



ACS (INTERNATIONAL) NEWSLETTER

IN THIS ISSUE

Dear Students, Parents and Friends,

Celebrating 20 Years of ACS (International)

As ACS (International) marks its 20th anniversary, we reflect on a journey shaped by vision, tenacity, and a commitment to excellence. From its founding in 2005, the school set out to offer an international education rooted in strong values, blending academic achievement with character development. Two decades on, that mission remains steadfast, and the ACS (International) community continues to thrive, embracing change while staying true to its Methodist heritage.

Academic excellence combined with holistic development in a Christian context has been the cornerstone of this journey. Our students have consistently demonstrated outstanding results in the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme, earning places at some of the world's top universities. But beyond grades and accolades, ACS (International) has sought to cultivate thinkers, innovators, and leaders, individuals who not only excel in their fields but also approach the world with integrity, purpose and a compassion for humanity. Education here extends beyond the classroom, challenging students to grow intellectually, socially, and morally.

Equally important has been our dedication to service, both locally and globally. ACS (International) has always believed in learning through action, and over the years, our students have engaged in meaningful projects that have left a lasting impact. Whether supporting vulnerable communities in Singapore, contributing to the development of regional charities, or championing sustainability initiatives, our school has fostered a spirit of responsibility and care. These experiences shape our students into citizens of the world, aware of their privileges, mindful of their responsibilities, and equipped to make a difference.

The support of our Methodist family has been integral to this journey. Our partnership with Holland Village Methodist Church and other Methodist organisations has provided spiritual guidance and a moral foundation that strengthens the school's sense of purpose. Through this connection, students are encouraged to lead with humility, serve with generosity, and remain grounded in values that will guide them beyond their years at ACS (International).

As we celebrate this milestone, we look forward with a renewed sense of purpose and excitement for the future. The past twenty years have shaped a school that values excellence, service, and character, and we remain committed to building on this strong foundation. The world is evolving, and ACS (International) will continue to innovate, adapt, and inspire future generations of students to be thoughtful leaders and compassionate global citizens.

To our students, staff, parents, alumni, and community partners, thank you for being part of this journey. Your dedication, passion, and belief in our mission has made ACS (International) what it is today. As we look ahead, we do so with gratitude for the past and excitement for what is yet to come.

Happy 20th Anniversary, ACS (International)! The Best Is Yet To Be!

Gavin Kinch
Principal

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Orientation

On 3 January 2025, ACS (International) welcomed 230 new students with an exciting Orientation. This memorable day marked the start of a new chapter in their lives, and the 20th Student Council was honoured to be a part of their initiation to the school.

Our theme, Galactic Wars, encouraged teamwork and collaboration among the orientees, with a day filled with fun games and activities. The day kicked off with an electric atmosphere in the chapel, with a briefing and introduction to the new students. The new students then split up into their Orientation Groups (OGs) and got to know each other by playing engaging icebreakers like H2O and Double Whacko. Each Orientation Group was led by three hardworking and energetic Orientation Group leaders. Together, they made their way through the line-up of games ranging from, Red Light Green Light in the chapel to Force Cup Lazer Maze in the canteen. There was cheerful buzz all over the school as the OGs moved on to play their first mass game, the Scavenger Hunt. The afternoon was filled with laughter as the new students bonded over an array of wet and dry games. From Hungry Hippo, Capture the Holocron, and our ACS (International) tradition of Soapy Bench, everyone worked together to help their team come out first in the game.

The Orientation ended with a welcome speech from the Principal, Mr Gavin Kinch and prayer led by Church Ministry Staff Aaron Ho. The grand finale was a vibrant celebration, accompanied by individual group cheer performances that resonated with the excitement as the new students bonded with their new friends. The students presented their dance to the song "We're All In This Together," highlighting the friends made throughout the day. We are very grateful for everyone's unwavering support throughout the event and wish all new students all the best as they begin a new chapter of their lives here at ACS (International)!

Saloni Sinha (6 SVM)



Inter-House Chinese New Year Decoration Competition

This year, the 8 Houses celebrated Lunar New Year with a twist. We took part in a competition that does not carry any house point, and yet, every single tutor group gave their best.

The winners were
 Year 6: LSG
 Year 5: Thoburn
 Year 4: Oldham
 Year 3: GHK
 Year 2: CKS
 Year 1: CKS

Looking back, this competition was one of the most enjoyable experiences I've had as the aesthetics representative. The challenge of deciphering the hint made the event even more exciting, and I was thrilled when my guess about Snakes and Ladders turned out to be correct. Seeing my classmates come together, collaborating with more enthusiasm than ever, was truly inspiring. Despite our best efforts, we didn't win—but that's what made it a great learning experience. Competition isn't just about victory; it's about creativity, teamwork, and having fun. In the end, I congratulated my good friend from GHK, knowing that such friendly events are to pull houses to be closer together. True joy does not come just from winning but enjoying the moments of working towards it.

Eliot Smith (3 LSG)

Thinking back on the Lunar New Year board competition, we recall our tutor group coming together as one, all ready to contribute to the board making. We delegated tasks, with some making origami oranges, and others sticking things onto the board. We had lots of fun planning for the competition as we really enjoy doing crafts and hands-on activities. It was a great experience that tested our creativity and our artistic abilities, and it felt amazing to win after all the work we had put into planning and actually creating the board. We are thankful to Ms Nadiah Karina and Mr Teo Tee Wei for helping our tutor group brainstorm some ideas for the competition, and Mrs Kerry Lakhani for overseeing 5 Thoburn's board making on the competition day itself. Lastly, we are thankful to the rest of our tutor group who enthusiastically contributed to the board and helped to put it together. We look forward to next year's competition.

Amanda Lim & Kylda Tan (5 THO)

Being part of the organising committee for the Inter-House Lunar New Year Decoration Competition 2025 was a rewarding experience that allowed me to develop crucial skills such as event planning, teamwork, and leadership. With the rest of the committee, I was involved in managing the event, setting the judging criteria, ensuring smooth communication, and overseeing various other aspects to ensure the event's success.

I am deeply grateful to Yan Sek, Marek, and Kenneth for being part of the organising committee and for their dedication and hard work. Their commitment and teamwork were crucial in bringing the event to life, and I truly appreciated the opportunity to work alongside them.

One of the most rewarding parts of this experience was witnessing the creativity and enthusiasm each house showcased through their decorations. It was fulfilling to see how our competition fostered house spirit and cultural appreciation within our school community.

Devang Ranjith Menon (5 OLD)



Reflections on Visit to Chinatown

Before Chinese New Year (CNY), the students learning Chinese as a foreign language had the opportunity to go to Chinatown. During this time, we were able to try the delicious Chinese delicacies and to interview people who were shopping and selling goods in Chinatown. Through this activity, we found out the reasons that they went to Chinatown and the unique aspects of the area. Overall, it was an extremely interesting and thoughtful experience that helped us get insight into CNY."

Jacob Christopher Budiman (4 SVM)

During our trip to Chinatown, we completed tasks from our worksheet while immersing ourselves in the Chinese culture. One highlight was interacting with vendors, where we practiced Mandarin phrases such as 这是什么? (What is this?) and 这个多少钱? (How much is this?). These conversations improved our speaking skills and helped us understand the culture there. Another task was trying traditional foods, such as dumplings (饺子) and rice cakes (年糕), while learning about their cultural significance. Dumplings symbolise wealth, and rice cakes represent progress.

We also noted and studied Chinese couplets such as "恭喜发财" (Wishing you wealth and prosperity) and "年年有余" (Wishing you abundance every year). The trip gave us a deeper appreciation of the Chinese culture!

Nathan Alexandro Tjhe (5 SVM)

On 22 January, the Year 1 G2 Chinese class went on an exciting field trip to Chinatown, an area rich in culture and history. The Chinese department organised this outing to enhance our understanding of Chinese traditions and gave us engaging assignments to complete. During our visit, we explored various stores that offered decorations for Chinese New Year, including inverted Fu posters, couplets, and Chinese knots. We also visited unique shops that sold traditional Chinese foods, each with its own cultural significance. One example of a food we encountered was "年糕", which translates to "year cake" or "sticky cake."

Our task was to explore Chinatown to learn more about Chinese New Year culture. We had to find three examples of Chinese foods and understand their cultural significance. While we were in the decoration shops, we had to find examples of Chinese New Year couplet phrases and their meanings. Additionally, we were required to use a polite greeting in Chinese to interact with a vendor. We also needed to find a lucky charm or item and explain why it was considered lucky. Lastly, we had to try a snack or drink that was connected to Chinese New Year traditions."

Celyne Beverly Khiezt (1 OLD)



Chinese Calligraphy Activities

Chinese Calligraphy is an art form that combines visual arts and the interpretation of literary meaning. Hence it is intriguing when Mr Pan teaches the students many different ways of writing the word snake in Chinese characters. He explains how these differences reflect different styles and periods.

On 4 February 2025, the IGCSE Chinese Second Language and Chinese Foreign Language classes attended a special Calligraphy lesson in celebration of Chinese New Year. The calligraphy teacher Mr Pan demonstrated how to write the characters which evolves around the theme of the Year of the Snake. In addition, Mr Pan also taught us how to write our Chinese names in proper stroke sequences. Eventually all of us managed to write out something, be it a New Year blessing or writing the word Snake in Chinese character. We found the lessons very different and interesting, with many practice sessions. We also learnt more about Chinese New Year culture from the lesson.

Wong Wei Jie (3 OLD) and Choi Seongwon (3 GHK)

Taking a Chinese calligraphy class was an eye-opening experience. I learnt that it's not just about writing characters but about mastering brush strokes with patience and precision. At first, it was difficult to control the brush, but with practice, I began to appreciate the beauty and meaning behind each stroke. The class deepened my understanding of Chinese culture.

For example when trying to write a Chinese calligraphy character you have to apply just the right amount of pressure to not waste the ink and destroy the paper. The difficulty is also heightened by the fact that Chinese calligraphy emphasises fluidity and balance, and each stroke's thickness, curvature, and spacing must be carefully controlled. Even small variations can change the aesthetics of the character."

Wu Yi Jia (3 TKK)



Lunar New Year High Tea

On 5 February, the International Student Committee (ISC) and the Parent School Partners (PSP) collaborated to organise the annual Chinese New Year High Tea for international students. The fun-filled occasion included fantastic bonding games, delicious traditional snacks, and even hongbaos filled with chocolate coins. To wrap up the celebration, everyone took part in Lo Hei—a lively prosperity toss that symbolises a year of good fortune ahead! This event was the perfect opportunity for new international students to get accustomed to form friendships and get accustomed to their environment. See you at next year’s Lunar New Year High Tea!

Jayden Christian Budiman (5 SVM)



Student Reflections on Chinese New Year Celebrations

On 24 January, we celebrated Chinese New Year with performances prepared by students from around the world. From Chinese students' singing, catwalk by 2 SVM, and the captivating performance of ACJeans, it was truly heart-warming to see students collaborating to produce a successful performance that has paid off their hard work and dedication. My team comprised Year 4 to Year 6 Korean students, performing Daechwita (대취타) and Fighting (파이팅 해야지). Daechwita (대취타) showcased the traditional Korean culture especially by incorporating the traditional Korean instrument "Kkwaenggwari (꽹과리)" in the performance, and Fighting (파이팅 해야지) was an upbeat piece that motivated and energised the students. With the help of Ms Oh Eun Jeong, we produced a satisfactory performance. As most of us were not familiar with dancing, we had to practise hard to learn the choreography. Since October 2024, we dedicated time to learn the dance and to find ways to improve the performance. Year 4 and Year 5 students even met in Korea during the winter holidays to practice and finalise their choreography. We took videos of each practice and watched them to find out where we needed to improve. With the help of the teachers, seniors, and our groupmates' reflections, we overcame the challenges and even formed teamwork within and outside of our year groups. We would also like to thank the students and teachers who were highly engaged and cheered for us during the performance. Happy Chinese New Year, ACS!"

Lee Yeseo (6 OLD)

This year, the Chinese New Year Celebration fell on 24 January, leaving us with less than three weeks to prepare. In every sense, we surpassed ourselves and brought to the audience our best performance. I would like to specially mention Crystal Huang who composed and performed her song at the finale, the Chinese Calligraphy CCA for their out of comfort zone performance and the string instruments for their collaboration. I'm proud of how the 2025 LNY celebration has concluded brilliantly! This year, I was once again part of the event, along with Crystal, Yulwon and Nathan, as the emcees for the celebration. Since this is our second year working together, rapport and trust had been built and we could work together more efficiently. Although the preparations and rehearsals were tiring, we put in our hundred percent effort to ensure a high quality performance. Hearing the cheers in the Sports Hall, I'm confident that all the performers had been acknowledged. The spectators were enjoying the show below the stage, while we were enjoying ourselves onstage! Many refreshing and talented skills were demonstrated, such as "Bian Lian", which I played Guzheng as an accompaniment for the students, it was eye-opening!

When I finished my last line on stage, the applause that came from the audience brought affirmation. I appreciate every single person, teacher, student, and the others who have put forth their best effort into this celebration."

Lo Cheuk Chun (4 THO)



Yuan Xiao Festival

The Yuan Xiao Festival falls on the 15th day of the Chinese New Year, and it is a day to eat yuan xiao, or more commonly known in Singapore as tang yuan. These are round glutinous balls that have been manufactured and are available in supermarkets throughout the year, although in older days, we used to make them at home. It is not difficult to make at all, but requires patience and perhaps some tender loving kindness to roll them into perfect round shapes! The Chinese believes in eating the tang yuan in even numbers and this will bring good luck and unity within the family.

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The tangyuan making session was a very enriching and enjoyable experience. Beyond just learning how to prepare this traditional delicacy, we gained insight into the skill and precision required in the process. Some tang yuan were perfectly made, while some others did not turn out well as the filling was not rolled properly. Furthermore, my group worked together to make our dumplings as quickly as possible. Besides being a cultural lesson, the experience also strengthened the friendships within our class.

Cheang Liam (5 OLD)

Making tang yuan for the first time was truly an eye-opening experience. Every Chinese New Year, my family would gather to enjoy this traditional treat, but I had never given much thought to the process of making it. From kneading the dough to carefully rolling tiny balls, I soon realised that preparing this well-known dessert is far more involved than I had imagined. The balance of water, the texture of the dough, and the precise size of each ball all play a crucial role in achieving the perfect tang yuan. I discovered that patience and consistency are key — ensuring each ball is the same size and rolling them into smooth, uniform shapes. As I carefully made each ball, I began to appreciate the skill and attention to detail that went into preparing this beloved treat. Finally, when the tang yuan was ready to eat, it was incredibly satisfying to taste the result of all the hard work. This experience not only deepened my understanding of Chinese culture but also gave me a greater appreciation for the effort and tradition behind making tang yuan, making it all the more special to enjoy with my friends and family.

Meredith Tan (5 GHK)



Thoburn and Oldham House Camp

The 2025 Oldham X Thoburn House camp collaboration that took place on 14 February was a truly fruitful event. Planning started early in 2025, and we could feel the weight on our shoulders. I was thrilled to be chosen as a main organiser. For the past 4 years, I always looked forward to House Camp with excitement and anticipation. Hence, my hope is to instil that same notion into the hearts of every Oldham and Thoburn student. The planning process was vigorous, yet gritty at times. Initial meetings were awkward, with the eight of us being unfamiliar with one another. But over time, the ice began to break, as warmth and cohesion among us began to develop. The one constant amongst the planning process was a lot of meetings. Lunches and Tuesdays of sleeping in had to be sacrificed, but such was the cost of our duty.

On the actual day, our powers of improvisation were tested. Halfway through the schedule, the lightning alert had gone off, to our dismay. Our hands were forced, and several months of planning had seemingly gone out the window. However, we still had a few tricks up our sleeves, and the end product was an astounding success. If diamonds are made under pressure, then this House Camp might just be a ruby.

Seeing our hard work pay off was a fulfilling experience. Organising this House Camp equipped me with skills I will carry into every project I do in the future; it has introduced me to new friends, and provided me with countless cherished memories.

Chan Yan Sek (5 THO)

The Oldham X Thoburn House Camp was planned extensively by Ernie, Yan Sek, Pasquale, Devang, Amanda, Kazuki, Kevin and I. We hoped to bring the houses closer together through the House camp, and to help Students form bonds that will last even after the camp.

During the house camp, Students had the opportunity to play a variety of new and fun games we prepared, such as Human Caterpillar, Ring of Fire, Project Picasso and so on. Because of the scale of the event, there were times when confusion arises, and we had to run back and forth to maintain coordination with the game masters and group leaders. Displaying good problem solving and thinking skills help us overcome such roadblocks. We had the opportunity to have a fun, mass Just Dance where even the teachers joined! And to wrap it all up, we had the opportunity to enjoy ourselves together with the house camp participants, to play with water balloons and water guns, which gave us a splashing good time.

Least to say, it was a blast; an opportunity for the organisers to grow in, and a wonderful house camp.

Cally Riola Gozal (5 OLD)

The house camp was good, with the games very organised and well-prepared. I liked Moving Caterpillars which involved passing chairs as we moved forward. After the games, I was totally exhausted but we played on with the water balloons that I have helped to fill up during lunch break. It was very satisfying when the balloons burst as it hits my opponent. And the pizza was exactly what I wanted. I hope there are a lot of activities coming up that involve Houses.

Jung Eunho (1 OLD)

We began the House camp with some amazing games such as Blind Chicken, Whacky Pool Noodle and Broken Telephone. My favourites was Blind Chicken! This game can get very chaotic but my partner and I strived through and communicated well, which led to our group earning a lot of points from this. After the games at game stations ended, all the groups gathered at the Sports Hall to do Just Dance. We sang and danced along and I had the time of my life. We had our wet games scheduled and I had so much fun. This was my favourite activity throughout the day, as everyone was splashing each other and throwing water balloons, with some mini games included. My friends and I were dousing each other with water.

It was finally dinner time, after getting wet and running around I was really hungry. For dinner we got pizza with a lot of different options as well as drinks. Everyone started to eat food and sit around with their friends and they all started sharing their experience about house camp. At the end, we all were given keychains with both Thoburn and Oldham emblems and my group had won the most points so we got big bottles of popcorns which tasted really good. Overall, I really liked house camp this year and I hope next year it will be just as fun.

Parmar Vihana Niraj (2 THO)



TKK Support of Refugee Learning Nest

TKK's charity project focused on refugee awareness and support, specifically Refugee Learning Nest (RLN): an Indonesian-based refugee learning centre for asylum seekers and refugee students from around the world, from ages 6 to 18. We wanted to develop a project that engaged our school in a range of community activities that were both fun and also raised awareness – helping to foster greater international mindedness within our community. Our wide-ranging activities aimed to reach a large target audience through sports, the arts, cinema and food.

We began with an interactive mural in the Student Centre where students painted paper plates or wrote messages of solidarity. With the large contributions of plate decorations, a patterned sea of blue was created to replicate the oceans that refugees often journey on. As one of the juniors overseeing the activity, it was especially heart-warming to see the Year 1 and Year 2s enthusiastically express themselves through art. It reminded me how even small actions can unite many in the quest for a greater cause. We also organised a bubble tea sale kindly sponsored by Holland Village Methodist Church, a lunchtime basketball tournament for seniors, and an after-school film screening as fundraising initiatives, with all proceeds going to The Refugee Learning Nest.

TKK successfully raised funds and heightened student awareness, inspiring individuals to reflect on the struggles faced by refugees and encouraging greater community involvement.



These charity events reminded us that small efforts added together can make a real difference. Thank you to everyone who participated and/or contributed to make this initiative a success!

Simran Rakesh (3 TKK)

TKK House Camp 2025

The TKK House Camp, held on February 15, was an exciting and well-organised event for students from Year 1 to Year 5. The camp aimed to foster teamwork, leadership, and house spirit through a variety of engaging activities. Participants enjoyed physical and mental challenges, including wet and dry games such as Captain's Ball and Slip and Slide Bowling, as well as an amazing Escape Room inspired by our House tutors, all washed down with delicious food from Shake Shack. The event was well planned, with budget-conscious decisions ensuring high-quality activities without overspending. Organizing the camp came with challenges, particularly in keeping students engaged and ensuring smooth transitions. One issue was the distance of certain games from the main activity area. To maintain enthusiasm, modifications were introduced, such as adding water-based elements and friendly competition. Despite these challenges, seeing the younger students excited and actively participating made all the effort worthwhile. The camp provided valuable lessons in leadership, communication, and teamwork. The organisers learnt how to manage large groups, clearly explain games, and make real-time adjustments to improve engagement. Through this experience, participants honed their problem-solving skills, learned to accommodate different perspectives, and developed resilience under pressure.

The TKK House Camp was a resounding success, strengthening bonds among students and reinforcing the importance of collaboration. The event demonstrated the value of determination, adaptability, and teamwork in executing large-scale activities. A heartfelt thank-you to everyone involved in making the camp a memorable experience. The lessons learned will serve as a foundation for even better events in the future.

Jay Choi, Choi Yangchae, Yugo Endo, Jaden Kaiser, Asher Ong, Alex Tay and Rian Umeno (5 TKK)



Artistry CCA's Trip to Sebastião Salgado: AMAZÔNIA at National Museum of Singapore

The Artistry CCA consists of a group of art enthusiasts who are always looking for new perspectives and fresh inspiration. As the nation's oldest museum, the National Museum of Singapore has hosted many premier exhibitions from around the world, and Sebastião Salgado's was no exception. On 11 February 2025, the Artistry CCA visited the National Museum of Singapore to experience "Sebastião Salgado: AMAZÔNIA".

Three isolated photographs of individuals from the Yanomami tribe, dressed in traditional attire and adorned with face paint, lined the approach to the exhibition. Shot in Salgado's signature high-contrast black and white, these images immediately established a tone of intimacy and grandeur. Entering the exhibition, we were enveloped by a compelling score by acclaimed French electronic music pioneer Jean-Michel Jarre. Composed specifically for this exhibition, the score incorporated recordings made in the Amazon rainforest: birdsong, the patter of rain, the rhythms of traditional dance, all interwoven with electronic sounds and orchestral music performed by the Philharmonie de Paris. This soundscape served as a subtle yet omnipresent guide, perfectly complementing the 200 photographs that form the heart of AMAZÔNIA.

Displayed in a semi-dark gallery, with the only illumination emanating from the photographs themselves, the 200 large-format prints, curated by Salgado's wife, Lélia Wanick Salgado, appeared luminous, as though lit by shafts of light piercing the forest canopy. This presentation further immersed us in the experience, creating a breath-taking effect that drew us into Salgado's nine-year voyage through the Amazon, capturing the majesty and raw power of the world's largest rainforest. The exhibition's layout mimicked a journey deep into the jungle. Threading our way around photographs suspended at varying heights, we eventually arrived at models of Ocas (traditional indigenous housing). Along our journey, we were confronted with serpentine rivers winding through seemingly endless forests, sheer-sided rock escarpments disappearing into the clouds, apocalyptic cloud formations looming over delicate treetops, and the "Flying Rivers"—the unique phenomenon of rising water vapor forming streams of moisture larger than the Amazon River itself. The journey was punctuated by two projection rooms. One showcased scenes of the forest accompanied by the symphonic poem "Erosão; Amazônas; Dawn in a Tropical Forest" by Brazilian composer Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887–1959). The other displayed portraits of Indigenous inhabitants, with music composed specifically for the exhibition by Brazilian musician Rodolfo Stroeter.

Finally, we reached the Ocas, which represented the second major component of the exhibition. Here, Salgado documented, photographed, and interviewed leaders of more than 10 tribes within the Amazon. This section celebrated the indigenous people, presenting intimate portraits and vivid images of their daily life, alongside films where tribal leaders shared the challenges they faced.

Expansive, monumental, yet intimate in scope, AMAZÔNIA captures a diverse landscape that is home to one-tenth of the planet's known flora and fauna species, inhabited by approximately 310,000 indigenous people representing 169 distinct ethnic groups and speaking at least 130 different languages. This exhibition is a testament to Salgado's dedication to stirring the imagination and evoking awe, a powerful portrait of the vast, majestic, "untouched paradise" of the Amazon Rainforest, and the myriad unique tribes who call it home — a rare, unfiltered glimpse into the true beauty of the Amazon, and a world desperately needing protection.

AMAZÔNIA: Photographs by Sebastião Salgado | Exhibitions | National Museum of Singapore



THIMUN 2025

As our flight took off from Changi airport on 25 January 2025, there was little that could have prepared us for the week ahead, one filled not just with fruitful debate and impactful resolutions, but also with lifelong memories and bittersweet goodbyes. After a 27-hour journey, arriving in The Hague brought excitement and exhaustion, making for a quick evening before we all collectively crashed out at the hotel. An early start welcomed us the next morning, catching the train to Amsterdam to the Anne Frank house and Rijksmuseum, a renowned art museum, though there would be little time to admire the art. Deputy Secretary General Aryav Bhesania and I had to rush off to student officer meetings, with Aryav overseeing a number of the committees at the conference, while I had a role as a Press delegate, reporting on the conference as a part of MUNITY. As Aryav and I began our work, the rest explored the Hague city centre and visited the home of the International Court of Justice (ICJ), before a hearty dinner near the hotel.

Piling into the tram the next morning, anxiously awaiting our arrival at the World Forum, we found ourselves among unfamiliar faces from all around the globe, an intimidating yet impressive display of the scale of the conference. We found our rooms and began lobbying, representing our delegation, the Kingdom of Belgium, to the best of our abilities as we began to compile resolutions and send them off for approval. As alliances formed and resolutions were drawn up, there was equally no rest for the press as we scurried about committee rooms for coverage and interviews or continued to publish articles.

To end the day, we and our new acquaintances convened in the King William II hall, eagerly awaiting the opening ceremony. An impressive flag parade soon ensued, accompanied by commentaries on Artificial Intelligence (AI), in line with the theme of this year's conference. Following shortly was the Secretary General's speech, acknowledging the extent of AI's effects in the modern day, before opening the conference with the crack of the gavel, soon swallowed by an uproar of applause.

The next 3 days flew by as lobbying escalated into heated debate. Resolutions were introduced, speeches were delivered to rally support for or against the solutions proposed and amendments were submitted, fuelling disputes. Article after article was planned, drafted, and published, filling the MUNITY website with vibrant covers and striking images capturing the cutthroat debates.

Each day, committee rooms erupted into a flurry of chatter and debate, punctuated with voting procedure, followed by groans of disappointment or applause echoing through the World Forum. Soon the final day had arrived, and as delegates debated on their last resolutions, placards were signed, Instagrams exchanged, a goodbye article from MUNITY was posted and we all said goodbye to lifelong friends, mutually grateful to have experienced the conference together. As the gavel's crack echoed through the auditorium, this time to signify the end, the doors flew open to fill the auditorium with a spectacular performance of drums and brass, giving the conference a performance worthy of heralding its end.

Boarding the plane home at Amsterdam Schiphol Airport the next morning, memories of THIMUN fresh in our minds and the last conversations between THIMUN buddies still ongoing, we left the Hague. There was a mixture of sadness and nostalgia filling our minds as the plane landed in Singapore, as we were reluctant to admit the conference's end. We thank Mr Robb Ross, Mdm Sreemati Sen, and everyone else who made this trip unforgettable. THIMUN 2025 was one for the memory books, filled with many lessons learned, friendships forged and cherished memories!

Ethan Chan (4 TCT)



Meet the Guardians and Homestay Providers Evening

The Meet the Guardians and Homestay Providers Evening on 19 February provided a unique opportunity to connect with the people who play such a vital role in supporting our international students. The event allowed for meaningful conversations and a chance to gain deeper insight into the responsibilities and challenges of guardians and homestay providers.

The guardians and providers shared stories about their experiences, highlighting the bonds they have with their wards. This evening allowed the school to appreciate the significance of their roles, as they helped bridge the gap between school and home life for international students.

It was inspiring to hear how the guardians and homestay providers not only provide a safe place for our international students to stay, but also act as mentors, friends, and a key support network. Their involvement goes beyond logistics, as they nurture the students' emotional and social development, ensuring they feel part of the community.

The evening also gave all guardians and homestay providers an opportunity to ask questions and clarify expectations, which was incredibly helpful for ensuring that everyone is on the same page when it comes to the care and support of the international students. Overall, the evening was an excellent reminder of how essential these relationships are in creating a positive and supportive learning environment for our international students. We would like to express our thanks to the guardians and homestay providers, who dedicate so much of their time and energy to making sure our international students thrive both academically and personally.

Chin Siew Lin & Goh Weili, International Student Coordinators



Coffee Morning with the Principal

Connections.

This word summed it all up for the more than 200 of us who attended this year's Coffee Morning with the Principal on 20 January, in person or on Zoom from Singapore or other parts of the world. This much-anticipated annual event organised by the Parent School Partners (PSP) serves as a platform for the communication of ideas from the school to parents. It is a valuable opportunity for open dialogue between parents and the school's leadership. The ACS (International) Principal Mr Gavin Kinch, with his signature openness and clarity, peppered with a great sense of humour, patiently answered several questions posed by parents on-site, and other questions that were gathered before the meeting. The topics were wide-ranging—from the school's mobile phone policy and whether the canteen can go cashless, to more academic ones such as how to support our children academically and mentally during their IB years, and how the school can provide guidance on career and tertiary education. Vice Principal (Senior Division) Mrs Tan Siew Hoon wisely added several tips and advice for helping our children better navigate their IB years.

Mr Kinch said, "We are a school which looks to engage with our parents and hear their voice...I hope you will feel a part of our school, and you are connected to everything that we are doing here."

Coffee Morning with the Principal would not be complete without a cup of coffee or tea with other parents present. It was a great opportunity for parents to interact with one another. Parents whose children were from the later years sharing their experience and tips with parents whose children are entering those earlier years. Everyone also played a part in welcoming the new parents among us. Adding on to the buzz that morning were activities from the sale of Chinese New Year Red Packets and preloved school blazers. It was great to see many new bonds being forged and existing friendships being strengthened through the many conversations. We truly appreciated the efforts of the school's Senior Leadership Team to mingle and interact with so many parents during this event.

Without a doubt, it was a morning well spent connecting with the school and one another! We are looking forward to many more of such occasions!

Joy Sim, PSP Exco

Thank you very much to PSP for organising this event. It's my first time attending the Coffee Morning with the Principal session physically, and I personally met other parents whom I normally interact via the parents' WhatsApp group. The PSP Exco and other team members have been supportive and we are learning (from) one another in our children's journey in ACS (International). I would encourage other parents to spare some time from your busy schedule to join upcoming events.

Karen Lai, Year 4 & 6 Parent

As a Year 1 parent coming into a new school system, the session was ever so helpful in networking with other fellow parents and getting to know the school's leadership a little better. The Q&A session also provided a better understanding of the journey from IGCSE into the IB programme in the later years. Kudos to the parent group for making this session happen!

Jay Krishnan, Year 1 Parent

It was a helpful event, and my husband and I enjoyed everything about it. We are particularly happy to see the second-hand blazer stall, because I think that shows the heart and compassion the school has for doing good for the planet and making sustainable choices. We also enjoyed meeting other parents with older kids and learning about their journeys...The PSP make us feel so welcomed into the community, even though we are brand new to the ACS family

Emily Teoh, Year 1 Parent



Casual Coffee Meet-Up for our Graduating Parents

It was a morning of delicious breakfast and engaging conversations with ACS (International) Principal Mr Gavin Kinch and Vice Principal Mrs Tan Siew Hoon at this year's Year 6 Casual Coffee Meet-up organised by the Parent School Partners (PSP) at Baker & Cook.

Mrs Tan said: "I enjoyed the informal and friendly interaction with parents over nice coffee and delicious croissant. Thank you, PSP, for organising the Coffee Morning!" With about 20 parents in attendance, the discussions ranged from the challenges of parenting teens to tips and insights regarding university applications and National Service. For those of us who had not seen one another in months, it was a great opportunity to reconnect and reflect on our exciting journeys as parents and guardians at ACS International.

Mr Zhu Jincao, father of Zhu Ziheng, appreciated meeting the new parents and exchanging "a lot of useful information for the upcoming IB exam preparations." He found the gathering "warm and welcoming" and hopes that "more fathers can be encouraged to participate in various events like this in the future."

Ms Aditi Wakharkar, mother of Aahan, was inspired by the parents as they shared their "children's goals and the different pathways they were considering." While she admits she only knew a few parents, she "quickly felt an instant connection, as we all share common feelings of anxiety and hope regarding our children's aspirations. It gave me a newfound sense of confidence in allowing our children to spread their wings at just 18 and reassured me that we are all navigating this journey together."

Indeed, as parents and guardians, we are all in this together and we couldn't have done it without the support of Principal Kinch, our vice-principals and the amazing teachers at ACS International. On behalf of our Year 6 parents, thank you for always encouraging us to stay positive as our teenagers enter a new and exciting chapter in their life!

Celine Abueg, Year 6 parent and PSP Co-Chair



Combined ACS Schools Prayer Meeting

On 21 February, songs of worship rang from John Wesley Hall of ACS (International). "In my life, Lord, be glorified, in our homes, in our school, Lord, be glorified!"

Nearly 55 people from the ACS family of schools gathered at our first Combined ACS Schools Prayer Meeting of 2025. Helming this Combined Prayer Meeting for the first time were 3 of fathers from ACS (International). Formed a year ago in response to a call from Reverend Jeremy Ong of Holland Village Methodist Church (HVMC) to start a Fathers Prayer Group, we are amazed at the work that God has done in and through this small but growing group of praying fathers since!

Lifting our voices in one accord with other parents from the other ACS schools, we were reminded that we are all part of the larger ACS family. ACS (International) Principal Mr Gavin Kinch recounted the time when he and his son visited the grave of Reverend William Oldham, the founder of ACS. After an hour of walking through rows of graves in a cemetery at Glendale, California, they finally located his final resting place. While paying their respects at Rev Oldham's grave, Mr Kinch shared of how he was struck by the deep and lasting legacy that Rev Oldham had left behind. In his message to all of us from Ezekiel 33, Rev Jeremy Ong reminded us that we are God's chosen watchman, entrusted by God to watch over our children and be a voice of warning over their lives.

What made this occasion even more special was the celebration of ACS (International)'s 20th anniversary this year. Rev Ong, Mr Kinch and Vice Principals Mr Christopher Hayward and Dr Kris Achter were presented with a special Indonesian dish, Tumpeng. The choice of this dish is an interesting reflection of our school's position in the international community. The ACS Combined prayer meeting is always a delightful time of reunions. Besides meeting other parents, we sometimes get the rare chance to reconnect with old friends from our school days! Around the hall, while indulging in the scrumptious spread of food exquisitely laid out by one of our talented mums, conversations flowed easily and there were many smiles and happy faces.

Our next Parents Prayer Meeting is on Thursday 6 March at 8am while our Fathers Prayer group next meet on Saturday 8 March. Let's continue to pray for God to be glorified in our ACS schools, building upon the foundation laid by Rev Oldham!

Joy Sim (Parents Prayer Group and Year 3 Parent)

Seeing the diversity of backgrounds gave me a glimpse into the global family that we are in. Hearing about ACS (International) Principal Gavin Kinch going all the way to the US to pay respects to Rev Oldham's grave was poignant as we reflect on how God has been faithful to grow the ACS family till date. We owe a huge debt of gratitude to many who have gone before us! Today was also a special and joyful day of unexpected reunion with my seniors and juniors from my secondary school whom I have not met for 35 years!

Laura Ler, ACS (Junior) Parent

This was my second time attending a parents' prayer session, and I was just in awe as during the first time. To experience a group of parents and school leadership actively praying over the school and its students, combined with an uplifting sermon and wholesome brunch is incredible. I feel blessed to be in such a community.

Emily Teoh (Parent of Year 1 student Eden Teoh)

Attending the combined prayer meeting was a truly uplifting experience. I cherished the opportunity to connect with like-minded fathers, sharing in meaningful fellowship and united prayer.

Shean Mant (Parent of Year 1 student Alyssa Mant and Year 3 student Sarae Mant)

I was deeply ministered by the opening song, The Goodness of God, as it reminded all of us that God has been there through thick and thin and He has always been our Father and our Friend. The final verse sung 'In my school, Lord, be glorified today' echoed what was in my heart. I pray all in ACS (International) will give glory to God. We had wonderful fellowships during prayer time and a brunch fit for a king!

Belinda Phua (Parent of Year 6 student Ezekiel Phua)



Year 6 IBDP Biology Ecological Field Trip To Sungei Buloh Wetlands Reserve, Singapore

On 8 February 2025, Year 6 Biology students from the Higher and Standard Levels embarked on an enriching ecological field trip to Sungei Buloh Wetlands Reserve, Singapore. This immersive experience allowed them to explore the mangrove ecosystem first-hand and apply theoretical concepts to real-world observations. The trip aimed to enhance students' understanding of biodiversity, conservation, and ecological interactions while reinforcing key IB Biology syllabus topics.

Throughout the day, the students examined the structure and function of mangroves, analysing both biotic and abiotic factors that shape the ecosystem. They identified various species of flora and fauna, and learnt about their ecological roles and adaptations. Using quadrats and transects, the students collected data on species distribution and environmental conditions, gaining insight into ecosystem stability and the impact of external factors such as pollution and climate change. These practical investigations strengthened their grasp of ecological principles, including trophic levels, nutrient cycling, and the range of tolerance among organisms.

A key focus of the trip was understanding the human impact on wetlands. Students evaluated the effects of habitat destruction, pollution, and invasive species on the delicate balance of the ecosystem. They discussed conservation efforts, including mangrove restoration projects, rewilding initiatives, and sustainable practices aimed at preserving biodiversity. By examining real-world case studies, they explored the consequences of eutrophication, biomagnification, and plastic pollution, linking their observations to broader environmental issues. Students also engaged in discussions about conservation strategies and the role of protected areas such as Sungei Buloh in maintaining ecosystem resilience. They analysed how environmental policies and community efforts contribute to sustainability.

Teachers: Ms Shiva Sharma, Ms Lynn Ng, Dr Srivalli Singh, Mr Antonio Inigo, Ms Nadiyah Karina and Ms Analiza Policarpio Garcia



Reflections by students on the Sungei Buloh Wetlands Reserve Field Trip

Experiencing Biology Beyond the Classroom

This trip was more than just an academic exercise—it was a chance to witness first-hand the delicate interplay between biotic and abiotic factors. Observing the gradual transition of the wetland ecosystem, from the waterlogged roots of mangrove trees to the adaptations of the animals thriving within them, made textbook concepts truly come alive. Seeing these ecological interactions in action deepened the appreciation for how organisms survive and coexist in their natural habitats.

This experience has also allowed me to appreciate how biology knowledge from textbooks is applied in the real world and see the interaction between biotic and abiotic factors in real-time.

Nicolas Koh, 6 Bi HL 2

The most valuable part of the field trip for me was gaining insights about the wildlife, especially the mangrove species and the animals we learned about. I feel like this trip has strengthened the application of this topic where I learn about how to apply these ecology concepts into the real world.

Natasha Tan Rae, 6 Bi HL 2

Encounters with Wildlife

One of the most exhilarating parts of the trip was spotting animals that I would never see in my daily life. From otters gliding through the water to a well-camouflaged tree snake resting on a branch, every encounter was a reminder of the incredible biodiversity within the wetlands.

Haeram Choi 6 Bi HL 3

One most valuable part is of course the real-life observation of biotic and abiotic factors instead of reading it off a textbook. This gives a deep impression and memory of what those respective factors are and how they can click in place with other ecological concepts.

Wu Sze Shing (Billy), 6 Bi HL 1

Learning from Passionate Educators

Interacting with the guides was an unexpected highlight of the trip. Their enthusiasm for conservation and deep knowledge of the ecosystem were infectious. One of the guides shared his journey of leaving a research career in the Amazon to work with ORCA Nation, an environmental conservation group. His passion for the subject was evident in the way he explained food webs, ecological niches, and conservation efforts. He eagerly answered every question, even those beyond his expertise, demonstrating a commitment to learning alongside us.

It was truly inspiring to see this passion and learn so in-depth about every little thing—how food webs worked, how plants and animals in the ecosystem coexisted and competed.

Nishka Birmi, 6 Bi HL 3

Bridging Theory and Reality

The trip allowed me to see how biological concepts extend beyond exam questions. Witnessing the real-life effects of human activities, such as plastic waste accumulation and habitat fragmentation, made issues like biomagnification and conservation efforts feel far more urgent.

Seeing plastic waste first-hand made me more aware of and able to reflect better on the impact of biomagnification.

Aqeel Shaik, 6 Bi HL 2

A Lasting Memory

More than just an academic excursion, this experience was a memorable adventure shared with friends. Exploring the wetlands, searching for elusive animals, and engaging in discussions about nature made learning enjoyable and impactful. The beauty of Sungei Buloh, coupled with the insights gained from our instructors, has left an indelible mark on my perspective. I now look at nature with a deeper understanding, appreciating the complexity of ecosystems and the delicate balance that sustains life. This field trip was not just about biology—it was about learning to observe, question, and connect with the natural world more profoundly.

"First-hand experience is always better than just learning concepts from the textbook."

Shingo Mase, 6 Bi HL 2

The most valuable part of the trip was learning about all the different species and how they interact with each other within the Mangrove ecosystem. It helped me understand how field biologists identify different species as well as their realized niches in the ecosystem. It also helped me understand what keystone species are and how they interact with the environment."

Thaddeus Luke Shen, 6 Bi HL 2

The most valuable part of the field trip was learning the different names of the mangrove trees and how each of these different types of mangroves have different properties. This led me to understand how biologists in the field identify and differentiate different species of a plant such as mangroves.

Justin Lee, 6 Bi HL 2

Hands-On Scientific Exploration

Beyond observing wildlife, the students and teachers had the opportunity to engage in data collection using ecological tools. All measured abiotic factors such as light intensity and tree height, conducted species identification exercises, and applied real-world sampling techniques. Using quadrats and transects gave me a practical understanding of biodiversity measurement methods.

The field trip helped me understand the concepts and terms that I learned in recent topics, such as ecological niches. Because of the trip, these concepts became easier to understand and memorize when revising for the test.

Wu Yufei, 6 Bi HL 3

HIGHER EDUCATION NEWS

February has been a month filled with exciting opportunities for our students to engage with university representatives, professors, and career experts. From demystifying IT careers to understanding the nuances of Oxbridge applications, here's a recap of what happened this month in Higher Education & Careers.

Event Highlights

4 February – Higher Education Planning Ahead Talk for Year 6 Students

We kicked off the month with a comprehensive Higher Ed Planning Ahead Talk for Year 6 students, covering essential topics to help them prepare for the next steps in their university applications:

- Student Directory & Resources – Where to find important university application materials
- Understanding Predicted Grades – How they impact applications
- Next Steps in Your Application Journey – What to do now and in the coming months
- Deadlines to Track – Key timelines for applications and decisions
- Teacher References: What You Need to Know – How to request strong references
- The Role of IA, EE, CAS, and TOK in Your Application – Why they matter to universities
- Scenario Planning: Preparing for Different Outcomes – How to navigate multiple possibilities

7 February – The Education University of Hong Kong

We kicked off the month by welcoming Ms Ng Aik Min, Global Affairs Manager from [The Education University of Hong Kong](#). Aik Min was originally from Singapore and now works in Hong Kong for the university. Students had the chance to learn about the university's specialised programmes in education and related fields, as well as potential career pathways. The university has lots of scholarships available for IB students and welcomes international students on campus. Meet her at our upcoming Higher Education Fair on 7 April at the Sports Hall. In the meantime, you may view more details about the university [here](#).



11 February – Professor Shanton Chang, School of Computing and Information Systems, University of Melbourne sharing about Digital and IT Careers

Professor Shanton Chang from the University of Melbourne spoke to students about careers in IT, [breaking down common misconceptions and providing insights](#) into the evolving landscape of tech careers. It was an eye-opening session that helped students see the diverse opportunities in this field beyond coding and software development.



12 February – Personality Assessment Workshop by Bridge U

Self-awareness is key when making career decisions, and our **Personality Assessment Workshop** gave students the tools to better understand their strengths, interests, and work styles. This session helped many reflect on how their personal traits align with different career paths. All ACS International students in Year 4, 5 and 6 can take personality assessments via [Bridge U](#) at their convenience and discuss the results with a [Higher Education Counsellor from our school](#).



18 February – SMU Personal Branding Workshop for Year 5 Students

Singapore Management University (SMU) hosted a **Personal Branding Workshop** for Year 5 students, helping them develop their **unique brand identity**. The session covered how to effectively **communicate strengths, present a compelling profile, and stand out in university applications and future careers**.



20 February – Professor Matthias Dorzapf, University of Cambridge

We had the privilege of hosting Professor Matthias Dorzapf from the University of Cambridge, who shared detailed insights into the **Oxbridge application process**. He also addressed questions on **portfolio preparation**, helping students gain a clearer understanding of selective universities look for in applicants.



21 February – University of British Columbia

Our session with Anindita Mahmud, a **UBC representative**, covered academic programs, campus life, and practical aspects of studying in Canada. Students were particularly interested in **weather conditions, travel options within Canada and to the U.S.**, and opportunities for internships and research.



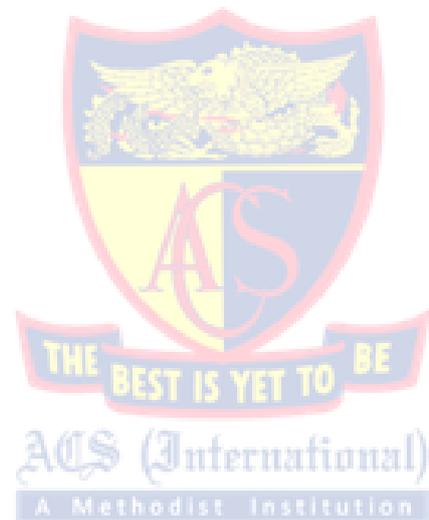
Counsellor Engagement

Our counselling team stays up to date with the latest university trends to provide the best guidance for students. This month, we attended a **counsellor session by Monash University**, where we gained valuable insights into **Australia's changing admissions landscape**. As university policies evolve, we're committed to ensuring students have the most accurate and relevant information for their applications.

We also had the opportunity to meet with a representative from IBO to learn more about their newly launched [Credit Standing Database for students](#) (currently only available for US university related searches).

Looking Ahead

March will bring even more university engagements and career workshops. Stay tuned for details on upcoming events! As always, if you have any questions about university applications or career pathways, feel free to reach out to the Higher Education & Careers office.



UPCOMING EVENTS

March	Event
4	Pascal, Cayley and Fermat Maths Contests
6	Sports Day
7	Year 6 Hindi IOs
	TCT House Camp
8	SVM House Camp
10 – 11	Year 4 (Including FIB/PIB), Year 5 and Year 6 AEP
11	Year 4 IGCSE Mandarin Orals
13	Ski Trip Parent Info Session
13 – 15	SIMUN Conference
14 – 22	Ski Trip
14	LSG House Camp

March	Event
17 – 21	School Holiday
26	Reports Published
28	Special Project/Nominees Camp
29	Methodist Walk
31	Hari Raya Puasa (Public Holiday)





ACS (International) Chamber Orchestra

Esplanade Outdoor Theatre

Friday, 28 February 2025

7:15pm - 8:00pm

8:45pm - 9:30pm





METHODIST WALK

29 March 2025

ACS (International) will be raising money for the following needs of the school:

1. Student Hardship Fund
2. Oldham Chapel upgrades

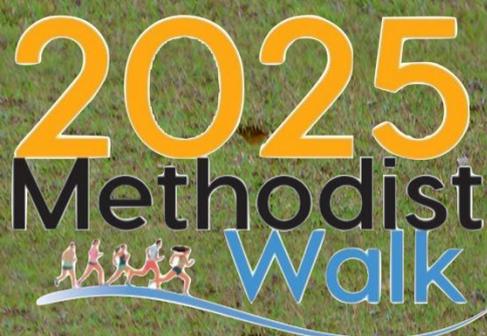
We invite all in our ACS (International) community to join us and aim to walk at least 50km in support of the “A Million For a Million” pledge.

We encourage cashless donations through the school’s [Giving.sg](#) campaign page. Donations may also be given via cheque made out to Methodist Schools’ Foundation, with the name of the school clearly indicated on the back.

We look forward to having your fullest support as we come together as a school family for **MethodistWalk 2025**.

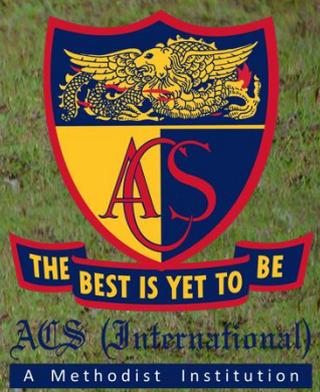
Details can be found on the [FAQ](#) and fundraising platform [Giving.sg](#)

Scan here to give



Walk in the Truth of God

Ps 86:11





ACS (International)

A Methodist Institution



OPEN HOUSE

5 April 2025

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*

You may also register your attendance via acs.openapply.com

Attendance by reservations only