

# Weekly School Newsletter

## Message from the Head of School

The short three weeks since our last set of school holidays, has been a hectic and exciting time at the school. These past weeks we have welcomed more than 100 new families, hosted curriculum and camp information evenings, continued to have great success with our sporting teams, conducted an extraordinary Arts Week, provided an update on the school at this week's parent engagement workshop and yesterday held two wonderful assemblies to celebrate the Lunar New Year.

On Tuesday, the team at GWA (Singapore) welcomed Sir Michael Wilshaw to the campus, providing a tour of the campus, time in classrooms, meetings with leadership and students, and discussing the importance of comprehensive support systems for student progress. Sir Michael has very recently joined GEMS Education as a Strategic Advisor, having most recently served as the Chief Inspector of OFSTED in Britain.

Tuesday night also saw the leadership team attend the URS- Asia One Awards, held at Marina Bay Sands. The evening was an opportunity for government and private sector groups from education, health care and finance to come together from across the region, and to recognise leading organisations and individuals. I'm delighted to share that GWA (Singapore) received two awards. The first recognises GWA (Singapore) as Asia's Greatest Brand 2016 in K-12 Education. The second award was for Asia's Greatest Education Leader in 2016. These awards are wonderful external recognition of the significant work done by so many within the school, as well as serving as specific indication of the strong layers of leadership and management across the entire organisation.

The school is at such an exciting stage of development and your contributions as families through feedback and engagement are crucial to our success now, and fundamental to our development next.

On behalf of the team at GWA (Singapore), I wish all families a happy and prosperous Chinese New Year. Gong Xi Fa Cai.



**David Edwards**  
Head of School  
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### IMPORTANT CONTACTS

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Please note:

**GWA FAIR: NEW DATE**

**22 APRIL 2017**



### Parent Event

Join us for a Valentines Day Lunch! Taste the famous local hawker food in a dining restaurant!

Liao Fan Hong Kong Soya Sauce Chicken Rice and Noodle was one of the first hawker stalls to be awarded a one Michelin star in the Singapore Michelin Guide 2016.

**Date:** 14 February (Tuesday)

**Time:** 11am

**Venue:** Liao Fan Hong Kong Soya Sauce Chicken Rice and Noodle

**Address:** 78 Smith Street  
Singapore 059872

**RSVP:** [j.lee@gwa.edu.sg](mailto:j.lee@gwa.edu.sg)

恭喜發財  
GONG XI FA CHAI



### Message from the PYP Coordinator

*The arts are not mere diversions from the important business of education; they are essential resources.*

Elliot W Eisner, "The Role of the Arts in Cognition and Curriculum" (2001)

The importance of arts education in the curriculum is to introduce students to another way of understanding themselves and the world. It allows them different ways of expressing thoughts, experiences and feelings that are not easily expressed in everyday symbols and signs. Our amazing arts teachers worked tirelessly to organise an amazing Arts week last week for our students. The Arts are a powerful mode of communication through which students explore and construct a sense of self and develop an understanding of the world around them. Arts provide students with a wide range of opportunities and means to respond to experiences and engage with historical, social and cultural perspectives. The students are stimulated to think and to articulate their thoughts in new ways, and through a variety of media and technologies.

Last week our students had the privilege of working with an artist in residence, dance and drama instructors and participate in a multitude of workshops lead by some of our very creative parents. These many facets of the creative arts are crucial to the development of our children. Involvement in the arts is associated with gains in mathematics, literacy development, cognitive ability, critical thinking, and verbal skills. Arts learning can also improve motivation, concentration, confidence, and teamwork. As our aim is to develop international mindedness in our students, the learner profile outlines the need for our students to be open-minded, to be thinkers; both creatively and critically.



**Olivia Burke**  
PYP Coordinator  
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### Message from the MYP/IGCSE Coordinator

The IB Middle Years Programme (MYP) developed a wide range of skills and attributes within our students, including the ability to effectively engage in collaborative learning. This process is based on the view that knowledge is a social construct and collaborative activities target the student as the primary focus of instruction. Working in groups is an important mode of learning and students develop solutions to real-world problems through interaction and engagement with each other.

Collaborative learning occurs in many different ways within GWA (Singapore) and can be through working in pairs or in larger groups. This type of collaboration involves students working together to discuss concepts, or develop responses to problems and often follows on from the introduction of new material to allow students to contextualise and make connections with their new learning. This approach allows students to clarify understanding and address misconceptions.

In addition, the exploration of ideas results in exposure to increased understanding of diverse perspectives which supports exploration of the concepts and contexts which drive the MYP.

If you would like to know more about the MYP then do not hesitate to contact me.



**Mark Gardner**  
MYP/IGCSE Coordinator  
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Click [here](#) to view detailed Events Calendar

30 Jan - 3 Feb  
2017

**CHINESE NEW  
YEAR SCHOOL  
HOLIDAYS**



17 Feb 2017

**REMINDER:  
PUPIL-FREE DAY**

14-17 Feb 2017

**GRADE 5  
CAMP  
MALAYSIA**

20 -24 Feb 2017

**BOOK  
WEEK**



## SPORT AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

I am pleased to advise that we have acquired a new software system here at GWA to assist with the organisation and coordination of our Sports and ECA Seasons. Using the 'SchoolsBuddy' system will significantly improve the efficiency of the signup process and certainly reduce the workload each season.

In the coming days each family will receive an email from the people at 'SchoolsBuddy' prompting you to activate your own account so you can then make choices for Season 3 when they are loaded into the system. Do take time to follow the instructions to ensure you don't miss out. Please keep an eye out for this email and be sure to also check your junk mail inbox.

Season 2 will conclude on February 10th, with Season 3 scheduled to start February 20th.

Our sports teams continued their successful season with another week of great results:

- 14U Girls Football: defeated Chatsworth 3-0
- 14U Boys Football: lost to Nexus 0-5 and defeated UWC East 8-3
- 16U Boys Basketball: defeated Canadian International School 48-18
- 19U Girls Touch: defeated UWC East 7-1

The week after Chinese New Year break we will have the 12U Girls Basketball and 16U Boys Basketball playing in the semi-finals aiming for a place in the championship final.



Gong Xi Fa Cai.

**Danny Tauroa**  
Activities Coordinator  
[d.tauroa@awa.edu.sg](mailto:d.tauroa@awa.edu.sg)

## MESSAGE FROM GWA PARENT ASSOCIATION (GWAPA)

It was great to see some of you at the GWAPA meeting this week - thank you so much for coming!

[On February 18, Saturday](#), there is a wonderful community service opportunity for all of us. We are going to visit an orphanage in Johor, Malaysia. One of our parents inspired us with the idea of a shoebox gift for every child in the orphanage - see the description below.

Also, if you have any children's clothes, books or toys in good condition and/ or non-perishable food like rice, that you would like to donate for the kids in Johor - please let us know and we will arrange collection from you.

If you are interested in visiting the orphanage with us or you would like to prepare a shoebox gift - please contact Paola, our Community Service coordinator by sending her email ([gwapa.communityservice@gwa.edu.sg](mailto:gwapa.communityservice@gwa.edu.sg)) and/or [click here to sign-up for the shoe box gift \(Johor Orphanage Shoe Gift Box\)](#) Please bear in mind you can prepare a shoebox gift without going to Johor.

Thank you in advance for your participation!

### GIFT ITEMS IDEAS

#### WRITE

Single Line Note Books, Ball Point Pens (Blue/Red/Black), Correction Tapes, Pencils, Erasers, Chinese Ink & Brush

#### WASH

Hair shampoo, Bath soap, Toothpaste, Toothbrush, Johnson Baby Lotion, Johnson Baby Powder Hair cream, combs and body powder for the boys ( no hair gel please), for girls: hair oil, hair bands, rubber bands, combs, hair clips

**WEAR** (Small clothing items): hat, socks, underwear, flip-flops.

**WOW!** (A treat): books, toys, sunglasses, game, handcraft, photo of yourself/child, sweets (must be in date to at least March 2017 and only a few), make-up, small musical instrument, doll or cuddly toy, car, skipping rope, yo-yo, finger puppet, torch.

Do Not pack! (for health & safety, or customs reasons): food (except sweets), anything breakable, chocolate, any liquids, medicines, scary things (like Halloween stuff or skull & crossbones), war-related items, sharp items, large clothing items

### The Shoebox Idea

- Get an average sized shoebox (or a plastic storage container), wrap in gift paper (box and lid separately). If your shoebox is very big we may (reluctantly) have to divide it.
- Choose a boy or a girl from the provided list
- Fill your box with gift items (see our list of suggested ideas).
- Place the name label at the top right hand corner of your box lid.
- Close with elastic band (but don't seal with tape as we need to check it)

### CONTACT GWAPA TEAM

[gwapa.singapore@gwa.edu.sg](http://gwapa.singapore@gwa.edu.sg)

Share your sports news with us, join our Facebook page

### GWAPA Team



### Community Service Johor Orphanage

18 February 2017  
8am-2pm

[gwapa.communityservice@gwa.edu.sg](http://gwapa.communityservice@gwa.edu.sg)

[Johor Orphanage Shoe Gift Box](#)