



Newsletter 11 2019-20

Friday 22nd November 2019

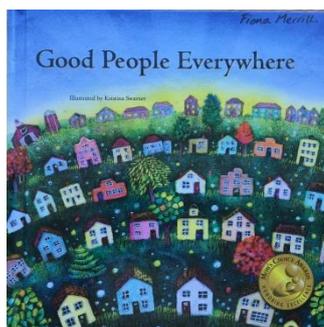
Dear Parents and JIS community

It is great to be back at school and to begin to get some normal routines re-established. The students have had an excellent few days, with some glorious autumn weather and lots of busy activities and learning. Thank you to everyone in the JIS community for helping us make the best of a difficult situation, we have tried to keep everyone informed and also tried to support the continuation of learning at home. Thanks to advances in technology and also the perseverance of many students and their families, we know that many of the students were able to carry on with some learning during the school closure. Some students interacted a lot and others joined in when they could.

The students of course want to discuss what has been going on and also need us to recognize what they have heard and seen. We do not shy away from discussing and acknowledging what many have seen on tv, media or may have experienced first-hand. All members of staff have been asked to be professional and neutral when listening and to comment in a positive way.

We cannot control ideas or thoughts fully, I am aware that some discussions have been held on school buses and also that some playground games are no longer cops and robbers tag (!), so we need to listen, educate, inform and generally be aware of what the students are thinking and verbalizing. As parents, listen, discuss and respond; if you need to contact school please do so at any time.

Good People Everywhere – a celebration of humanity and its diversity

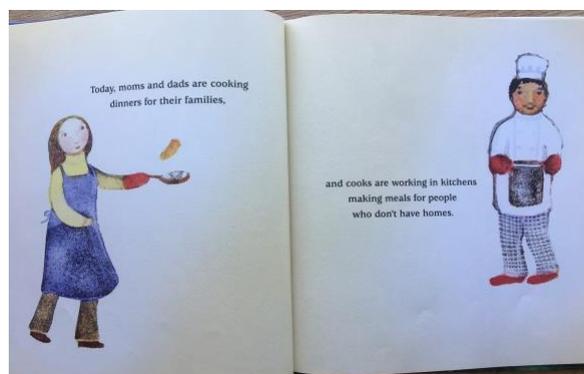


One of the best ways of getting children to reflect and discuss is through the use of story and the power of creative ideas and words. We have been using the text: 'Good People Everywhere' as a positive way to ensure that all our students can see, hear and feel the positives in their environment and also manage the conflicting, negative images or thoughts they may be having in a context of the last few weeks in Hong Kong.

The story is a simple and highly effective celebration of the diversity of humanity and how there is so much good there is that goes uncelebrated.

In library sessions today Ms Wan has shared the story again with the

students and asked them to consider the 'good' in their world and suggested that we draw, write or create images of our own positives – to make a display in the school entrance foyer – to celebrate the joys of ourselves and our community. We really welcome any of you to get involved in this, so we can truly represent 'good people everywhere' within the school and its community. Send in your images, ideas, artefacts and we'll create something to showcase them.



Around school:

Sports Day 29th November – Dragons, Phoenix, Pegasus – who will win this year?

We hope everyone received the information regarding the changes to Sports Day next week – Friday 29th November.

We shall now be holding our Sports Day at the Tai Po Sports Ground – 21 Tai Po Tau Road, Tai Po from 8:45a.m. – 11:45 a.m. (<https://www.lcsd.gov.hk/clpss/tc/webApp/Facility/Details.do?ftid=38&did=12>)

In order to make sure everyone can arrive and be accounted for we have booked buses for students from JIS to the sports ground, but we will have to try to get on the buses as close to 8:30 a.m. as possible.



At the end of Sports Day there will be buses back to school for those students going back to school. Parents taking their children home will be asked to sign a form (out next week), so that we know where everyone is, for safety and accountability. At the end of the school day school buses will run home as normal for those children who are still at school.

SIS after school activities – Friday 29th November. Stephanie Tsui (SIS) will send out an information email to all students involved.

Cinderella Rockerfella – Friday 13th December

Ms Wan, Ms Jill and Ms De Thier are going full speed with their cast and crew for the school show on Friday 13th December. Of course we are a bit anxious with the loss of time recently but the cast are really keen and have worked so hard that we shall go ahead and plan a wonderful evening, on schedule.

The show will start at 6pm and ESSPA will be organizing the tickets and pre-show food and drinks in the playground area from around 5:30pm. Tickets will be on sale very soon. The tickets help to pay for the rental of sound system and microphones to enable us all to enjoy the show.



Ms Yuki De Long – school counselor

A quick note to let the JIS community know that Ms Yuki has been around in school this week to support JIS students. She is also available for families who may like to discuss their experiences or the events within Hong Kong in the last few months. Please contact Jenny Procter on jprocter@es.jis.edu.hk



Learning at JIS – from Cath Wan, Deputy Principal/ PYP Coordinator **The role of our curriculum in supporting children during times of challenge**

It was wonderful to welcome the students back to school this week. They have been as energetic and enthusiastic as ever and it's great to see them continue to flourish even after a challenging week for Hong Kong.

Education has an important role in preparing students to deal with times of adversity. Here are a few snapshots of how we are doing this.

1) The PYP Curriculum and “human commonalities” - (a geeky moment!)

Some of the theories that have played a major role in the PYP curriculum include those from Ernest Boyer and Basarab Nicolescu. Boyer's theorised about “Core Commonalities”, things that all humans have in common, regardless of race, background, gender or beliefs; they are shared human experiences. These are intentionally reflected the PYP's transdisciplinary theme descriptors for Who We Are, Where We Are in Place and Time, How We Express Ourselves, How the World Works, Sharing the Planet and How We Organise Ourselves. Every year group investigates these areas every year through different conceptual lenses and contexts. Thus you could say, human commonalities drive our curriculum!

Nicolescu, whose writings have informed the IB's approach to transdisciplinary learning states that Inquiry into human commonalities taps into the “sacred”: the feeling, regardless of culture or beliefs, that “induces in the very depths of the human being an absolute respect for others, to whom he is linked by their sharing a common life on one and the same Earth” (Nicolescu, 2008, p.16).

I'll close the 'geek' moment there before I get carried away. For those of you who are interested, there are references at the end of my article.

2) Scope and Sequences

Our school uses the IB Personal, Social and Physical Scope and Sequence documents to inform planning for every unit of inquiry. This document is separated into 3 strands:

Identity

“An understanding of our own beliefs values, attitudes, experiences and feelings and how they shape us; the impact of cultural influences, the recognition of strengths, limitations and challenges as well as the ability to cope successfully with situations of challenge and adversity; how the learner’s concept of self and feelings of self-worth affect his or her approach to learning and how he or she interacts with others”. (B PSPE Scope and Sequence overview)

Active living

As well as focusing on health, this strand teaches the promotion of safety, rights and responsibilities we have to ourselves and others to promote well-being; making informed choices and evaluating consequences.

Interactions

This strand includes relationships with others, communities, society and the world around them; the awareness and understanding of similarities and differences.

If you would like a copy of the full PSPE scope and sequence, please let me know.

3) SecondSTEP Programme

The PSPE scope and sequence runs parallel to our key programme “SecondSTEP”. Run with the support of our Student Support Department and School Counsellor, Yuki, this programme explicitly teaches social-emotional skills, empowering students to be in charge of their own emotions and approach challenging situations in a positive, productive manner.

4) Personal, Social and Physical Education Policy

This policy is available on our school website. It details how we support student well-being at JIS, in line with our core values: commitment respect and kindness.

5) The Learner Profile

The IB Learner Profile is at the heart of everything we do. These attributes support the development of balanced, caring, open-minded people, who can inform themselves, think critically, communicate effectively and act with integrity and honesty.



The Bottom Line

In these difficult times, we cannot tell the children WHAT to think. However, we can empower them with habits of mind and skills to deal with challenging situations. We can teach them to think critically and from multiple perspectives and we can help them look after their own and others’ well-being.

With our curriculum’s focus on human commonality, we are hopefully developing internationally minded people who choose to be the ‘best human being’ that they can.

In celebration of humans as good people, we launched a ‘Good People Everywhere’ project today. It was wonderful to see how positively the students were able to identify good people in their lives. I posted details of the project on class dojo. If your child could bring in something that tells us about a kind person in their lives, or an act of kindness of their own - it could be a drawing or some writing, then we will use it to create a “Good People Everywhere Wall”. Our JIS community is full of kind, caring people – let’s celebrate it!



References (for those that enjoy a geeky moment!)

- Boyer, E. L. (1995). *The Basic School: A community for learning*. New Jersey: The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.
- Nicolescu, B. (2008). *In vitro* and *in vivo* knowledge: Methodology of transdisciplinarity. In B. Nicolescu (Ed.) *Transdisciplinarity theory and practice* (pp. 1-22). New Jersey: Hampton Press, Inc.
- Nicolescu, B. (2014a). *From modernity to cosmodernity: Science, culture and spirituality*. New York: State University of New York Press

Events for the week ahead at JIS – Week 15, November 25th -29th November

Monday 25th –

Tuesday 26th – P5 and P6 students to visit Tai Po Kau Country Park – a.m.

-Board of Directors meeting for HKJS ltd – Mr Walton to attend

-Ms Yuki in school

Wednesday 27th – Influenza vaccinations day for those signed up

-Mr Walton and Ms Miyajima at Eton House (Mayfair by the Sea) presentation at 5-7pm

Thursday 28th – P5 and P6 students visit Island House in Tai Po – a.m.

-P1 visit Zen Organic Farm – all day trip

-Ms Yuki in school

-2-2:45 pm – visiting Japanese soccer player to give presentation / training for JS and IS students

Friday 29th– **JIS Sports Day – Tai Po Sports Ground 8:45a.m. – 11:45a.m.**

This week’s ICHK newsletter for news from our partner secondary school is attached: click [here](#)

Wishing everyone a very enjoyable weekend and a safe and happy week ahead for JIS!

Simon Walton

Principal

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