

Letter from the Principal



25 October 2013

Dear Nexus Parents and Families

Welcome to term 2. I'm pleased to announce that our roll has now exceeded 500 and is already projected to reach 525 over the next couple of weeks. We appreciate the trust that our new and existing families place in us and will continue to work hard to meet your expectations. In response to your feedback, we have informed our cafeteria vendors that their contract will be terminated at the end of this term. A tender process for provision of food services at Nexus is now beginning and we should be able to advise you of the outcome by the beginning of December.

While on the topic of food, please note that a number of children and staff who have recently joined our school have severe nut allergies. For this reason, our cafeteria does not sell any products containing nuts. We would also like to encourage families to not provide their children with nuts or products containing nuts in their snack or lunch boxes. This is particularly true for our younger learners who are always interested in what other children are eating. We thank you for your understanding and cooperation in this matter.

During this week, we welcomed a large group of parents from Nexus and other schools to our seminar "Parenting in a Wired World". I was supported by Dr Rosie Martin (parenting coach) and Richard Poth (digital integrator) in presentations and discussion about the digital world and the opportunities and challenges that face parents and teachers as digital technologies continue to develop. This seminar was part of Digital Safety Week, supported by [Commonsense Media](#), and one of a series of events that will be offered to help parents. If you would like access to the interactive document that supported the seminar, please email ict@nexus.edu.sg for permission. Thank you to everyone who helped to make the event such a success.

In this newsletter you will find information about:

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If you have any comments or questions about any aspect of the school's procedures, please email me at principal@nexus.edu.sg

Please also LIKE and share our [Facebook](#) page and follow us at [Twitter](#) to keep up with all that is going on at Nexus.

Regards,



Dr Stuart Martin
Principal

Learning English

Tip of the Week

Parents can support their child in becoming a keen reader by helping them explore their choices of text and genre. Reading reinforces new vocabulary and encourages exploration of ideas and language.

Our school library has an abundance of fabulous books for readers of all levels and our librarians are more than happy to help your child choose the books that will fascinate and intrigue them.

For the non-fiction reader, the Horrible Histories series introduces famous historical events in ways that will leave the learner with a lasting impression of historical events. Reading non-fiction can be fun and the learner will then pursue reading more difficult history texts with greater understanding of the content.

Take time to talk to your child about what they love to read, share what they read and read with them often.

“Life is too short to read books that I’m not enjoying.” Melissa Marr.

Rosemarie de Vries

Subject Leader ELS

Primary School News

Welcome

First, welcome back to all our existing children and families. We hope you had an enjoyable and restful holiday. Second, welcome to all our new learners and their families. Nexus’ reputation as a small community school offering high quality learning experiences with a truly international outlook is continuing to spread. This week over 30 new learners have joined us, many transferring from other educational establishments in Singapore. It has been lovely getting to know them all and having greeted them in the mornings and chatted to them around school, they seem to have thoroughly enjoyed their first days at Nexus.

Expansion of Nursery and Kindergarten

I am very pleased to inform our parent community that we have expanded our Kindergarten Year Group for the third time in 10 months. During the holiday we created a second classroom next to the existing Kindergarten Blue (KB) Base. The new class will be known as Kindergarten Green (KG) Base. All the new learners that have arrived this week will join Kindergarten Green Base.

You will also notice other exciting transformations in the Nursery and Kindergarten Pod. In both Year Groups we have partially removed the dividing walls between the classrooms. The key reason for this transformation is to create larger and more inviting learning zones in each Year Group. Children will start and finish the day in their Base and key whole-class teaching sessions will continue to be taught in their Bases. For the remainder of the day, children will be encouraged to experience the learning opportunities in both Bases in a series of clearly defined learning zones, for example: a reading zone, a role-play zone, a zone for fine-motor skills. These zones will involve a mix of adult-initiated learning experiences and carefully guided child-initiated learning experiences. These changes are very powerful in developing young learners understanding that we have the opportunity to learn many different things and that we all learn in different ways. It also encourages them to be more independent in their learning.

In addition, we are delighted to welcome Mrs Maylene Leonard to our Kindergarten team. Mrs Leonard trained as a teacher in Australia and has numerous years of experience working in early childhood education in the international school sector, including working at UWCSEA and OFS. In addition, Mrs Jo Williams has also joined our Nursery and Kindergarten team as a teaching assistant. Mrs Williams has a range of experience working in

international schools working with Primary-aged children. This increase in staffing means that our staff to learner ratio in the Nursery and Kindergarten Phase is as low as 1 to 6. As the number of learners grows we will continue to appoint highly qualified and experienced staff.

New staff in the Primary School

In addition to Mrs Maylene and Mrs Williams joining us in the Nursery and Kindergarten, we are also pleased to welcome two new Teaching Assistants: Mrs Karen Baker and Mrs Janice Chin. Both have extensive experience working in Primary Schools. Mrs Baker is a trained counsellor and teacher of English as a foreign language. Mrs Chin is a trained teaching assistant who specializes in working with children that find learning more challenging. Mrs Chin will be working with our Year 5 and 6 learners. With this recruitment we have taken the opportunity to reallocate some of our teaching assistants. One key change is that Mrs Atiyeh Sadeghi will now be working alongside our Year 5 and 6 learners and Ms Clarine Cheo and Mrs Baker will be working with our Year 1 and 2 learners.

Primary School Council Representatives

I am delighted to share with you the names of those children who have been elected by their peers to the role of school council representative.

Year 3 - Finn, Josh

Year 4 - Laura, Alannah, Numa, Ellie

Year 5 - Jake, Esme, Anna

Year 6 - Mikey, Kaelen, Jenny and Nicole

The children in Year 2 and above all took part in presentations and voted to decide who they wanted to be their representative. The speeches that the children wrote were well considered and showed that we have many emergent leaders in our Primary School. The representatives have already started to develop communication strategies. They have created a notice board and used the monitors in the Main Entrance and Cafeteria to introduce themselves to the wider school community. They have also been working on plans to develop playground games..

Storytelling

This week the children in Primary School have been extremely fortunate to experience some passionate and engaging storytelling from Sarah Barnett. She gave her time freely to Nexus and we are very grateful for this. Sarah is about to embark on a journey volunteering with VSO (Voluntary Services Overseas <http://www.vso.org.uk/>). In recent years, efforts have been made to ensure that education is more accessible to children in developing countries but there are still millions of children who are denied this opportunity. Also, as enrolments in schools rise, this increases pressure on already overstretched education systems, affecting the quality of education being provided. Teachers with little training or experience are expected to teach large classes of children for long hours. VSO is different from most organisations that fight poverty. Instead of sending money or food, it brings people together to share skills and knowledge. In doing so, it creates lasting change. Everything VSO does is also led by local organisations' needs and they only send volunteers to projects where their skills have been requested. Sarah is about to be travel to Africa, most likely to Rwanda, for 18-24 months to help train teachers and develop the curriculum in schools there.

In return for Sarah's time in our school, we do hope that our families may wish to support her very worthwhile cause. She is aiming to raise S\$3000 and, as well as arranging storytelling events, she is cycling 450km across Vietnam and Cambodia in November to do so. If you wish to know any more about her fundraising or wish to donate, please visit www.justgiving.com/Sarah-Barnett8. Thank you and we hope your children we enjoyed the storytelling.

Years 5 and 6 Assembly

Our next assembly will be led by our Year 5 and 6 learners and will take place on Friday, 1st November at

8.35am. We hope that lots of families will be able to join us.

Years 3 and 4 Mini Exhibition

Next week will also see our first 'Mini-Exhibition' of the year. You are invited to join our Year 3 and 4 learners as they share with you just a small aspect of their learning over the last few weeks. The exhibition will take place in the classrooms from 9.15am on Friday, 1st November. We started these informal class-based exhibitions last year and found them to be very successful. These drop-in sessions may include sharing a final piece of work, reviewing an activity that they have undertaken or looking at some work in progress. Parents are encouraged to talk to their children about what they have been learning as well as talk to other children if they wish. A Mini-Exhibition (just like the summative PYP Exhibition in Year 6) is a celebratory experience. It is a time for parents and their children to share together the learning experience. While the homeroom teachers attend in case of any need for support, the event is centred on the parent-child interaction. The exhibitions are not an opportunity to talk to your child's teacher about their progress or any concerns you may have. If you do wish to speak to your child's teacher, please contact them to make a separate appointment. Throughout the year children in all Year Groups will take part in two Mini-Exhibitions. This will help them to develop the skills of articulating their learning experiences in preparation for the summative PYP Exhibition in Year 6.

Caps

A reminder that all children playing outside are required to wear a hat. Please can you make sure your child has a hat or cap in school and that it is clearly labelled with their name and class.

Nursery and Kindergarten: flip-flops/jandals/sandals/thongs/slippers

If you haven't already, please bring in a labelled pair of light plastic footwear for your child to keep in school for sand play outdoors. This will avoid the children getting wet feet and sand in shoes. Please keep these in your child's cubby. To ensure safe playing, we will be talking to the children about using these only when playing in the sand and not when running around.

Arrival at School

A polite reminder to parents and guardians, the school day starts at 8.25am. Children are expected to arrive in school in time for morning registration. However, children must not arrive at school before 8.00am, as we do not have sufficient staff levels to supervise the children. Children can wait in the cafeteria from 8.00am.

Illness

Please be reminded that when children have recovered from an illness it is best for them to remain at home for at least 24 hours after the illness has subsided. This gives them sufficient time to recover and ensures that they do not pass their illness onto other learners.



Paul Beach

Head of Primary School

Secondary School News

We have started the new Term with a number of new learners who are getting to know their way around the school. Teachers are now in the process of preparing reports which will be issued at the end of the month; so we already a very busy place.

Tomorrow is our Open day and I would like to thank in advance our learner volunteers who have offered to help us during the morning.

The new School Council has met and will shortly be announcing their post holders for the upcoming year.

During the last week of term 1, Year 7 – 9 learners took part in residential trips to Tioman or Thailand. These trips have multiple purposes – we were particularly pleased to see how many of the learners gained self-confidence and improved their social skills during the trips.

The Year 7 trip to Tioman

I would like to thank to Mr Massey for organizing this and to the staff who accompanied our learners. The trip was a great success. Ms Fairbrother has compiled lots of photos and other memories on “The Tioman Blog”. Please visit the blog at <http://nisstioman2013.blogspot.sg/> or bit.ly/nisstioman

The Year 8 & 9 Trip to Baan Pangam – Prachinburi

40 learners from years 8 and 9 spent 5 days in Thailand at the adventurous activity centre Pa Ngam Mountain Resort. For many, staying in large dormitory accommodation was a first, and they had fun living alongside and getting to know their school friends.

Highlights included a fast zip wire through trees and across rivers in the rainforest, team activities as part of the rope challenge, climbing and abseiling as well as dressing in Harry Potter stage outfits and flying through the trees using stunt harnesses. Other activities included film nights, jumping from a seven metre high pirate ship into a natural lake, the fire show which welcomed us on our first evening and the last night disco which brought out some interesting karaoke and dance routines!



John Evans

Head of Secondary School

Nexus Parent Group

Special Events

Secondary School Pot Luck Lunch - Tuesday, 12-3pm, 29 October

Come and meet your class reps and make new friends - bring a plate to share.

Coffee & Catch Up - Friday, from 8.30am, 1 November

Members of the ICT dept will be on hand to answer school-related IT queries e.g. accessing school reports through the Parent Portal (please bring your user name/password - contact Student Services if you do not know it)

Halloween Disco - Friday, 1 November (Auditorium)

- 5.45-7.15pm - Primary School (including costume parade)
- 7.30-10.00pm - Secondary School (fancy dress)

This is a joint enterprise with the Student Council/CAS students. We are seeking parent help to decorate the auditorium on Friday afternoon and supervise on the night. Please contact your class rep or email npg@nexus.edu.sg (for the attention of Susan) if you would like to help.

Seminar - Tuesday, 12 November

Dr Rosie Martin and Margaret Chisholm will be running a parent workshop entitled “**Helping your Child to Read**”, on Tuesday, 12th November from 8:30am - 9:30am. Everyone welcome. We will use the NPG room but will also be visiting the library.

Christmas Fête - Saturday, 7 December

We are supporting the Fête once again and will be collecting donations for the bric-a-brac stall (i.e. pre-loved toys, books, clothes/fancy dress) from next week. Donation bins will be located outside the Student Services office and in the NPG Room. Clear those cupboards before Santa brings the new stuff!

Also ... if you would like to rent a table (2m x 60cm - SGD70) at the Fête, please email Marketing (ho.m@nexus.edu.sg)

Scrapbooking Club - Tuesday, 8.30-11.30am, 29 October (Aisha McConnell)

Parent & Preschooler Group - every Wednesday, 8.30-10am

Open to all Nexus parents with a preschool child (0 months and up) - please park strollers under the stairwell of Block C.

All Groups/Clubs meet in the NPG Room (Block C, Level 2) unless otherwise specified. If you have an idea for a group or have a query regarding either of the groups above, please email npg@nexus.edu.sg.

Class Rep Communication

Class Reps have sent a number of emails to their homerooms to introduce themselves and communicate important reminders. If you have not yet received an email from your Class Rep – please email npg@nexus.edu.sg (for the attention of Karen/Primary School; Jan/Secondary School) indicating your Homeroom.

Social Media & the NPG

Facebook - go to bit.ly/NISSNPG and “Like” our page. You will then receive NPG news and event notifications

Twitter @NISSNPG - spread the word and increase our followers - Use the hashtag #NISSNPG - bit.ly/TwtrNPG

Co-Curricular Activities (CCA) News

CCA Season 1 finishes on Friday 1st November 2013. There will then be a one week break before the start of Season 2. The dates for Season 2 and 3, to coincide with the ACSIS Sports Seasons, are as follows:

Season 2: Monday 11th November 2013- Friday 7th February 2014 (9 weeks). No CCAs will run the last week of Term 2, 16-20th December 2013

Season 3: Monday 17th February – Friday 2nd May 2014 (9 weeks)

Season 2 CCA programme will be sent out by email on Friday 1st November (next week), as learners should then be aware of the sports team they plan to commit to for Season 2.

Most CCA sign ups are on a first come, first served basis. The sign up process is now completed electronically and information and links for this will be sent with the programme next week.

A letter confirming your child's CCAs will then be sent out on Friday 8th November 2013.

Run for Hope: Sunday 17th November 2013

Sign Up Deadline now extended until 31st October 2013



Please come and join us for the Run for Hope on the 17th November to raise much needed funds for Cancer Research and to show your support for people whose lives have been touched by the effects of cancer.

It would be fantastic to see a huge team of Nexus runners support the event. All levels welcome, from fun runner/walker to serious runners.

The organisers of the event have asked for all sign ups to be completed through the Run For Hope website: <http://www.runforhope.sg>

All Nexus runners should use the Nexus promo code: CGNIS48
FINAL deadline for signing up is **now 31st October 2013**.
Primary school runners need to be accompanied by an adult for the run.

Distance: 10km or 3.5km Fun Run
At: The Promontory @ Marina Bay
Time: 07.00am
Buses from school: 06.00am
A meeting point for Nexus runners will be confirmed closer to the event.

Nexus will organise the Entry Pack /T-shirt collection for all runners using the Nexus Promo Code.

For any of our learners who wish to run, but who are unable to sign up via the Run For Hope online system, please email: cca.enquiry@nexus.edu.sg and let us know that you are keen to get involved.

Orange October for Orangutans Month

Are you aware that it's Orange October for Orangutans month?



The Sumatran Orangutan Society (SOS) is dedicated to protecting the critically endangered Sumatran Orangutans. Without urgent action, Sumatran Orangutans could be the first Great Ape species to become extinct.

The Make A Difference Club invite all learners to Make A Difference by getting involved with an Orange-themed Casual Clothes Day on Friday 1st November 2013.

All learners are welcome to come to school in their own clothes with a splash of orange or total orange immersion on Friday 1st November 2013 for a donation of \$2. Please remember PE kit if you have PE.

Some fun stalls have also been organised by CAS learners for the primary disco, including 'Lucky Dip', 'Pin the Hat on the Witch' and facepainting and glowsticks to raise funds for this charity. Please bring a small amount of money to the disco to have a go.

Funds raised will help the Sumatran Orangutan Society (SOS) to:

- * Raise awareness about the importance of protecting orangutans and their rainforest home
- * Support grassroots projects which empower local people to become guardians of the rainforests
- * Restore damaged orangutan habitat through the tree planting programme
- * Campaign on issues threatening the survival of orangutans in the wild

Help SOS protect orangutans, their forests and their future

Andrea Webb

CCA & CAS Coordinator

webb.a@nexus.edu.sg

Sports News

We are currently in the final stages of ACSIS Season One, with our 14&U Boys Badminton team qualifying for the gold medal match against Chatsworth International at Chatsworth on Thursday 31st October. We wish them all the best. The U19 Girls Volleyball team were in a three-way tie for 2nd place but dropped out of semi-final contention due to points count-back. They have two remaining games in the battle for 5th overall. All of our teams have had successes over the past few weeks, and I thank all contributing coaches and managers for all their efforts.

Sign-Up for ACSIS Season Two

We will be offering the following sports for 'ACIS Season Two' which begins around 20th November and will conclude on 8th February. If you haven't signed up already, and would like to represent Nexus in one or more of our offered sports, please visit me in the PE Office, or drop me a quick email.

Training days and match schedules will be confirmed over the coming weeks. I look forward to hearing from you.

ACIS Season Two Sports: Nov - Feb
10&U Football
11&U Football
11&U Badminton
12&U Boys Basketball
12&U Girls Basketball
14&U Football
14&U Volleyball
U19 Basketball

Sports Draw – Term 2 Week 2 (Monday 28th Oct – Friday 1st Nov)

Monday 28th October

- U19 Boys Football HOME vs. Canadian International School. 4.30pm

Tuesday 29th October

- 9&U Football HOME vs. various. 4.30pm

Wednesday 30th October

- ACSIS Cross Country Championships AWAY at Tampines Bike Park.
Information letter should have been received by participating runners
- 11&U Boys Basketball AWAY vs. various at Tanglin Trust School. 4.15pm
Team is expected to be back at Nexus by 6.00pm

Thursday 31st October

- 11&U Girls Basketball AWAY vs. various at Australian Int. School. 4.15pm
Team is expected to be back at Nexus by 6.00pm
- 14&U Boys Badminton AWAY vs. Chatsworth International School. 4.30pm
Team is expected to be back at Nexus by 6.30pm

If you are new to Nexus International School Singapore and are interested to find out more about our sport programme, you are more than welcome to email me at moriarty.b@nexus.edu.sg



Bevan Moriarty

Director of Sport