



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,

Welcome to the second quarter of the semester and I hope all our families had an enjoyable school break in the last week of October. We extend our warm wishes to our families who celebrate Deepavali and we hope you had a bright and joyous Deepavali.



We were very fortunate in the month of October to welcome a delegation from the Finnish Education Department of the city of Turku, Finland. These education specialists were keen to learn about our innovative teaching practices as well as the Mother Tongue Language Program.

With our Grade 5 Model United Nations unit on the horizon, our students also had the privilege of being engaged in a presentation conducted by the Dutch Ambassador to Singapore and Brunei, Ambassador Anneke Adema. Our students were excited to learn about Ambassador Adema's role within Singapore, how countries work together to address global challenges and ways to foster and maintain the harmonious relationship between the two countries. Ambassador Adema's visit has truly inspired our Grade 5 students as they embark on their MUN journey.

Finally, a heartfelt thanks to our wonderful Parent Association for their hard work in making Children's Day in the Elementary School a fantastic celebratory day for our young students. Our students arrived at school to find the Parent Rock Band singing in the atrium, Children's Day wishes written by Grades 1 and 2 folded into paper planes and decorated on the level 3 entrance as well as gifts for each student. We are truly grateful for the PA's dedication in making this day memorable for the children.

As we head towards the month of November, we have outlined a number of important dates below, with our Holiday Concerts taking precedence in our events calendar. Our students are looking forward to presenting songs and dances from different countries and cultures that are representative of their holiday traditions. We hope to see our parents at our concerts!

Penny Liew
Elementary School Principal
penny_liew@ofs.edu.sg



From The Parent Association (PA) Desk

We cordially invite you to join us for a delightful Deepavali Coffee Morning on 7 November 2024! Our dedicated Parent Association and parent volunteers are excited to present various performances, engaging activities, and delicious food, all designed to immerse you in the vibrant culture of India. Do not miss out on this wonderful experience!

Event: Deepavali Themed Coffee Morning
Date: Thursday, 7 November 2024
Time: 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
Venue: Parent Lounge
(Level 4 of Administration Building)

Please register your attendance by signing up on the OFS webpage.

<https://www.ofs.edu.sg/events/2024/deepavali-themed-coffee-morning/>

Music News

Our students have been putting tremendous effort into preparing for the upcoming Holiday Concerts. Each Grade will showcase festive songs and dances celebrating holidays from various cultures around the world. Through these celebrations, we aim to nurture cultural appreciation, respect, and unity among our students. Additionally, rehearsals for our school musical, Frozen JR. are continuing every Wednesday after school. We cannot wait to share these exciting musical events with you soon!

(Kevin McCabe)



Important Dates:

5 November	Last day of ECAs
7 November	PA Deepavali Coffee Morning
9 November	Last day of OFS Tigers Season 1 Competitive Sport
18 November	OFS Tigers Season 2 Competitive Sports begins
18-26 November	Grades 1-5 Art Exhibition
19 November	Grades 1 and 2 Holiday Concert
22 November	Grades 3 and 4 Holiday Concert
26 November	Grade 5 Holiday Concert
5-6 December	Grade 5 MUN Conference Opening and Closing Ceremonies

Grade 1 News

It was wonderful to see our Grade 1 Parents at our Parent-Student-Teacher Conferences. It is a great opportunity for parents, students and teachers to celebrate the learning that is taking place in our classes. We are coming to the end of our second IPC Unit of Work, "Hooray Let's Go On Holiday". We have enjoyed learning about our home and host countries and we had an exciting time exploring Singapore and all the attractions it has to offer. We are looking forward to our next IPC Unit of Work "Green Fingers" where the students will be enquiring into living and non living things, going on nature walks to observe the plants in our local school environment and carrying out investigations into what plants need to survive.

(Jaya Ward)



Grade 2 News



Our Parent-Student-Teacher Conferences were an exciting opportunity for students to share their hard work and for parents to meet the teachers. Setting goals for the semester and celebrating student achievements, has been an incredible way to celebrate their learning journey. We culminated in the IPC unit "Material World". Students applied their understanding of material properties to build bridges for "The Three Billy Goats Gruff". The Grade 2 students have been very excited about our IPC unit "Different Places, Similar Lives". They are learning that even though we may be from different countries, we have many similarities with the people around us. For the Entry Point, children participated in a teacher-led activity where Grade 2 teachers shared information about different countries.

(Sameerata Prakash)

Grade 3 News



Welcome back to all Grade 3 parents. We hope everyone had an enjoyable and restful October break. Our students have completed their unit on "How Humans Work" where they identified bones, muscles, and learned various ways to keep their bodies healthy. Our last Unit of Work for this Semester is "Bright Sparks!". Our Grade 3 students will be exploring how electricity flows through wires and how switches operate. They will be following scientific procedures, just like real scientists, while also learning the features of this text type. The students are looking forward to sharing their performances with you for the upcoming Holiday Concert.

(Hayley Kinnaird)

Library News

I hope you all had a lovely rest, and enjoyed some extra time to read over the October break. Perhaps your child borrowed a 'Spooky Story' from our Halloween display? Just a gentle reminder to please return library books by their due date. Children's library status can be checked on the OFS portal. Please mark your child's library day in your calendar if they need help remembering which day to bring their library folder to school. Additionally, please help take care of our library books by keeping them in a waterproof library folder. There are many new books arriving each month in the library; please enjoy the display on our 'Newbies' wall in the library, and feel free to borrow from our new titles.

(Catherine Kmet)



Sports News

The ES OFS Tigers teams have been outstanding in this first season of the ACSIS league. ES students in the OFS Tigers Badminton, Basketball, Cross Country, Football, Gymnastics, Netball, Swimming and Tennis teams all look set to finish amongst the Top 3 international schools by the conclusion of this first season. There have been many resounding victories and some extraordinary displays of talent, skill, commitment, strategy and teamwork. The dedication of our coaches and support from the school has led to a highly successful start to this school year's sporting results. We are looking forward to building on this momentum further in offering quality opportunities and competitive experiences for our OFS Tigers to practice, participate, compete and represent our school in their preferred sports.

"Greatness starts Somewhere - Greatness starts Here"

(Gil Levy)

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Grade 4 News



October seems to have flown by. The students were very excited about presenting to their parents and other grades for our 'Shared Learning Experience'. The IPC Personal Goals of collaborator, communicator, thinker and adaptable were all on show during the learning process. The Grade 4 floor was buzzing with activity and it was great to see so many parents come along and support us. We are now well into our Mathematics Module 2 and the focus has been on function machines, 2D and 3D shapes and coordinates. The students have been able to show their understanding of the different concepts taught through Mathematics games. Grade 4 have started their narrative unit and will be creating some fun stories to share with their classmates focusing on character and setting development along with dialogue to bring the characters to life.

(Guy Watts)

Grade 5 News



Our Grade 5 students have been engaged in the OFS MUN Unit, a simulation designed to teach them about diplomacy, international relations, and the issues surrounding the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Each class has been designated a country to represent, enabling them to utilise their research skills effectively. Additionally, students have opportunities to showcase their leadership skills by serving as Chairs and Deputy Chairs of their Committee Rooms, as well as Flag-bearers and Ambassadors for their respective countries. This unit fosters the development of personal goals and key 21st-century skills, including communication, critical thinking, social skills, self-management and research.

(Karla Kleist)

Physical Education (PE)

As our swimming program for the year nears its conclusion, the PE Team is thrilled to celebrate the confidence and motivation our students have shown throughout the five-week program. Moving forward, we are excited to cover a range of skills in our Athletics curriculum, including running, long jump, and throwing. Additionally, some classes will soon begin their Gymnastics program, guiding us toward the end of the year. Lunchtime Sports continue to be a highlight, with our Grades 4 and 5 teams actively competing in 'Capture the Flag.' Looking ahead to Quarter 2, we are excited to introduce one of our most popular sports – Table Tennis. We anticipate another active and enjoyable term in our PE Program.

(Mark Sherwin)

Educational Intervention Services

Reading Matters – Supporting Your Child's Journey to Fluency

Parents often ask us 'What can I do to help my child at home?' The answer is nearly always the same ... read! One of the best gifts you can give is to foster a true love of books and support your child in becoming a skilled and confident reader. The link between good reading comprehension and higher overall academic success is well-documented. Developing reading fluency takes time and practice, but there are a few simple strategies that can make a big difference.

Build a reading routine into your home life

Just 15 minutes of reading a day has a big impact on fluency and comprehension. Help your child establish a consistent daily reading routine; whether it is before or after school, during quiet time, or after dinner. Sitting in an upright position beside each other encourages focus, joint attention and good reading posture. Choosing a place with adequate lighting will reduce strain on the eyes over time. The cherished routine of bedtime reading can then be reserved solely for pleasure and bonding.

Model the joy of reading

Children learn by example and you are their most important role models! Show them how much you enjoy reading by sharing stories, talking about what you have read and used to read as a child, packing books for your holiday, having fun with word play and building in time to read as a family. You can model for your child by reading aloud and indulging in a wide range of reading opportunities. Reading comprehension is common to all languages, so please have these discussions in your mother tongue if that is more natural.

Positive reinforcement is key

Celebrate every reading milestone, no matter how small! Whether it is reading a new word, finishing a book in one sitting, using confident expression, let your child know you notice their progress. Avoid the temptation to focus on the colour band your child is reading, the mistakes they make or interrupting their flow by offering well-meaning advice which may feel critical to them in the moment. Positive reinforcement and keeping a growth mindset builds motivation, self-esteem and a lifelong love of reading.

Encourage self-correction

When your child stumbles over a word, it can be tempting to jump in and help by correcting them. However, giving your child time to self-correct is a valuable learning opportunity. Use gentle prompts to guide them: 'Does that sound right?'; 'You have paused, do you think you missed something? Shall we re-read that sentence from the beginning?'; 'Can you try that again?' This encourages independence, critical thinking, and greater fluency.

Re-reading builds fluency

One of the most effective ways to improve your child's fluency is through re-reading. Revisiting familiar stories allows children to focus on reading smoothly and accurately without the pressure of decoding new words. It embeds vocabulary and understanding, enhances pace and expression, helping children become more fluent readers. So have fun reading your favourite stories again and again – each time, they will become faster and more confident!

"You can find magic wherever you look. Sit back and relax, all you need is a book!" – Dr Seuss.

(Christina Govi & Shelley Hood (ES Learning Support Teachers))

International Primary Curriculum

We have recently launched our Health and Social Education (HSE) curriculum. Guided by our school's mission statement, our students will develop the knowledge, skills and understanding to be able to play an active and positive role in our diverse community. They will understand how to look after their personal wellbeing, develop positive relationships and know who to turn to when they need help and support. With a focus on kindness, respect and empathy, we aim to equip our students with strategies to keep themselves and others safe.

(Shalini Maira)

Art News



Thank you to all the families who came to celebrate our students' achievements in Art during the recent Parent-Teacher-Student Conferences and we would like to extend a warm welcome to everybody to attend our upcoming Grades 1-5 Elementary Art Exhibition. It runs from 18 November to 26 November and you can view it in the Elementary School Level 4 Activity room. We look forward to seeing you there!

(Jennifer Freeman)

Languages News

Our Elementary School recently celebrated Languages Week with a vibrant and engaging array of activities. The week-long event aimed to highlight the importance of learning and appreciating different languages, both mother tongues and foreign languages. Cultural Quest, a thrilling treasure hunt that took students on a journey to discover the cultural treasures of various languages and countries. Students embarked on a quest filled with clues, riddles, and challenges. The teachers joined in the fun, donning pirate attire and guiding students through the exciting treasure hunt. They had the opportunity to explore the rich tapestry of cultures from around the world. They learned about traditional clothing from India and Korea, delved into the intricacies of Viking history, and explored the artistic beauty of Delft Blue pottery. In addition to the treasure hunt and artistic endeavors, students participated in a variety of cultural experiences. They learned to play traditional Hebrew spinning games and explored Finnish national symbols. The event was a fantastic way for students to learn about different languages in a creative and interactive manner. Languages Week was a resounding success, fostering a love for languages and celebrating the linguistic diversity of our school community.

(Monica Makkar and Roger Calais)



New Staff

KATIE EGAN

My name is Katie Egan, and I am an experienced teacher from Ireland with a passion for education. I studied for four years at Mary Immaculate College in Limerick, Ireland, where I earned my degree in education. My first teaching role was in English as an Additional Language (EAL) teacher, which sparked my love for teaching English to foreign students. I spent five years teaching in Ireland, working with a wide range of age groups and gaining valuable experience. After that, I moved to Hanoi, Vietnam, where I taught for three years. It was an incredible experience that allowed me to gain so much knowledge and work with students from all over the world. This has enriched my perspective on teaching and cultural diversity. I am now thrilled to be working at OFS, where I thoroughly enjoy my role as an SPP teacher, helping new students learn English. I love seeing them grow in confidence as they develop their language skills. Outside of teaching, I have a passion for travelling, music, food, and reading, which all contribute to my love of exploring new cultures. I am looking forward to a great year ahead at OFS, filled with new learning opportunities and growth.



CHRISTOPHER ENG

My name is Christopher Eng, and I am excited to join the Overseas Family School as an Elementary Physical Education teacher this year. I was born in Toronto, Canada, and I have a passion for promoting active, healthy lifestyles. I believe that learning through movement should be an engaging and enjoyable experience for all students. I hold a Master's degree in International Educational Leadership from Lehigh University and a Bachelor's degree in Kinesiology from York University. I have had the pleasure of teaching in Canada, South Korea, Bangladesh, and Qatar before coming to Singapore, gaining valuable experiences with students of various ages and cultures. I am always looking for new ways to make lessons relevant and fun, whether through games, sports, or creative activities. In my class, I encourage curiosity, collaboration, and creativity. I believe that each student brings unique strengths, and I am here to support students in reaching their full potential – physically, socially, and emotionally – in Physical Education. When I am not teaching, I enjoy cooking, exploring, and staying active with my kids. I am excited for a fantastic year ahead, filled with learning, growth, and new experiences. Let us make it a great one together!



JOANNA HAMILTON-DICK

Hi, I am Mrs. Hamilton-Dick, originally from the UK. I moved to Singapore in July 2024 after two years in Bali and sixteen in Hong Kong. With over ten years of experience, primarily in Grades 4 and 5 within the IB Primary Years Program, I have had the privilege of teaching students from around the world, which has enriched my perspective on cultural diversity. In my free time, I enjoy exploring new places, hiking, and skiing with my family. I am excited to be part of the OFS community and look forward to new adventures in Singapore!

