

SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

Austin Heights Private and International School

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**AUSTIN
HEIGHTS**
Private & International School
TOGETHER WE EXCEL



PRINCIPAL'S NOTE

I am delighted to welcome new and returning students to the School, and to express my thanks to everyone in the community who has made me feel so welcome, and assisted me in various ways upon my arrival. To develop a fledgling school is a significant but rewarding challenge because an international school is not simply the delivery of the UK IGCSE curriculum although that is a major component. The School is equally committed to preparing our young students for an increasingly demanding and technologically exponential world. Quality education cannot merely comprise the acquisition of knowledge; it must also embrace the nurturing of transferable skills, the ability independently to research, to think for oneself, to work cooperatively with others, to be creative and to communicate effectively. Concepts such as these appear very impressive on paper, but it is their active implementation which is essential. To that end, I shall keep you abreast of a number of initiatives to be introduced as the academic year progresses which are specifically designed to promote these aims. Some of these are already itemised below in this newsletter, the format of which is being reviewed from the point of view of style and content.

YEAR11 COMMUNICATION AND PRESENTATION SKILLS COURSE

Y11 have been given the opportunity to participate in a professional communication and presentation skills course run by the Principal. The course covers, among others, the creation and effective use of PowerPoint slides, transferring written information to visual, verbal skills, confident and persuasive speaking to large audiences, body language and use of presentation space. Equipping our oldest students with such life-long skills at this stage in their education will be valuable to them not only in further education but, of course, in whichever careers they are planning to pursue.

Parents of Y11, please note that the IGCSE trial examinations for the year group will take place in January, allowing the students the entire Christmas vacation to revise. Consequently, the reports for Y11 will only be issued once those examinations have been graded although the Parent-Teacher Conference remains scheduled for December in order to give the students targets while they are revising.

CURRICULUM PLANS

Parents have been issued with a curriculum plan according to their son/daughter's year group. The plan gives an overview of the main topics covered by each subject during this first term. Full details of the IPC programme will be given via a separate letter.

NEW STAFF

Although all our new staff were introduced in the previous newsletter, I would like to take this opportunity personally to welcome them all. I look forward to a long and successful professional association with them.

PSHE PROGRAMME

PSHE (Personal Social and Health Education) has been introduced to the curriculum for Primary and Secondary Years 7-9. The purpose of PSHE is to help children and young people deal with the real life situations they face as they grow up. The topics covered are central to young people's wellbeing and include dealing with issues, coping with change, personal responsibilities and interaction with others.

Study Periods: Students in Years 10 and 11 who have study periods during the week are expected to report to the library on the designated days and times. Our Librarian has the details of every student who is expected at those periods. Students in this category who are given special permission by a teacher to be elsewhere should inform the tutor of that fact in order that the appropriate amendments are made in the Librarian's list. Those who have a study period during a CCA session may sign up for a CCA activity throughout the term as an alternative to studying in the Library.

STAFF TRAINING

At the beginning of the term, our teachers underwent refresher courses on lesson planning and preparation, classroom management and inquiry approach to learning. This month sees the commencement of a series of informal lesson observations which will be extended to formal performance management, feedback and target setting later this term.

MUSIC & DRAMA: SECONDARY



We have decided to combine the Music and Drama CCAs to form a theatre company, in which students will be given the opportunity to work towards a full stage production. Students will experience the often demanding work of theatre and be exposed to the full range of theatre skills: singing, acting, dancing, lighting, instrumental performance, sound design, set design and construction, and manufacture of costumes and props. There will certainly be something for everyone.

CHARITY FOCUS

Students' awareness of charitable organisations should extend beyond placing a few ringgit in a tin. During the term we will highlight a small number of charities, explaining to students the work which these charities do and the challenges they face. Students will be devising fund-raising activities, and our older secondary students will be offered the opportunity actively to participate in charity work. During the assembly on 24th September, Y11 made a superb presentation to the entire School on the work of the World Wildlife Fund with particular focus on the plight of tigers.

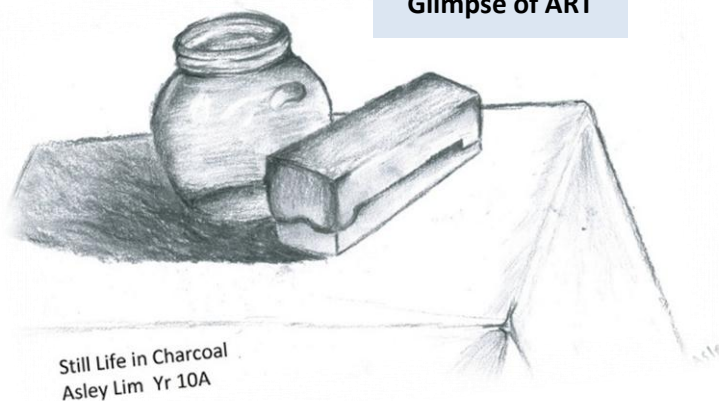
STUDENT COUNCIL

A new body entitled the Student Council is to be established this term. Elected students will represent their peers at meetings with the School Principal or his designee to discuss matters pertinent to the development of the School. While there will, of course, be issues which are beyond the remit of this group – and there is a clear code of conduct by which all members must abide – the Student Council will be able actively to contribute to matters relating to, for example, the environment of the School, events and presentations, fundraising, celebrations or commemoration.

KEY DATES FOR THE TERM

Friday, October 26 th	Hari Raya Haji
Monday 5 th – Friday, 9 th November	Term 1 Assessments
Monday 12 th – Friday 16 th November	Half term break
Friday, November 22 nd	Sultan of Johor's Birthday
Friday, December 7 th	End of Term 1
Saturday, December 8 th 0930-1300	Parent-Teacher Conference Primary & Secondary

Glimpse of ART



REPORT ON JUNIOR CCA

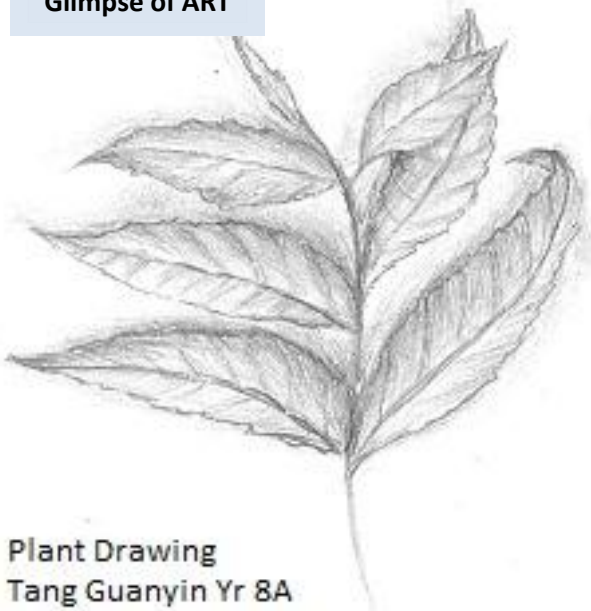
On 13th September 2012, Junior Art CCA students experienced making clay by themselves. The clay was made from flour, salt, water and a little bit of glue.

Once all the mixture had turned into a dough, we added a few drops of food colouring using primary colours (red, yellow and blue), and mix the colours if they want another colour (secondary colour).

Despite all the mess made in the Art room, I believe that our students have learnt something useful that they can do or produce in future.



Glimpse of ART



Plant Drawing
Tang Guanyin Yr 8A

IPC ENTRY POINT (Y2)

To celebrate Malaysia's 55 years of Independence, the Year 2 students dressed up in 'Merdeka Day Inspired Clothes' on 14th September 2012 (Friday) as the Entry Point for this theme. They wore clothes that were inspired by our Malaysian flag (e.g. colours of the flag). Some of the designs were amazing.

Each student was given a chance to present and share information about their clothes and also why they love Malaysia. Although some were nervous, they still managed to overcome their stage fright to share their experience with others.

This event allowed them to build up their potential in public speaking at a very young age. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the parents of Year 2 students for supporting their children's learning.



LINES OF COMMUNICATION

To ensure that lines of communication remain consistent and direct, all non-confidential matters pertaining to students should in the first instance be directed to the tutor or teacher via the student's diary. Please support us by ensuring that receipt of any communication is acknowledged. Should a meeting be required this should initially be made with the teacher or tutor. Thereafter, if the matter remains unresolved, consultation will take place with the appropriate line managers or senior staff.

USE OF HAND PHONES

With immediate effect, students will be permitted, upon parental request, to bring hand phones to school provided they are only used at the end of the school day in order to communicate with or receive communication from their parents. Should students wish to bring a hand phone, it is their responsibility, for safety reasons, to keep it either in the School Office or other secure location (e.g. a locker) as designated by the Principal. Any student who is seen using a hand phone or in possession of a hand phone under any other circumstances during lesson hours will have the hand phone confiscated, and subsequently made available for collection by parents from the school office.

Form 3 students from Austin Heights Private School will sit for the PMR (Penilaian Menengah Rendah) Examination on the 9, 10, 11, 15 & 16th October 2012.

The exam will be held in the multi-purpose hall (3rd level). Invigilators from other schools will be monitoring our students.

To prepare students for this exam, pupils have been attending extra classes on Fridays (1:10 to 3:30 pm) since February.

During the next two weeks leading to the exam, CCA will be replaced by extra classes on Wednesdays and Thursdays (2:30 – 3:30 pm)

Hopefully this pioneer batch of 10 students will do their utmost to bring honour and glory to the school.

I would also like to express a big 'Thank You' to all teachers who have sacrificed much time and effort to prepare our students for this important examination.

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SWIMMING

We are delighted to have secured the services of professional swimming coaches for the entire school. The ability to swim – apart from its obvious role in personal safety – brings enormous benefits in terms of physical fitness. Exemption from swimming – which is an integral part of the Physical Education programme – is only permitted upon receipt of a medical certificate.

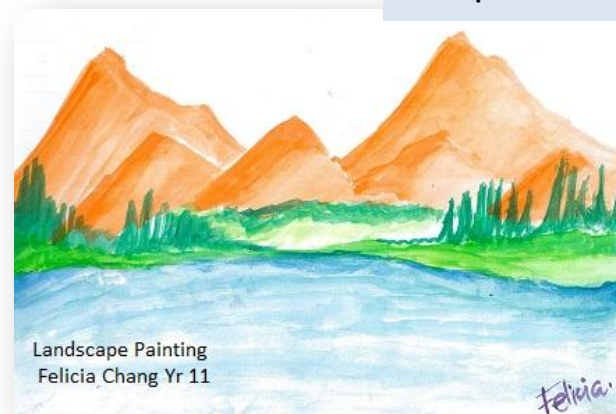
BRINGING FOOD / DRINKS TO SCHOOL

We are delighted that students wish to celebrate their birthdays with their classmates. However, with the potential of 600+ birthdays being celebrated, we must clarify the circumstances under which this can take place! If a student wishes to celebrate a birthday, then cakes (with no nut content) can be consumed during breaks or at lunch hour. Birthday parties are not permitted during lesson times and additional food cannot be brought in.

During the academic year, there will be occasions when food made by the students/parents can be consumed during lesson time, which would be, for example, at Christmas or other major celebrations; such times will be indicated by the leadership team. Indeed, this may also be an opportunity – especially in Primary – for parents to join the students in celebration. For reference, on occasions such as those, food must contain no nuts, pork is not permitted and beef products must be clearly identified.

We respectfully remind parents that, unless there is a religious or documented medical reason for doing so, students are required to use canteen facilities in order to conform to school health regulation. Furthermore, the quality of external food cannot be monitored and it often gives rise to litter problems.

Glimpse of ART



Landscape Painting
Felicia, Chang Yr 11