

CTESCONNECT

2020 SUMMER



*An Upside-Down World -
Life During COVID-19*



Digital Learning - IBDP Students' Perspectives

CEO Greetings

No one can doubt that this has been a very difficult academic year on so many levels but there have been some major moves forward for TES. For the last 2 years we have been gearing up for more technologically advanced learning environments. We have invested in training and hardware so that teachers would be able to leverage new opportunities as we moved into the new building at ESC. The training and hardware was also being rolled out at EPC. This led to us being well-prepared for school closures and the roll out of digital learning.

I have to say that it was still a shock to all of our systems and we took a little while to get into the swing of things and 'get it right'. That we did and were recognised by local media was a huge pat on the back for our staff, students and parents who tried their best to get the most out of the situation.

That we all learned valuable lessons also needs to be acknowledged. Teachers looked at delivering care for students remotely, not something that we had really considered previously. Students (sometimes) learned self-management, planning and self-regulation. Parents learned how hard it is to be a teacher and keep children focused on learning, I also hope that they learned how to support their children academically and got some enjoyment out of it. As an organisation we learned that, in the face of the unknown, we have to be extremely flexible and always decisive. We had to reorganise entry into the school: taking temperatures; restricting adult access and hence change pick-up and drop-off; change the cafeteria seating arrangements, timings of lunch and add social distancing; get everyone in masks for the whole day. And we all learned to get on with it and support one another!

As we are currently moving into our new building with new classrooms fitted out with new technology it is a very exciting time at the ESC. Gone are the desktop computers, interactive whiteboards and projectors. We have large touch screens with docking stations, flexible teachers and students equipped with their own laptop set up with all the software. This is combined with the roll out of a new schools management system that will give access to parents, students and teachers along with a new website and paperless applications process. In short we are now catching up with changes in the education field that reflect best practice.

David Gatley
CEO of Taipei European School



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CONNECT

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Taipei European School (TES) is a not-for-profit international school aiming to provide excellent accredited education for the local international community in Taipei. We offer the national accredited curricula from the UK, Germany and France, assuring an education offering the identical curriculum standards as the European home country, in the dynamic Chinese cultural and language setting of Taiwan.

This publication aims to provide our community an insight into our school, as well as to serve as a platform to connect our past, present and future stakeholders.

For any questions or inquiries about the publication, please email us at connect@tes.tp.edu.tw

From EPC to ESC: What We Do to Help Students with the Transition

By Raymond Imbleau, Dean of Year 7, BSHS

Can you remember your first day of Secondary School? You were probably nervous at embarking upon 'the unknown', sad to be leaving your Year 6 class teacher but excited about the prospect of making new friends, meeting new teachers, exploring a new campus, and experiencing new lessons. You were probably a little worried about what your new timetable would look like, where your new locker would be, how you would find your way to all your new classrooms before the bell rings and whether or not it would be possible to complete the nightly homework that secondary school teachers are renowned for giving.

At TES, the transition team from both the EPC and ESC want to make this transition process as smooth as possible so that students are equipped with the information and scaffolding that they need to take this next positive step. Therefore, each academic year, the Year 6 students travel up to the Secondary campus for three transition days where they actively participate in exciting and educational taster lessons from many different subject teachers. In the past, the Science laboratory experiments have proven a big hit as the students explore the laboratories and complete experiments in earth science, biology, physics and much more. The real hit each year for the Year 6 students is when they get to use bunsen burners to light a fire - under the guidance of their science teacher and while donning safety goggles of course!



They also have the opportunity, each year, to walk over to the sports centre and participate in a round-robin football tournament. All these taster lessons, along with a guided tour of the campus from their senior school-mates, prove to be very beneficial as they are given the opportunity to experiment with something new in class, check out our beautiful school surroundings in Yang-mingshan, have a tour of the new facilities and speak with older TES students who will share their own personal experiences.

Throughout the year, they also have additional opportunities to work with students in Key Stage Three (Years 7 to 9) through activities ranging from Drama performances, Chinese Language Marketplace events, Chinese Language exchanges and specialist lessons from Language teachers. All of these have given our Year 6 students an insight into the teaching and learning that takes place at the Secondary campus, as well as a chance for them to make personal connections with older students from Key Stage Three who will share the European Secondary Campus with them next year.



As with any move from a primary to a secondary school, there will be a few changes for students. Three of the immediate changes or challenges of Secondary School will be greater independence and responsibility, as well the need for more organisation. All Year 7 Core teachers will, of course, help support each student in their House by issuing them with a homework diary on the first day of school. Year 7 students will use this homework diary on a daily basis and record all their homework assignments in it at the end of every class. As each Year 7 student will have approximately 12 different teachers, their homework diary is really their golden ticket to success throughout the year. When students get home after school, they should open up their homework diary and make a homework plan for the evening. They should also empty out their school bag and pack it again with only the things they need for the next day. Parents can encourage their child to be even more proactive in Year 7 - we want our students to develop skills of independence and to be in charge of their own learning. We want to cultivate the skills that they need to be successful in the High School, at university and beyond.

The Years 5 and Years 6 parents have a similar transition experience each autumn. In November, the parents visited the Secondary campus where they met our BSHS Headmaster, Mrs Papps and the Senior Leadership Team who spoke about the KS3 curriculum, the new one-to-one devices starting from August, the importance of pastoral care, as well as the importance of students taking more responsibility for themselves in Secondary school. Mrs Sunny Foehr-Huang, Head of the Parent Association, also spoke from a High School parent's point of view which all mums and dads found very insightful.





Even when the transition days for the parents and students are completed by the end of the academic year, it doesn't stop there. In the first week of the new school calendar in August, all the Year 7 students will be involved in Team-Building Day - activities where they will be given the opportunity to meet their new Core (similar to PSHCE in the UK) teacher, their housemates and the new students who have recently enrolled in TES. We hope that all of the students who have come up from the EPC can take this opportunity to be a great help to the newcomers and show them around campus, just like they were shown around in the spring. In the second week of school, Year 7 students attend Camp Taiwan for their final time with TES.



At camp, students will participate in a wide range of activities such as: sea-kayaking, river-tracing, the giant swing and outdoor ecology. These experiential activities will allow students, both new and old, to bond and support each other throughout the 3 day/night excursion.

Shubh (H3) is an eager annual student guide for the Year 6 visits: 'I love to participate in transition days and being a tour guide. I love to help and show budding Year 6 students all the amazing things that we do in Secondary and High School and answer all their questions. Hopefully my answers will help them flourish when they start Year 7 in August'.

Summer (Y9) reflected on her Year 6-7 transition experience 'Everyone has to face change, which isn't necessarily a bad thing. Secondary school gives young students a chance to become a bit more independent, responsible, and organised. In all my years in the Primary Campus, I looked forward to the new experiences secondary school provides. Don't fear change, embrace it! Now, I embrace my future'.

At TES, we are one school. Despite the geographical distance between the campuses, and the different languages that are spoken in the sections, we are the Taipei European School. With the transition days for both parents and students alike, we truly hope that the Year 6-7 transition process proves to be a valuable and rewarding experience for all, connecting both campuses and showing that we truly are: one school.





REDESIGNING OUR EARLY YEARS LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

By Jennie Bonnalie (Head of Nursery and Curriculum Leader, BPS)

The Nursery team have been exploring ways to improve and enhance our learning environment. We made it a team goal to ensure that it was a priority. To help us with our goal, we were fortunate to have professional development training earlier in the year, from Early Years expert, Jan Dubail. He helped our team to think critically, plan, problem-solve and start to develop a rich, child-led and stimulating learning environment plan.

As Early Years educators we knew the importance of our learning environment. We wanted our environment to promote positive relationships, collaboration, communication, and exploration through play. The UK Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum states, *'An enabling environment is one which provides a rich, varied and safe space in a setting in which children can play, explore and learn. This can contribute greatly to children's learning and development in the early years. The environment should be child-centered'*.

As experienced teachers, we also wanted to create an environment where the children felt they belonged and had ownership over it. We knew that greater student agency is developed through the use of continuous provision, enhancements, and provocations. We realised that we needed to include our children's 'voice' in our planning, as this was going to make the children feel more ownership and connection to the space. One of the ways to encourage student voice was to ask for feedback from the children each week. We asked them which activities or what they had enjoyed doing over the week. Their 'voice' provided the teachers with important feedback to critique and plan our provision for the following weeks. By including them in some of the decision-making, the child felt valued as an important part of our shared community. Another example of including the child was by allocating a display board, where students could put up work that they were proud of and wanted to share.



The EYFS also believes that, 'Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. There is an ongoing judgement to be made by practitioners about the balance between activities led by children, and activities led or guided by adults'. Therefore, as a team, we took stock of our resources and equipment in our environment. The equipment and resources were re-organised and planned to allow for more independence, choice, creativity and accessibility. We organised it so that the children could clearly see what was available. We purposely chose materials and equipment that are adaptable, open-ended and flexible, so that the child could determine how they wanted to use it, and for what purpose. As early childhood expert Fiona Zinn suggests '....controlling the desire to "tell" children and knowing how and when to set up situations and make use of questions and experiences which aim to extend, consolidate or confront children's ideas' (Zinn, 2019).



We continually have to be responsive and adapt our environment to that of the children's interests. Equipment is selected and planned within the children's learning space that will continue to scaffold their learning and understanding.

To further support us with our goal, the Early Years are next on the list to receive the new Furnware furniture that the rest of the BPS has received. The timing was perfect, as we had a much better idea of what we needed to achieve our goal. The new furniture is flexible and adaptive, and ergonomically comfortable for young children. It is due to arrive at the beginning of the new academic year, and we can't wait, as we know it will be the icing on the cake for the Unit, so watch this space!



Farewell to TES and Taiwan

By Jean-Yves Vesseau, Head of the French Section, 2013-2020

My love story with Taiwan began from afar, in European art-house cinemas, watching Edward Yang's 'Yi Yi' and Hou Hsiao-Hsien's 'Millennium Mambo'. Of course I had no idea then that I would one day get to live in Taipei - I admit that I probably would not have been able to place the island on a world map with any degree of certainty. Nor did I rush to visit when I moved to Shanghai, favouring instead to holiday on the beaches of Thailand or get my fill of cinematic scenery from the skyscrapers of Hong Kong.



In February 2013 though, I was offered a position as the Head of the French section of Taipei European School. A first visit occurred a few weeks later under grey skies and a persistent drizzle. Walking the large avenues of a mostly deserted city on a Tomb Sweeping weekend, it was not exactly love at first sight.

And even after moving to Taipei in August of that year it took my wife and I a while to settle down. We found ourselves missing the bustling streets of Shanghai's former French Concession. The few words of Mandarin we'd managed to master there did not take us very far here. The first typhoon hit us quickly, then the first quake. Work helped, though. The school was wonderful, the students and their families incredible. Soon we launched project after project, the community grew fast. Long hours were spent at the office, Taipei a mere backdrop, it felt, to what was essentially a work assignment.



And yet, little by little, without always being the wiser, my love for Taiwan grew. And little by little Taipei became home. To such an extent that 7 years later, as I am about to leave for the USA to pursue my professional career, I know that Taiwan will always be a big part of who I am. And I know that there are so many things from here that I will carry with me in my virtual luggage.

I will forever carry the sounds that rhythm our daily lives: the school bells, the garbage truck, the beeps of the MRT turnstiles. I will forever carry the wonderful people I have met, Taiwanese, adopted Taiwanese or people just passing through. My colleagues at TES who are such dedicated educators and many of whom I am lucky enough to call my friends today. I will carry the smiles of Taiwanese people, their kindness, values and generosity. I will carry and cherish these memories, keep them in my pockets until they're polished smooth like one of those jade Buddhas you see on market stalls.

Thank you Taiwan for everything you have given me over these years. Before writing this article I found pictures of myself upon arriving here: I looked so young then and I did not know that my stubble would get white here. I had always been one to find the grass greener elsewhere, moving around, country after country, continent after continent. Until Taiwan got me, that is, and the idea of finding a better place to be seemed almost impossible.

Nothing made me happier then than realizing that the 'P' in my APRC actually meant that I had become, unaware again, a permanent resident of Taiwan. Knowing that I will be able to come back makes leaving much easier. After all, we all want to come back home at some stage in our lives.



TES says Au Revoir to Jean-Yves Vesseau French Section Head from 2013-2020

2013



2014



2015



2016





2017



2018





2019



2020





TES Staff Taking Part in Taipei Running Events

By Camilla Harris, Music Teacher, BSHS

At TES, there are over 50 very keen runners from all four Sections of the school. Throughout this academic year, teaching, administrative and personnel staff have taken part in numerous running events in Taipei from 3km runs with their own children to full 42 km marathons!

We all have different running abilities. Some of us have only started running 'seriously' over the last year or so and some have been training regularly, not just as runners but as triathletes too. It has been a great way to get together and a different way to socialise with each other. We all have our own targets, which might be to complete a certain distance, or possibly beat our own PB (Personal Best) time at a distance we have done before.



So far this academic year, staff have taken part in the Standard Chartered Taipei Run which ranged from the Duxfield and Harris families doing the 3km Kids Dash Run to Mr David Bracken completing his first marathon. We also had our very own Mr Ian Armstrong and Mr Nicolas Blanc placing in the top 8 runners for the 10km in the first Lantern Festival Night Run in Tamsui.

Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, some events have been cancelled. Mr Chris Bonnet was due to take part in a marathon in South Korea recently. Not to waste his training, Mr Bonnet organised 'The Unofficial Marathon' - the most exclusive 'unofficial' marathon in the world - for the TES runners to run towards and along the Bitan river. On a very hot Spring day, Mr Bonnet completed the full 42km marathon, Mr Tom Myerscough completed the 21km and Mr Neil Harris won the 10km.

Since living in Taiwan I would never have classed myself as a 'runner', but over the last couple of years I have managed to complete a 12km Beast Trail run up Maokong mountain, completed two 10km and two 21km runs. Even while pregnant, I have been able to take part in three 3km runs with my children. There is a great community of runners and supporters, not just here at TES but in Taipei. It doesn't matter what your ability of running is like, just go for it and give it a go!



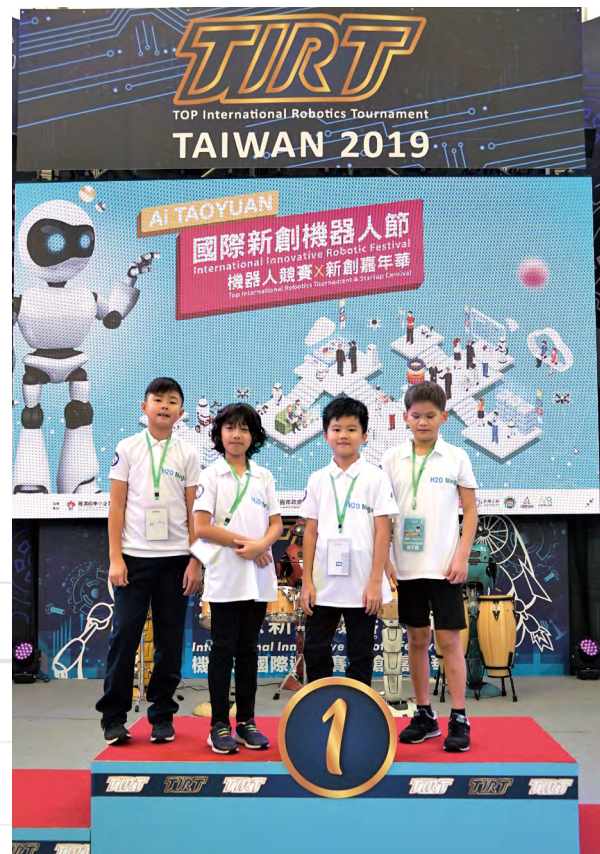
Young Engineers in the Making – BPS Students Win 2019 STEM Design Asia Invitation Tournament

By Mr Frank Cheung, ICT Enrichment Teacher, BPS

On Saturday 15th December, during the first weekend of our Christmas holidays, four selected Year 6 students, Wilson Li, Otto Yang, Hayden Mok and Ethan Tsai represented BPS in the first-ever SAM Labs STEM Design Asia Invitation Tournament. The tournament was hosted in Taoyuan Stadium as part of the TOP International Robotics Tournament (TIRT). We competed against teams from Saudi Arabia, South Korea, Malaysia as well as schools within Taiwan.

The theme for this tournament was ‘Smart City’. The challenge was to identify one problem we face with the potential of having a detrimental impact on future society relating to health, economy or social aspect, and subsequently find a solution by incorporating SAM Labs equipment. With this in mind, our young engineers transferred learning from their Y6 Topic at the time, ‘Who Owns the Water’, and delved deeper into researching water shortage in Taiwan. The fact that Taiwan is an island nation with plenty of precipitation which should not face a shortage of drinkable water on a yearly basis baffled the team. However, since research has shown that rain water is drinkable; pressing the issue further, the team found a correlation between poor air quality with water pollution which is one of the culprits to unsafe drinking water. Hence, our team decided to invent a rainwater filtration system with the goal of human consumption. Having decided on what we wanted to solve, which is related to water, our engineers coined the team name, H2O Mega.

In the months leading to the competition, our young engineers were hands-on managing a project by first identifying the issue, then doing research on the filtration system, building a workable prototype and finally producing a system that they felt proud of. Team H2O Mega sweated and toiled by forgoing their breaks and some lunch hours to meet and build the system. During this entire period, the team had to solve multiple issues and overcame many unforeseen technical difficulties. Finally, with the prototype in hand, they also had to prepare a formal presentation to explain and share their project in front of a panel of judges.





On the day of the tournament, we arrived at Taoyuan Stadium at around 6.30 a.m. Our young gladiators felt nervous as they stepped through the large rotunda and into the heart of the stadium, yet they soldiered through. We had almost 3 hours before our first competition. Therefore we set up, tinkered and tested our equipment over and over again. To calm our nerves and prepare ourselves mentally, we took turns to walk around to observe designs from our competitors and other venues within the stadium.

The tournament got off to a great start as we sailed through the Fast Finger Competition. The Fast Finger Competition is a series of coding questions posed by SAM Labs to see which team could answer them correctly in the quickest manner. In one instance, our team answered the challenge correctly in 3 seconds! The lightning speed in which our team responded to the questions resulted in our gunslingers cruising through this round as we easily coded all questions and defeated all teams.



During the main event, in the late afternoon, our team remained poised and calm throughout the presentation despite having some technical difficulties. We wowed the judges with our design of an automated filtration system. For demonstration, we used cooking oil mixed with water to simulate dirty water. It was an innovative system. Dirty rainwater is collected into a tank where a buoy will rise to a predefined level in order for the automated valve to open and let the water into the filtration system. The filtration system is a funnel with layers of charcoal, sand, and gravel inside a coffee filter. Once the water has been filtered, it would drip into a collection chamber. A sensor will trigger a set of LED lights to flash green in the model house when the chamber is full. This way, occupants will know when they are in fact using filtered water instead of paid water from the tap. To further enhance the Smart City ethos, our engineers added a security system in the house. A pressure sensor was placed underneath the welcome mat at the front door. An alarm with lights and camera will capture anyone who steps on it at night. For good measures, we coded some decorative LED lights to synchronise the flash patterns in different colours to give it a festive feel since it was Christmas after all. With forward-thinking ideas, H2O Mega won the STEM Design Challenge Gold Award and was awarded the champion of the 2019 STEM Design Asia Invitation Tournament.



This event was indeed a special Christmas present to all who were involved. A great way to start off our holidays. The children came out of the arena victorious. Their hard work was recognised by peers and the organiser of the event. Each team member learned something new about themselves and gained invaluable experience for their many future endeavours to come.

Wilson Li - B6.3

The SAM Labs competition taught me a lot about teamwork. In such a short time, I learned a tremendous amount of things such as how to build a filtration system, how to find evidence to support the idea of my invention and how pollution affects rainwater. Most importantly, thank you to all the judges for teaching us that the process is more important than the result! *Shout out to all the people in our school, no pain no gain, this is to all the playtime I missed.*

Ethan Tsai - B6.1

When the judge was going to present the winner, we were nervous, but once we heard that we won, we cheered.

Otto Yang - B6.1

It was daunting at first to present in front of so many people, but once I settled in, I found that it wasn't that bad.



SHOT ON MI 9T PRO
AI TRIPLE CAMERA

Hayden Mok - B6.2

'In this journey of making a filtration system, four of us experienced lots of things together. We argued with each other, we helped each other, we got frustrated and we also got excited... I learnt how to respect each others opinions and work together as a team through contributing our ideas and strength. We encountered many obstacles along the way. We overcame our differences and resolved these obstacles together. We were so happy that we won first place at the end of a long day! However, this should not stop us from further learning and improving. The judges gave us so many valuable ideas which will make our filtration system better and more practical! This is my first participation in a STEM competition and I enjoyed this experience so much.'



Celebrating Ms Chou and the Chinese Language Programme in Reception

By Jessica Gosling, Reception Teacher, BPS

Ms Chou works with the BPS Reception team, as the Early Years Chinese Enrichment Teacher. She began this role in August 2019, as the new programme was implemented in BPS Reception. This programme integrates Chinese into the day of a Reception classroom, with short directed teaching sessions led by Ms Chou. Her curriculum is in line with the British Curriculum which is taught by the class teacher. The children therefore build up their bilingual understanding of the British Curriculum, where key academic vocabulary is learnt in both languages. The children do not leave their classroom environment for 'stand alone' lessons. Similarly, they do not learn isolated phrases (such as colours and numbers) but instead are enriched with relevant vocabulary. Following the teaching sessions Ms Chou will join the children in play using Chinese. Here, she differentiates her spoken Chinese to support the different levels of Chinese reflected in the class.

Working with Ms Chou so far this year has been a great learning experience. I am always interested in her take on presenting ideas to the children, which are often highly active and engaging. Her input on our planning can often inspire us to think in different ways. Further, I am amazed when I begin teaching a new concept in English (which has been taught previously by Ms Chou), often the children already can discuss key ideas or vocabulary. For example, when teaching shapes, I pulled out a semi-circle for one child. This is quite a challenging shape for Reception, but the boy immediately responded with the shape's name in Chinese.

What follows is a short interview I had with Ms Chou in February.



Background

Ms Chou was born and grew up in Taiwan, where she attended school until she was 18. She then left Taiwan for University in Australia. Language was an interest to her from a young age, as, whilst in school, she majored in English and minored in Japanese. Although she loved learning English, the route of English language teacher alone was not enough for her. Instead, she was very passionate about working with children. So she chose a degree in Early Childhood Education. She returned to Taiwan where she worked at Taipei European School as a Learning Assistant in Reception to Year 4 for more than 10 years.

Interest in this programme

First of all, she wanted to work with children as a teacher and she wished to be a part of the Reception programme again. The new role was related to and supported her current study which is an MA in teaching Chinese as a second language. She felt she could apply the academic disciplines of both her Early Childhood study and the MA to the context of the school. Ms Chou was very excited to start a brand new programme within our school.

How successful has this programme been?

Ms. Chou feels working closely with an ‘awesome’ reception team has really helped the programme. She believes everyone is very supportive, helping each other and working together for this new programme. Ms Chou is very excited seeing children who had never before spoken Chinese have begun to speak. Further, she recognises that parents, supported by the school, are beginning to use more Chinese conversation at home. This has given strength to the Chinese programme. It is clear to see the progress with all the children. With native Chinese-speaking children their comprehension is progressing: she has learned from the class teacher how these children have understood aspects of the curriculum in depth. Teaching the children within their own environment, in a way they are used to, has supported their age appropriate stage of development. Ms Chou feels what we are doing makes more sense as children can absorb more of what we are learning, especially academic words.



Reflections for the future

Ms Chou feels the first half year has been exploring and experimenting for everyone, but now we know which ideas are working and we can plan forward implementing these ideas. Ms Chou has really valued both teacher and parent feedback. She hopes that more people from the school as well as parents and families can value the importance of home language as much as we do, so children are supported both at home and at school with Mandarin.



Digital Learning – IBDP Students’ Perspectives

By Kerry Nockolds, Director of Admissions and Marketing

In 1964 Bob Dylan sang ‘The Times They Are A-Changin’ and it certainly has been the case in the past semester across the world as the advent of COVID-19 has created great upheaval to the normal patterns of life.

In our school and in education establishments across the world, the new reality has been digital learning, certainly not a new phenomenon but previously used mainly in a forum for adults wishing to extend their learning while continuing their day job / careers.

We at TES pride ourselves on helping to develop, in our students, the skills, attributes and character traits that will enable them to flourish at university and beyond. We wish to give the students a love of lifelong learning, and endeavour for our graduates to demonstrate such attributes as a spirit of cooperation, international mindedness, independent and critical thinking, cross cultural awareness and also the ability to guide and lead others.

Well, in this time of great upheaval, where hope could easily be lost, we had the chance to hear from IBDP students whose examinations have been cancelled this year, the first time in the IBDP’s 52 year history.

In a Zoom interview with ‘Parenting Magazine 親子天下’ in March, where the focus was on digital learning at TES and how to stay connected ; a group of 8 students from H3 and H4, demonstrated articulately and very clearly that they possess these graduate attributes.

Here is an extract of some of the thoughts and opinions expressed in the 30 minute interview led by Ms Papps, Head of BSHS, as she asked questions to H3 and H4 cohort students.

H4 Cohort



How did you deal with the news of the cancellation of IBDP exams worldwide?

- Chloe: Shock initially, then on reflection I realised everyone was in the same boat and provisions would be managed.
- Kevin: The fast response from the school and Exam boards was reassuring, I felt that the process would be well-managed given the situation.
- Celina: It was disappointing as everyone one worked very hard, but by the evening the IB cohort were supporting each other and the important message was ‘what we have learned in the IB course is already ours even if there is no exam - we have learnt a lot’.



Do you have any concerns about next year’s University destinations?

- Chloe: I’m UK bound, and as A-Levels have also been cancelled the IBDP is not discriminated against for cancelling.
- Celina: Not all of us are fully decided, but US colleges have been putting on webinars and engaging with us to reassure us about the situation.
- Kevin: The Universities are fully aware of the changed situation and I’m not worried on this aspect.



H3 Cohort



What concerns do you have in H3?

Maxine: The CAS week is supposed to be done in the 1st year, but due to the situation we can't do that now. TABITHA is delayed and IA trips are delayed also.

Shubh: In February (with the first set of digital learning) there was a concern that students might get complacent and lose focus on our studies, but we H3 students actually self-regulated our learning to make sure we don't fall behind.



In your digital learning experience, what is going well and what would you like to see if continuing the journey?

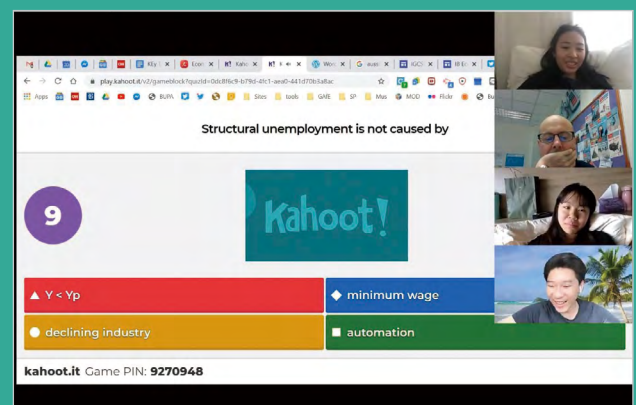
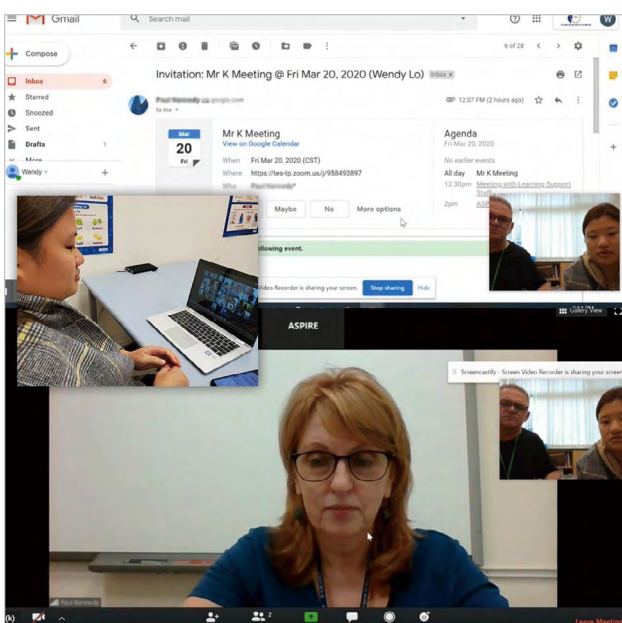
Gil: Following the routine, teacher taking Zoom attendance, having your face on the screen helps. It is a challenge to teach yourself self-discipline as there is no teacher there in your room to monitor this.

Noa: As an IB student we have to be watching ourselves because the consequences will be on us if we don't. So in KS3 you may need parents checking in on the students, as there are no external exams, but IBDP grades depend on work in class, so there is an internal drive to keep us going.



Faris: TES has really been on the ball compared to schools abroad, having talked with friends overseas. They haven't been as organised or had the same opportunities as we have had. So far there are several advantages to online learning; not being in school, and the students don't feel the classroom tension as they are comfortable at home - all students have been very interactive in Zoom classes and more engaged in the discussions. Introvert personalities find it more accessible.

Chloe: I find myself participating more than in normal classroom settings, as Zoom has many functions which allow the teacher to ask questions. In biology, the teacher used a poll function so everyone has to give an answer - we don't necessarily get this in classroom settings, more pressure as not everyone can answer everything.





Gil: Even though we are physically apart, it is not like in a classroom where students sitting at the back might keep silent and ones at the front answer, everyone is equal in Zoom and contributes more equally and feels more comfortable participating.

Shubh: Improvements could be to ensure all teachers are able to use the platform efficiently and fully as Zoom has a lot of features which can be used to help students participate.

Ms Papps: Thanks Shubh, teachers have different comfort levels with the various platforms and that is where the work on Continued Professional Development by the school and teachers has been focused on.

Gil: I'm not sure of the solution, but the biggest obstacle is the loss of teacher-student interactions. For example, in computer Science it is difficult when we are not physically there as the teacher writes on the board and talks through the item.

Maxine: For art, it can be hard, as I miss the access to the studio and resources, at home I don't have the same resources. Our teacher has had to switch the curriculum schedule to cover more theoretical art topics.

Noa: This is difficult in theatre class, too. The teacher had to shift to the 'Director Notes' topic, where we would be working on a collaborative project to make a piece of theatre. It's more difficult for this type of work.

H4 Cohort



Let's pretend the IBDP exams were to still take place, how would digital learning affect your preparation for the exams?

Celina: I feel the benefits of digital learning for exam preparation outweigh the disadvantages because I gained more time. Not needing to commute freed up lots of time, and could be used for exam preparation. I think our whole year group was happy we were able to get more sleep too!

Kevin: The flexibility of the schedule helped out. Before the closure we would have had one week of study leave before the exams started, so the digital learning felt like a longer study leave. We are resourceful students so we know where to get past papers to practice, how to make notes. The extra time and no commute was good.

Chloe: When exams get close, I like to work on my own, make my own schedule and topics I want to focus on and go over, but in school you have to go to the scheduled classes and everyone does the same. So as I get close to the exams I prefer digital learning from home - but not for the whole year.

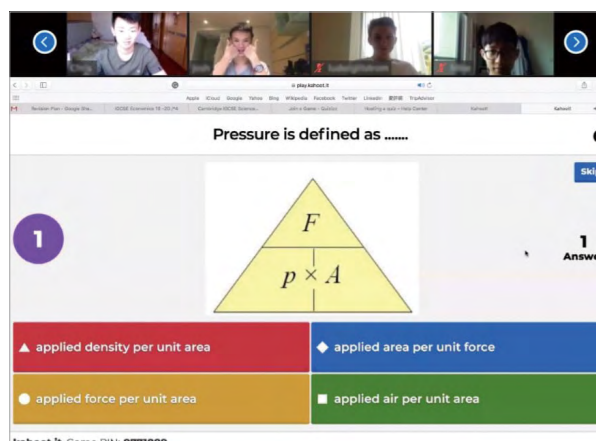
H3 Cohort



What are some personal challenges you find of not being at school? How are you finding ways to stay connected?

Maxine: My sisiter is in self-quarantine as she came back from overseas, so not being able to see her is torture (laughing), but I have been really grateful for technology and being able to call people whenever I want. I've actually been doing more socialising.

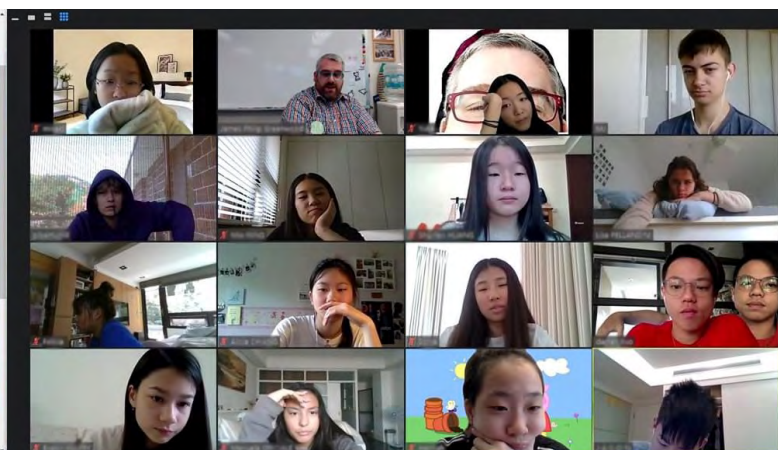
Shubh: One big challenge with online learning is that you can't sit with a person in class and have that little conversation about what is going on in class, to enhance or clarify the learning. But with texting I can do this after the lesson to chat and check my understanding.



Faris: I find myself socialising more, after lunch, in breaks, I will have video group calls with my friends to discuss homework and for social interactions. Being here in Taiwan is a privilege as we still have some freedom to go out.

Celina: I used to rely on my friends to answer questions in class but I have to do that myself now. For example in economics we have a chatroom on Messenger where we post questions and others in the class will try help answer.

Ms Papps and her team at the BSHS get to see and hear the students showing these qualities throughout their classes and in activities and CCAs outside of class, but it is very heart-warming to hear our future graduates discussing this topic in a mature and open way. I think we can agree, the students are well prepared academically and socially for the future, whatever else it may bring.



A Brave New World?

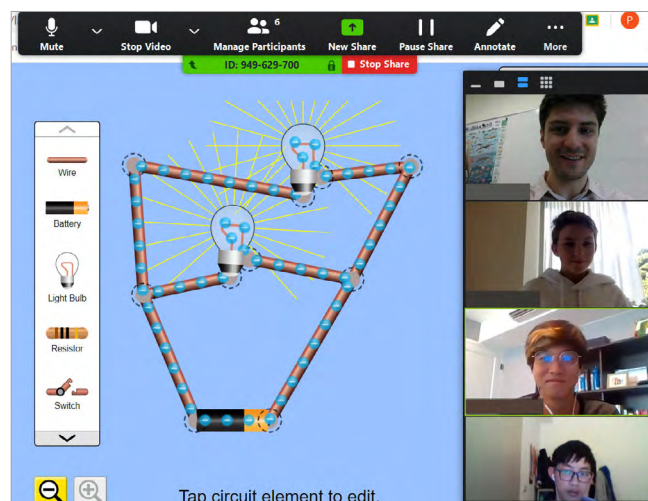
A Time for Digital Development in the Education Provided by TES

By Gavin Matthews, English Teacher, BSHS

History has always told us that ‘necessity is the mother of invention’: a national standardised time was created in the UK in 1840 in response to the timetabling needs of the new Great Western Railway; the internet was created in 1960s America in anticipation of the needs of nuclear war; and canned food was invented in 1809 in a Napoleonic France that needed to feed its armies across overstretched supply lines. The moral of these stories is clear: we often do things because we need to, rather than because we want to, and then sometimes we only come to realise that we wanted to when given the wisdom of hindsight.

The closure of all schools by the Taiwanese government brought new needs into sharp focus for many teachers. What should have been the start of term after the New Year break instead became a taking of stock: what did we need - in knowledge and equipment - that we did not already have, in these strange new insecure days?

With the shock announcement of the closures, there was an initial feeling of insecurity and there could have been a danger of catastrophisation, of people reacting irrationally to an unknown and unanticipated situation. But as unwelcome and worrying as the news was, there was also some propitiousness in the timing of this. We were already on the path to becoming a one-to-one laptop school (where all learners and teachers are equipped with a personalised digital toolkit), staff were already committed to becoming certified Google Educators, and there were many changes in infrastructure that were already happening in order to empower learners and educators alike to flourish in a digital learning environment. There was an opportunity here, and many colleagues not only expressed an interest in taking it but rose to the challenges that come with digital dependency.



It would be foolish not to acknowledge the initial difficulties, however: insecurities, a lack of some technology, a need for software, an uncertainty about what we were able to do. And teachers were not the only members of our community feeling their way blindly into the morass of the unknown weeks or months that stretched ahead. Students, administrators, management and parents all shared understandable anxiety in the initial days of physical closure. There were successes, failures and some good lessons.

One of the successes was in the camaraderie of almost all teachers who found themselves in this unprecedented situation. It meant that we all felt safer to experiment, and to share those experiments. As a result of this very rapid learning curve, Chris Goodman (Teacher of Science) acknowledged that ‘my digital toolbox is now much better resourced’, and Javed Shujaat (also a Teacher of Science) discovered ‘how resourceful and innovative I can be when sitting on a cliff edge’, devising an engaging practical lesson (‘influenced by primary teacher Colette Armstrong’) in which year 8 students had to record different sounds at home. Reflecting on this experience, Javed acknowledged that, ‘Many students really surprised me with their engagement, and it was great to see their parental involvement’.

We also learnt new things about the lives and interests of the students. Pamela Schmunk (Head of Drama) noted that, 'some kids thrived with distance learning but others didn't. The best pay off was with the more introverted kids who wrote tremendously imaginative assignments. I was able to cultivate strong relationships with some of these teenagers. These are students who are often eclipsed by louder kids in Drama class by virtue of personality or perhaps confidence with English'. Similarly, Neil Harris (Dean of Year 9) felt 'connected to their learning in other subjects in a way I don't often get to feel in "normal school"'. It made me appreciate all the different work that they do, and how resilient they are'.

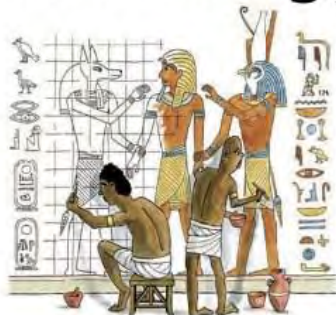
But the first closure in particular - before we could learn the lessons of the first closure - proved challenging for everyone: teachers, students and parents. Hannah Brooks (Head of Geography) found that it was difficult 'to give variety in lessons. I also felt challenged by the social isolation of the situation, and that was probably worse for students'. That sense of isolation meant that some students found the situation alienating, and others clearly struggled with time management because of that isolation. Of course, there is a strong argument that they will learn from the experience, and that therefore it may still have been a useful educational exercise, but it may have been a slightly painful way to learn this lesson for some students.

Work management was also challenging, and there was a feeling after the first closure that there could be some lessons learned here. Almost all teachers were working incredibly long hours, possibly not fully utilising the efficiencies that digital learning can offer, or simply because time and energy was being spent on serious 'upskilling' before the educational benefits could be reaped. The management of work given to students may also have been badly calibrated: given a timetable that was looser than the regular school timetable, many of us may have been guilty of overloading the students with more work than they could comfortably manage and their parents could efficiently supervise. (Of course, an alternative explanation would say that a perception of overload may have taken hold, that students may simply not have realised how much work they do in an average school day. As Megan Hoddinott (Teacher of EAL) wryly observed, 'The students had to realise that they were not on holiday'.)

These successes and challenges gave us valuable lessons, and meant that as a school we were almost certainly all more ready for the second stretch of home digital learning. We had all been aware that another closure was a distinct possibility, and that the call might come in the middle of a night, so we had to make sure that we were ready for it.

The Art of Ancient Egypt

For this activity the children in year three are learning to draw a figure in proportion using a grid just like the artists of Ancient Egypt.



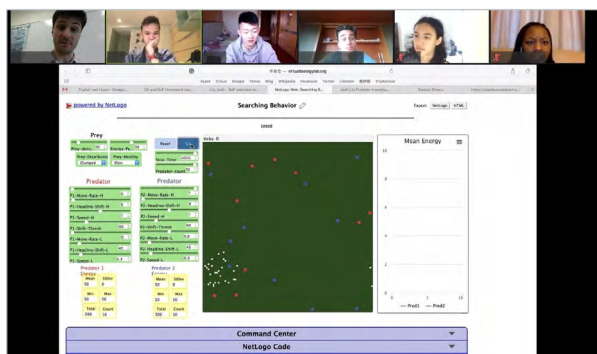
Class 3.1



Class 3.3



Class 3.4

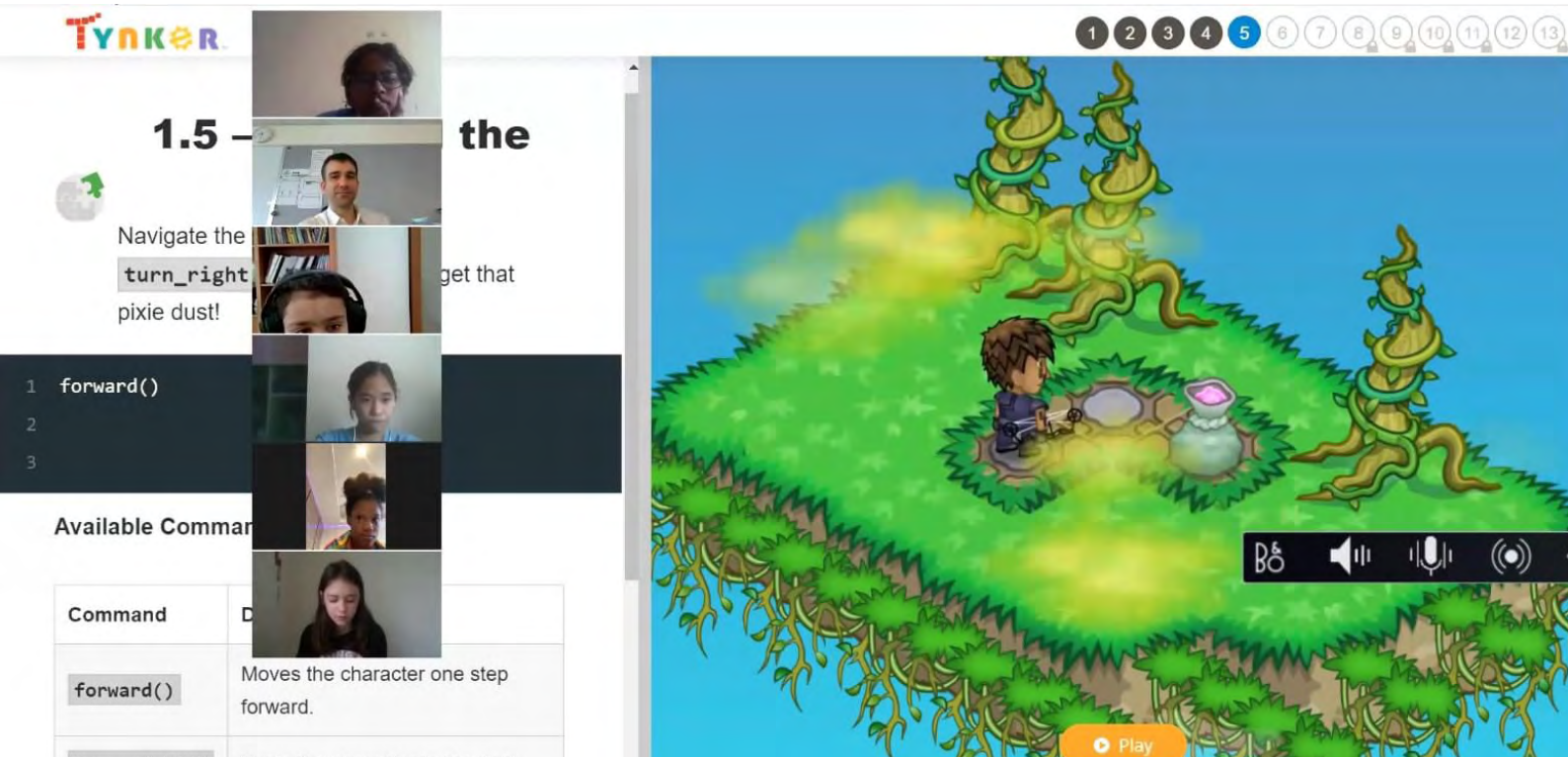


For the second stretch, we were ready. Now it became about harnessing the technology that we knew we had, in order to create a simulacrum of the classroom. We had learnt from the feedback that the students had provided us in the first period of closure. We understood that they wanted as much direct contact with their teachers as they could get, adherence to the regular timetable, a realistic setting of work, set around the regular rhythms of the classroom. And so we strove to give that to them. The eight days of digital learning that took place just before the Spring Break saw students attending lessons via Zoom with all registers being taken, and homework tasks being set as they normally would be. Students were required to be dressed as they normally would, with the regular norms of the classroom being followed as closely as they could be. Group work - an essential feature of all classrooms - took place in virtual breakout rooms rather than table groups, and homework expectations were as they normally would be, with work being set for completion before the next lesson.

These closure days caused all of us to try new things in new ways, but that is what the best education has always been about. (Don't we always prepare our students for uncertainty?) There were lots of small challenges, such as equipment not working, but where there were clear expectations laid down, people just solved these problems, which is what happens in a real classroom anyway.

In a feedback meeting between some H2 and H4 students and the leadership team at the end of this second period of digital learning, students were overwhelmingly positive about the experience. David Sinclair, the School's new Director of IT, was impressed by what he heard in that meeting: 'Students were creative and resourceful but most importantly they took responsibility for their own learning. They established backchannels in order to discuss the work they were being set and harnessed the power of the collective to support one another. They told us that these lessons had given them a different perspective, in being able to see the faces of their peers at all times in the lessons. Those who were introverted saw these lessons as being a way of challenging that. There was a sense that this school was a "village", and that we have done well as a community in some difficult circumstances'. We are now at a really interesting point in our digital learning journey. David Sinclair raises important questions for the immediate future: 'Everyone is at ground zero now. How do we identify what is more than a fad? What should continue to provide our learners with the skills necessary to flourish? How do we build capacity? How do we personalise learning? How to better prepare to ensure learning equity?' There are other relevant questions, too: how do we teach important lessons of digital safety, etiquette and privacy? These are all vital issues that will not go away, and will only get larger as the technology develops further.





These questions and others will need answers, and those answers will come from a collaboration between all members of our community: school leaders proposing and mandating some norms, teachers implementing new ideas, students giving intelligent feedback, and other members of the TES community giving their views.

At all times in this discussion to come, it is important to remember that the available technology should not drive our learning, but should always serve it. The needs of education should drive technological innovation. While many elements of teaching - communication, feedback, sharing - are made easier, our intended outcomes, desired skills and lesson objectives remain the same. An ability to interact well with technology should not be seen as a substitute for interacting well with another human. If we all keep this at the forefront of our thinking, then the educational development that we have undergone will pay off not just now, but in the more interesting things that we will be doing with technology when we are back in our physical classrooms.

The point about this learning experiment that is simultaneously worldwide and intensely local is that it has involved all members of the school community learning something new together. And maybe this could be another unforeseen gift. For how often do teachers place themselves in the risk-taking requirements of trying to piece together a knowledge question in a TOK presentation, of defending a scientific hypothesis of which they are still so uncertain, of being expected to attain a fluent academic register in a language that they may only have started learning a few years ago? Gaining an insight into the uncertainty experienced by any learner cannot but be a good thing for a teacher. When we struggled with the uncertainty of managing our first Zoom lesson or creating our first rubrics in Google Classroom, we were on the same side as the students.

We should not forget that the closure of schools around the world is part of a far more significant, far more tragic picture, but we can still acknowledge that these unwanted circumstances may have created some of the conditions that will change our pedagogy in significant ways. These are interesting times that we would rather not be in, but we are in them, and it is our joint responsibility to make sure that some educational good can emerge from this.

An Upside-Down World : Life during COVID-19

By Kerry Nockolds, Director of Admissions and Marketing

There is no doubt the world has been turned on its head these last 5 months, as the COVID-19 pandemic took on proportions that would not seem out of place in a Stephen King novel!

It would not be appropriate in our school magazine, not to recognise the way life has been affected in many inconvenient ways at the lowest end of the spectrum and deadly ways at the furthest end.

A lifetime ago, everyone went off to Chinese New Year full of the normal feelings of celebration for the year of the Rat! That was probably the last time life seemed normal for many of us.

We are very fortunate that the Taiwanese government took a very swift response to the virus, derived from Wuhan in Mainland China, delaying the return to school for the local school children - which started the first round of Digital Learning for TES.

There are several articles in this edition of Connect that look at Digital learning, so this article is going to look at the health provisions taken by the school and the work that has gone on behind the scenes.



As an internationally diverse school, we had many viewpoints about the escalation of the COVID-19 but the school took the position, from the start, of doing everything that the Taiwan CECC proposed as the very minimum measures.



So, during the Chinese New Year break, the first round of preparations began: controlled access, hand cleaning / spraying stations, checking temperatures, but more importantly the combined 'will' to try to keep the school as protected as possible from the dangers that would escalate into the worldwide pandemic.

Staff from across the school pulled together to man the various temperature check and hand spray stations, as well as teachers and learning assistants delivering the children to new pick-up zones. Hand-in-hand with this, was the education of the students about keeping clean hands, and a general understanding of how the virus is spread.

At this time, Taiwan's quick and decisive actions and constant vigilance meant that the spread from China was mitigated to less than 50 cases!





Unfortunately, the same was not true for much of the rest of the world, as Europe and America got hit hard by the virus, the true horror of the pandemic on a human scale was unfathomable. The response, as to how to prevent, contain, but ultimately only delay the pandemic's spread, was (for many countries) the national population being in lockdown, just as Wuhan and many provinces in China had done.

With the closure of schools, universities, businesses - the advent of digital learning and working came into full effect and the world economies were hit hard.

Wave 2 came to Taiwan as students returned from overseas, from across the world, and the cases of COVID-19 were now being imported back to Taiwan. Measures from the Taiwanese CECC were to require self-quarantine for 14 days upon return. As an international school, this posed enormous dangers to the school, and following the retroactively provided date for this self-quarantine procedure, TES went back to digital learning, once more the safety of the community was to be placed ahead of all else.

Finally, on April 20th, the students were back at school, but this time more intervention to secure the safety of the students and staff had been set up. 'Social distancing' has become the mantra of all countries around the world. We, fortunately, were still able to leave our houses and function in a semi-normal way, with the key exceptions of no large gatherings, face masks to be worn on all public transport.





Once again the school staff had been busy in the student's absence, setting up new protocols on social distance in the cafeterias, special separation at lunch tables, hot food serving removed, new drop off and pick up procedures, and of course the need for masks to be worn on campus, pretty much all day. Once again the staff and teachers picked up the new routines to make sure the school was functioning as best it could given these inconveniences.

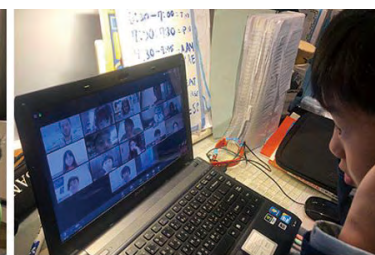


In this article, we would like to thank the staff that has put in the extra mile, whether in the cafeteria, buses, teaching, administration, learning assistance, maintenance, admissions, marketing, finance, HR or leadership - countless extra effort and hours have been spent to secure our physical environment and I'm sure that like other parents in the school, you appreciate the work that has been undertaken to protect the community.



Of course, the digital learning situation is not one that is preferred but is certainly the safest while maintaining the education curriculum progress, a situation that our compatriots in other countries would be very eager to have been able to provide and enjoy.

We hope the situation will be alleviated by the start of the new academic year, we have certainly all missed the wide variety of activities and events that students and the community would usually have been enjoying these last few months. We wish all the people around the world a swift return to normal life and let us continue to support each other during this difficult time.



TES School Applications Go Online

By Kerry Nockolds, Director of Admissions and Marketing

All parents of the community will probably remember the process of applying to TES. It was a case of filling in a paper application form, copying lots of documents, and mailing or hand delivering to the Admissions office. Well, as of March this year the TES Admissions process moved online.

As with any changes to a new technology, a substantial amount of effort was required to research and compare different online application packages, but finally during the summer of 2019 the choice was made - as we partnered up with Faria Education Group, a world-wide player in this space, to use the Schools Admissions Management System 'Open Apply'.

With the decision made, the hard work really kicked in as the transfer of process from paper to digital began. With the support of the IT department, particularly Mr David Sinclair, then newly appointed Director of IT, and Mr. William Faure, Senior Software Engineer; the Admissions department began the process of training for the new system, and the creation of the online application form.

This, of course, was at the same time as running the present year's application process, which was to be the final time paper would be used to apply for TES.

There are many benefits to running an online application process, not least the environmental one of not requiring so much paper to be used! As an Eco School this is an important step forward. However, hopefully the main benefits will be in convenience for the future applicants and efficiency for the Admissions staff.

A great deal of time and effort was spent to try to make the future parents' applications both quicker and more straight forward. Trials of the new forms were undertaken with a goal to make it far quicker to complete - something we hope has been the case for the 100 or so parents that have completed an application online since we went live in March.

So for new parents, and those of you that have children that may join the school in coming years, we hope that the experience will be a smooth and efficient one with Open Apply.

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Taipei European School TES

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Submit Application

Welcome to Taipei European School (TES)

Dear Parent,

Thank you for coming to visit our Admissions site, we look forward to meeting you on a campus tour or just via your child's application.

CAMPUS LOCATIONS

Swire European Primary Campus
99 FuGuo Road, ShiLin District, Taipei
11158
11158台北市士林區福國路99號
Taiwan

Swire European Secondary Campus
31 JianYe Road, ShiLin District, Taipei
11193
11193台北市士林區建業路31號
Taiwan



THE NEW SECONDARY CAMPUS: READY FOR CLASSES !

By Kerry Nockolds, Director of Admissions and Marketing

Anyone who regularly visits the Secondary campus on YangMing Shan, will have taken a keen interest in observing the building work that started with the official stake out of construction on 1st Nov. 2017! The transformation from football pitches into a first-class international school building is really quite remarkable!

The official opening of the building will be in August after the start of the new Academic year; however there will be some teachers and students who will have already had the chance to take some classes in the building by the end of this semester.

So here is a quick tour of the building, outside and inside to whet your appetite.



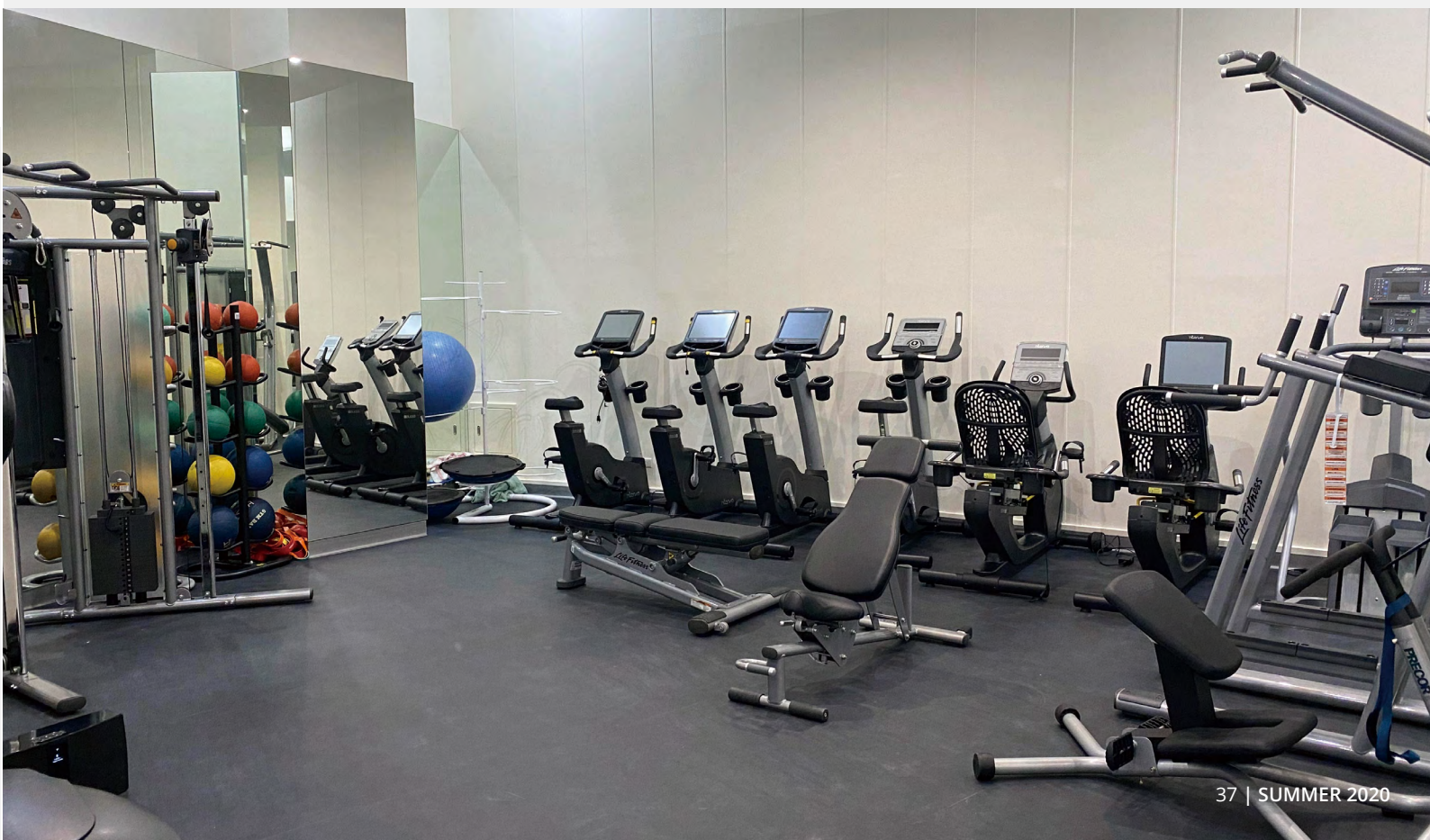
There are 5 teaching blocks which are all connected and they surround an Outdoor Recreational Area.



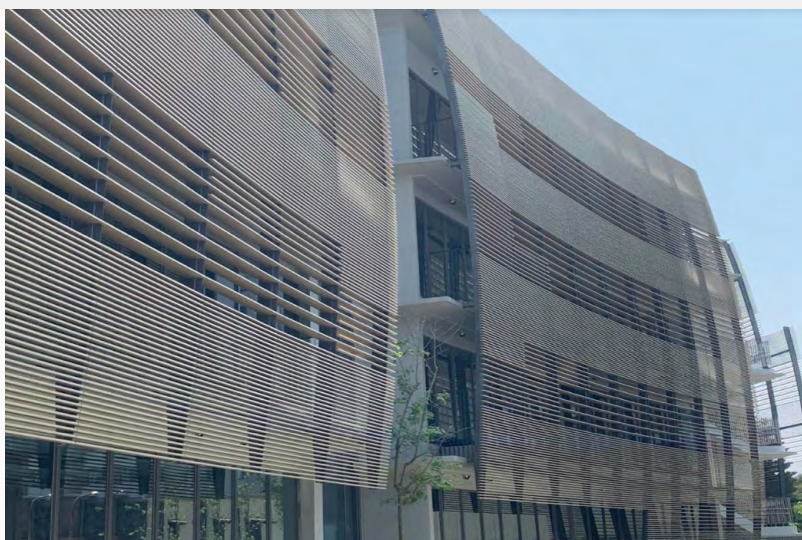
There are 30 large classrooms in these teaching blocks between 73m/sq - 75m/sq which is much bigger than those in the Phase 1 building, so this offers significantly more space for the students and teachers.



With the building structure going down as well as up, the below ground gymnasiums (yes there are two), dance studio and weights training rooms provide the school with far greater capacity to offer sports and activity which were held off-campus previously.



Stunning design for the façade, gives the school a modern but classic look, with the design based upon the concept of a Chinese style bookcase. The outside slating look acting as a way to retain great light in the classrooms.





Internally the design is light, attractive and stylish, with a functional component.



From the start of next academic year there will be guided tours available for parental sign-up through September so if your child is already a Secondary student you can see the new facilities or if you are a parent at the Primary you can come see what the future holds for them!





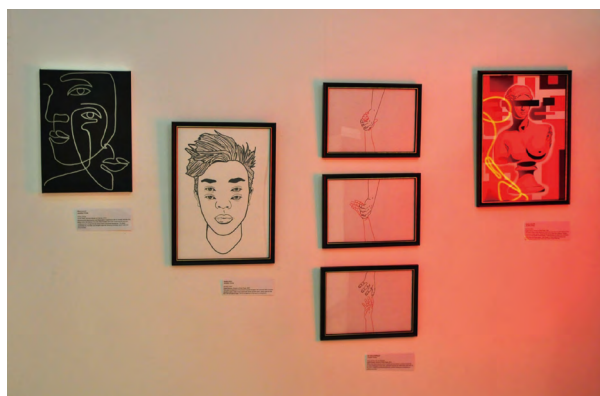
IB Visual Arts Final Exhibition

By Bert Young, Art Teacher, BSHS

Having had a senior IBDP class for the past 7 years, the final exhibition is always the highlight of my year and this year was no exception. The show is the culmination of 2 years hard work and something the students would have been dreaming of since starting the course. It is not simply a result of hard work but the outcome of a very personal journey, on which the student not only acquires technical ability in a medium of their choice, but is also required to delve into their own psychology and visualise the emotions that they experience.



The first year of the course is very much skills and theory based and is primarily teacher-led with every student doing the same projects of the same theme, although their outcomes may be very different. In the second year the students are expected to be more independent, and should by then have an idea of what type of artist they are and what type of subjects motivate them. They are then required to hone their skills in a particular area. Are they a painter? Are they an animator? Are they a sculptor? In fact, every year there appears to be more and more digital artists with 5 out of 10 of this year's artists submitting digital work to the exhibition.



The exhibition is assessed equally on technical competence and conceptual quality. Therefore, the meaning and message behind the work is as important as the skills required to create it. Art is a form of visual communication and therefore the student must first establish what they are trying to say, before deciding on how best to realise it. If we consider art as a form of communication, then audience to a visual artist is equally important as audience to a musician, an actor or a dancer. One cannot exist without the other.

This year's exhibition was a particularly emotional journey owing to the progressive setbacks caused by the school closures. The exhibition was first moved from Bopiliao Historical block to the ESC, then, was eventually cancelled on the morning of the exhibition. If we look at the history of Art, we will repeatedly see that when restrictions are imposed on creativity, that is when the best artwork is often created. I believe this year there was a unique energy as we battled closer and closer to the finish line, determined to get it hung by 3.30 p.m. on the final day of school before the closure.



When we reached the finish line, I was blown away by the quality of work, the determination of the students and the overwhelming feeling of pride to see that every student had fully achieved their potential, and created undoubtedly the best work in their artistic journeys to date. It is always an emotional journey of self-discovery for every student, and I feel hugely grateful to simply walk alongside them and occasionally help them read the map.

In the modern world, the vast majority of artist's audience are online. Although we may not be able to provide canapés, we can certainly share the work of our wonderful students with the school community, the Taiwanese community and the worldwide community. We have film, digital art, sculpture, fashion, embroidery and even some paintings! You are all cordially invited.



TES Joins Taipei Lantern Festival 2020 - TOGETHER WE GLOW

By Eamonn O'Callaghan, Art Teacher, BPS

Over the last few years it has become a tradition at the Taipei European School to take part in the Taipei City Lantern Festival.

At the beginning of the school year, a group of students from the French, German and British sections met with me in the art room after school every week as part of the lantern festival ECA. We started with a discussion about how to represent our unique school identity in a way that would be distinctive and that would resonate with our international community. As our school is a fusion of cultures we wanted to blend a traditional Chinese inspired fabric lantern with stained glass paintings that would reflect our European heritage. There was a lot of discussion among the students about what form the lantern should take. We were conscious that every year most lanterns are made to look like the next animal from the Chinese Zodiac. We knew that we wanted to be more innovative and we were willing to take a risk on something new.

The inspiration for our lantern came from 'Sammy's Next Move', a book by Helen Maffini. It is a wonderful story about a snail named Sammy who lives around the world with his parents. Like many of our students Sammy is a 'third culture kid'. This term applies to children who often move to new countries and have to change schools and make new friends. Sammy is a snail and so he carries his home with him wherever he goes, just as a third culture kid does by knowing that home is an idea as much as a place.

The title we came up with for our lantern is HOME IS EVERYWHERE WE GO. We wanted to convey how our students have brought their cultures to Taiwan and made a new home for themselves here. The students created designs that envisioned a huge snail with a colourful shell surrounded by flowers.





Once the concept was agreed we started planning the different practical aspects for making the lantern display. A local artist Ms Hsiu-Ching Chang came to our school to do a workshop with the students on how to use wire to make the flower forms. Mrs Chang gave us a lot of support with making the larger forms and the electrics. The Tri-Section students in the ECA created the stained glass effect paintings for the shell. They traced patterns and painted the shapes with oil based glass paint. Each student worked with one colour at a time. Every pattern included several colours so the design was painted with the first colour and then passed to the next student who painted it and passed it along. It was a real collaborative effort and by the end of the project we had created almost two hundred individual paintings that were glued to the wire structure of the snail shell.

Following months of hard work from the team of Lantern creator students at the Primary campus, the 'Snail and flower lantern display' was unveiled for the start of the Lantern Festival. TES CEO Mr Gatley, joined Mayor Ke and other guests on stage at the entertaining opening ceremony on the 8th March 2020.

All the students involved were very happy and proud to see our finished lantern displayed in the city centre alongside other artwork from around the world in the International Lantern Zone in Beimen area. We are already looking forward to taking part again next year!



2020 BSHS STEAM Week

By Paul Warren (Head of Science, BSHS), James Greenwood (Head of Computing, BSHS), Joanna Long (Head of Art, BSHS), and Malcolm Williams (Head of Mathematics, BSHS)

After the first period of digital learning days, students and teachers in the BSHS were buzzing with excitement for STEAM Week 2020 (9th - 13th March). STEAM Week is a highlight of the BSHS's calendar and, this year, we were determined to make sure that the COVID-19 restrictions didn't dampen our spirits!

STEAM education is a transdisciplinary approach to learning and many different opportunities were created for our students to think and act creatively, supporting them to recognise the intersection of science, technology, art, engineering, and mathematics. The theme of the week was 'Off the Grid' and teachers worked hard to plan a range of super fun practical lessons which enabled our students to engage in experiential learning, persist in problem-solving and embrace collaboration.



Science

In science lessons, students in Year 7 used stop-motion film techniques combined with Foley sound effects to produce a film showing how aspects of Science can be used to live 'Off the Grid'. The task was to explain the science behind at least one element of living without power.

Millie in Year 7 gives her take on the project:

'STEAM week, one of the highlights of the year, is a week where we focus on science, technology, engineering, art and maths. Therefore, in science class, we have been making stop motion videos relating to the topic, living "off the grid". Our group is making, a small film of how a person created a sustainable island'.

'All the aspects of STEAM were included in making the video. We included technology by using a stop motion app to create our mini films. We engineered by building objects and props used in the film. We used elements of art and design to create the film, and we included mathematics by calculating the angles of the background boards. Last but not least, we used science to explain all the scientific theories behind how electricity is generated'.



Cassie in Year 8 explains how the students applied their understanding of science to the project.

'In science, our STEAM activity was to make a solar oven. We watched a video tutorial in preparation for creating the final product. We then had to apply our knowledge of light and heat energy to be able to heat up foods, using only a few simple materials and sunlight. We tested our machines with chocolate, prawns and eggs'.

Students in Year 9 constructed wind turbines. The wind turbines were used to charge batteries and power everyday objects.

The project is explained by Summer and Lien in Year 9:

'For STEAM week, we did various activities. Science is especially fun when we can carry out experiments with Ms Tsai. This year, we were required to build a miniature wind turbine out of building blocks. After construction, we tested out different variables, such as the power of the fan, the angle of wind, and the distance between the fan and the turbine. Our group's experiment went something like this:

- *We inserted a rechargeable battery into the turbine and checked its voltage before we started.*
- *We placed the fan 10cm away from the turbine, and set the fan to a fixed power setting.*
- *Next, we let it spin for around 1 minute and put the battery into the voltage measure. The difference between the two voltages equaled the amount of energy generated.*

This experiment goes to show that renewable energy is an efficient and eco-friendly source of electricity in our daily life. Our damaged world deserves our attention, and we should currently be focusing on generating energy sustainably. Wind turbines are one of the most reliable sources of green energy, since the Earth constantly has wind, as well as being cost effective in the long term.

The technology of wind turbines has made us recognise the importance of renewable energy, which doesn't produce much emissions. To take action against climate change, green energy sources - especially wind turbines - are our way forward'.

Computing

In computing lessons, students learned what it takes to manage a village by playing Banished, a real-time world-building strategy game. The students learned the value of taking a balanced approach to gathering food, creating shelter and looking after their citizens.

The game provided students with a simulated village of around 30 citizens who they could deploy to a variety of jobs (gathering wood for fires, collecting stones for building, picking berries and going fishing to feed the village). The students whose villages proved to be most successful, and most resilient in the face of harsh winters, were those who took a balanced approach to resource management and development. Anyone who started to build a cathedral before they could adequately feed their citizens would find their village was soon abandoned!

Students were asked for feedback once the activity was complete, and here are some of the highlights:

I really enjoyed how it was solely based on how YOU take care of your own village, instead of the game leading you to do something. It was a game free for players to decide what they would like, which is a really cool aspect.
Nina in Year 7

It was fun because you get to see your civilization grow. Every time I was successful and built a house, I felt very proud.
Audrey in Year 8

I liked the challenge of it the best! I really liked the fact that we had to manage a civilization without any help.
Grace in Year 7

Students also had to learn how to be responsive to changes in the game environment, cancelling any building projects and focusing on making warm clothes as soon as winter hits. They also had to time any major construction projects to fall in line with the warmer seasons when workers could work longer hours.

The use of video games for exploration work like this is not new, and is supported by a large and growing body of research. As Clark Aldrich says.

'Simulations teach timing and balance, something not possible through traditional classrooms, film, or books. They enable new types of educational experience that can be rigorously, effectively, and consistently deployed, increasing the power of any organization that uses them well' (Davidson, 2008).

The Computing department was delighted that the students enjoyed the activity, and learned so much from it. We hope to introduce more opportunities for 'serious play' in our CCA offerings next year.



Art

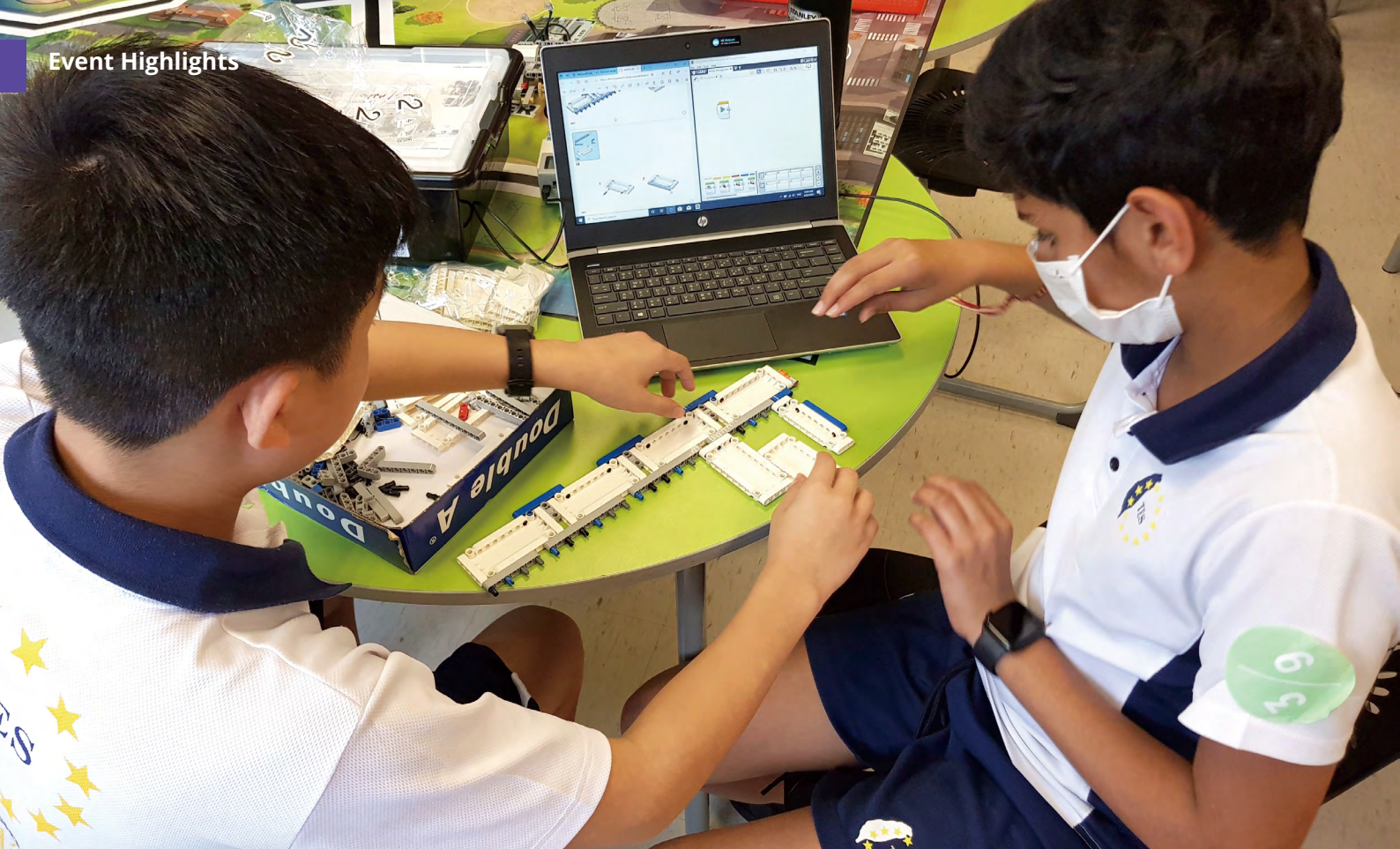
In Art lessons, students put their talents to use to improve the appearance of the campus, but obviously with a science twist! Living Off the Grid means decorating your own home (you can't just call a decorator!) and so students in Year 9 created a ceramic periodic table mural. The students each designed a tile that was then fired and tessellated. During the research stage, they learned about the properties of each element and their designs represented the element's behaviour and its uses in the world.

For the duration of STEAM Week, there was also a swinging drawing pendulum in the Phase 2 Atrium. Students in all year groups interacted with it and it was really exciting to see the patterns that were created from the natural movement of the pendulum. Students were fascinated by the natural harmonic motion that transformed energy into paintings. There was much discussion about whether the project was Science, Art, or a meeting in the middle. Students were able to throw the pendulum off from its path to create wild patterns in places, but also allow it to do its thing and resume its natural path. As the pendulum lost energy the lines became more dense and as we adjusted the suspension of the string holding the paint cup, the pendulum created new designs. Patterns appeared resembling nebulas, spirals, and shells, and revealed graceful hidden geometries.



The Year 9 students across all Sections, and with all Art teachers, worked on creating a large visual periodic table ceramic mural. Students started researching an assigned element from the grid prior to STEAM week - investigating the properties of the element and how it appears in our everyday life - some elements more prominent and productive than others, but all with their unique characteristics and uses. Students have since designed a visual tile that attempts to describe how the element they are describing is put to use. They have almost finished the ceramic design stage now and will go on to fire and glaze them with colour before we assemble the entire table. We will update via the BSHS blog and Facebook as this process evolves and reaches completion!





Lego Robotics

Learning about Lego Mindstorms robotics was a popular part of the STEAM Week programme this year. All students in Years 7 and 8 attended a taster session in robotics. Throughout the day, small groups of students had the opportunity to construct a part of the First Lego League 'City Shaper' competition course and design and programme a robot. They were able to get a taste of the competition attended by the students in the Robotics CCA group. An instructional video informed them about how to programme the EV3 Mindstorms robot. Students were able to put into practice their creative ideas for robot designs and programme them to make sounds and movements. Next year, we are expanding our Robotics CCA programme and creating new opportunities for even more students to get involved.



Mathematics

The Mathematics department organised a variety of activities that were designed to be enjoyable ways of practising mathematical skills, communicating mathematically with team members and to stretch and challenge students at all levels.

Students in Year 7 : They competed in houses to play the game Countdown. They had to combine six specially selected numbers and use just the four basic arithmetic operators, to generate as many target numbers as possible before the other teams! It was frantic and addictive fun with numbers with a true spirit of teamwork, perseverance and grit shown throughout. It was a hotly contested competition but our congratulations go to Bora house for coming out on top.

Students in Year 8 : They participated in a lively mathematically-themed ‘Mathex’ race. A runner from each team had to run to collect a problem at a time. The team then solved the problem and the answer was brought back to the judge by the runner. If the answer was correct, the runner was given the next problem for the team to solve. This activity was an energetic and fun-filled challenge.

Students in Year 9 : They had their mathematical talents tested in a quiz-style relay race. It was very much a team effort and every question answered correctly gained points for the students’ individual houses. A great effort from everyone and well done to Bora for winning the race.



Thank You to the Photographers

STEAM Week 2020 was documented in photographs by students in the Peak Media Team. We are extremely grateful to Ting-Jen in H3 for organising this with Iggy, Brian, Thomas, Jenny, Patrick, Anzo and Angela.

References

Davidson, D. et al (2008). Beyond Fun: Serious Games and Media. Pittsburgh, PA: Carnegie Mellon University ETC Press.

The European Flag

By Christopher Bonnet, Head of Year 3 and Curriculum Leader, BPS

The colours of our logo are synonymous with that of the European Union and the Council of Europe. Our 12 gold stars over an azure (blue) is distinctive and highly recognisable.

I've heard people argue that we have chosen this design as it is reflective of the flag of the European Union. I would argue against this. The flag we recognise as that of the European Union is, and at the same time is not, the European Union flag. In fact it's not definite that it's actually even a flag.

When is a flag not a flag? In the early days of what became of the EU, member states feared that it might replace their nation-state flags so officially it is 'an emblem that is eligible to be reproduced on rectangular pieces of fabric'. It is sort of a half-flag, a Schrödinger's flag.



Making Differentiation Easy

By Yun-Yeh Tsai, Lead Teacher of Chinese Language and Culture, BPS

The British Primary Section at TES hosted a well-attended and highly successful Chinese Language, Job-Alike workshop (JAWS) on Friday 17th and Saturday 18th January 2020. Delegates represented a range of top-tier international schools from China, Thailand, Vietnam, Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong, and of course our very own TES (both Primary and Secondary).

Job-Alike workshops are hosted by various FOBISIA (The Federation of British International Schools in Asia) schools and embody the spirit of sharing good practice, collaboration and developing new ideas. This was precisely the outcome of our Chinese Language JAWS. Not all children learn in the same way and may have very different learning needs or face other challenges in being able to access the Chinese language. Similarly, other children need to be stretched and challenged. This involves differentiating content, support or outcome when it comes to teaching and learning Chinese. That was exactly the focus of this JAWS: *Effective Differentiation in Chinese Language Teaching and Learning*.



Delegates were given the opportunity of not only touring our wonderful Primary campus but more importantly observing our CLC programme in action in the classroom by joining a number of Year 4 Chinese lessons. This served as an easy warm-up for the workshops that were to follow for the rest of the session. Comments from delegates were very encouraging of both our school and our CLC provision.

It is expected that those who participate in a JAWS actively contribute to the discussion and run workshops. Interactive and inspiring workshops were run by a number of delegates at our Chinese Language JAWS. To name but a few of these workshops: *Activity Design for Differentiated Instruction: Focus on Secondary Learners*; *Considerations and Strategies needed when Planning a lesson/unit/topic*; *Tiered Instruction in Mixed-Ability Classrooms*. A number of our CLC teachers presented workshops over the course of this two-day event and did us proud. The benefits delegates gained were significant. New insights were gained around differentiated learning in the classroom; formative assessment and effective groupings to facilitate learning.

This JAWS was the start to not only collaborating on a Chinese JAWS event; but also the start of valuable friendships and collaborative opportunities going forward. Everyone took something valuable from their time together and left eager to try something new in their practice.



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