



Newsletter 5 2018-19

Friday 21st September 2018

Dear Parents and JIS community

What a week! So much to tell and moments to listen to the stories of last weekend. We are so thankful that no-one in the JIS community was injured and hope that damage to your homes or property is able to be repaired easily. We were thankful that 4663 Tai Po Road survived well – we had some minor damage but we were able to open on schedule with the other schools around us.

For this of you who did not travel along Tai Po Road on Monday or Tuesday – it was (like so many areas of Hong Kong) a sad and sorry sight to see so many magnificent trees pulled down and shredded to ruin*, but the Hong Kong services did such a magnificent job and got us all into school by Wednesday. (*see tree item later)

ESSPA – Welcome Back Party BBQ!

It may seem like forever ago but last Friday evening ESSPA welcomed 375 people to their 'Welcome Back' BBQ. In the calm before the storm the new committee did themselves proud in organizing an excellent event.

Thank you to everyone who came along and supported the event, we hope you all had a good time connecting and re-connecting with friends and families of classmates. A huge well done and thanks to all of the volunteers who cleared the school grounds of chairs, tables and everything – thank goodness we did this !



Around school updates:

Music festival notice

Ms Jill has sent out the application forms for the Music Festival for this year. If you are interested in your child being involved, please send the form back by Tuesday 2nd October.

Art Literacy Project



Last year Annette De Thier with a group of JIS Parents ran the Art Literacy workshops for the JIS students. These workshops were a great addition to our arts programme and allowed for some excellent community liaison opportunities, as well as some sharing of hidden parental talents!

This year Ms. De Thier is keen to get a group together again. The idea of the group is that they research an aspect of the visual arts – could be a specific artist or a genre of art, and then they develop some activities and a short introductory presentation for the different classes at JIS.

Anyone interested please contact Annette De Thier on adethier@es.jis.edu.hk for more details.

Mooncakes and Dango

Students of both Mandarin and Japanese were able to make some seasonal delicacies this week. The mooncakes were in Mandarin and dango in Japanese class. A great way to learn about the creation and application of cultural understanding.

Thanks to all staff involved in sorting ingredients and cooking arrangements. Thanks also to the parent volunteers who came in to help with the mixing, cooking and hopefully eating!

Not sure how many snacks made it home – but if they did we hope you enjoyed them.



Peace Day activities planned by P6 for other classes

This afternoon the P6 class went into all the other classes to present some activities to help raise awareness and celebrate ‘World Peace day’ by conducting some community building exercises with groups of all ages. The student had to think, problem solve and support each other.



Learning at JIS – from Cath Wan PYP Coordinator

Many thanks to all the families that filled in the questionnaire about learning at JIS. A huge thanks also for your patience with the technical issues regarding the link I sent. If you haven't yet filled in the questionnaire and would like to do so, please use this link: <https://goo.gl/forms/tNdxFRhIEG1gmE2E3> . I will keep the link open until the half term holiday. In the meantime, I will address the most popular questions through this article. For more individual questions, I will contact you personally.

So here goes: the most popular question asked (66.7%) was:

How do we assess learning?

I feel before we answer this question, we must ask **why do we assess?** In line with our JIS mission, we assess to support students in achieving their personal best. Research shows that students learn best and are motivated when they have a personal understanding of where they are at and where they want to go. A simple letter grade attached to a piece of work has been shown to have little positive influence on a child's learning and can in fact hinder development of a growth mind-set: the mind-set which gives a child determination and motivation to improve.

A few years ago, staff at JIS worked together, with documents from the IB to create an agreement of what effective assessments do. Here is the outcome of that collaboration:

Effective Assessments:

Allow students to	Allow teachers to
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share their learning with others • Demonstrate a range of knowledge, conceptual understanding and skills • Use a range of learning styles, intelligences and abilities to express their understanding • Know and understand in advance the expected criteria • Set themselves goals • Understand their strengths and areas for improvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modify and extend every stage of the teaching and learning process • Refine differentiation practices • Plan in response to student inquiries and interests • Develop expected criteria • Gather evidence from which sound conclusions can be drawn • Provide evidence that can be effectively reported and

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be reflective and engage in both self -assessment and peer assessment • Learn in the context of real-life experiences that could lead to further inquiries • Engage in global contexts and understand differing points of view • Analyse their learning, understand what needs to be improved and master the skills required to do so. 	<p>understood by the whole school community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboratively review and reflect on student performance and progress • Support students in goal setting • Take into account a range of learning styles, intelligences, abilities and different cultural contexts • Assess student work analytically and holistically • Assess their own practice and identify goals for improvement in an ongoing manner
Allow Parents to	Allow the school to
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See evidence of their child’s learning and development • Become aware of their child’s strengths and areas for development • Develop and understanding of their child’s progress • Provide opportunities to support and celebrate their child’s learning • Develop an understanding of the PYP curriculum framework and aims of the programme • Develop confidence about, and show support for, the teaching and learning taking place in the school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflect the school philosophy • Build a community of practice with shared approaches and a common language • Align teaching, learning and assessment, develop a fuller picture of assessment as an ongoing process as opposed to a single even in time • Identify ways of working that can be transferred from teacher to teacher and encourage greater consistency and quality over time • Ensure that assessment practices are meaningful • Develop an environment of trust and respect by demonstrating, as a school, a model for continual improvement where everyone is held accountable • Ensure that students are meeting standards set by school and comparative systems • Identify learning trends within the school

Adapted from: JIS teachers’ collaborative list and Assessment in the PYP: Annotated Samples
https://ibpublishing.ibo.org/server2/rest/app/tsm.xml?doc=p_0_pypxx_pas_1305_2_e&part=3&chapter=1

So, we’ve ascertained what effective assessments do, but what do they look like? Here are a few snapshots.

Early Years Specific

Teachers keep detailed anecdotal from observing the children in authentic situations. ‘Child’s voice’ is often scribed by the teacher so that the teacher can revisit the actual words a child said. Teachers produce ‘learning journeys’ of the students: a narrative documenting the child’s actions and skill development. Ms. Bailie and Ms. Bilbow conduct a ‘screening’ of all early years students using a standardized test. This test highlights beginning reading development and allows early intervention should any reading delay be suspected.

All Students

Anecdotal notes

If you dare to take a peek at a teacher’s desk or planning file at the end of the day, you will generally see it covered in notes. Teachers assess constantly and the notes that are taken feed immediately into their planning. If a student is finding something challenging, the teacher will ensure that time is taken to support that student. If a student is finding something too easy, the teacher will prepare extra challenges to ensure that each student is operating at the ‘edge of their comfort zone.’

Diagnostic interviews

All students who have started to read have an individual diagnostic reading interview (running record) with their teacher at least 3 times per year. This 4 page individual assessment allows the teacher to determine which strategies a child is using to read and what depth of understanding they are getting from the text. These interviews allow the teacher to select texts which are at an appropriate challenge. Detailed diagnostic interviews are sometimes used in mathematics – particularly to identify any gaps in developing number sense.

Work samples

Each child has a ‘student assessment file’. In this file, samples of writing and maths are collected 3 times per year. Teachers examine these samples together to analyse ‘where the child is now’ and ‘next steps’. The files follow the child as s/he progresses through the school so that teachers can look back over the years at the child’s progress.

All children also produce a yearly portfolio which includes work in all units of inquiry as well as language and maths.

‘Project- based’ assessments

Students are often given a project where they are expected to synthesise knowledge, understanding and skills from multiple disciplines. In order to have a 'quality bench mark', students will often co-create a rubric or check list with the teachers so that they are crystal clear on the expectations of quality work. In these assessments, the process involved is assessed as well as the resulting product.

Peer and self-assessments

The skill to be able to honestly and critically evaluate one's own strengths and areas for improvement, as well as offering and accepting advice from peers is essential in developing motivated, independent learners. This is done at JIS through rubrics, check-lists, 'thinking routines' and conferencing,

Standardized testing

Whilst the effects on learning of standardized testing are debatable, in line with most Hong Kong international schools, JIS does have students from P3-P6 partake in standardized international tests. This allows us to compare the data with other schools to ensure the transferability of our students' skills. We take care to ensure that we do not spend hours 'teaching to the test'; as having students actively engaged in learning is our priority.

The above was just a snapshot of assessment practices at JIS. We do have a full assessment policy, do feel free to contact me if you would like to read it: cwan@es.jis.edu.hk

Events for the week ahead at JIS – Week 6, September 24th-28th

Monday 24th – MAPS testing for P3 – P6 classes during this week

Tuesday 25th – School closed for the Public Holiday

Wednesday 26th – LEAP Van at JIS – 3 days – all classes visit

-JIS Board of Directors meeting – SW to attend

Thursday 27th – LEAP Van

-Mr Tanaka, teacher at Happy Valley JS to work in JIS for the day

Friday 15th – LEAP Van

Typhoon Mangkhut and the trees:

A group of the students and staff have been thinking creatively about how we can acknowledge the recent damage to Hong Kong environment in a positive way. It was encapsulated by one of the students thinking aloud : *'If we can make some benches or seats using the big tree logs then the trees did not die for nothing'* – a fabulous thought, I am sure you will agree! One which we would like to act upon, if possible.

We are wondering if anyone within the JIS community has access to equipment or discarded tree trunks that we could manage to get to school for us to make seats and benches with, before they get dumped into landfill sites? It may be a difficult one but we would like to try and basically honour the trees in our own sweet way. Anyone who thinks they may be able to help – please let us know, school phone: 2834 3531 or s-walton@jis.edu.hk



ICHK Weekly Bulletin: Friday 21st September.

The staff and community of ICHK has done a superb job of trying to get the school ready for the students to return. The 3.5m storm surge in Starling Inlet, next to the school sent the sea water about waist deep in the playground, flooded much of the first floor of all buildings and totally ruined the electricity transformer for the entire school. CLP and some electrical engineers have been busy trying to restore the school electricity supply and hope to have the school back on track very soon.

I attended an ICHK Board meeting on Thursday evening and it was very evident that the school and its community had pulled together for the benefit of the students, they were exhausted, challenged but ultimately looking forward to the 'end' of the journey very soon. Their dedication and support for the school was most inspiring.

Toby Newton has managed to get out a bulletin to the school community – here it is: [here](#)

Typhoon Mangkhut - Thank you for all the messages of support and care we received this week. We look forward to the rest of the school term being calmer, drier and a lot less stressful than last weekend!

Wishing everyone a really enjoyable weekend ahead.

Simon Walton
Principal