



ACS (INTERNATIONAL) NEWSLETTER

IN THIS ISSUE

Dear Students, Parents and Friends,

I was recently asked by a leadership colleague from outside ACS, who were the educators that inspired and influenced me. It was a great question that really got me thinking and stuck with me for a long time. There are lots of educational 'voices' in the market that come from a range of different areas. There are the academics working in universities that speak into the educational space through their research, school leaders who publish their thoughts, consultancy groups who promote their white papers, and teachers who use various online platforms to share their thoughts and opinions. Some of these voices are worth listening to, but of course there are some that are not as relevant.

As I considered who were the educators that inspired me, I found myself drawn to people I had met throughout my career who had impressed me with the work they were doing. None of them had self-promoted or published their efforts, but their stories and what they had achieved were inspiring to me. As I considered the people I had in mind, I thought if their stories were inspiring to me, they might also be inspiring to others. So I decided that I would take some time to contact the people I thought of and ask if I could interview them so they could tell their story. After a bit of cajoling, I convinced a number of them to be interviewed, so that their stories could be recorded and shared with others. My aim was to inspire other educators and bring to light some incredible educational leaders that are not 'out there' promoting themselves.

The result of this exercise was [The GlobalEd Podcast](#), which is currently a collection of six interviews:

Kyiv, Ukraine – A Principal who led her school through the Russian invasion in 2022.

Cairo, Egypt – A teacher shares how their school led staff and students through the Arab Spring in 2011, and the work that he does now supporting displaced people arriving in Egypt from war-torn Sudan.

Galiwin'ku, Australia – A Principal of a remote indigenous school in far north Australia talking about living in the community and how the indigenous health crisis affects her school.

Mexico City, Mexico – The Chair of the IB Heads Council and an IB Board member, share about their experiences of the IB.

Dakar, Senegal – An African Principal shares her journey of working in international schools across the world and how she is making her students global citizens.

Jakarta, Indonesia – A lady who founded a school in Indonesia's largest landfill site, and her story of how they serve the children of that community.

While the podcast is secular in nature, a number of the interviewees are Christians. If you are interested in listening to these stories, you can find the podcast on Spotify, Apple Podcasts and YouTube. I hope that as the podcast 'transports' you around the world, you are uplifted by the inspiring work that is occurring. Please keep the work of these educators in your prayers.



Gavin Kinch
Principal

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STAFF NEWS

Welcoming Our New Staff Member

Greetings to the wonderful school community,

It is with great pleasure and enthusiasm that I introduce myself as the new Head of Higher Education and Careers at our esteemed institution. Having recently joined this incredible community in February, I bring with me experience accumulated over 14 years in the education sector. My journey in guiding students towards their future paths has been both rewarding and fulfilling.

Prior to my current role, I had the privilege of serving at another school in Singapore, where I honed my skills and developed a deep interest in fostering the growth and aspirations of young minds. Now, as a proud member of this school, I am excited to contribute my knowledge and expertise to support our students in navigating the exciting and at times daunting journey of higher education and career exploration. My philosophy centres around the belief that each student possesses unique talents and interests. I find great joy in working with youth, helping them unlock their potential, and guiding them towards finding meaning and purpose in their academic and professional pursuits.

My educational journey includes a Bachelor's degree in Commerce and a Master's degree in Counselling which was a transformative experience that deepened my understanding of the nuanced aspects of human development, psychology, and the intricate pathways individuals traverse in their academic and professional lives. This academic venture has proven invaluable in my current role, allowing me to approach career guidance with a holistic perspective, taking into account not only the academic aspects but also the unique personal and emotional dimensions of each student.

I will be speaking to all students during assembly on 28 February and sharing key dates including our Higher Education Fair on 8 April which is open to parents to attend as well. I am eager to collaborate with students, parents, and fellow educators to create an environment that nurtures curiosity and personal growth. Together, let us embark on a journey of exploration, learning, and empowerment.

Here's to a successful and inspiring academic year!

Warm regards,

Junita Devi Sockalingam
Head of Higher Education and Careers
ACS (International)



STUDENT SUCCESSES

National Youth Achievement Award (NYAA)

On Friday, 12 January, Deputy Prime Minister Heng Swee Keat hosted the NYAA Gold Award Ceremony. President Tharman Shanmugaratnam presented the NYAA Gold Award to Gold Award recipients. The ceremony was witnessed by Members of Parliament, VIPs, foreign ambassadors and high commissioners, principals, teachers, parents, and invited guests.

The Gold Award is the highest accolade that one can achieve as part of the NYAA programme. It requires dedication, hard work and commitment to show sustained effort at the four different categories which are Service Learning, Outdoor Appreciation, Healthy Living and a Community service initiative over an 18-month period. Three ACS (International) students received the Gold Award, namely Erica Molenberg, Kim Minjee and Stephanie Tsang Miao Zi.



Stephanie Tsang pictured with Deputy Prime Minister Mr Heng Swee Keat and President Mr Tharman Shanmugaratnam at the gold award ceremony.

Two ACS (International) students also recently received their Bronze Award certificates. They are Tiffany Rusli (6 GHK) and Nathan The (4 SVM). They should be commended for their commitment and efforts towards the programme over the 6-month period for the bronze award.

I look forward to more students successfully completing their Bronze, Silver or Gold awards this year. If your children would like to register and start their NYAA journey, they can sign up at the PE office.



Nathan Tjhe and Tiffany Rusli presented with their bronze award in assembly

Dominic Marwood
NYAA Co-ordinator

Time Out with a Singapore Storyteller

Mr Kevin Foo, a local author and ACS old boy, visited ACS (International) on 22 January and enthralled the Year 1 students with his journey of writing his book “The Secret Kingdom Of Honey Peaches – The Quest Of Avatars”

It was an enthralling experience.

The Secret Kingdom Of Honey Peaches - The Quest Of Avatars is the first of a four-part series, and the captivating novel weaves the pursuit of knowledge with the quests of virtues, guiding youths towards a horizon where education and morality meet.

Mr Foo devised an engrossing fantasy on the journey of a band of animal avatars, all starting at the Botanical Gardens, home of the “Angsana Tree”. The adventure begins through portals into the magical “Tai Shan Kimajobaba” in search of the mythical honey peaches, which are said to bestow enlightenment and delight.

During the session, Mr Foo shared about the values that he wanted to deliver through his book: graciousness, kindness, generosity and empathy. He spoke engagingly about the challenges that he faced to stay committed and write his novel – to persevere and keep on going to get a successful end result and make his dreams become a reality. Mr Foo certainly inspired many Year 1 students to persevere, follow their dreams and work hard to achieve their goals.

Hunter Lau and Summer Loh (both from 1 THO), Kieran Lim and Hyo Bin Cho (both from 1 CKS), all said that they enjoyed the talk with Mr Foo. They added that his sharing inspired them to write more, and explore new ideas and book genres. They were heartened by the fact that although Mr Foo was not as good at writing when he was younger, he still persevered and became a talented writer.

The four students said they now have a better understanding that success takes a lot of work, and every task will always start slow, but the end result is always worth it. They also learnt to be more confident in day-to-day school tasks.

Meeting Mr Foo reminded me of the quote “ You can’t win if you don't play”. He was truly a risk taker and embraced all the possibilities and different aspects of Singapore, which is a rare location in most books. I enjoyed the interaction with Mr Foo and look forward to more author experiences that the school has to offer.

Rachel Doramus (1 THO) (photo above)



Physics Educational Tour to France and Switzerland for IB DP Students

Twenty Year 5 students along with Ms Manjari Sreedharan and Mr Ho Wee Kwang went on a Physics Educational Tour to France and Switzerland from 18 – 26 Nov 2023. The Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics (STEM)-focused trip offered an immersive experience showcasing cutting-edge research and industry applications. The students embarked on a guided tour of renowned research facilities, including ITER, CEA Nuclear Studies Centre in France, and CERN in Switzerland.

At CERN Science Gateway, a 90-minute lab workshop on electron beams enriched their understanding. Additionally, they explored Airbus' assembly facility and museum, gaining access to aircraft prototypes like those of the Concorde and A380. The visit to Cité de l'espace in France deepened their knowledge of space flight. To complement their learning, a visit to a cheese and chocolate factory unveiled the intricate production processes. This enriching excursion aimed to spark curiosity and passion for STEM disciplines among the students.



The trip also prioritised fostering intercultural understanding and international mindedness among students. Cultural immersion was facilitated through guided tours of historical sites in Toulouse, Marseille, and Geneva, providing insights into the local cultures. At the UN headquarters, Palais des Nations, students observed an ongoing conference, thereby broadening their global perspective. Additionally, the visit to the International Committee of Red Cross (ICRC) headquarters in Geneva offered a deeper understanding of humanitarian efforts on an international scale. These experiences were intricately woven into the itinerary to encourage the students to appreciate diverse cultures and global initiatives while reinforcing the importance of international cooperation and understanding.



Italy's Melodic Tapestry: Concert Tour Experiences of 2023

From 19 to 28 November 2023, the ACS (International) Chamber Orchestra, comprising 26 musicians, travelled to Italy for a concert tour. The main aims of this tour were to gain performing experience, a greater understanding of the culture in Italy and bonding among the fellow members of the orchestra.

Performing overseas in Italy as a chamber orchestra was a transformative experience that taught us invaluable lessons beyond music. Before each performance, we would all have to hand out flyers to passers-by, advertising our concert to the locals and tourists. This was a first for many of us, especially in a foreign country where many did not speak the same language as us. All of us learnt simple Italian phrases to communicate with the passers-by. Our efforts proved fruitful as we were greeted by many locals taking time out of their busy schedules to watch us perform. Resilience emerged as our guiding force, where challenges became opportunities for growth. When the unexpected occurred, such as the soundpost falling off a cello or adapting to a foreign drum set or double bass, resilience became our anchor. Through perseverance and a steadfast determination to uphold performance quality, we managed to continue delivering exceptional performances.

Our first performance was on 21 November at San Paolino Church, followed by a performance on 22 November at Santa Maria Assunta Basilica. To perform for locals in Italian cathedrals was an opportunity of a lifetime. Our last performance was on 25 November at Teatro Monteverdi. This also marked the final performance for the Year 6s as part of the ACS (International) orchestra. It was a bittersweet moment as we played 2 encore pieces at the final performance, namely To Zanarkand and Croatian Rhapsody.

Apart from performing, we also explored many famous sites in Italy! At the Leaning Tower of Pisa, we climbed up the steep steps to the top of the tower to be welcomed with a spectacular view. We also had a guided tour of Florence, visiting the famous Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore and learning more about the history before earning well-deserved gelatos! However, one of the most interesting experiences was attending a violin making workshop in Cremona: we were taught how violins were made and even had the opportunity to witness the process! On our last full day in Italy, we watched an Italian Opera! Although it was hard to understand the story, it was an eye-opening experience as the opera had an orchestra performing in the orchestra pit, something many of us have never seen before. Other than sightseeing and performing, some of the most memorable experiences were the times spent bonding together, be it playing card games on the bus or chatting during meals. We all strengthened our bonds together and became a lot closer.

We would like to thank our conductor, Mr Lim, and all the teachers-in-charge for making this trip a successful one!

Audrey Zee (President, String Orchestra)

Kyra Terese Lim (Vice-President, String Orchestra)



THIMUN 2024

ACS (International) Envoy Club headed to Europe in January 2024 to attend The Hague International Model United Nations (THIMUN) conference, held at the World Forum in the Netherlands. THIMUN is one of the biggest annual conferences, with over 3,400 delegates from 100 countries present at its 56th iteration. The conference was from 23 to 26 January, but the week-long trip held many other interesting occurrences.

Landing in Amsterdam after over 17 hours of travel, we were delighted to find the temperature was almost -6 °C, a welcome change from the hot and humid Singapore climate. After arriving at the Hague, we freshened up and immediately explored the city. We walked along the Dutch parliament to the Escher Museum, dedicated to pieces from Dutch graphic artist M.C. Escher. The modern art in a vintage home piqued our interest, as we spent the evening roaming the halls and stopping at every photo-op. The walk back was just as mesmerising, as we walked past sculptures and flocks of swans and ducks atop a frozen lake.

The next day we visited Gouda, a village home to Gouda cheese. With its traditional Dutch houses and quaint shopping streets, it was a beautiful village. We learnt about the slightly dark history of the village, which suffered during the plague, but cheered ourselves up by spending all our money on cheese and stroopwafels. Following that, we visited the Peace Palace and managed to capture the sunset while Aryav Bhesania (5 CKS) attended the conference training as the Deputy President of the International Court of Justice. On our third day, the conference began with passionate lobbying, intricate resolutions, and loud breaks. Representing Egypt, ACS (International) had three main submitters for outstanding resolutions, discussing issues ranging from online misinformation to education equality and drought resilience. Delegates eloquently debated with one another about the scope of debate for the coming days. The day concluded with the opening ceremony, which included a flag parade, heartfelt speeches from the Secretary General and discussions from guest speakers, which included the Registrar for the International Criminal Court.

The focus shifted on Wednesday 24 January, from informal discussions to formal debate. Resolutions and amendments that were discussed the day before were debated, and delegates voiced their opinions, questioned other delegates' actions, and engaged in arduous discourse. The same continued for the remainder of our conference, with speeches, international relations, and new friendships. The mix of cultures and representation in council called for a unique twist on global politics, but we were all fuelled by our shared love for diplomacy, and managed to make many new friends, from Spain all the way to Uzbekistan and the USA.

On the last day we bade farewell to the conference, and the end of our trip drew closer. That day, debate ended early, so council members enjoyed themselves during the informal socials, where everyone joined in for games such as 'Never Have I Ever' and 'Soulmates'. Entering the grand hall of the World Forum and following another round of speeches by the Secretariat, we were surprised by an electric drum performance, while the flags of all the nations represented at THIMUN waved in the background. The performers had everyone on their feet, creating a conga line that spanned the entire perimeter of the auditorium.

We would also like to thank Ms Sreemati Sen and Mr Giribabu Tummala for accompanying us and planning this experience. This trip will be a memory we will all cherish long after we move on.

Afia Gupta (4 TCT)



Visit to Singapore Art Museum

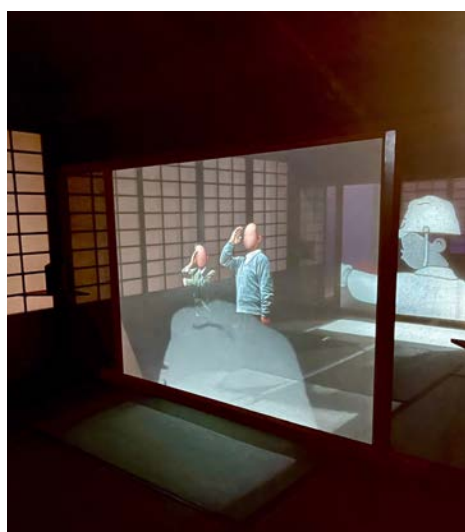
The Artistry CCA is led by students who have a deep passion for the arts, and aim to inspire a love for aesthetics in the entire student body. We produce a magazine devoted to the arts and organize school activities to promote awareness of the arts.

On 6 February, Artistry CCA embarked on their first trip to the Singapore Art Museum. We were exposed to different exhibitions curated by local artists, including the “Proof of Personhood” and “Time and the Tiger” exhibitions. We had a blast looking around at these exhibitions, absorbing the identities and cultures of contemporary art. During this excursion, I viewed view artworks through various new media such as glass projections, AI generations, and re-enactments of history.

The “Proof of Personhood” exhibited art using AI tools, with the main idea of whether or not art can still be undertaken in this day and age. The exhibition highlights the concept of what can be considered to be made by humans, and how art encourages us to reflect on how technology has unknowingly become a part of our everyday lives. One particular artwork, “Justin” by Ang Song Ming, stood out as it included an array of many forged Justin Bieber signatures and a signed poster. Song Ming tries to show how much hard work is needed for a pop star to become a “real” and “polished” pop star, just as Song Ming had to practise Bieber’s signature many times without the use of AI, before it became “polished”. This artwork was one of the only non-AI works which stood out to me as it contradicts the rest of the exhibition. I feel more connected to this piece of work since it demonstrated proof of the nature of personhood.

Overall, the experience was delightful and the artistry CCA will continue its journey to other places of art. These trips bring about more ideas for our upcoming magazine revolving around “colours”!

Athena Peh (5 TKK)



Visit to Chinatown Festive Market

On 20 and 23 January, the Chinese Department took 17 Chinese classes to visit the Chinatown Festive Market. Since the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions in Singapore, the Chinese New Year Festive Market has bounced back to its former vibrancy and there is now a mix of traditional and contemporary handicrafts and food on sale. The rows of authentic Chinese Restaurants opening at the side creates the illusion that we have travelled to China, resulting in a successful out-of-classroom learning trip.

"The recent excursion to Chinatown during our Chinese lesson was extremely interesting. Since it was leading up to Chinese New Year, the bustling streets were filled with interesting food stalls and small unique shops. An hour was just not enough to cover all of Chinatown but with the time given, my partner and I managed to get our hands on this handcrafted traditional dragon toy and we even saw elaborated Chinese Knots being sold, symbolising a good year ahead for all! Furthermore, the distinct smell of warm and tasty food was evident and even though we did not have enough time to try most of the food, I will definitely be going back to Chinatown soon!

Natasha Tan Rae (5 OLD)

The school trip to Chinatown allowed us to learn and experience more of Chinese culture and traditions during Chinese New Year. During the time we spent there, we met many people selling traditional Chinese snacks such as pineapple tarts. We tried many different foods and bought many Chinese traditional souvenirs such as Chinese Knots and handmade dragon heads. We also met many friendly stall owners who taught us more about the significance of different objects and decoration. I hope that we will be able to return to Chinatown in future and spend more time there!

Danielle Tan Sher-Yin (5 CKS)



Lunar New Year Celebrations

We celebrated the Lunar New Year (LNY) on 7 February with broad strokes on the theme of dragons. The Senior Leadership Team, the 8 Houses, and the lion dance troupe, each presented a unique facet of what the dragon meant to them. There were vibrant, colourful and grand performances. A special highlight of the celebration was the dance repertoire presented by the Korean students. They started their performance with a catchy tune and cute movements to a cheerleading music, and then a trilogy of dances travelling from ancient to contemporary times. It was such a spectacular performance that made us all extremely proud of the Korean students. The LNY celebrations were full of captivating performances prepared by students, showcasing the traditions from around the world. There were dance performances such as Korean Cheerleading, Jeon-Woochi and K-pop dance, prepared by Year 6, Year 5 and Year 4 Korean students instructed by Ms Oh Eun Jeong. The 29 performers worked very hard to make the performance a success, showcasing slices of Korean culture in the presentation. The work started with several meetings during the school holidays, and choosing the music: To You (그대에게), Jeon Woo-chi and Backdoor, and we practised for more than 2 months since the end of 2023.

We faced challenges in synchronising our choreography with the music due to unfamiliar movements, but overcame the obstacles through providing feedback and encouragement to each other. We also organised self-initiated rehearsals twice as the event approached. This enriching opportunity allowed us to develop communication skills by collaborating with fellow students from different year groups, embodying the communicator aspect of the IB learner profile. We also formed meaningful relationships throughout the journey, and the memories created were truly meaningful. After the performance, we received positive feedback from teachers and fellow students alike. We would like to extend our thanks to everyone involved. May this year be filled with joy and happiness!

Kim Seojung (6 TCT)

What an honour it has been to host such an amazing event! Witnessing everything unfold from behind the scenes was an awe-inspiring experience; one that I wouldn't trade for anything. It felt surreal to witness our collective hard work: hours spent grinding to write an engaging script, rehearsing our lines repeatedly, and panicking over last-minute preparations... All of that culminated in this beautiful celebration we now share together. I'm confident that my fellow emcees—Amina, Daniel, and Nathan—agree that those challenging weeks were insignificant in light of the grandeur that was "LNY Celebration 2024". There were some rough patches. I stumbled over some rehearsed lines and also struggled with improvised lines when unexpected changes occurred on the way into the Sports Hall (namely, some drums and a certain dragon). Mistakes are still painful to reflect on (especially my singing) but highlight the enormous room for improvement! Embracing the "new year, new me" spirit by accepting this challenge has brought me this unforgettable experience. Let's all approach the new year as fearlessly as a dragon!

Crystal Huang (4 LSG)



Lunar New Year Get Together High Tea for International Students

The Lunar New Year (LNY) Get Together High Tea was held on 15 February, by the International Students Committee (ISC) supported by the Parents School Partners (PSP) and Holland Village Methodist Church (HVMC). All international students, especially the new students who joined us this year were invited, and it was an opportunity for us to bond together. The Year 5 International Students Committee (ISC) members led students from different year groups in exciting icebreaker games. Delicious food was also provided, ranging from sushi to cakes. Although it was a short session, we had a great time eating and conversing, and we look forward to more opportunities for us to come together again.

*Haruna Imayoshi (5 GHK)
ISC Committee member*

“It was interesting to meet the other international students and playing games to get to know one another was very fun. The food was also very delicious. I look forward to next year’s LNY gathering for international students.”

Jenny Kennedy (2 CKS)



Inter-House Aesthetic Competition

We all had a great time taking part in the Inter-House Lunar New Year Dragon Competition. It involved the largest number of participants from the Houses, and when staff walk around campus, students were hiding their dragon heads and bodies so that each entry is a beautiful surprise to the school.

Thanks to our judges from the PSP, HVMC and the alumni, we have our three winning teams from both the Junior and Middle Division, and the event culminates during the LNY Celebration on 7 Feb, when the six winning dragons move dramatically into the sports hall, with the audience busy snapping photos as they walk past.

Winning Teams:

Middle Division

First Place: TKK
Second Place: LSG
Third Place: SVM

Junior Division

First Place: OLD
Second Place: TKK
Third Place: LSG

This year, TKK students from the Junior and Middle divisions, with the help from the Year 5 students, made two dragons using entirely repurposed materials to welcome the Year of the Dragon. Over two weeks, students devoted their time after school to craft the dragons. The leadership exhibited by the Year 5 students was commendable, as they not only led the project but also provided invaluable support in planning, crafting the dragon, choreography, and filming of their fellow students.

Personally, I loved the creativity from the Junior division: they employed the “papier-mâché” technique using recycled newspapers to make a blue dragon head, representing the colour of TKK. This dedication to sustainable practices demonstrated creativity and reflected our commitment to being environmentally conscious. Meanwhile, our Middle division entry included the TKK griffin in their dragon dance, proudly showing our house spirit to everyone. Getting 1st place was not easy. Without the support and collaboration of everyone involved, this would not have been possible. We are proud of each and every one of you! Let’s keep up the good work, TKK!

Zhang Hanyi (6TKK)



The Inter-House Dragon Dance Competition 2024 was full of excitement. I felt a great sense of achievement, especially because Oldham won first place in the Junior division! It was tiring to stay back every day and to lead a large group of students to make a 3-meter-long dragon in two weeks. Planning and gathering materials over the holidays was stressful. However, despite all the challenges that the volunteers and I faced, it was very rewarding when Oldham won first place! It was indeed the most rewarding moment during my life in ACS. As this was the first competition of 2024, it gave everyone a sense of motivation to excel in upcoming competitions too.

When I look back at the journey, everyone who signed up for the competition worked tirelessly to craft the dragon, showing their enthusiasm and commitment to the house. Well done, Oldham!

Lee Yeseo (5 OLD)

Combined GHK and OLD House Camp

On 2 February, students from GHK and Oldham Houses had a combined House Camp. We put our heads together to plan a programme for 273 students, and were ambitious in our attempt to set up 10 stations for the 30 groups of students to play in. At each station, scores were recorded so we could give out prizes to the winning team. There was a lightning alert during the early part of the camp, so we had to use the wet weather plan. Fortunately, towards the evening, the sky cleared so we could have some crazy fun with the water.

A big thank you to Sanjita and Youngjune for leading the team, and a shoutout to Kelly, Yejoo, Yutika, Audrey, Yeseo, Natasha, Sara and Yun Yu for leading the camp. Competition and collaboration went hand in hand at this year's Oldham and GHK House Camp. Over the flame of rivalry, as 10 groups from 2 Houses competed for the top spots, new friendships and alliances were forged. Preparations began three months prior to the event. An event of this scale required a team of capable Year 5 students. We, the House Captains of GHK and Oldham supervised them. Through late-night meetings and last-minute changes, we persevered, conquered, and learned. There was no set way to manage the organisation of the event, as we had to observe and adapt to the needs of the core team of Year 5 students who organised the event. We quickly realised that these Year 5 students had to realise their shortcomings by themselves in order to effectively fix them, so instead of outrightly saying what we felt was wrong, we discussed how to approach them among ourselves, and helped them explore opposing perspectives. We acted as liaisons between our Heads of House and the core planning team; guiding the team to follow their suggestions and deadlines. We were well into our journey as school prefects, and we had to step back from being in the thick of events and instead had to manage and guide. Our new roles marked the threshold of a new level of leadership that we experienced. They say the best lessons come from our mistakes, and the biggest lesson we learnt was that even capable teams require a reasonable level of control from their managers. While we tried to step back and allow them to grow and learn by themselves, the pre-House camp joint House assembly revealed some faults in our groupings that could have been avoidable had we kept a closer eye on them and finalised it earlier. We learnt to remain vigilant in our supervision as well as the importance of holding dry runs before the main event. The dry run, held on the Saturday before the event, was attended by 60 volunteers from Year 4 and Year 5 in GHK and Oldham Houses. They ran through all the games and timings, and provided feedback to our core team. Faults in specific games were addressed and guidance from the core team to the volunteers was relayed. The jovial and jesting atmosphere created by the volunteers during the dry run foreshadowed what they brought to the actual event. As House Captains, we made our rounds to each of the teams and games being played to observe how all our leaders worked and to participate in some games ourselves. The combined House camp ran smoothly. The volunteers knew what to do. The smaller group leader-to-participant ratio made handling the groups much easier.

As Year 6 students, this was our last House camp before we graduated. Despite the several buckets of water that were poured on us throughout the evening, and the late night we had cleaning up afterwards, we all agreed that the joint camp was a good choice. The House Captains spent several nights and one Saturday with a team of volunteers who were as passionate about making the camp a success as we were. It could be definitively said that the Yellow (GHK) and Red (OLD) Houses made for a surprisingly good pair.

Sanjita Parashar (6 GHK) & Heo Youngjune (6 OLD)
House Captains of GHK & Oldham



Coffee Morning with the Principal

Do you sometimes wonder why we do what we do as parents? We research the most suitable school for our children, navigate subjects they might excel in and encourage them to have good friendships where they can support each other. What ignites us to do so much for our children, if not for our love and desire to give them a good future?

Coffee Morning with the Principal 2024 offered a glimpse of our desire and dedication to open doors of opportunity for our children. Held on 30 Jan 2024 at ACS (International) Oldham Chapel, 270 parents of all year levels attended the event, either in person or online. We welcomed what the Principal and Vice Principals shared to develop our children holistically. Before the talk, the church foyer was buzzing with parents catching up and meeting new friends while having a sip of coffee or tea. It was a chance to meet new parents as well, with many Year 1 parents joining the event. Sales of second-hand books, pre-loved blazers and CNY red packets added to the liveliness of the scene. Parents also appreciated the door gifts such as bucket hats and umbrellas that each had the school logo.

We started the event with a prayer, with Rev Jeremy Ong, Pastor-in-Charge of Holland Village Methodist Church, blessing the event. Parent Support Partners (PSP) co-chair Erica Hugh welcomed and invited new and existing parents to be active in PSP, that hosts monthly activities to engage parents and support the school. Parents Prayer Group (PPG) Chair Christina Kokadir also invited parents to be part of the praying community who meet in school every first Thursday of the month to pray for our children and families.

ACS (International) Principal Mr Gavin Kinch warmly welcomed the parents to the new year. His emphasis on open and accessible communication between parents and teachers through e-mails encourages parents to partner with the school in our children's learning. He also gave impressive good news, like some students getting into Cambridge this year and a sample of students who did well in IB with the right attitude, despite less than stellar PSLE results. Beyond results, our children benefited from IGNITE values instilled throughout their stay at ACS (International).

The event had a lively Q&A session, and there were key takeaways and a commitment to stay on course, be hopeful and continue striving. We are thankful to parents for taking the time to participate and mingle with likeminded parents who want the best for our children, as evident in the following quotes:

'I always love the gathering of parents. It's in such environment we share, we learn and support each other as our child journey in ACS (International).' – Year 1 Parent Ivan Loh

'My husband and I are very glad to have chosen ACS (International) for our grandson. We are also very grateful for the support everyone has given him in this school, and he has blossomed in myriad ways.' – Year 4 Guardian Wai San Kok

Cherry Bodestyne Siow
PSP Secretary



Combined ACS Schools Prayer Meeting

The Combined ACS Schools Prayer Meeting on 16 Feb 2024 at ACS (International) marked the first gathering of the year, drawing nearly 60 parents to our school for a time of worship, prayer, and fellowship. This event united the ACS family in prayer and celebration. Witnessing parents from various ACS institutions—ACS Primary, ACS Junior, Barker, Independent, and ACJC— coming together was truly heart-warming, evoking a sense of reunion among old friends. Setting the tone for the meeting, we commenced with the song "Welcome to the Family."

In attendance were the ACS (International) Principal, Mr Gavin Kinch, as well as Vice Principals Mr Christopher Hayward and Dr Kris Achter. Mr. Kinch delivered an enlightening presentation on ACS's rich history, tracing its origins back to 1886 at 70 Amoy Street under the stewardship of missionary Bishop William Fitzjames Oldham. He underscored the importance of instilling a profound compassion for humanity in every student, echoing the values championed by Bishop Oldham.

Led by Mr. Mario Singh, a parent from ACS (International), we joined in prayer for the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and healthy relationships between teachers and students. It served as a reminder of our collective responsibility to nurture an environment of life, joy, and peace across all ACS schools. Indeed, the partnership between school leadership and ACS parents is invaluable in shaping the holistic development of our children.

Rev Jeremy Ong, the school chaplain from Holland Village Methodist Church (HVMC), urged us to draw strength from Psalm 25 amidst life's uncertainties and trust in God's truth to guide our path forward. With ACS Primary's upcoming relocation to Tengah, Mr. Kinch humorously dubbed this journey "The West is Yet to Be!", reminiscent of Bishop Oldham's pioneering spirit. Let us, like him, move forward in trust and faith, seeking God's heart as we continue our educational mission.

Join us in our next prayer meeting on 7 March 2024 for a Prayer Walk around the school compound. See you there!

Joy Sim, Priscilla Han, and Christina Kokadir PSP



Pastoral Care and Counselling at ACS (International)

Dear Parents and Guardians,

At ACS (International), we are committed to fostering an environment where every student can thrive both inside and outside the classroom. Recognizing the unique challenges faced during the teen years, we have dedicated resources to ensure a robust support system for all our students. This article aims to provide you with an overview of Pastoral Care at our school and highlight how our school counsellors support students during their time at ACS International.

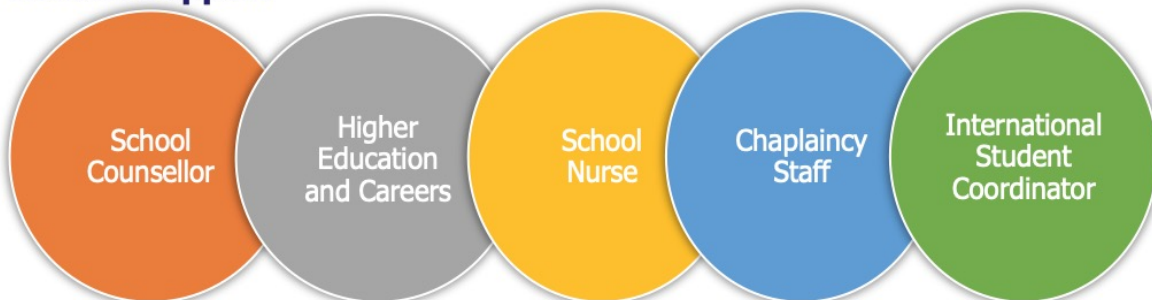
Pastoral Care

Pastoral care at our school is designed to provide comprehensive care that extends beyond academic guidance. This includes a dedicated pastoral team that offers emotional and social support, ensuring that each student feels valued, understood, and connected within our school community. Our pastoral care staff are trained to identify and address various student needs, ranging from personal counselling and mentorship to conflict resolution and peer mediation. Students will have regular one-to-one check-ins with their house tutors. Other staff on the pastoral care team may also be engaged to provide further support if necessary.

Care Structure



Holistic Support



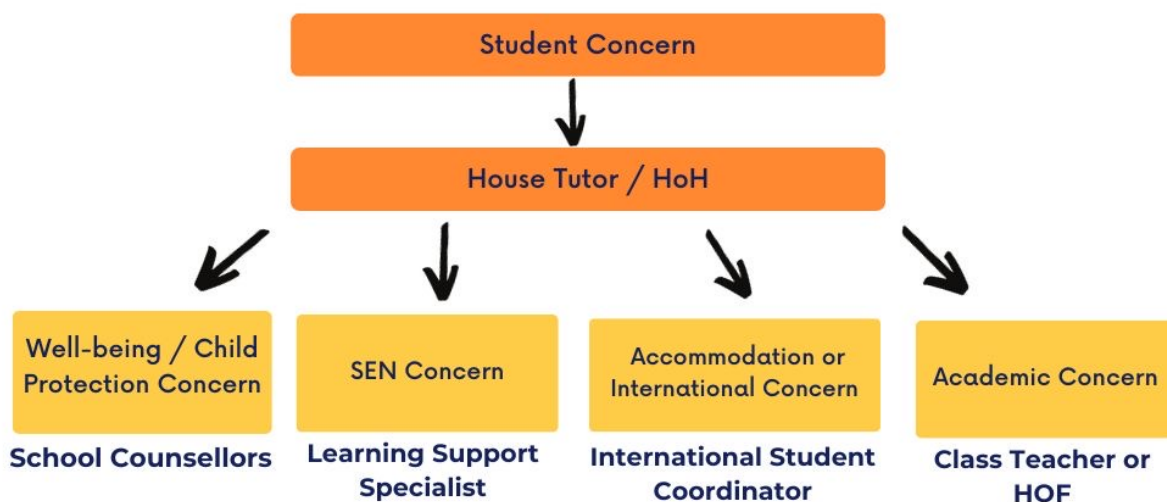
Referral Process

Parents may contact their child/ward's House Tutor when there is a concern. The House Tutor will then refer the student to the appropriate pastoral care staff.

Examples of concerns handled by the Pastoral Care staff are highlighted below:

- School Counsellor: Peer conflict, family conflict, academic motivation, test/performance anxiety, social anxiety, low mood/depression, school avoidance and other socio-emotional issues.
- Learning Support Specialist: Learning differences, classroom strategies, academic support, referrals for educational evaluation/testing (Note: To maintain quality of care, our Learning Support Specialists work exclusively with students who have been formally diagnosed)
- International Student Coordinators: Housing and accommodation, guardian support and communication, international travel
- Class Teacher / Head of Faculty (HOF): Academic concerns, subject-specific questions

Referral Process



School Counselling Services

Our counselling services are designed to be comprehensive and accessible to all students. Here's an overview of what we offer:

1. Individual Counselling
 - Personalized Support: Tailored sessions to address individual student needs, including personal growth, emotional challenges, and academic concerns.
 - Confidentiality and Trust: A safe and confidential space for students to express themselves and seek guidance.
2. Group Counselling
 - Common Interest Groups: Sessions focused on relevant topics such as coping with transitions, dealing with peer pressure, managing anxiety, and building self-esteem.
 - Skill Development: Sessions aimed at developing specific skills like stress management, study habits, and social skills.
3. Crisis Intervention
 - Immediate Assistance: Support for students facing urgent emotional distress or crisis situations.
 - Post-Crisis Support: Ongoing counselling and resources to ensure long-term well-being and adjustment at school.
4. Family Involvement
 - Parent Consultation: Sessions with family members to learn more about the broader issues affecting the student's well-being.
 - Parental Guidance: Workshops and small groups providing parents with strategies and insights to support their child's emotional and academic journey.
5. Referral Services
 - External Resources: Referrals to external professionals are provided for specialized support or evaluations.
 - Collaboration with External Support Providers: Working closely with external therapists/clinicians to coordinate interventions and provide comprehensive support for the student.

We hope you have found the information in this article helpful. Should you wish to learn more about our counselling services or discuss specific concerns about your child, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Charlina Gozali (Year 1, 2, and 3)
charlina.gozali@acsinternational.edu.sg

Dorothea Yeo (Year 4, 5, and 6)
Dorothea.yeo@acsinternational.edu.sg

The School Counsellors

UPCOMING EVENTS

February	Event
26 – 27	AEP (Years 4, 5 and 6)
26 & 27	Year 4 IGCSE Mandarin Speaking Test
March	Event
1	Founder's Day & ACSpirit De Corps
4	Year 6 IB Hindi B IO
5	Year 6 HE Talk
11 – 17	School Holidays
26 – 28	Religious Emphasis Week
29	Good Friday





ACS (International) Singapore is a distinctive international secondary school open to all Singaporeans & other nationalities, offering an all-round English-based education for students aged 12 to 18 years leading to the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) and the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP).

Senior Leadership Team



Mr Gavin Kinch
Principal



Mrs Tan Siew Hoon
Vice-Principal



Mr Christopher Hayward
Vice-Principal



Dr Kristopher Achter
Vice-Principal

Information Sessions

Session 1	9am – 11am
Session 2	11am – 1pm

**Oldham Chapel,
ACS (International)**
*61 Jalan Hitam Manis,
Singapore 278475*

Visitors only need to attend one session

*For more information,
please contact
Joseph Ng or Serene Lim
at +65 6472 1477 or
admissions@acsinternational.edu.sg*

Attendance by reservations only