



INTERNATIONAL
KINDERGARTENS
國際幼稚園

ESF International Kindergarten

Wu Kai Sha

Annual report 2013/2014



Inspired to think, explore, achieve

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INTRODUCTION

Inspired to think, explore, achieve

The 2013/2014 school year was a busy and exciting one for the whole school community. It included many changes and improvements to the school's provision for children and families, and demanded a high level of professionalism and commitment from staff.

There were many successes experienced by various stakeholders and these are detailed throughout this report.

"In partnership with families we aim to develop confident, creative, knowledgeable children who respect all others and participate actively within the school community. We strive to provide an engaging and enriching environment that stimulates children's curiosity and supports and develops a lifelong love of learning."



SCHOOL CONTEXT

ESF International Kindergarten (Wu Kai Sha) is located in Ma On Shan. We cater for children aged 3 – 5 years old and follow the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (PYP). The school was authorised as an IB World School in June 2013.

In partnership with families we aim to develop confident, creative, knowledgeable children who respect all others and participate actively within the school community. Our inquiry based curriculum encourages children to explore relevant concepts and ideas through child-centred play and exploration, real-life experiences and focussed learning and teaching activities, allowing them to develop a range of understandings, knowledge and skills in all areas of the curriculum.

We have a wonderful team of highly qualified and experienced teaching staff who are both nurturing and knowledgeable about early childhood education.

We strive to provide an engaging and enriching environment that stimulates children's curiosity and supports independent learning. The school has large, bright spaces for learning and play and children spend their time in classrooms, shared areas and in the indoor and outdoor play areas. All classrooms have a good range of resources for each teacher to use with the children which includes a wealth of technology resources. We also have a dedicated library area which is well stocked with a range of children's literature, information texts and Story Sacks.

In 2013/2014, the school operated 14 classes divided between AM and PM sessions (8.30 to 11.30am and 12.30 to 3.30pm respectively). There were 6 K1 classes and 8 K2 classes. We cater to children from Kowloon and the New Territories, have a bus service to most areas and are conveniently located near an MTR station.



Admissions

The school has retained and built upon the healthy admissions figures gained in the previous school year. Through careful management of the admissions process and by anticipating the movement of children and families throughout the year, we have sustained a steady admissions process and remained above capacity throughout the school year. The increase in enrolment numbers over the past 3 years is illustrated in the table opposite.

The children represent over 20 nationalities as follows: Hong Kong (127), Chinese (34), Canadian (42), British (34), Australian (20), American (18), Indian (9), German (5), French (5), Malaysian (4), Taiwanese (3), Japanese (3), New Zealander (2), Portuguese (2), Singaporean (2), Thai, (1), Polish (1), Russian (1), South African (1), Indonesian (1), Irish (1), Korean (1), Irish (1), Filipino (1).

The main home languages spoken are Cantonese, English and Mandarin. In addition, children are from families speaking Hindi, Korean, Japanese and Spanish. Staff also reflect the international context of the school with native languages including English, Cantonese, Mandarin, Swedish, French, Tagalog and Hindi.

Children travel from all over Hong Kong to attend WKS but predominantly from Sha Tin, Tai Po, Tai Wai, Fo Tan, Sai Kung, Ma On Shan and as far as Tsuen Wan, Kowloon Tong, Yuen Long and Discovery Bay.

Admission to Year 1 at ESF Primary Schools

The highest ever percentage of children were successful in moving from WKS to an ESF primary school at the end of 2013/14. 95% of applicants secured places at Shatin Junior School, Renaissance College, Beacon Hill School, Kowloon Junior School and Clearwater Bay School. This figure has increased from 84% in 2012/2013 and from 68% in 2011/2012.

Liaison between Wu Kai Sha and feeder primary schools was also strengthened through more proactive collaboration with colleagues. In addition to the established visits by primary school staff to WKS, this included reciprocal visits to the Primary schools by WKS staff, formal meetings to discuss the performance of children following interview and the development of consensus for a small number of children to undertake a second interview in Term 3.

We recognise that the reintroduction of the primary interview priority gives us a renewed mandate for further work in this area.

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
August	298	293	325
September	299	293	325
October	300	297	327
November	300	303	332
December	300	303	333
January	302	310	332
February	304	310	330
March	301	311	331
April	306	320	330
May	302	316	328
June	301	315	328
Average	301	308	330
Capacity %	97%	100%	107%

Student Transition

Numbers enrolled at Primary School for Year 1

Primary School	No. of students 2013-2014
Shatin Junior School	97
Renaissance College	37
Beacon Hill School	15
Kowloon Junior School	12
Clearwater Bay School	10
Anfield International School	5
Christian Alliance International School	2
Japan International School	1
Singapore International School	1

*95% of K2 children gained and accepted places at an ESF Primary School – the highest percentage to date and significantly more than in 2012/2013

Numbers leaving Wu Kai Sha during the school year to attend other schools/leave Hong Kong

Reason	
Relocation, leaving Hong Kong	12
Transferred to ICS	2
Transferred to local system	1
Transferred to Australian International School	1
Transferred to ESF Abacus	1
Transferred to Japanese International School	1
Total	23

SCHOOL EVALUATION

The 2013/2014 school year began with an ESF School Review. This review was originally scheduled to coincide with the appointment of a new school Principal the previous year, however it was pushed back to October 2013 so that it did not clash with the schools IB Authorisation visit in June 2013. The feedback was positive and constructive and gave school staff additional information about learning, teaching and other areas of the school's provision.

An ESF Maths Review was also held in March 2014. This review was part of a wider evaluation of provision and achievement in Mathematics across all ESF schools. The results of both reviews were either incorporated into the 2013/2014 school development plan or held over to 2014/2015.

At the end of the school year, all staff spent a half day reflecting upon and reviewing the school development plan. In order to capture the reflections of staff, innovative use was made of Google Docs to enable staff to contribute towards the evaluation. The results of the evaluation were used to identify and celebrate achievements as well as set priorities for the 2014/2015 school year.

ESF School Review

A summary of the main commendations and recommendations from the school review is as follows:

Commendations

- Teachers using a variety of strategies and interactions to support learning of all students
- Parents acknowledging the learning that is occurring and seeing that learning being transferred into the home
- Teachers and Educational Assistants using appropriate language to suit the learning context and needs of students
- Students being provided with a range of stimuli and learning opportunities which enables individual choice
- A shared understanding of the kindergarten's philosophy
- Teachers selecting, developing and using a variety of appropriate resources and materials, including technology
- Teachers creating an environment of mutual trust, respect and rapport by building positive and productive relationships with students
- The increasing use of natural materials to create engaging and stimulating learning environments
- Level of adult engagement and interaction with students during interactive play
- Materials are organized effectively to promote student independence (eg. appropriate height, easily accessible etc)
- Teachers developing clear and achievable classroom expectations with students which maximizes learning time
- Communication between school and home is extensive and diverse (eg. Twitter feed, parent information sessions etc)

Recommendations

- More opportunities provided for children to experience their wider environment and community
- Teachers ensure that time for learning is maximized and all children are actively involved during whole class and group activities
- Open-ended questions used more consistently to move children on to their next steps in learning
- Teachers consistently and routinely capture and respond to students' interests and questions in a systematic way to inform planning
- More learning engagements linked directly to the UOI or key/related concepts for each unit

ESF Mathematics Review

A summary of the main commendations and recommendations from the mathematics review is as follows:

Commendations

- Leadership of mathematics
- Use of manipulatives to support student learning
- Provision of relevant and interesting mathematical contexts
- Differentiation of learning experiences

Recommendations

- Embed questioning strategies more deeply
- Develop the use of number in day-to-day experiences

School survey and staff forums

The bi-annual ESF survey was distributed to the school community in May 2014. Through this survey we aimed to find out about the impressions that parents and staff have formed about the education we provide. The feedback from the survey helps us build on our strengths and inform our future planning.

Parents were particularly complimentary about the school's overall provision, the impact of student learning and the progress of their children. A summary of the main commendations and recommendations from the school survey is as follows:

Commendations:

- welcoming environment for parents and new parents in particular
- range of purposeful and attractive new learning spaces
- an environment in which children acquire English very rapidly
- excellent home school communication with parents using a variety of methodologies including social media
- high quality of learning throughout the session and not just the more structured classroom sessions

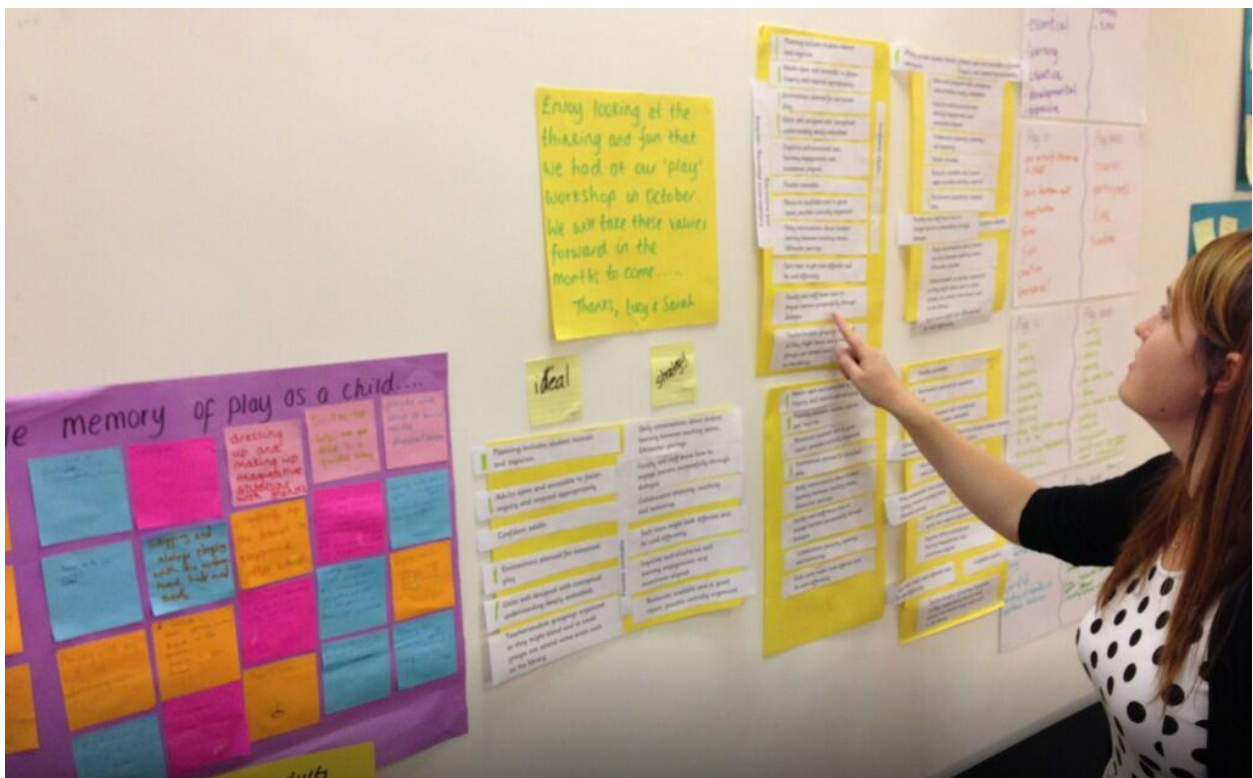
- the many improvements to educational provision and learning environment witnessed during the previous two years

Recommendations:

- Improve procedures for the organisation and replacement of resources
- Strategies to improve communication and collaboration between the various teams in school
- Further CPD opportunities to support the learning and development of EAs

In order to take a closer look at the areas highlighted by staff, the school survey was followed up with a series of staff forums. The Principal ran a series of workshop sessions to allow staff the opportunity to explore recommendations in more detail and colleagues were able to suggest actions to ensure continued improvement in school policy and practice.

The outcome of these forums was positive and empowering for school staff and ideas were subsequently incorporated into the 2014/15 school development plan.



SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

Priority Area 1: School Vision and Mission

We articulated and reinforced the vision and values of the school to all in the community. This was achieved by making reference on all new school documentation and by making a deliberate effort to reference this and discuss this during every parent information session. We developed a standard presentation for school tours that enables all teaching staff to deliver a coherent and consistent message about the vision and mission of the school.

The School News Blog was used to share important aspects of the school's philosophy with parents and the community, This included articles on types of play and other aspects of the schools philosophy such as the environment and sustainability.

Learner's Experiences

As part of our continued curriculum development, we spent time this year reviewing the learning experiences of the children. In order to assure ourselves that children are exposed to a balance of experiences that is both appropriate to the learning style of young children and enables the development of key skills and knowledge, we have adopted a framework for thinking about learning at Wu Kai Sha.

The IB states 'Schools committed to a constructivist, inquiry-based approach to teaching and learning promote inquiry and the development of Transdisciplinary skills such as critical thinking. Educators support this through ongoing, intentional planning for a careful balance of child-initiated play and adult-supported learning throughout the day.'

We believe the following framework of learning experiences provides a balance to the children's education in the PYP. In 2013/2014, we began a process of exploring these areas in detail with teaching staff and with parents.

- Planned Play
- Spontaneous Play
- Discovery and Exploration
- Real life experiences
- Focused learning and teaching

All teachers reflected upon this framework as a way of evaluating the balance of experiences being offered to children in their classes. The framework enabled a new and purposeful dialogue about the value we give to the diversity of learning experiences we offer to children and the way in which we enable the development of children's understandings as part of our curriculum programme.

Over the year the school focused on learning about Reggio practices and made use of the new IB guidance document for the Early Years to grow our understanding and pedagogy in ways to implement the PYP with young children. We reviewed the range of learning and teaching resources used in the school and in conjunction with our developing Reggio philosophy, have begun to develop practice around the use of natural, and open-ended resources.

Value and purpose of play

Year Group Leaders took a lead role in developing a study about the value and purpose of play and led workshops to all staff about the use of play based strategies to support the learning of young children. During the meetings, staff explored the value and purpose of play within the curriculum and made a personal connection to this. We looked into the impact of powerful child-adult interactions and ways in which we can continue to build on this. Through this, we developed our school philosophy and beliefs, ensured that play is appropriately planned for, implemented, monitored and evaluated our practice. This had a positive impact on our aim to enhance student-adult interactions and continued to improve students' learning. The school team are currently working on a way to present our values and beliefs in a visual format so that it can be shared easily with others.

In addition to the school-based work, one Year Group Leader participated in an ESF Action Research Project (Snapshots) which was made up of a small team of teachers from ESF Kindergartens. They researched into what made an excellent play-based PYP learning environment. Throughout this project, team members visited different schools, shared practice, researched and implemented strategies in their classes based upon their reading and reflected on the effectiveness and the impact on the children's learning. The team put the action research together in the form of a website and shared their findings across the foundation.



Priority Area 2: Learning and Teaching

Over the course of the year the school focused on the development of learning and teaching in a number of key areas including Mathematics, English Language, Chinese, play-based learning strategies and natural/outdoor education.

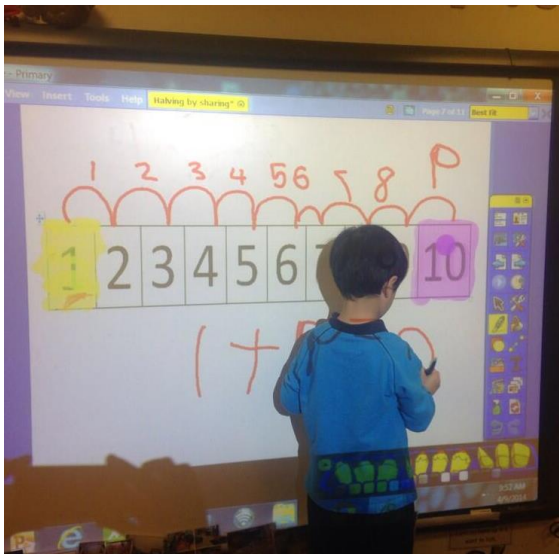
We enlisted the support of several ESF Advisors who have worked in collaboration with the school over the year to support us in curriculum development. Jason Boon, the Language Advisor, has supported planning for language, and offered guidance in using the language Scope and Sequence documents to support assessment in the units of inquiry. Stuart Lowe has worked with teachers to develop opportunities for use of ICT and technology and to set the Google Docs system up with the school. This has enabled teachers to collaborate in planning much more easily. The Early Years Advisor led sessions for staff in questioning techniques and sustained, shared thinking and also supported teachers with their curriculum planning and development.

English Language

Teachers worked with the Language Advisor to develop planning for language and use of the language Scope and Sequence documents to support assessment in the units of inquiry. Professional Development by Get Reading Right was held for all teaching staff and EAs toward the end of the school year in phonics and phonological awareness to support understanding in these areas. Teachers then spent time discussing the appropriate learning progression in these areas for their year group.

Mathematics

The written Mathematics curriculum was developed over the year and opportunities for mathematical experiences were more explicitly linked to the Units of Inquiry in long term planning. The school focused on developing authentic use of Mathematics through real-life experiences and greater use of natural and open-ended resources.



Chinese Language and Culture

In October 2013 we were successful in recruiting a teacher of Chinese to develop and implement a programme of Chinese language and culture for all children. Jeanine Wong was successful in gaining the position. A curriculum for Wu Kai Sha has been developed over the year based on ESF Chinese Curriculum which has raised interest of learning Chinese. Learning experiences in Chinese have developed significantly with activities that are planned based on children's prior knowledge and life experiences. There has also been a renewed emphasis on placing visible Chinese language in the environment and increasing the opportunities experience Chinese culture in the environment.

Questioning and Sustained Shared Thinking

As part of our work to improve the interactions between adults and children, the Learning and Teaching Advisor worked with EAs, and teachers in developing understanding of questioning techniques and supporting children's ability in sustained shared thinking. Cards with prompts for sustained shared thinking strategies for were added to key activities to support adults' work with children.

Outdoor Learning and Experiences

This year, we developed our belief that we have a responsibility to develop in children the skills to one day be future custodians of the planet. At this young age, we believe the most important way to do this is to ensure children develop appreciation and respect for nature and the natural environment. We believe that children's hands-on experiences in the garden, outdoors and kitchen fosters an appreciation of the natural world and how it sustains us, promotes awareness of the environment, and aids well-being and health.

We have formed an partnership with United World College (UWC) nearby, and over the course of the year teachers and children have been able to walk to a natural wooded area within the college grounds. This has enabled children to learn about the outdoors and learn within the outdoors. The Sharing the Planet unit of inquiry has been developed to further opportunities for hands-on learning about living things and the environment.



School Garden

Growing and cooking enables children to develop a sense of the interconnectedness of the environment, health and well-being, leading to personal health and a sustainable future. Naturally, the outdoors and the kitchen classroom provide diverse opportunities for teaching and learning in a manner that is engaging and relevant to our children.

This year the garden was extended allowing more space for growing vegetables and edible crops with the children. A range of skills, knowledge and attributes are developed over time with the children as they have planted, cared for and harvested crops, and observed living things in the garden. Although small, the garden provides children with the opportunity to learn ways in which that they can have a positive impact on an environment.



Kitchen Classroom

A project to create a working kitchen for children was completed in the Christmas holidays. The facility is highly visible in the centre of the school and has child and adult sized work surfaces, and ovens that are visible to the children but safe from touch.

All classes have made use of the kitchen classroom as a learning space. This has allowed for authentic learning of maths and science skills and has promoted independence and a sense of competence in the children. The K2 classes based a unit of inquiry around food with the Central Idea 'Food sustains us and comes from different sources'.



Assessment

Understanding and practice in formative and summative assessments were explored with teachers over the year through staff professional development and planning meetings. Assessment rubrics were created for units of inquiry and added to the Gateway reporting system. The PYPC and a year group leader attended a PYP workshop on Assessment in the Early Years.

Towards the end of the year, teachers conducted an audit of the content and format of the existing student portfolios. A consensus was reached to explore a more accessible and manageable system for student portfolios for the new year, and to review the content so that it more accurately conveys evidence of learning. One teacher trialed 'Evernote' to collect evidence of learning, and shared this with teachers. Two teachers trailed PowerPoint as a medium of creating a class learning journey for a unit of inquiry, and shared their experiences with peers.



Priority Area 3: Community and Partnerships

Events and Community Connections

We had an extremely busy year connecting with our stakeholders and community and supporting various initiatives within Hong Kong and beyond. We have felt the value of these connections in the many positive comments received from parents and colleagues and from the high levels of praise received from the organisations we have worked with.

IB Early Years' Regional Workshop

During November, Wu Kai Sha Kindergarten held an IB Regional Workshop event in school. This was the first such event to be held by the IB anywhere in the world and the first time a large IB event has been held in an Early Years setting. The IB representatives were full of praise and gratitude for us making the event happen and for the very smooth organisation by our team. The event was truly international with delegates attending from Asia-Pacific and countries further afield including the USA, Dubai, Fiji and Bangladesh to name a few. The stakes were certainly high and the spotlight was definitely being shone on our school!

There was a highly charged, purposeful and professional buzz all weekend long! Delegates were full of praise and enthusiasm about our learning environment from the moment they walked through the door and there were literally hundreds of photographs being taken of our displays, indoor and outdoor learning spaces, provocations and resources. Many people could be heard talking about the evidence of learning that was visible throughout the school and in classrooms. This is an affirmation of the great care and effort everyone puts into creating the best possible learning environment for children at Wu Kai Sha and we were quite simply overwhelmed by the positive and encouraging comments we received.

Our parents were also included in plans for the weekend. An IB information session for Wu Kai Sha parents was held in school and this was attended by over 60 parents.



Supporting the Education Community

The Hong Kong Early Years Network is coordinated by the Curriculum Coordinator at Wu Kai Sha and became firmly established over the year. Four meetings of the HKEYN were held over the year, each one hosted by a different school. The hosting school selects the focus of discussion for the meeting, and facilitates a PD / practice sharing session in the area chosen. Approximately 40 teachers attended each meeting, an enthusiastic turnout after a school day.

The network set up a Facebook page this year to enable teachers to share questions, ideas, resources and links to educational articles.

Wu Kai Sha hosted a number of teachers requesting to visit over the course of year and held the Hong Kong and Southern China PYP Network meeting in March.



Grounds for Learning Project: Partnership with Li Po Chun United World College

One of our goals in supporting young learners is to provide real life experiences that enable children to discover and explore the natural environment. Although we have created a flourishing school garden at WKS, we do not have a great deal of outdoor space. To overcome this issue we held discussions with Arnett Edwards, Principal of Li Po Chun United World College, to explore the possibility of access to their campus which is located a short distance from our school.

In accessing the campus, we hoped to establish a 'Grounds for Learning' project that would aim to enrich our children's experience of the outdoor environment by helping them to connect with nature, learn outdoors, develop social skills and importantly, have fun! We are extremely grateful to our friends and colleagues at UWC for supporting us with this initiative and providing the opportunity to use their grounds.

Link with the Masarang Foundation

Helen Brighton (K2 teacher), was very fortunate to be chosen to join a study visit to the Masarang Foundation in Indonesia alongside ten other teachers from ESF primary and secondary schools. The Masarang Foundation works with local inhabitants of the rainforest providing support for developing sustainable farming and rescuing and rehabilitating local wildlife. They are currently establishing charitable status within Hong Kong and detailed information about the work of the Masarang Foundation can be found at <http://masarang.hk/>. ESF is working in partnership with the Masarang Foundation providing support on projects in Indonesia. Previously, support has been in the form of senior students volunteering to help at one of the project sites. Also, primary or middle years students have organised fundraising events.

This opportunity provided Helen with hands on experience of working with an organisation committed to developing a sustainable environment which she will use to further develop our efforts to integrate environment and sustainability issues into the curriculum and will in turn enhance our students understanding of their responsibility towards the environment.

Christmas Performance

One of our aims for this year was to explore the meaning of Christmas with the children and help them to understand some of the traditions and customs that take place at this time of year. Our visit from Santa, our gifting of presents, our class celebrations and our K1 and K2 performances enabled us to share the joy of the season across the whole school community!

All K2 classes treated us to their wonderful 'Wriggly Nativity' performance. This was attended by parents, family members and colleagues from across ESF. The children did an outstanding job in retelling the story of Christmas. They all played important roles in the performance and used narration, song, dance and movement to great effect. Although young, the children demonstrated how capable they are and performed with real confidence and enthusiasm.

K1 children also held a performance to a packed house of parents and family members. The children shared their learning of the colour and light Unit. They treated us to a range of Christmas songs and sang beautifully which helped everyone feel the joy of the season.



Workshops for Parents

Teaching staff presented a number of workshops to parents over the year. Almost all workshops were full at 60 participants, and additional sessions were added to accommodate parent interest. Sessions offered were:

- An Introduction to the PYP
- Developing speech and language
- Supporting Reading and Phonics
- Writing development (this was a newly developed workshop this year)

An overview of the content of parent workshops was shared with PYP and language coordinators at ESF at the end of the year.

Parenting Workshop

In addition to the workshops led by school staff, many parents attended a special workshop hosted by parenting expert Marie Marchand on Tuesday 13th May. Marie discussed many relevant topics including information and strategies for dealing with children's behaviours. We received excellent feedback from parents about the presentation and will explore the possibility of bringing Marie back to Wu Kai Sha to work with our parent community further.

Parent Volunteers

Wu Kai Sha continued with a programme of training parent volunteers. A large number of parents attended an initial information session and then volunteered to work within individual classes or across the school over the year. This support from our parent community is highly valued and allows activities such as short trips to be managed much more easily. Some volunteers worked regularly in the kitchen, cooking with children, and one especially dedicated parent worked an extended period supporting the school in managing the library and resources.

In addition to providing valuable class support, a number of parents offered to share their skills and talents with the children. This included musical percussion, rangoli pattern design, Chinese art, reading stories in mother tongue, cooking and sharing talents such as unicycling and magic.



Open Days

The school held an open day in the first and third terms where parents were invited to join their children in small groups to share in their learning experiences. The open days were, as always, exceptionally well attended with close to all parents coming to school for the session. A decision was made at the end of the year to rename the day 'Shared Learning Days' for the upcoming year, to more accurately reflect the purpose of the day. In addition, some thought has been given to ways in which we can develop the day still further to enable parents and children to gain greater understanding of learning.

Art Jamming

Both year groups participated in the Art Jamming experience provided by an outside company during the How We Express Ourselves units. Children had the opportunity over the course of two days to use acrylic paint and a real canvas to create a piece of art.

The provision of real life experiences and events and the use of authentic media and materials is a philosophy we value. We believe it enables children to develop transdisciplinary skills and a sense of worth and competence.

During Art Jamming, it is always instructive to note that children who may need support in other areas are often the ones who persist the longest, and are the most engaged and creative during the painting process. This underlines the importance of the transdisciplinary nature of the PYP.

Educational Visits

The children have participated in a number of visits connected to the units of inquiry over the course of the year. K2 children visited the Melaleuca Wood at UWC on a number of occasions and Kadoorie farm during the Sharing the Planet unit. Both year groups visited Ma On Shan park for a combined sport day / community event, and went to the theatre during the How we Express Ourselves unit.

K1 classes visited the transport hub and MTR station downstairs and participated in a transport trip around Hong Kong. K2 classes individually went to a variety of venues such as supermarkets and restaurants when learning about food.



Christmas Gifting to HKSPC

We were delighted to have Santa in school on Tuesday 17th December. Santa visited all class parties and spent some time meeting and talking to all children. One of Santa's tasks was to receive the gifts and donations that we collected for the Hong Kong Society for the Protection of Children. We were absolutely overwhelmed by the generosity shown from our families and we thank everyone who took part. The gifts have already been passed to the HKSPC and will be distributed amongst the many children in their care on Christmas Day.



Fundraiser for Philippine Disaster Relief

Children at Wu Kai Sha were very aware of the typhoon that caused so much destruction in the Phillipines in November and together with the school community, were motivated to do something to help. The school selected to hold a dress casual day and children and staff came to school dressed in the colours of the Phillipine flag and made a small donation. A total of \$31, 592 was raised and donated to UNICEF who directly supported children and victims of Typhoon Haiyan.

Priority Area 4: Faculty and Support Staff

Professional Development

In October 2013 our teachers joined other ESF teachers for a day of professional learning at Renaissance College. The key note speaker was Lee Crockett, an award winning author, designer and artist who is the Managing Partner of 'The 21st Century Fluency Project'. Lee shared his thoughts about the 'fluencies' required to ensure that we equip children with relevant knowledge and problem solving skills for life in the 21st century. Teachers also participated in a wide range of workshops which focused on various aspects of learning and teaching.

Teachers played a major role in developing and delivering CPD to colleagues. This helped to give some ownership over the CPD programme to teachers and enable them to share their practice and develop capacity as leaders. CPD led by teachers included:

- Introduction to Reggio Emilia
- The Hundred Languages of Children
- Image of the Child
- The Learning Environment
- The Purpose and Value of Play

The school organised a wide-range of CPD sessions during the course of the year and continued the practice of dedicating 90 minutes each Monday after classes finish to professional development. This enabled school staff to share practice and resources, develop agreements and engage in professional learning activities. The focus of school-based CPD included:

- Learning Technologies
- Development Planning
- SEN Strategies
- The Purpose and Value of Play
- Philosophy and Vision
- Conceptual Understanding
- Planning for Mathematics
- Collaborative Planning
- Formative and Summative Assessment Strategies

Teachers attended a range of workshops provided by the IB and other providers such as Eton House. These workshops are essential in supporting teachers continuous development and understanding of current educational practice and research. Workshops attended by Wu Kai Sha teachers included:

- Assessment in the Early Years
- Play Based Learning
- PYP for 3-5 Year Olds
- Well-being
- Teachers as Researchers
- Pedagogical Leadership
- The Reggio Emilia Approach

Recruitment

At the beginning of 2013/2014 3 new class teachers joined the team and each brought with them a rich experience of working with young children in early years and primary school settings. A new position was created for a teacher of Chinese who would develop and implement a programme of Putonghua for all classes. We also welcomed 3 new EAs, two of whom hold the HK Diploma in Early Childhood Education.



Priority Area 5: Support for Students

Overview

During the year a total of 23 children (13 in K1 and 10 in K2) were listed to the Special Educational Needs register at ESF Levels (the highest placement in a setting with no formal LSC classes). A further 12 children in K1 classes were monitored and received additional in-class support and differentiation.

Supports for named children included small group language, gross motor and social support groups, in-class differentiation strategies, and external speech and language and occupational therapy for some children. The school benefited from the support of the SEN Advisor over the year. The Advisor worked with teachers in writing IEPs, suggested strategies and met with and supported families.

Resources and support

The school made a decision during the course of the year to recruit a dedicated teacher to support children in their learning. This reflects the ESF value of inclusion and provides the necessary support and expertise required to meet the additional needs of all children in school. At the end of the school year a teacher was appointed to the post 'Support for Learning Coordinator'. We believe that having an experienced teacher dedicated to supporting children and teachers will greatly enhance inclusions and educational provision at Wu Kai Sha.



Priority Area 6: Resources and Facilities Development

We believe that a practical and attractive learning environment is key to engaging young children in their learning and this year, we looked at various ways in which to further enhance the environment at Wu Kai Sha. During the Christmas holiday, various works took place in school, most notably the construction of a new kitchen area that is accessible to children. Other improvements included the erection of new display boards in the shared areas, alterations in Crane and Magpie classrooms that involved mounting the electronic whiteboards on the wall, painting of all common areas of the school and the installation of a large sink and wall unit in the art area.



Library

This year we were excited to launch our new online library catalogue. The system allows students, staff and parents to browse our entire library collection and reserve books and resources for use at home. The Wu Kai Sha library currently includes over 1400 books, Story Sacks and audio-visual resources as well as hundreds of approved websites.

We began lending our library resources in phases, beginning with K2 children and families. Information about how to use the library system and a copy of our lending policy was sent to all families and we arranged a series of short training and information sessions to introduce the library system to families.



School Garden Extension

In September 2013 we applied to the Leisure and Cultural Services Department to obtain a grant for developing and extending garden on our outside terrace area. This grant was part of the Greening School subsidy scheme developed by the HK government to encourage schools to develop garden areas within their premises. Once the application was submitted an officer from the LCSD paid a visit to the school to assess our area. A total grant of \$5000 was received in September 2013 which was the maximum allowed. The terms of the grant stipulated that 70% of the subsidy for planting projects should be spent on purchase of plants and opening tree pits, the remaining 30% may be spent on purchase of horticultural materials such as planting media, fertilizers and gardening tools. By January 2014 the garden had been extended with newer and larger planters. The children were involved in the process of enlargement, helping to empty bags of soil into the planters and transplant plants in to them. The new planters have allowed for vegetables such as tomatoes and bell peppers to be planted as they need more space to grow. We also installed a natural bamboo screen to separate the learning space from the cleaner's area. Some of the new plants have been chosen because of their sensory qualities such as lavender (for smell) and asparagus fern (for touch).

Learning Technologies

We continued to make improvements in the way the school uses technology to support learning, teaching and organization.

Google Apps

In order to support improved opportunities for communication and collaboration, we adopted Google Apps for education. This involved moving school email services from the Gateway to the Google platform and integrating existing services such as our school calendar. Now that all staff have access to Google Apps, we have been able to facilitate better collaborative planning for teachers within the school and between schools. Improved general communication across the school is also made possible through access to shared documents.

Hardware

A further batch of iPads were purchased and set up with an appropriate range of apps to support student learning. These are now in regular use by children and are used appropriately. A number of desktops computers were replaced as part of the replenishment cycle.

Educational Software

The school has purchased 'Espresso' software to provide additional resources for the classroom and support children's learning at home. Espresso provides a wide range of materials including thousands of videos and multimedia activities. New educational software includes '2Simple Paint' and '2Simple Create a Story' which support the children's language and creative skills. Many 'apps' have been purchased for use with the school's iPads and parents have also been made aware of appropriate apps for use at home. The process for purchasing apps was reviewed to take account of recommended policy and process.

Digital Communication

Our digital communication continues to be well received by parents and the community. Our Twitter feed is regularly updated with news, information, articles and photographs depicting learning and teaching taking place in school. There has been a high level of interaction and engagement from parents and community members and this has led to additional opportunities for dialogue about the children's learning. A Facebook page replicates the Twitter feed and ensures that parents can access up-to-date information via their social media applications.

THE YEAR AHEAD

The school participated in many evaluation activities this year. While we are committed to self-evaluation and improvement of our practice, following two years of considerable change we are also conscious of the need to consolidate our practice in key areas. We will continue to develop our pedagogy and practices in line with the new PYP Early Years advice and make particular reference to appropriate approaches such as Reggio Emilia. There will be an emphasis on personalization and pedagogical documentation of the children's learning which will involve enhanced collaboration between teachers and EAs and involve them in consistently and routinely capturing and responding to children's interests and questions in a systematic way.

The appointment of a dedicated Support for Learning Coordinator will enable us to develop our commitment to inclusion and our capacity for managing and supporting students with additional learning needs. This will involve the establishment of 'Student Support Groups' for children with IEPs, offering more consistent curriculum support and developing closer liaison with feeder primary schools.

Building on the success of our parent partnerships this year it is important that we continue to capitalise on the enthusiasm of our parent community and their desire to learn with us and their children. We will aim to offer an expanded programme of parent information sessions, form a parent support group and organise a large-scale community event that enables parents to play a wider role in the life of the school.

THANK YOU

Finally, I would like to say a special 'thank you' to all the staff who have worked so hard during the school year. They are tremendous team of dedicated professionals who's caring and commitment ensures we provide the best possible opportunities for children to think, explore and achieve in so many ways.

I would also like to thank parents for all the support they have shown our school over the year and this includes the help offered by our many wonderful our parent volunteers who have worked in classes. It is a pleasure working with such a strong and dedicated community.

Christopher Coyle
Principal