



## GENERAL NEWS AND INFORMATION

### Welcome Back!

It has been a busy few weeks for everyone since the beginning of term, but one that has gone very smoothly. K2 children have settled back to school very quickly with their new teachers and EAs. Our K1 students are very excited to be here and are already displaying high levels of confidence and cooperation as they settle into their new classes. I have been extremely impressed by the way in which everyone in the school community has worked together to ensure the children could make the best possible start to the new school year. Staff have worked very hard to prepare a wide range of learning experiences for your children and I would like to thank them all for doing such a great job!

### Staff News

We are delighted to welcome several new members of staff to our school this year. New class teachers include Laura Dehm (K1 Owl), Jessica Hugo (K2 Magpie), Allys Stafford (K2 Robin) and Ines Topps (K1 Peacock PM). New EAs include Alex Ko (K2 Emu), Frances Mickleburgh (K2 Robin) and Rohini Thomas (K1 Owl). Please join us in welcoming our new staff to the school community!

Congratulations to Kevin Thapa (K2 Crane EA) who married in the UK and to Penny Chen (K1 Eagle EA) who married in Hong Kong during the summer holiday. Jeanine Wong (Chinese Teacher) gave birth to a baby boy in July. Jeanine is currently enjoying her maternity leave and we look forward to seeing her back in school at the end of this month.

### Fiona Zinn Workshop

Thank you to the many parents who attended Fiona Zinn's workshop on the importance of Early Years education. This was an insightful and thought provoking session which inspired a great deal of discussion amongst the group. We have received some very positive feedback about the workshop which we have passed on to Fiona. As you may know, Fiona spent two full days with our teachers and EAs and we are currently discussing how to integrate some of her approaches and strategies into our practice at school.

### Y1 Admissions

The admissions process for Year 1 places at ESF Primary Schools opened on 1 September. All K2 parents wishing to apply for a Y1 place in an ESF school should remember to complete the online application and gather all supporting documentation by September 30. If you have any questions about the Y1 admissions process, please do not hesitate to contact Fatima Rumjahn.

### Snack

We would like to kindly remind you of our expectations in regard to your child's snack. These expectations encourage children to eat healthily and help us to ensure children with allergies are kept safe. It may be appropriate to share this information with your helper.



- You should provide a small portion as children are given a maximum of 10 minutes to eat snack
- **Snacks should contain** healthy foods such as fruit, vegetables, cheese, crackers, small sandwiches, yoghurt or dried fruit
- **Snacks should not contain** biscuits, cakes, chocolate or sweets
- **It is vitally important that snacks DO NOT contain nuts or nut products such as peanut butter**

To ensure our message is not forgotten over time, a sticker will be placed in your child's communication book to gently remind parents and helpers, who have included biscuits, cakes or sweets, to provide a small, healthy snack next day.

### **Birthdays**

We appreciate that some parents may want to celebrate their child's birthday by sending something into class. We would suggest that this is a small gift such as a notebook or a small toy and not cakes or sweets. Another way to celebrate would be to donate a new book to the classroom and make it special for your child by coming in to read it to the class.

### **Gateway**

'Gateway' is the online system used by all ESF schools and helps us to provide more effective communication between families and the school and allows parents to access information about their child's education and progress more easily.

Log in details for all K1 families and new K2 families will be issued in your child's communication book soon.

### **Parent WhatsApp Groups**

We are aware that there are a number of 'WhatsApp' groups used by parents to discuss matters relating to the school. We recognise that these groups are important in developing the sense of community amongst parents and that useful group conversations often take place.

Unfortunately, there have been a number of instances where inaccurate information and personal opinion has been circulated amongst parents which has caused unnecessary confusion and concern. We would like to remind parents that the school is the primary source of accurate information and parents are requested to contact the school office to clarify matters or seek advice when necessary. Staff at Wu Kai Sha are always happy to answer your questions and assist with enquiries about learning and life at the school.



## OUR LEARNING IN K1

It is lovely to see how well the K1s have settled into their new school environment and how they familiarised themselves with a wide range of learning areas. The children are building up their classroom communities and starting to make friends.

The K1s have been tuning in to their first unit of inquiry *Who We Are*. This unit is enabling the children to develop their understanding of play as well as to make friends and explore ideas through play.

The unit will be carried out through our lines of inquiry:

- **Different kinds of play (Form)**
- **The outdoors as a source of learning and play (Connection)**
- **How friends play together (Function/ Connection)**
- **Our rights and responsibilities at school (Responsibility)**

Over the past weeks the children have explored different play areas and the use of a variety of resources. They are developing an understanding of expectations and routines at school such as finding their name tag or unpacking their school bags. All K1 classes particularly focused on developing the children's understanding of sharing, turn-taking and tidying up.



The Eagle class used social stories such as *the Rainbow Fish* or *Our House* to discuss how friends play together. Some children started to show an awareness of the importance of sharing and have begun to consider others when playing. During carpet time, the Eagles have learned how to sort resources into the correct baskets and demonstrated an understanding of what tidy up time means.

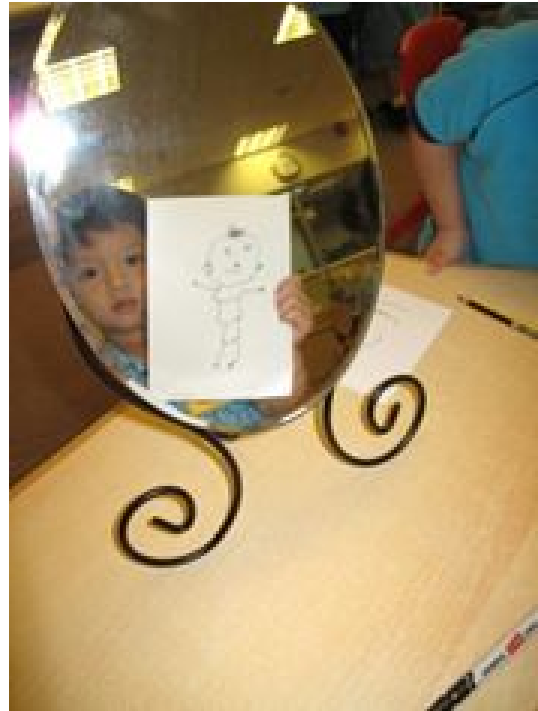


Likewise, the Peacock PM class has been focusing on classroom agreements and behaviour expectations during circle and play time and children have begun to identify 'sharing' as being the right choice. They show increasing independence when starting their classroom routine and the ability to follow rules and routines without prompts.

The Owl class was very interested in story time and responded well to using classroom puppets in order to consolidate concepts learned through stories. Following this, they have been visiting the school library, focusing on book care. This has been a great hit with the children as they were very engaged and excited about the independence of choosing a book and putting it back where it belongs.



Similarly, the Peacock class (AM) showed enthusiasm for and enjoyment of familiar stories. Having revisited the stories, some of the children were able to predict what would happen next or supply missing story endings. The Peacocks have also been focusing on book care and learned how to put books back into the baskets.



In general, the children are able to choose an area in which they would like to engage in; however, some do require a little guidance when it comes to making independent choices.

The K1s will continue to develop a sense of classroom community by learning about one another. Through sharing their 'All about me' books, the children will find out about their peers' homes, families and favourite activities.



## OUR LEARNING IN K2

All of the teaching staff here at Wu Kai Sha are delighted to see your children return to school and progress into K2. All of the children have settled into their new classes remarkably well and have been busy building up relationships with their new teachers and classmates.

Our first unit of Inquiry 'Who We Are' is currently encouraging the children to consider how we can build a positive classroom community. The children are achieving this line of inquiry by developing classroom rules with their peers and teachers. The teachers are also working with the children to help them develop, understand and become familiar with their daily routine at school and enable them to anticipate different events within their school day.



The classes have focussed on friendships and the children are beginning to identify who their friends are and who they like to play with. The children have shared information about themselves such as likes and dislikes and friends in 'All About Me' books. We have been learning new ring/circle games with a friendship focus- e.g. Tell the group what you like about the person sitting next to you. In the Physical Area children have enjoyed playing ring games such as 'I took a letter to my friend'. They have been finding out about their physical capabilities and using their bodies to travel in different ways using a range of equipment.



The K2 classes have enjoyed exploring and engaging in the different learning areas of their new classrooms. By encouraging the children to reflect on their play and explorations at school, the children are demonstrating their ability to identify their favourite areas to learn and play. The K2 classes have made bar charts to identify the most and least popular areas of their classroom and have discussed how they could improve the least popular learning areas as a class.

The children have been engaging in a variety of activities to develop skills across the PYP curriculum. They have participated in active pre-writing activities to develop their fine motor control and are



learning about the concept of alliteration to support their phonic skills. K2s have accessed many mathematical opportunities within the classroom and the main focus has been on number. The children in K2 have also taken part in a variety of creative art, cooking and gardening activities.



## PARENT / STAFF ASSOCIATION NEWS

### **PSA Nominations 2015-2016**

Last year, our Parents' Association organized several significant school events and raised money which was used to purchase climbing equipment for our children.

In order to formally include the school staff in the Association, this year, the Parents' Association will be renamed as the ESF International Kindergarten Wu Kai Sha Parent Staff Association (PSA). It is our hope that we can create another success story this year. Thank you to everyone who has recently completed the self-nomination form.

### **Mid-Autumn Festival Events**

The Mid-Autumn festival is an exciting time for us all and this year we are holding a number of activities to help us celebrate!

### **Community Celebration**

*Thursday 24th September  
Ma On Shan Park  
5pm-7pm*

This event is intended to be an opportunity for our families and staff from Wu Kai Sha Kindergarten to socialise and enjoy. Our hardworking PSA is busy planning activities and will also be providing fruit for all to enjoy. To make this event even more special, our children will be able to impress family members by parading their lanterns in the park and by sharing Mooncake, both of which they will be making in school.

### **Lanterns**

Children are currently making their individual lanterns in class. These are made from various materials, many of which are recycled. If you wish your child's lantern to be lit at the park then you may consider placing a small battery operated candle inside. Please note that these lanterns are NOT designed to be illuminated with a naked flame.

### **Mooncake Making**

On the 23rd and 24th September, a group of volunteer parents will support the children in making their own Mooncakes. The Mooncakes will be baked in school and will be distributed to families during our Community Celebration.

This will be such a memorable time for children and adults so we hope you will be able to join us and celebrate the Mid-Autumn festival.





### PA Financial Report 2014-2015

The Financial Report of the 2014-2015 Parents' Association will be available to view in the school office from Monday 14th September.

## KEY DATES AND EVENTS

***Please add the following dates to your diary!***

- Monday, 28 September: Public Holiday (School Closed)
- Thursday, 1 October: Public Holiday (School Closed)
- Friday, 2 October: CPD Day (School Closed)
- Tuesday, 6 October: Student Conferences (Magpie)
- Wednesday, 7 October: Student Conferences (Emu)
- Thursday, 8 October: Student Conferences (Robin) & Charlie & Lola 9.45am: Emu / Magpie
- Friday, 9 October: Student Conferences (Owl) & Charlie & Lola 9.45am: Crane / Robin
- Monday, 12 October: Student Conferences (Crane) & Student Conference (3.30pm - 7.00pm)
- Tuesday, 13 October: Student Conferences (Peacock)
- Wednesday, 14 October: Student Conferences (3.30pm - 7.00pm)
- Thursday, 15 October: Student Conferences (Eagle) & K2 Ma On Shan Park
- Friday, 16 October: K1 Ma On Shan Park
- Monday, 19 - 25 October: ESF "Half Term Holiday" (School Closed)
- Wednesday, 21 October: Public Holiday (School Closed)
- Monday, 26 October: Term Begins

### **What are CPD days?**

*Continuous Professional Development (CPD) days provide teachers with the opportunity to enhance their professional knowledge and skills with the underlying aim of enriching the learning experiences for their students. CPD days are an important additional responsibility on top of the required teaching days. Two of the five ESF CPD days are centrally agreed. The remaining CPD days are set by individual schools to take place at the most appropriate times to support school development initiatives.*



## OTHER

### **'How to Inspire Your Child to Love Learning' Parent Workshop with Ellen Booth Church**

We are extremely pleased to share the details of an upcoming parent workshop, which is purposefully designed for parents of our youngest ESF students (K1-Y2). In an effort to further include 'parents as partners' in the education of our students, the ESF Education Team has organised a session with Ellen Booth Church who will inspire parents to consider how they may support a love of learning from the child's first school: Home!

*Details of the workshop are as follows:*

- Date: Wednesday 30th September
- Time: 6.30pm - 8pm
- Kowloon Junior School, Perth Street

Please visit the following link to register: [http://bit.ly/ESF\\_Parents\\_Sep2015](http://bit.ly/ESF_Parents_Sep2015)

### **New ESF Educational Services Website**

The website for ESF Sports and ESF Language & Learning has a new look and feel. It also has improved functionality with the introduction of a course finder enabling users to search by school location or programme type, and then select the individual classes on offer. We hope this will make things easier for parents and also raise the profile of these programmes with better communication of what's on offer after school.

Please visit the website at: [www.esf.org.hk](http://www.esf.org.hk)