



# Overseas Family School Elementary School

**Master Policy:**

To maintain a happy, safe and effective school for overseas families living in Singapore

## Principal's Message

Dear Parents and Students,

A very warm welcome to all our new students and parents and a "welcome back" to those returning to the Elementary School. It was lovely to see our students on campus after a long vacation. Our students have settled into their homebase classes and new routines quickly and have been busy building positive relationships with their classmates and teachers. Thank you to our returning students, teachers and Parent Association for the support and care given in helping our new students and parents feel a part of our family here at OFS.

In our new academic year, Overseas Family School is excited to launch our Pilot Early Intervention program in Kindergarten and lower grade levels at Elementary School. The pilot is designed to offer services for children who may need additional support to access learning in the classroom. This is in addition to Learning Support that is now being offered on a push-in and withdrawal basis K-12. The Early Intervention team comprises learning specialists, Speech & Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy and support for social-emotional challenges. If you would like to learn more about our Early Intervention or Learning Support program, please contact your child's teacher.

In the month of August, our administrative team hosted a number of parent information sessions and this includes our new parent orientation and Curriculum Talks. For parents who have missed both information sessions, a copy of the presentation can be found on the OFS dashboard when you log in to our school website. Our Back to School Nights which was held on Monday 4 September (Grades 1 to 3) and Wednesday 6 September (Grades 4 and 5) provided parents with an opportunity to meet with their child's teachers and to get a sense of the room environment in which their child spends much of the day. I trust that these sessions have provided you with important information about our school, curriculum and your child's class. We truly believe in a three way partnership between home, school and our students. By working closely together, we can all support your child to enable the best possible outcomes.

Finally, I hope our Elementary School is a place where all our students feel happy, valued and enthused, where learning is fun and exciting. Please let us know if we can be of assistance with any queries, comments or concerns you may have at any time.

I wish all our families the very best for Academic Year 2023-24.



Penny Liew  
Elementary School Principal  
[penny\\_liew@ofs.edu.sg](mailto:penny_liew@ofs.edu.sg)

## From The Parent Association (PA) Desk

The Parent Association (PA) invites all parents to join us for a Hari Raya (Eid) themed Coffee Morning. Come along and learn more about the traditions and customs from our Muslim community.

Date: Thursday, 14 September 2023

Time: 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Venue: Parent Lounge (Level 4 of Administration Building)

If you would like more information about this or other PA events, please feel free to contact our Chairperson by email at: [parent\\_association@ofs.edu.sg](mailto:parent_association@ofs.edu.sg).

## SPP



We are thrilled to welcome families from a wealth of different cultures, languages and backgrounds as we greatly value the rich diversity of our school community. The new academic year has started very well for our returning and our new SPP students. The SPP teachers have been impressed with their positive attitudes and adaptability. Together, we will create countless meaningful learning moments and guide your child to successfully become English proficient. Stay tuned and watch this space for quarterly SPP updates. For any SPP program enquiries, please feel free to reach out to me at: [camelia\\_gergely@ofs.edu.sg](mailto:camelia_gergely@ofs.edu.sg).

(Camelia Gergely)

## Sports News

OFS Tigers has seen its greatest number of student sign ups for the Elementary School 9U, 10U and 11U teams.

The quality of our student-athletes has improved significantly and as a result so has the standard. A number of teams will move up the ACSIS Divisions playing against stronger teams too. Being selected to the competitive teams is an honour in that students will be representing their sports specific team, our competitive sports program - The OFS Tigers - and the school in competing against some of the very best in the ACSIS Leagues and Championships this season.

For our Elementary School – we have added additional Football and Netball teams to increase the amount of students able to play as well as doubled the number of gymnasts involved from last year. Season One is well underway and concludes on 18 November. Let's Go Tigers!

(Gil Levy)



## Grade 1 News

Welcome to the new academic year and a special welcome to all our new Grade 1 students and families. The students have settled in very well and have made a smooth and successful start to the academic year. It was a pleasure to see you at our Back To School Night session and we hope the information you received gives you a good insight into the routines and procedures of Grade 1. Our first IPC Unit of Work, "Brainwave", has been an exciting way to start the academic year, where children have been exploring how our brain works and how we can prepare ourselves for learning. We would like to thank you all for the wonderful way you have supported your child; sending in supplies, labelling belongings, answering questionnaires and volunteering to help. We look forward to a fabulous year in Grade 1.

*(Jaya Ward)*



## Grade 2 News



What an exciting and busy few weeks the Grade 2 students have had! They have settled well into their new classes and are getting to know their teachers and new friends. Our first IPC unit "Brainwave" has been a wonderful opportunity to look at the different ways people learn and how we can improve our learning. Our learning journey has taken us on an exploration of the IPC personal goals, Knowledge, Skills and Understanding (KSUs) and the importance of having a positive mindset. Students participated in a teacher led skill rotation activity to understand what helps and hinders learning. They learnt ways to grow their brain through the 'Positive Mindset Workshop'. In Mathematics, we explored data handling by conducting surveys in our classrooms. We learnt how to represent and analyze data using tallies and bar graphs. The students are showing great independence as they get used to the responsibilities of Grade 2. We look forward to a great year together.

*(Sameerata Prakash)*

## Grade 3 News

It has been great getting to know the Grade 3 students in the first few weeks of school. Likewise, they have spent time getting to know their teachers and have become well adjusted to so many new, and some familiar faces, school and classroom routines. Students are settling into their new classes and are enjoying making new friends, as well as reuniting with classmates from previous years. We started our academic year by introducing children to our IPC Unit of Work, "Brainwave". Students have revisited what they know about anatomical components of the brain, while simultaneously gaining new knowledge and understanding of how our brains help us to work toward and achieve the IPC Personal Goals. The entry point enabled students to engage with rebus puzzles, anagrams and a creative art task. The students are off to a fantastic start and we look forward to sharing our learning journeys with you as the year unfolds!

*(Camelia Gergely)*



## Grade 4 News

It has been a busy first few weeks in Grade 4. Students have shown resilience and adaptability while getting used to life in a new grade level and the differences from Grade 3. Our first IPC unit, "Brainwave" has had the students understand the importance of having a growth mindset when it comes to their studies and all aspects of their lives. This should help them throughout their time in Grade 4 when they will be faced with many new challenges. In Language Arts, Information Report writing is the text type we begin with and students are beginning to understand the structure and different language features used when writing an information report. All their hard work should lead to some interesting reports! For the first few weeks of Mathematics, students have been looking at place value, rounding, standard and expanded and will now move onto working with the four operations.

*(Guy Watts)*



## Grade 5 News

Our Grade 5 students are very happy and enthusiastic about the new academic year. They have settled in nicely and the teachers have been impressed with the Personal Goals being displayed. Our first IPC unit, "Moving People" began with an engaging Entry Point where students had to imagine that they were people who urgently needed to move away from their home as a result of war, natural disaster, government, etc. They had to quickly decide on a few items that they would take with them on their journey. Students were then organised into families and had some great discussions about what they brought. One of the highlights was the students "trekking through the forest" to make their way to a boat that was waiting for them. Finally, the families had to trade items for tarps and cloth to build shelters for the night. These activities allowed the children to experience the struggles that actual refugees go through. Junior Student Council Members have been elected for each class. They have received their official hats and badges and have started weekly meetings. We are looking forward to a fantastic year of learning and experiences in Grade 5.

*(Karla Kleist)*





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## New Staff

### SAMANTHA ANG

My name is Samantha Ang and I hold a Bachelor's degree in Neuroscience and a Master's degree in Education from the United States. I have 11 years of teaching experience and taught in four different international schools abroad. This will be my third year teaching in Singapore. As a teacher, I aim to perpetuate knowledge and inspire learning. With my passion for teaching, I believe that it is important to build a firm foundation for the students. I strive to develop students who will build a better world through intercultural understanding and respect. A student-centered and inquiry-based learning encourages critical thinking, self-reflection and dedication to lifelong learning and continuous improvement. This year, I am teaching Grade 1, and the inquisitiveness of their young minds continues to amaze me. I believe that trust and honesty will strengthen student-teacher relationships. Thus, having students' trust in shaping their future is so purposeful that it makes me look forward to teaching them everyday.



### AMBER BARRETT

Hello! My name is Amber, and I am originally from Johannesburg, South Africa. I have been teaching for eight years, and I recently relocated to Singapore. I spent the last five years teaching in Vietnam, it was a wonderful experience working with such a diverse group of students. As I settle into Singapore, I am looking forward to exploring more of this vibrant city and immersing myself in its rich culture. Most importantly, I am excited to create a happy, safe, and effective educational environment for all my students. Building strong relationships with my students and helping them reach their full potential is my ultimate goal. Aside from teaching, I enjoy participating in various sports and activities, such as running, swimming, and trying out new sports. I am thrilled to be part of this wonderful community, and I cannot wait to embark on this new chapter of my teaching journey here in Singapore.



### ANDREW CHAMBERS

With a passion for education that has spanned almost a decade and has taken me across the globe, I am Andrew Chambers. My journey as an educator has taken me to many countries, allowing me to refine my teaching practices while working within diverse curricula and grade levels. Since childhood, my aspiration was always clear: to be a teacher, enabling children to showcase their potential and contribute positively to society. I believe the International Primary Curriculum (IPC) provides the perfect platform for this endeavor. Currently, I have the privilege of guiding and nurturing the bright minds of Grade 2 SPP2 students. It is incredibly fulfilling to watch them flourish and grow with the IPC curriculum, empowering them to make a difference in our ever-changing world. Beyond the classroom, I relish my adventures in travel, embrace various sports, and thoroughly enjoy social gatherings. My recent relocation to Singapore from Hainan has brought with it an opportunity to connect with a multitude of people from diverse backgrounds. The warm welcome extended to me by the staff, pupils, and colleagues at Overseas Family School has made my transition seamless. I am excited about my role in creating a happy, safe, and effective educational environment for overseas families residing in Singapore. Additionally, you might spot me coaching the Under 9 Tigers, another aspect of my life that fills me with enthusiasm and purpose. My mission is to continue fostering a love for learning while helping children discover and nurture their unique talents. Together, we can build a brighter future.



## Library News

Our eager readers have been delighted to be back in the library borrowing books. Library lessons have focused on reviewing routines and borrowing procedures. Some important reminders are:



- library bags must be used to borrow as they protect the books.
- students may borrow two books from the general collection and one language book.
- return or renew books after 2 weeks (slips in the back of books show due dates).
- students can visit the library during grade level designated lunch times (Grades 3, 4 and 5 can borrow during this time).
- encourage your child's love of reading through reading aloud to your child and encouraging and modelling reading habits.

(Olivia Burford-Taylor)

## Art News

Ms Wendy and I are so pleased to see all of our returning and new students settling into Art and expressing themselves through a range of



exciting skills and activities linked to their Units of Work. Some young artists have experimented with materials such as foil, sand and paper pulp; others have been learning how to draw humans with the right proportions, no T-Rex arms here! Grade 4 children are using bilateral symmetry to draw beetles and other arthropods and Grade 5 learners are being inspired by a folk artist to design a unique mixed media artwork. We look forward to a year full of creativity, growth and expression!

(Jennifer Freeman)

## Chess News

Big congratulations to our Grade 3 student, Ashwath Kaushik, who recently returned from the 7th Eastern Asia Youth Chess Championship held in Hainan, China. Ashwath achieved an impressive bronze medal in the Standard Open U12 category. We are excited to see where his chess journey will go next!



(Dijana Dengler and Philipp Ziegler)



## Physical Education (PE)

Welcome back to an exciting year in the Physical Education Department. Students started the year being introduced to their PE teachers, followed by discussions of expectations and essential agreements that would ensure safety and an enjoyable year ahead. We reminded the students of the importance of having a water bottle, hat and wearing the correct PE attire for their PE lessons. We kicked off the year with our athletics and net games unit, where our young athletes are developing their skills, techniques and strategies whilst developing their communication skills in an environment that fosters teamwork and fair play. It also allowed for opportunities for our students to develop their understanding and movement in running, long jump, high jump and javelin, along with other key athletic disciplines. The equipment that is used is adapted to give the students a safe yet "real feel" for each activity.

Our Grades 4 and 5 lunchtime activities have also started with a bang, with students eagerly participating and developing their invasion skills and strategies through Capture the Flag.

*(Ashley Riffel)*

## Languages News



The Foreign Language and Mother Tongue teachers welcomed their students through fun-filled games and activities. The classrooms are buzzing with enthusiasm and the energy to learn. The teachers introduced themselves to the new students and created an engaging environment where students feel comfortable and excited to start their foreign language learning journey or further develop their Mother Tongue. They kicked off the class with icebreaker games, encouraging students to mingle and interact with one another while practising the language. These games not only help in breaking the ice but also promote teamwork and boost students' confidence in using the language. Hindi language students celebrated the Indian Independence Day on 15th August by creating posters and writing slogans. The students have begun their language learning adventure and we look forward to a promising year ahead.

*(Monica Makkar and Roger Calais)*

## Music News

We are delighted to welcome our students back to level 10 to embark on their musical journey this year. We believe in nurturing your child's passion for music while providing them with a solid foundation of knowledge and skills. Students in Grade 1 have been exploring rhythm and beat using unpitched percussion instruments. Grade 2 students are learning to play pieces on the xylophone while the Grade 3 students are developing their skills on the keyboard. Grade 4 students are learning to play the recorder, while Grade 5 students will learn to play in an ensemble using the djembe drum from West Africa. We have also begun our auditions for this year's musical 'Winnie the Pooh KIDS'. We look forward to an exciting year ahead filled with musical celebrations!

*(Kevin McCabe)*



## International Primary Curriculum

### Assessment for Improving Learning

The IPC approach to Assessment for Improving Learning is based on a simple assumption – 'if we are passionate about improving children's learning, we have to be passionate about assessment. (International Curriculum Association – Assessment for Improving Learning). At OFS we ensure that our curriculum supports learning and promotes conceptual understanding. To this end, in our Units Of Work, we assess our students regularly using the learning goals in different subject areas and ensure they are given several opportunities to share their knowledge, use their skills and demonstrate their understanding. Through regular formative assessments and some summative assessments we are able to adapt our instructional practices and help students achieve their goals by providing constructive feedback. We provide choice and challenge in the completion of the assessments within units of work, giving the students a choice in the way they would like to present their learning. Peer and self assessment are encouraged which give the students the opportunity to deepen their understanding.

Knowledge is continually expanding and includes data, facts and information. Assessments are carried out through a variety of formats to give students an opportunity to share their prior knowledge and make connections with newly gained knowledge.

Skills are assessed through observations made while students are engaged in using the skill. Students are given multiple opportunities to practice the skills which are seen as transferable between subject areas and can be assessed over and over again through each of the Mileposts. The assessment of skills covers both the product and the skills used. Rubrics and success criteria are shared with the students for these assessments.

Understanding is assessed through the activities provided for students to demonstrate their understanding. Students are able to transfer and apply their learning in different contexts to show their breadth and depth of understanding. The data is collected over time and students work on deepening their understanding through focussed reflections on their learning.

Teachers also take notes based on their observations on the Personal Goals and the development of International Mindedness. We share assessment data via the OFS portal wherein the rubrics or criteria used to assess the students are clearly articulated. We also share assessment information and set goals through the Parent Student Teacher conferences. The student portfolios and the end semester reports reflect student achievement and progress.

*(Shalini Maira)*