



Newsletter 17

Friday 17th February 2017

Dear Parents and JIS community

A really busy week again at school with lots of excellent field trips going on to support learning and units of inquiry. The weather has really helped to, even playground duty has been a joy in clear sunny days like this!!

Around school updates

ESSPA Book Sale – Tuesday 14th February

Many thanks to everyone who supported the book sale this week organized by ESSPA volunteers. They raised a fabulous \$2, 828 which will be put towards our donation total to 'Room to Read', once our Bookathon is complete.

Some of the books that are left over will be sent to a school library in rural Phillipines, organized by Cong Contreras, school librarian.

Matt Cooper visit:

Reception, P1 and P2 classes met with Matt Cooper a local author and environmentalist who presented his new book on Wednesday 15th February. Matt did a great job of inspiring and informing the students all about his personal action project and why he wrote his new book. Lots of the students immediately visited my office to inform me 'Mr Walton we have to save the gibbons!' The book is based around the Hainan gibbon, of which there are now only 26 left in the world. Matt Cooper has written a book looking at the environmental themes around the gibbons and by creating more interest in the animals he hopes to be able to help save them from extinction.

Anyone wishing to buy the book can do so through the school – either complete the form if you have been sent one (Rec – P3) or order through Cath Wan in the school office c-wan@jis.edu.hk

JIS Bookathon 2017– going strong!

The annual JIS Bookathon is in full swing with lots of students reading and borrowing extra books from the school library. The aim of the Bookathon is for the students to prepare for 'UNESCO World Book Day' by doing some fundraising for the JIS library and Room to Read charity. All students have been given a sponsor form to help raise some money. To end our JIS Bookathon we shall celebrate World Book Day on Friday 3rd March 2017 with a character dress up day and events in the library.

JIS Parent Workshop – Inquiry learning, PYP and JIS – 23rd Feb. 7pm NEXT WEEK!

We have sent out some information regarding a parent information and workshop evening on Thursday 23rd February at 7pm. The workshop will aim to give parents a chance to explore the philosophy and practical implications for teaching and learning at JIS. Ms Wan (PYP Coordinator) and Mr Walton will present the session which will be information, activity based and hopefully informative and fun! Please sign up using the link sent out from school this week. We hope to see as many parents as possible at this event.

Sign up link: <https://goo.gl/forms/wU2BfyOdlc29XB8f1>

Refreshments will be served and also Ms Miyajima has volunteered (!) to provide child care for those parents needing to bring students along to an evening workshop.

Changing Young Lives – Guojiahsan Friendship Primary School, Gansu, China

Thank you to those families who have been able to donate through the lai see packet appeal to support the students and families of our school in Guojiashan village, Gansu. If you can donate, please send in the packets as soon as you can next week.



Thank you from the staff and students of our sponsored village school.



Curriculum in the Classroom – from Cath Wan PYP Coordinator Keeping up to date

Next Thursday, Mr. Walton and I will be presenting a parent workshop to explore inquiry and its role at JIS. The IB PYP Curriculum may be very different to how you remember school and that's why we are always happy to spend time helping you to understand it more. Sometimes parents feel a little uncomfortable embracing how curriculum has changed. However, if the medical profession found out, through solid research that a certain practice either benefits or harms a human, we would expect practitioners to take notice. We would be horrified if a doctor said, "I'm not going to tell a patient to quit smoking because they are used to being told it's not that bad."

Educational professionals have the same duty of care – which is why corporal punishment no longer happens and children don't stand in corners wearing 'D' caps. At JIS we are committed to providing education based on solid research and evidential proof. Educational trends do come and go but there are strong consistent patterns in research which give us guidance. Studies from multiple sources tell us that by the time our students leave school, most of the 'rote' type jobs will have been taken over by automation. Key skills for the future have been identified as the ability to think critically and creatively. We would be short changing our children if we did not heed this advice. One of the exciting things about education now is that we have access to research that involves scans of brain activity. Collaboration between the psychologists and educational professionals is helping us to use concrete evidence of how children learn best in our planning.

The IB is a huge world-wide organisation that invests much time in research. It is free from nationally specific political agendas which sometimes distance school systems from having the freedom to act in pure 'for the children' terms. The education world is taking notice of the IB, with top universities showing a preference for the IB diploma because students going through the system do not expect to be spoon fed; they are critical thinkers and inquirers.

As parents who have chosen the IB PYP curriculum, your child may or may not leave JIS with 'rote learning party tricks'. Instead, you have chosen a curriculum that will nurture your child as a life-long learner and challenge your child to think deeply, critically and be able to problem solve across disciplines. We hope that you share our passion for this and we welcome your questions as a learning community. Please do not hesitate to contact me at c-wan@jis.edu.hk with any questions and if you'd like to access to studies in education, I'd be happy to provide them.

In the meantime, if you have not signed up for the workshop and would like to come, you can still sign up at this link.

<https://goo.gl/forms/DjEsuohuuNS2s6Py1>

Here are some extra resources you may find interesting:

A great video based on Ken Robinson's talk on changing education:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zDZFcdGpL4U>

An article from the Independent newspaper comparing the IB diploma with A levels

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/education/schools/the-ib-develops-the-students-top-universities-want-8503818.html>

Dates for the diary – next week – Week - February^{20th – 24th}
Sign up for JIS Parent Workshop on 23rd February!

Monday 20th –

Tuesday 21st–

Wednesday 22nd– P3 and P6 visit the Sai Kung Geo park for the day

Thursday 23rd – PARENT WORKSHOP – 7pm with Cath Wan and Mr Walton

Friday 24th – Crazy Hair Day – student requested!

P3 lunch – ESSPA arranged

Salvation Army collecting the donated clothes and toys

Good luck to our footballers playing in a mini tournament tomorrow. Well played to our rugby squad who competed today at the DBIS tournament at Kings Park.

See you all around school, have a great weekend.

Simon Walton