



Newsletter 16 2017-18

Friday 5th January 2018

Dear Parents and JIS community

Wishing all the members of the JIS school community: A very happy and healthy 2018

Quite a variety of information is included in our first newsletter of the term, so please read carefully.

New students and families to JIS

We welcome 4 new students to JIS this term in Reception, P2, P3 and P5 – we look forward to getting to know some new families and making them feel welcome in our JIS community.

Around JIS: new term, new year!

Here we are for a brand new school term and a new year for 2018. We hope everyone had a very enjoyable holiday season with family and friends in Hong Kong and around the world. Classes are up and running with some units of inquiry carrying on from last term and some brand new ones for some classes starting this week. We look forward to a great term ahead, with lots of activities planned both in and out of the classrooms.

JIS _ showtime! - The JIS stage production team has already advertised auditions for this year's show – Peter Pan – which will be performed on Friday 23rd March. All of the students will be involved in the show, as main characters or as members of their class performance. I am sure as the term progresses we will be getting parents and community members involved in the costumes, scenery and props building, please help out if you would like to get involved.



JIS student standardized testing activities, 8th – 12th January – Next week all students in P3 – P6 will be undertaking some standardized testing as part of our on-going assessment of their progress and development. In previous years we have used a system called INCAS and this was available once a year in May/June. This year we have been exploring some different options to monitor student progress, which we hope will be more flexible in use and also more diagnostic in the information gained. We will use the MAPS (Measures of Academic Progress) assessment system for January (mid-year) and June (end of year) alongside our continuous school based assessment strategies. The activities are not designed to be stressful and do not need any revision or 'cramming' – there are 3 activities: Maths, Reading and Language skills based which the students can work through at their own pace, in exactly the same way that the students have been used to with the previous INCAS materials. We do want the students to try their best and do well, but it is not designed or planned to be intimidating and does not require preparation or revision. We want to see where the students are at 'now' and think ahead as to where we want them 'to be' by the end of the school year.



SecondSTEP- an update report on our new PSPE programme so far: from Glenda Bailie

The elementary years bring exciting new challenges and opportunities. It's the ideal time to nurture social-emotional competence and develop foundational learning skills.

secondSTEP



At the beginning of the current school year we introduced a school wide initiative which we believe will greatly assist JIS students to excel both in and out of the classroom. The Second-Step Social-Emotional Learning programme focuses on four main areas; Skills for Learning, Empathy, Emotional Management and Problem Solving. Development of these invaluable skills will help students to navigate their way through school life as well as their community and contribute to lifelong success.

There are 22 weekly lessons (25 for Reception) which are delivered in class by Ms Yuki Delong, our school counsellor. Class teachers reinforce the Second Step skills and concepts throughout the week with daily practice. With age-appropriate lessons, the Second Step Programme for Reception – P6 features catchy songs, fun games, and other engaging activities that develop social-emotional skills. Children learn how to make friends, manage their emotions, solve problems, and deal with peer pressure.



The programme supports our three JIS core values,

RESPECT - COMMITMENT - KINDNESS

Respect for each other, our relationships, our surroundings, the environment, our learning

Commitment to make a difference, to stay resilient and strong through adversity, to persevere in our learning, to develop, to improve, to move forwards

Kindness to all, to the world around us, to help, to support, to offer encouragement, to be open minded, to be fair.

It has been encouraging to see how well students have engaged with the programme and have been increasingly successfully in applying skills learned.

How can you support your child's learning? You can engage with them to complete the weekly 'Home Link' activities. The sheets will help you to see which unit your child is currently working on and why the specific skill being taught is important.

Want to know more? - If you have already joined www.secondstep.org with the activation key provided in the introductory letter at the beginning of the year you will already be familiar with the course content through the information and videos provided there. If you have difficulty accessing the site please contact your child's class teacher who can resend you the activation code.

Italian lessons at JIS – January 2018 – pls confirm if you are interested asap!

Italian lessons will be starting at JIS on Tuesday 16th January. An application form and information is attached to this email. We need to have a starting group of around 5-6 students but interest seems to show that this should be easily possible. Term 2 will have a set of 10 lessons @ \$250 per lessons - \$2, 500 for the term. The teachers aim to match their programme with the ability and interest levels of the group. Parents interested in joining please complete the form, send in a cheque made payable to ‘Comitato della Dante Alighieri di Hong Kong Ltd’ (- not JIS!), to **the school office by Monday 8th January**. Full terms and conditions are on the application form.

Active Parenting course – to potentially run this term - see flyer attached

Ms. Yuki and Ms. Bailie plan to run the "**Active Parenting**" class once again in the new term. Depending on the group's preference, they can hold it in the evening rather than during school hours. If you are interested, please email me at kmurch@es.jis.edu.hk Here are some quotes from parents who have already taken the course.

"Active Parenting provided me with the skill to use effective discipline and taught me especially how to communicate with me 'almost teen' daughters." -- P6 Parent

"The Active Parenting course is one of the best things you can do when raising a child. It gave me new understanding of how a child's mind works and practical help to use on a daily basis. Having trouble with kids listening? Or feel like you are going to explode when your child is having a terrible meltdown? You can find invaluable advice and answers to many questions." P1 Parent

"I wanted to learn some parenting techniques that would enable me to deal with conflict or, in my case, anger, in such a way that the results could be managed positively for us all. The course was useful and it was great to learn that you are not alone with any issues that may burden you as a parent." P3 Parent

The course is always very well received by those who take part. All children are different, all families are different – there is no manual on parenthood! But there is lots of great research which can tell us all the useful strategies to use with our families. Come along and learn more, enroll yourself and maybe a friend to make it a social event!

Art lessons: January 2018 – after school – Mondays and/or Fridays

We are always keen to involve to get everyone involved with the life of the school and we also appreciate the many talents that are in our community. Natalia Gillott (JIS parent) has been approached by some other parents to possibly set up some art classes as after school activities at JIS. She has kindly prepared some information – see attached flyer, which may be of interest to some of our families. Natalia has a wealth of experience through both visual arts as well as her dance based expertise! Read her attached information and then contact her on natalia.gillott@gmail.com to enroll your child(ren). If possible the classes can start within the next week or so.

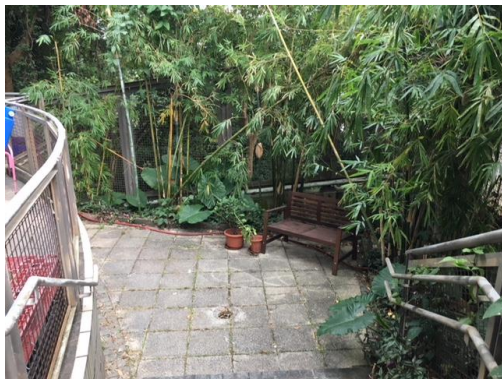


Community involvement projects for 2018: any takers?

Calling any frustrated gardeners.....

Are you a frustrated gardener – trapped in a flat with a small balcony only where you struggle to utilize your green fingered talents and floral dreams?? If so – contact the school. (s-walton@jis.edu.hk)

We too have had a dream and vision for a while now to create a really special area of garden, flowers, etc. around the school. With the busy demands of schedules of staff within school, it just never happens but with a couple of volunteers, happy to help out for an hour or two each week, perhaps it could! We also have vegetable beds in the 3rd floor roof garden that the students would love to have more consistent access to. Want to join us? Let me know.....



School is very happy to fund the purchase of flowers, seed, soil etc. We have tools to allow some parents and students to work together. This could be a really excellent community project – similar to the art initiative that has recently got started, to rave reviews.

JIS Parent strategic planning discussion group – new ideas, new voices

Many of you may be aware that a couple of years ago we started a parent discussion group (‘think tank’) that meets together to discuss the school, its future and development challenges or options. As a school JIS has a Board of appointed directors who monitor aspects of the school. We also have ESSPA who fulfill an important role for the school community. This discussion group is different and involves parents and Mr Walton meeting together around once per term. It is not designed to talk about individual students or staff but whole school things that we can improve; letting the community have a voice and working ever more closely with the school staff and management. We have lost a few members in the last year or so and we would be happy for interested parents to perhaps join us. Our meetings are usually from 7pm for around 2 hours in the school staffroom. Next meeting planned is on Tuesday 16th January.

Please contact Mr Walton if you would be interested to join the group; s-walton@jis.edu.hk

Dates for the week ahead: January 2018

Monday 8th: Student testing this week for P3-6 – MAPS mid-year assessments

Tuesday 9th: P2 at Nissin Noodles factory

Wednesday 10th: Chinese Orchestra concert – a.m.

-ESSPA meeting at 8:30a.m.

Thursday 11th: Reception class ‘journeys’ trip to Central and TST

Friday 12th: O.T. screening at JIS – opt in, send form to school office

ICHK newsletter link:

This week’s newsletter from ICHK: was not available at time of printing – visit www.ichk.edu.hk for the bulletin when available.

Looking forward to seeing everyone around school in the coming weeks.

Simon Walton
Principal