**
Clarence Lim

Student Achievements and Contributions: **04**
Our Avid Student Photographer
by Seraphino

Lunchtime Music Recital
by Mr. Hoddinott

Zika by Sharaf **05**

Our Alumni Community: **06**
Mhairie Claire Alvarez-Miller

PTA Activities: **07**
Our PTA

ISS Celebration: **08**
International Day
14 October

Past Happenings: **09**
School Activities
August to October

Up and Coming Events: **10**
Events to Look Forward To
November to December

5 Reasons to Pick a Small School

While a small school may not be every parent's first choice, it can provide a nurturing, inclusive and empowering learning experience for many students. ISS International School catches up with students and parents to find out what they appreciate about being part of a small school.

1) Small Class Size

The first obvious advantage is the small class sizes. Students benefit from the close interaction with teachers, made possible only by keeping a low student-to-teacher ratio. Class ratios at ISS International School can be as low as eight students to one teacher at high school, 15 students to one teacher at middle school and 18 students to one teacher at elementary school.

"It's a lot easier to make appointments with teachers as they have more time for you," Ashmitha, a student from Southeast Asia, describes. "As a result of the relationship you develop with them, they care a lot more about your comfort level with the subject and with you as a person."

With such personalised attention, students are less likely to feel lost or unnoticed, which can happen in a large student body. Instead, they will be valued and nurtured as individuals under the watchful care of their teachers.

2) Customised Learning Journeys

With more focus on students as unique individuals, a small school is able to customise the learning journeys according to the needs and interests of its students. The close and authentic student-teacher interaction – a successful formula for ISS International School – enables the delivery of an education centred on students' needs, to give students the best chance to realise their potential.

The progress of a student's learning journey – including their interests, strengths and weaknesses, actions and behaviours – are all tracked frequently to influence the way the school plans and delivers its curriculum to help students excel. This bespoke approach extends to language support to help non-native English-speaking students acquire English language skills, as well as other learning needs and extension work that students may require, in order to thrive academically in the school curriculum.

As Camille, a student from Europe, shares: "Of the five schools I have attended in two countries, I see a difference at ISS International School. It has a diverse range of classes and activities to accommodate different learner profiles. The teachers are always willing to help after school and between classes. I have known a teacher since Middle School and she still offers support to me."

3) Passion in Teaching

The close student-teacher bonds do not only benefit the students' learning and well-being at a small school. They also add to the sense of job fulfilment that the faculty and staff members experience, which in turn fuels their passion to shape the best learning experience for students.

Within a small school, faculty members are better able to form a close-knit, informal and supportive community while receiving more opportunities for professional training to improve their craft. One of the teachers at ISS International School shares that "we feel appreciated for the work done, compared to what I had experienced in my other teaching assignments. As a result, I feel fulfilled that my work is recognised and this gives a further boost to my passion to teach."

At ISS International School, the passion is well-reflected in the teachers' willingness to innovate in their teaching methodologies, to go beyond the call of duty to support students and to build lifelong friendships with students.

As Ashmitha observes: "The teachers are very passionate about their subjects and their teaching. They have been carefully selected to fit the requirements and the environment of the school. And yes, I can see that it is reflected in their zeal to educate their students. I can honestly say that I genuinely enjoy the majority of my classes because of the incredible support I have received from my teachers in those subjects."



Nurturing student-centric curriculum delivery



Small class sizes facilitate close & authentic teacher-student interaction

Within a small school, faculty members are better able to form a close-knit, informal and supportive community while receiving more opportunities for professional training to improve their craft. One of the teachers at ISS International School shares that "we feel appreciated for the work done, compared to what I had experienced in my other teaching assignments. As a result, I feel fulfilled that my work is recognised and this gives a further boost to my passion to teach."

Article: **“5 Reasons to Pick a Small School”** continues.

4) Big Fish, Small Pond

A small school is still able to offer an extensive range of extra-curricular and leadership activities to complement the academic subjects and holistically nurture the students' personal development. But the difference is that there are more opportunities for students to get involved.

“A small school has the advantage of allowing children greater participation, especially in the leadership positions,” observes Ai Hoon, a parent from the United States. “There are also more opportunities for them to represent the school in different events.”

Some students also share that it is much easier to take part in different sports. Small schools provide opportunities for beginners to learn the sport, instead of just choosing the best athletes to play.

5) Close-Knit Community

Finally, a small school is able to provide a safe and nurturing environment where faculty and staff know the students by name. They are thus able to care for the students' well-being and address any bullying or emotional problems in a timely manner if the need arises.

At ISS International School, the close-knit community extends to including the parents of students. Involving parents is integral to the students' progress. In addition to receiving regular updates from the school, parents are frequently seen participating at student events.

While students appreciate the ‘family’ feel of the school, Malin, a parent from Europe, notes that the warm welcome received gave her a very good first impression of ISS International School. She says: “The administrative staff members were very friendly and generous with their time in answering all our questions. They took great care in sorting out everything we needed, and this made us feel very welcome. We felt certain our children would feel at home here.”



Our teachers make time to guide our students

Getting to Know Our Board Member



Clarence Lim

Clarence Lim was a teacher for 12 years in three Singapore government schools. He taught English Literature, English Language and General Paper. He left teaching to join the publishing industry as an editor of educational and academic textbooks. After retiring as managing director and publisher of Oxford University Press (Singapore), he became the programme coordinator of a special English course tailored for the management and technical staff of Beijing Television Station (BTV). The classes were held at BTV and Beijing BISS International School. On his return after two years in Beijing, he became an adjunct English teacher at the Centre for English Language and Communication, National University of Singapore. Concurrently, he worked three days a week with Times Publishing as editorial consultant.

Clarence retired from regular employment in 2013 and now divides his time between golfing, travelling, making music and grandparental indulgence.

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ISS International School has a proud and illustrious history as the first international school with a deliberate cosmopolitan focus. The establishment of ISS by the founder, Mr Chan Chee Seng, contributed in some way to the then nascent industrialisation of Singapore. ISS must remain a boutique and inclusive international school to differentiate itself from the very large transnational and trustee schools so that it can stay nimble to better adapt to disruptions and disruptors unleashed from the ever-changing global economic trends.

– Mr. Clarence Lim

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Our Avid Student Photographer



Seraphino with his photo book

If you'd like to see Seraphino's work from his personal project, please visit bit.ly/Seraphino. If you'd like to purchase some of Seraphino's amazing work, head over to his 500px profile, 500px.com/seraphinohuang!

One of our students, Seraphino, has published a photobook of photos that he personally took of places in Singapore. He discovered photography when his dad first let him use a camera. His passion for photography fueled his interest to learn more and improve his photography skills. He studied photography online, and continued taking pictures and gaining experience. For his personal project, a requirement for MYP International Baccalaureate (IB) students, Seraphino took the opportunity to unleash his inner photographer, and the photobook is a result of all that hard work and inspiration.

“

The pictures in this collection are by no means unique locations never seen before by the human eye. By contrast, they are images of locations that can be found in every other travel book or photo essay book about Singapore. In that sense they are iconic of Singapore.

However, the way that the images of each of these locations are presented, the picture composition, framing, angle, perspective, time of day chosen for each shot, ambience, lighting, and photo editing done to achieve the precise effect desired, that is an expression that's uniquely me. It is my personal take on these places in Singapore, an expression of my feelings toward these places, and how I see that place in my mind's eye.

And as Elliot Erwitt once said, "Photography is an art of observation. It's about finding something interesting in an ordinary place... It has little to do with the things you see and everything to do with the way you see them." This, is the way I see Singapore.

– Seraphino, ISS Student

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Lunchtime Music Recital



To watch the videos of their performance, visit <http://bit.ly/ISSLunchMusic>

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The Lunchtime Recitals and Concerts are an excellent opportunity to bring music into the school community. It gives our students the opportunity to show off their talents, but they also learn about all the aspects that go into a performance. They get the chance to share their love of music and their gift of playing a musical instrument so they become more developed musicians.

– Mr. Hoddinott, ISS Teacher

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This article was contributed by one of our high school students at the height of the Zika outbreak in Singapore.

ZIKA

by Sharaf

Singapore, an Asian country and a neighbour to Malaysia, has often felt the threat of diseases spread through mosquitoes. Mosquitoes act as the perfect medium for the dispersion of malaria, dengue, whose threat has been introduced just a few months ago, and now, the Zika Virus.

The Zika Virus is spread through the Aedes mosquito, which is a common breed found in Singapore. The Aedes mosquito has long been a worry to large health organisations within Singapore and Malaysia since early times. We were so blind to Singapore's perfect security and beauty that the tiny threats lurking within the dark were actually morphing into monsters under our beds, in front of our very eyes.

Rumours (as people love to make for their lack of hobbies) claim that Joseph Schooling, the Olympic representative of Singapore brought "home" the Zika virus from Texas. However, rumours are rumours and though they are ridiculous, it is quite fun to point out people have the gift of ability to generate them. Actually, the reasons as to their sudden appearance is unknown, however, the first recorded case was from the Aljunied area in Singapore, where the patient had a severe fever, red eyes, and other symptoms of Zika. Reports of people with similar symptoms began to appear, like a ripple effect, washing over surrounding areas like Paya Lebar and the far east areas of Singapore (along the green line on the MRT, for your visual mind).

The panic that has contributed towards Zika's current climax is mostly due to the difficulty of determining if you have Zika or not. Only 1 out of 5 Zika patients show symptoms and furthermore, for those who do not show symptoms, it takes 6 to 7 days with active collection of urine and blood samples to determine the presence of the virus in there! Symptoms, if there are any, include red eyes, unexplained rashes, muscle pain, fever and so on, and last for up to a maximum of 7 days.

Although it may not affect your health significantly, it does pose a threat to our genetic structure, which contributes to this invisible spread of a dangerous disease. Firstly, we can start off saying it is not contagious, however, it can be passed around as a sexually transmitted disease. This puts more gravity on the next point: Pregnancy issues. Though research is still limited and still ongoing, it has shown that the children of pregnant Zika patients have abnormalities, such as microcephaly, which is the shrinkage of the head of the baby, simultaneously with the enlargement of their brain. Although the chances as low as 1/10 (which in my opinion are high, but media needs to maintain the calm of the citizens), it may still serve to create horrible social implications in the future and trigger an increase in abortion rates, which can now be justified in the perspective of not only parents, but their children's pained perspective of their dire medical situation.

The Zika virus has only started and the ripple effects will turn into tsunamis, so it is important that you students partake in keeping yourself and others safe. Purchase mosquito repellents and patches to lower chances of disease transmission. I know it is tedious, dumb and uncool, but if it saves your lives and the lives you could bring into this world, then your opinion is invalid. This is a serious situation, and though the effects are invisible, so are UV rays. They still hurt.

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The Zika virus has only started and the ripple effects will turn into tsunamis, so it is important that you students partake in keeping yourself and others safe.

– Sharaf, ISS Student

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I value every moment I spent at ISS International School, even the difficult and stressful times.

– Mhairie Claire Alvarez-Miller, ISS Alumni

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Mhairie Claire's mini alumni get together

My name is Mhairie Claire Alvarez-Miller and I am a 2015 graduate of ISS International School. I am currently studying at Osaka University in Japan. My program is part of the Global 30 program in Japan where the courses are taught in English. I study science in the Chemistry-Biology combined major program (CBCMP), one of the two Global 30 programs in Osaka University.

I was a student at ISS International School from preschool until I graduated from the IB Diploma program, with the exception of one year in Grade 1, when I was away in India. I had the opportunity to meet many people from around the world, be it peers, teachers, or staff. With these opportunities I was able to learn about other cultures and become more open minded. As ISS is a small school, I feel as though students are able to form close bonds with each other and are more strongly supported by their teachers.

I value every moment I spent at ISS International School, even the difficult and stressful times. Meeting such a variety of people from all over the world, and learning to carry on when I struggled, prepared me to meet the challenges in my university courses and to succeed at finding opportunities in everyday independent life.

Alumni Introduction

Our alumni are all over the world and remain an important part of the ISS International School community. We love to hear about what our alumni are accomplishing on their lifelong learning journey, and how their time at ISS has influenced who they are, what they do, and the part they play in the global community. In the future, alumni will be invited to attend special gatherings such as networking events, professional talks, annual reunions or dialogue sessions.

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ISS prepared me to meet the challenges in my university courses and to succeed at finding opportunities in everyday independent life.

– Mhairie Claire Alvarez-Miller, ISS Alumni

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We love to hear about what our alumni are accomplishing on their lifelong learning journey, and how their time at ISS has influenced who they are, what they do, and the part they play in the global community.

Join our Facebook group for the latest updates on our alumni activities and events!

www.facebook.com/groups/issgalumni/

Our PTA



PTA Executive Committee

The PTA exists to support the vision and mission of ISS International School by fostering a spirit of cooperation among parents and teachers as they work together for the benefit of the school community. We organise events for staff, teachers, parents, guardians, and students. The PTA contributes to charitable efforts supported by the school such as community service projects. We also support school-sponsored events like International Day, the Middle School Performance, Elementary and Middle Schools' Art Exhibitions and the Elementary School Book Swap, just to name a few.

The PTA for the 2016-17 school year are made up of parents from different nationalities, backgrounds and cultures, much like the school community itself. Elected by votes in September 2016, we are glad to present to you the PTA Executive Committee 2016-17!

Committee Chair: Vicki, Vice Chair: Trine, Treasurer: Cliff, Assistant Treasurer: Neal, Secretary: Sarah, General Secretary: Carlos, Japanese Community Representative: Kazue, ES Representative: Hiroko, MS Representative: Ma Aye, and our HS Representative: Paul.

"I am excited to serve as your PTA Chair for this school year and am honoured to be working alongside our talented PTA officers. ISS encourages a collaborative approach to the student-school-family relationship as this enhances the overall social integration, emotional well-being and academic success of our children, both inside and outside the classroom.

The PTA strongly values the parental involvement and nurturing environment we have at ISS and will be continuing the work from last year to strengthen and build our community. We will be doing this by coordinating events that give everyone in the ISS family an opportunity get to know one another better and empower our students to change the world. There are many ways to participate, and the ISS PTA welcomes any input you may have!" – Chair, Vicki

To get involved, please email pta@iss.edu.sg.



Our PTA Chair and Deputy Head of School having a good chat



Our parents and staff having an enjoyable time at the PTA Welcome Social



The PTA Annual General Meeting in September this year. Our new PTA Executive Committee is excited to serve the ISS Community!

International Day

14 October



Our flagbearers waiting for the Parade of Nations

ISS International School (ISS) was established in 1981 by our chairman, Mr. Chan Chee Seng, to serve the growing expatriate community and address the need for a more cosmopolitan international school. His deep rooted love for learning and his understanding of Singapore's economic needs then, created his vision for an inclusive international school with a strong global focus. This vision still lives strong today at ISS International School.

Our annual celebration of International Day supports this ethos and this year, International Day took place on the 14th October.

We started off with a flag parade, where every single nationality at ISS was featured, followed by cultural workshops where we could learn about different countries and their cultures, learn a new dance, make crafts, and watch performances. We ended off our wonderful day of celebration with an array of scrumptious international food lovingly prepared by our parents and students.



High School students doing the Tinikling, a Filipino traditional bamboo dance!



All dressed up and ready for the parade to start!



Enjoying the high school students' performances!



Middle School students dressed up!



Elementary School students all dressed up and enjoying their lunch!



Our parents contributed many dishes of delicious food!



Our older students teaching and helping our younger ones make Australian animal crafts!



Middle School students dressed up!



Middle School students dressed up!



High School students dressed up!

School Activities

August to October

New Student Orientations and 1st Day of School (August)

Our new students were invited to tour the school and facilities, meet their teachers, and discover more about what school life at ISS International School will be like, so that they start off the year feeling welcomed, included, and empowered to start their learning journey.

We spent the first day of school creating new friendships, strengthening old ones, and building skills to work together while having fun. As we journey through the school year, through teamwork and collaboration, we will learn and grow together.

Coffee Mornings (August – October)

We organise coffee mornings throughout the school year so that parents can gain a more indepth understanding of the subjects and skills their children are learning. We introduced parents to our curriculum: EYS, PYP, MYP, DP and also covered other core subject areas.

New Age Hackathon 2.0 (27 August)

Our Grade 10 students used their coding skills to support the theme of “Mental Well-being for All Ages”. They brainstormed ideas for a mobile app that will aid those with mental illness, which they created at the 24-hour coding event.

ES Sports Day (16 September)

We firmly believe an active body is as important as an active mind. Our students enjoyed being outside and staying active at ES Sports Day! We did our best to compete in races and events, celebrated with the winners, and encouraged and cheered each other on, furthering on our teamwork and sense of community, while having fun together .

MS Spirit Week (3 to 7 October)

Every year, leading up to the MYP Swim Gala, our middle school sports leaders organise a Spirit Week to develop school spirit and generate excitement for the Swim Gala. This year, we enjoyed a wide range of activities, like the Water Bottle Flip Challenge and the Limbo.

MYP Swim Gala (7 October)

Our MYP students trained hard for the Swim Gala – and it showed! They did a great job in all the races, portraying good sportsmanship and teamwork. We had a wonderful day at the pool supporting and cheering on one another.

Vertical Marathon (8 October)

Our high school students who volunteer with sick children at KK Women’s and Children’s Hospital participated in a vertical marathon, Climb for Rainbows, to raise funds for the hospital. What a great way to work out our bodies for a great cause!

MusicFest@SGH (28 October)

This year, our middle school students participated in MusicFest@SGH, and performed for the patients at Singapore General Hospital. They lifted their spirits with their upbeat and energetic performances from Wicked and Into The Woods.



New Student Orientation



1st day of school - teambuilding



MYP Coffee Morning



New Age Hackathon



ES Sports Day



MYP Swim Gala



MusicFest@SGH

Events to Look Forward To

November to December

HS Week Without Walls Parents Information Evening (3 November)

Please join us to find out more about the Week Without Walls trips your child(ren) will embark on in January 2017.

MS Urgent Run (5 November)

Our MS students will be participating in the Urgent Run, to raise funds for countries that have limited access to clean toilets.

Learning Other Languages: Strategies for Home Coffee Morning (8 November)

Drop by to learn strategies that you can use at home to enhance your child’s foreign language development.

MS Week Without Walls (14 to 18 November)

Our MYP students take a Service As Action school trip every year called Week Without Walls (WWW) to countries such as Cambodia, Indonesia, Thailand, and Vietnam. Through these WWW trips, we educate to make a difference through meaningful, practical and authentic experiences by fostering cross-cultural exchange and understanding.

IN Art Exhibition (16 November to 12 January)

Our talented Art students will be showcasing their work, along with students from many other schools in Singapore, at the IN Art Exhibition at the Australian High Commission. Feel free to drop by to appreciate and enjoy their beautiful masterpieces!

ES Student-led Conferences & Book Fair (16 November)

Your children will play the role of ‘guide’, and will show you around their classroom and school, sharing with you some of the lessons or activities they’ve done throughout Semester One. We will also be having a Book Fair in the library, so drop by before or after your student-led tour to get some good books!

HS Festival of Lights Concert (30 November)

Our High School music students will stage an amazing performance under the stars at our annual Festival of Lights concert.

The Rainbow Centre ‘Chair-ity’ Exhibition @ Ion (1 to 10 December)

The Rainbow Centre “Chair-ity” Project is a fundraising initiative that began as a way to raise money to help cancer victims. This year, for the first time, funds will be used to build an extension wing at the Rainbow Centre at Margaret Drive to help children with special needs. Some of our high school students worked with students from the Rainbow Centre to decorate chairs that will be auctioned off. The chairs will be displayed at Ion Orchard Shopping Centre. Please support our students’ effort by coming by to view the exhibition, and if you’re interested, make a bid for one of our chairs! You can also do your part for “Chair-ity” by logging on to <https://www.clubrainbow.org> after mid November to purchase these chairs.

ES Performing Arts Concert (9 December)

Our Elementary School students work hard all Semester One to put on a stellar performance in December. We look forward to enjoying the culmination of all their hard work!



Learning Other Languages - Strategies for Home



MS Week Without Walls Trips



IN Art Exhibition



ES Student-led Conferences & Book Fair



HS Festival of Lights



Rainbow Chairity Exhibition



ES Performing Arts Concert

Enjoy this content? Tell your friends about it!

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