

# Children growing up with Experience

It's easy to just describe some concepts in a book to children while adding additional explanations. Let's look at it the other way around. You may know that making a concept into something real with lots of experience or experiments takes tremendous time and effort. Chadwick chose the difficult way, and in the process, the teachers, children, and parents grow together very intensely, yet with fun.





“Most of all, we make efforts to implant the problem solving skill in our students. Mistakes and failures are quite natural in the process of learning. The child looks for a better answer through their trial and error process. Without dwelling on a narrow-minded definition that is right or wrong, the child looks for various answers and cultivates his or her own ability.”

Shelly Luke Wille, the Assistant Head of School and Village School Principal of Chadwick International, and a mother of two Chadwick students, understands how difficult it is to be a good parent and how important the education is. She created and introduced the “Design Cycle” for all the classes at Chadwick International. The Design Cycle is a kind of process which induces a virtuous cycle of learning. Students come up with ideas to solve given tasks and make prototypes based on the ideas. Then they remove flaws that occur in the process of actually applying the model, and by doing so make a better model. By recording all of these processes, they can see what they had overlooked and what they were good at. Although Wille holds the position of Assistant Head of School, she still teaches classes and communicates with the students. She emphasizes morality as well as self-confidence so that the students can solve problems on their own. “Ideas come from emphatic ability,” Wille said. “They come with empathy for the world, empathy for other people, and the thinking to change the world in a positive way. At Chadwick, we help children to develop their understanding starting from their community and gradually extend the range to their country and to the world. In 2016, Chadwick’s first graduates will go to colleges and into society. I hope they will be leaders to make a positive change in the society.”



## Experiential Learning

Befitting its role as an international school, there are a lot of students and teachers with different nationalities on the campus. The children are free to speak their mother tongue and English. This is because the administration thought it would be ironic if Korean students were not allowed to speak Korean even if they live in Korea. Therefore, Korean language and culture classes take up more than 5 hours a week. Students were not just sitting silently and listening to their teachers but making something and presenting things, running around, and debating.

In a hallway, Pre-kindergarten students were racing with cars made from recycled shoe boxes. The cars were equipped with Bluetooth-enabled equipment, so they could operate them by remote control. "Now, there's a big fire in the building. We are going to extinguish it," one student said. Along with the cars, there were various buildings such as a hospital and fire station that were made using recyclables, and components of the models for them were printed out by a 3D printer. The chapter that the students were learning was about "Community." They were making a miniature village and performing role play to understand the concept of community. Meanwhile, on the playground, all the 2nd grade students mingled and learning about the games played in various countries. It was a physical education class and also a part of the lessons on "community." The play culture of Alaskan children involved running a race on all fours. As they ran around the playground the whole day and make racing cars indoors, their clothes got dirty and their cheeks became flushed. Children of various nationalities were running and playing freely like children in the countryside, and it was reminiscent of the term "global village." Someone said that the parents of Chadwick are happy parents since their children sleep better since their days are filled with lots of activities to release high energy level of young child.

## Cutting-edge facilities that enable experience

In the Village School, where there are about 800 students ranging from PreK to Grade 5, natural sunlight enters all the classrooms. The school building was built with the layout of traditional Korean houses and palaces. All the classrooms are connected in a shape like the Hangeul character 'ㄷ' to streamline the students' path. There are also many facilities besides classrooms. When the glass door leading to the indoor pool is opened, the heat of the room can be felt. The pool area is very warm. Like this, the school shows its careful concern for children by providing the pool with warm air. One side of the pool is very deep and capable of scuba diving. The pool maintenance fee is one million won per day.

And right next to the pool there is a gym. The walls and floor of the gym have buffers to prevent children from being hurt. Also, a specialist teacher is assigned separately for activities such as rock climbing. There is a theater which can accommodate up to 700 people and is a large-scale concert hall equipped with orchestra seats, a lighting system, and a control room which has cutting-edge equipment. Therefore, plays, performances, and fund-raising activities can be held in the theater throughout the year.

In the Maker Space equipped with 3D printers, students can make just about everything. This is one of the spaces that the children like the most. At the time of a visit, Grade 1 students were making cars by themselves as part of a course to learn about "force and motion". They were making an optimized car by recording and revising the driving distance depending on the exchange of wheels and the load. One student was starting the car design all over again because he forgot to add a design for loading. When asked what would happen if the students could not complete their car within the given time, She answered the real purpose of the class was to learn the design process not about finishing a project on time or comparing the finished products.







### Developing a life beyond just learning and study

In a classroom for grade 5 students, the children were busy preparing for a conference. The assessment is conducted in a type of conference. It's not about looking for the right answers to questions while seated at a desk. Students make teams and organize the contents they studied into one theme and then present it before the school parents. One female student, who was working hard on a panel, was asked what she was making. It was a task with the theme of "cruelty to pets." Next to her, there was a model of a prison which was open for people to enter. The children make an action plan for the contents they have learned with a theme and for how they will proceed. After that, teachers evaluate how the students have performed all these processes. In a final report card, ranks are not determined.

With the International Baccalaureate (IB) curriculum Chadwick implements, a big topic is decided on and then detailed class contents are designed by the teachers of various subjects, including the PE, art and music teachers. In other words, many subjects such as national language, physical education, and art are mixed in one class. For example, if students learn about "totalitarianism and democracy," they can freely sing a song that they want to sing one day and sing a specified song together the next day. After that, the concept of totalitarianism is explained. In this way, one topic is covered for 6 weeks. So the number of topics learned in a year is about six. The six topics are the same for all students from preschoolers to 5th graders. The review is made naturally because they learn more in-depth contents as their grades go up.

So, what is the ultimate purpose of all these education courses? It is to implant self-confidence so that students can solve problems by themselves and to foster an ability to understand their potential. When students find and develop their potential and come to understand the world, they can become aware that the world is full of opportunities and look for what they can do on their own. Accordingly, they can learn how to design their life and what attitudes they should have through experience. That is the education Chadwick aims for, and it is the school's wish to cultivate moral leaders for the society.

