

THIS WEEK'S NEWS

Message from Head of School

IMPORTANT CONTACTS

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Over this past week, School Principal, Neil White and I have completed much of the teacher recruitment for the next academic year. As the school continues to grow, we are working hard to ensure that the high quality of teaching staff already in place at the school are enhanced with dynamic team members from August.

Our methodology to teacher recruitment adheres to a simple four step approach:

1. To join GWA, the educator must love children and love teaching
2. The teacher needs to demonstrate a strong track record of doing great things outside of the classroom. This could include being a teacher-trainer, conference presenter, coach and mentor
3. We review the types of schools the candidates have worked in previously
4. The candidate must possess strong undergraduate and postgraduate qualifications, specific to the role they will be undertaking at GWA

We are delighted to have been able to attract such high quality teachers to join us next year. For the G11 students, all teachers are highly experienced in the IB Diploma and, in a number of cases, are external markers for the DP examinations.

Amongst this recruitment finalisation has been the appointment of the Secondary Years Principal, commencing from the 2016-2017 academic year. This next school year, we will split into a more traditional division model. Current School Principal, Neil White, will become the EY/PY Principal.

We are delighted to announce the appointment of Mr Jan Stipek as the Secondary Years Principal, commencing from August 2016. Jan is the current Global Head of Professional Development for the IBDP and Career Related Programmes, located at the global head office for the International Baccalaureate Organisation in The Hague. Amongst extensive leadership experience, Jan has also been the Diploma Programme Curriculum Manager, an MYP Curriculum Coordinator and overseen a variety of significant projects in his career. Jan has worked in eight countries and speaks six languages. He will be joined by his wife and two children.

The engagement of high quality teachers and educational leaders at GWA is an ongoing representation of the importance of wonderful people surrounding your children. Our recruitment approach is considered and extensive. The appointment of influential leaders such as Jan, as well as the highly experienced IB teachers, reinforces our commitment to ensure our academic programmes are driven by highly experienced, connected and highly-recognised staff.

We look forward to introducing our expanding team to you in August.

David Edwards

Head of Education

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CALENDAR UPDATE

1 March, 6:30pm - G6

Camp Parent Information evening

2 March, 6:30pm - G7-10

Camp Parent Information evening

10 March, 6:30pm - G3

Camp Parent Information evening

7 March - Grade 10 IGCSE

Mock examinations

7,8 & 10 March - Talent

week

Next Parent event

Lunch at *Club Meatballs*

2 March, 11am-1pm

China Square Central

20 Cross Street #01-35

Singapore 048422

Contact our PRE (Judy) or GWAPA if you would like more details.

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Message from the School Principal

This week the focus has been on Book Week. Students and teachers have been involved in a series of events celebrating reading and fostering a love of books. These events have included a book exchange, where students brought books they had read at home into school to be exchanged for new ones. Any books that were left over will be donated to a worthy charity. The EY/PY Book Parade showcased a wide range of well-known book characters with lots of enthusiasm from both students and teachers. The Secondary Years held a book quiz and invited students to dress up as book characters for the day on Thursday.

GWA teachers and teaching assistants have participated in professional development workshops lead by our own GWA International Baccalaureate Educators Network (IBEN) workshop leaders. The Early and Primary Years staff have been attending a workshop on Concept-Based Learning and Inquiry and the Secondary Years staff have been involved in an MYP workshop focusing on Global Contexts and Assessment within the MYP.

Families are encouraged to review the school calendar and take note of important upcoming events this quarter. Next week we have parent information evenings for the Grade 6 camp on Tuesday 1st March and the Grade 7-10 camp on Wednesday 2nd March. Both events will start at 6:30pm in the auditorium lobby. Finally, our Grade 4 students will be attending camp at Pulau Ubin from Wednesday 2nd March to Friday 4th March.

As always, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Neil White - School Principal
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ECA and Sport Update

The third season of the ACSIS competition will commence for the GWA Jaguars next week. The 14U Boys' Basketball team will be first to represent GWA in their match against the **Australian International School**. Despite having limited practice the boys are eager to get the season underway.

Tip-off is scheduled for 4:45pm in the Jaguar Den and the team is looking forward to the home court advantage. It would be great to see the stands full of Jaguar supporters in their first game of the season.

The 14U girls basketball team will have to wait until March 22nd for their first home game. However, they will play two away games before their home court appearance. Our 8U football team will play at home four times throughout the season with the first round of games scheduled for March 16th.

ECA Update

As I mentioned last week most ECAs are fully subscribed for this block. If your child is unable to continue with their ECA, then please let me know as soon as possible, so that I may allocate the space to another student.

Tony McMullen - Activities Coordinator
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GWAPA FOOD DONATION DRIVE

There is a specific list of donation items required, please contact Judy, our PRE or Michelle Dabbs directly for this information.

Donation items can be handed to Judy at the GWA Parent Relation desk

Michelle Dabbs - amdabbs@gmail.com
 Judy - j.lee@gwa.edu.sg
gwapa.singapore@gwa.edu.sg



EY/PY Curriculum Update

This week the Early Years and Primary Years classes have been participating in many different Book Week activities. Book Week originated in the belief that children's books and literacy are life-changers. The major goal of creating a lifelong love of reading in children is something that book weeks all over the world strive to achieve.

Language helps us understand ourselves and make sense of the world. Books and stories help children develop crucial language and thinking skills. Children who enjoy reading are likely to become confident learners. Research has found that reading storybooks to children is one of the most important activities for developing the knowledge required for eventual success in reading. Reading to young children has been found to be related to language growth, emergent literacy and reading achievement. (Bus et al., 1995). In addition, reading to children also stimulates them to read books themselves and further develop their cognitive skills (Canoy et al., 2006). There are various ways in which parents can help cultivate this love of reading in their children:

- Whenever possible, read to your child for a few minutes
- Encourage grandparents to tell stories about when they were young
- Make a life story book for each child to show where they have been, what they have achieved and important milestones
- Let your child see you reading lots of different things such as books, magazines, letters, cards, recipes and newsletters
- Have lots of books around the house
- Talk to your child about what you read so they can see reading is important for you
- Let your children know you are proud they are reading

Olivia Burke - PYP Coordinator

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SY Curriculum Update

Reading is important to the continual growth of our students in the IB Middle Years Programme (MYP) and the activities during this week's Book Week have reinforced this. Student-led inquiry underpins the teaching and learning philosophy of the MYP and whether reading a book, news article, research report or article found on the Internet it exposes our students to new things, new information, new ways to problem solve and develop a deeper understanding of the world.

Reading encourages our students to question what they know, exploring topics from a different angle and develop an ability to compare, contrast and evaluate the information they are presented with. These skills link directly with learning and assessment in the MYP and help to support the development of critical thinking skills and the appreciation of different perspectives which are attributes that are vital in the world we live in.

Book Week has also focussed upon the enjoyment of reading and how this exposes us to a world of imagination. The successful book exchange initiative has allowed our students to explore new authors, new ideas and new perspectives in their reading and it was wonderful to see SY students engaging in this activity through the week.

If you would like further information about the MYP then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Mark Gardner - MYP/IGCSE Coordinator

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