



NEWSLETTER ISSUE 2 - 2020/21

In this issue, we take a look over the Chinese New Year celebrations across school, and explore what's been happening in STEAM learning — from astronaut training to investigating filters for Mars!

Find out more!
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THE BRITISH
SCHOOL
OF GUANGZHOU

A NORD ANGLIA EDUCATION SCHOOL

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Message from the Principal



As we reach the end of Term 2, I would like to thank the staff for successfully reintroducing our ASA programme. At the moment, we are unable to invite in outside ASA providers, which puts even more responsibility on our staff to provide a broad and vibrant range of options. There is no doubt that students have enjoyed participating in fun activities while socialising with their friends. The value of this should not be underestimated, after the challenges and the periods of isolation that many of them experienced. As always, activities range from academic to creative and sporting. I was particularly happy to see an ASA to prepare for the performance of 'We Will Rock You' in Term 3 — it will be great.

I am pleased to inform you that we have almost completed our recruitment for 2021-22. The recruitment and retention of outstanding teachers is probably the most important factor in the development of a successful international school. It is no secret that outstanding schools need outstanding teachers, and the search begins when we sift through resumes and letters of application in January. Interviews and reference checks are taken from 3 referees, including their current Principal, and background checks are then made to ensure that we meet Child Safeguarding Policies. The successful applicants will join us up to 2 weeks (3 weeks this year) before the school opens for a week of induction, and a week of inset with existing staff, where they will complete any necessary planning in preparation for the first day.

It is important to emphasise that BSG fully embraces a commitment to lifelong learning, and however qualified our teachers are, they know that they will need to embrace continuous professional development to meet our expectations. Nord Anglia fully understand the importance of retaining outstanding teachers and place a huge amount of importance on providing professional development. In a normal year, this training may have involved travelling to another school or region to take part in leadership training. However, this year much of the training has been online, so having access to Nord Anglia University has proven itself to be invaluable.

An important part of our teachers' professional development is our appraisal programme, where line managers and senior teachers get the opportunity to observe a lesson in depth and provide targets for further development. Our teachers fully understand that they can always improve and see appraisal as their entitlement. They also take advantage of opportunities to observe other outstanding teachers, as part of an established Peer Observation Policy.

Simply recruiting highly-qualified teachers is never enough. It is the role of our school leaders to ensure that all staff act as role models in promoting BSG's core values to our students, and to ensure that staff teach in a way that is in line with our school's stated mission to promote 'a love of learning.'

It is always a cause for celebration when our students fulfil their potential by achieving excellent academic results. For me this is also a time to recognise the work of so many teachers, who through their own dedication, have managed to inspire the students to put in the effort needed to be successful.

Although we are seeing progress in the fight against the global pandemic, we need to be prepared for another challenging year. Fortunately, our retention rates were excellent this year, with 90% of staff confirming that they intend to stay. Due to the additional challenges of getting teachers into China, this year we focused our attention on finding high-quality replacements who were already working in China. I am pleased to report that 7 of our 13 newly appointed staff were recruited from reputable international schools in the country. I would also like to note the impressive commitment and flexibility of our current staff, who fully understand that their summer travel plans will be restricted to China this year.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who found the time to complete the 2020-21 parent survey. We really do value your feedback and fully appreciate that there will be areas you feel we need to improve. Over the next year, we will focus our attention on creating an action plan to meet some of your suggested areas for improvement.

Have a great Easter holiday and stay safe.

Mark Thomas

COMMUNITY REPORT

by Michelle Cuming



It has been another busy term for The BSG Community Partnership, leaders from across the school have taken part in a range of activities. Every activity that the pupils take part in are ones to support the local community here in Guangzhou. The pupils support projects and are more than happy to give up their time to help people in need.

Huiling School Chinese New Year

Before the restrictions were in place BSG supported Huiling school by visiting them once a week with secondary leaders to have a sports afternoon. This year the students want them to know we were still thinking of them. The CP Leaders wrote CNY cards and filled them with chocolate coins. These were received by the school and handed out to staff and pupils.

Valentines Deliveries

The CP leaders took orders for Valentines cards and gifts and these will be delivered in tutor time to students with a personal friendship message inside. All proceeds will go to Hopeful Hearts.

Feeding the Homeless

The CP has a core group of parents and students waking up early each Saturday morning at meeting in the city for a 5am start. BSG have gone from strength to strength with this project and now have three of their own routes around the city. Brandon and Am (6th Form



students) have now been trained to write a leaders report at the end of each distribution and they are playing a key role in the group along with all the other pupils and parents. A special mention to the families that have made donations to our project, we have had 60 brand new hooded jumpers from a parent, 500 sets of toiletries from a family, 30 scarves and a tea dispenser from a pupil, freshly baked goods from a parent just to name a few.

Good news story: Just one of the highlights for a we had a lady who we have seen over the past 5 weeks not seem herself and was extra shy. With the support of the BSG team we asked her to wait around an area for the day and we would send someone to help her. A social worker found her and took her to the shelter. They found out her name and called her family, she had been lost for a few months and she was reunited with her family.

Shoe box appeal

Pupils from across all phases of the school brought in items to fill shoe boxes with essentials for the Homeless. This was really a team effort for all involved. We were able to get 70 boxes filled and given out to the homeless with a Christmas card. The smiles on the faces were priceless.

Movie Nights

Both Primary and secondary students had a movie night at school before the holidays. The CP leaders took a leadership role in the event and coordinated the collection of fund.



All monies raised have gone towards our CP Charities.

A big thank you to all the members of the Community Partnership it is a pleasure working with a team that really make a difference.

If you as a family would like to support out Community Partnership please email: michelle.cuming@bsg.org.cn.



EARLY YEARS

TODDLER-RECEPTION



FUN FESTIVITIES

by Monica Samtani

The Toddler Cubs and Pre-Nursery Koalas have had a fantastic start to this term! We enjoyed celebrating the Chinese New Year festival, where students engaged in various modes of learning, embedding art, cooking and performing on stage. We experimented with finger painting to make our cherry trees as the children mixed red and white paint to then create their pink blossoms. We worked collaboratively as a team, and we all hung our special wish envelopes to our Early Years Tree. The children loved getting their hands messy to make pretend dumplings, where we counted how many cups of flour and water we needed to knead the dough. Our favourite part was then relishing the delicious 'jiaozi's that were freshly prepared for us by the kitchen staff!

All the children put in their best efforts and rehearsed with their Chinese and Music teachers in preparation for their final performance on stage, where they shone like stars as they sang 'Xin Nian Hao'. We are now getting ready for another fun adventure as we learn about 'Old MacDonald's Farm'.



SINGING FOR NEW YEAR

by Emi Hayashi

This year the Early Years, Primary and Secondary students welcomed the year of the Ox with dragon dances and beautiful folk songs. At the British School of Guangzhou we celebrated Chinese New Year on the third of February with Toddlers, Pre-Nursery, Nursery and Reception performing one song each on the stage.

All students in reception sang “Mo Li Hua” together at the Early Years celebration. And to end the event all EYFS children sang “Xing Nian Hao”. Congratulations to our early years students for trying their best and sharing their work with their school friends and teachers whilst performing with confidence. Well done!



THE ENORMOUS TURNIP

by Deanne Newton

In Nursery this term, our focus is on sharing and working together. Our core text is ‘The Enormous Turnip’. This story is about commitment and team work. To hook the children into the story, we provided each class with two large cardboard boxes for the children to create something amazing for the classroom.

As a class the children shared ideas of what they would like to make then settled with one fun idea. The children were very excited to be involved and participated in making different parts of their creation. The children were able to use their imagination and explore with a variety of different tools and materials.

During this process the children demonstrated commitment and worked together really well, we are very proud of all them.



3, 2, 1...BLAST OFF!

by Barbara Merino

The children in Reception have had an exciting start to the term. We received a mind-blowing video by MIT professor and former NASA astronaut, Jeff Hoffman who set us a challenge to take a closer look at filters and how these can help to clean the air on Mars.

Over the past week, we have been exploring how to use different filters to separate different materials. Some of the filters were too small, some too big and some just right! The children used their problem-solving skills to make their very own filtration systems using a variety of different materials.

This has been the perfect hook to spark children's interest into the world of space and rockets!

The children were introduced to the story 'Whatever Next' by Jill Murphy. The story is all about a little bear that wants to travel to the moon. We have spent time using our speaking and listening skills to build up our understanding of the story and learn new vocabulary. I wonder if the children in Reception can help baby bear to build a rocket that can take him to the moon



PRIMARY

YEARS 1-6



TEMPLE FAIR

by Jessica Viljoen

Just before the Chinese New Year holiday, Year 1 learned about traditions associated with Chinese New Year. Taking inspiration from “The Legend of Nian” the children learned about different Chinese New Year festivities and decorated the Year 1 classrooms with handmade lanterns and beautiful Chinese-themed artworks.

All this learning culminated in the organization of their own Temple Fair at the South Lake Basketball Court. We made and decorated hongbao invitations for each of the Reception children and teachers and designed our own imaginative games.

On the day of our Temple Fair, we held an official opening ceremony; showcasing our drumming and singing with Miss Emi. All the games were designed by the Year 1 children and played and visited by the Reception children and teachers. We played: pin the tail on the ox, throw the bean bag in the bucket, cup stacking, make the hongbao and more!

To end off the fair, we performed an impressive dragon dance, led by Miss Yuki and the Year 1 Penguin class. The children loved taking ownership of their games and were leaders. They explained how to play their game and took care to help their Reception friends who sometimes needed a little bit of encouragement and praise. Fantastic job, Year 1! What a wonderful way to welcome the Year of the Ox!



EFFECTIVE 'HOOKS'

by David Healey

'Hooks' in the primary classroom can be many things. They can be trips, videos, outside visits, role-plays and much more. However, they all serve the same purpose; providing some all-important excitement or creating a buzz as a means to introduce upcoming learning. In Year 2, we created a bit of a mystery for the children by leaving a simple trail of leaves, some unexplained footprints and an unknown package in the centre of the carpet (as well as a fancy crown!).

This was left to be discovered by the children. Who left it there? What might it be? Why would they do this? What clues do we have to help us? The intrigue was amazing, and each class happily filled the start of the session with questions, theories and general wonder. It is always a pleasure, as teachers, to see children independently developing their prediction and rationalising skills in such a meaningful and fun way. This all led the children to uncover our new core text of 'Where the Wild Things Are' and, thanks to this simple yet fantastic hook, Year 2 are already heavily invested in what this marvellous book might be all about!



CNY MUSIC

by Josh Shullman & Emily Hart

Our primary and secondary students contributed to this year's celebration with riveting dragon dances accompanied by our student musicians. This year some year six students were selected to beat drums and dance at the event. The drummers performed fast and syncopated rhythms while their dragon counterparts captured the audience's imagination with their elegant yet powerful movements. Both drummers and dragon dancers should be proud of the effort that they put into their performances. Bravo!

In Secondary, the Music department was amazed at the number of students who volunteered to perform the drumming for our Dragon Dance House Competition. The drummers worked hard and committed to weekly rehearsal, learning new skills and complicated musical changes. They should be very proud of their achievement, performing in front of the whole school so perfectly.

The performing arts department want to applaud the efforts and successes of our young musicians and dancers. Everyone's hard work was reflected in their performance and was a great opening for the Year of the Ox.



EXPLORING ZHENG HE'S PORCELAIN

by David Barton

In Term 2, Year 3 began the term looking at a new topic all about the famous Chinese explorer, Zheng He. We spent time researching about where he went, who he met and what new and interesting things he discovered on the way. Did you know that when Zheng He was a boy, his father and grandfather gave him a beautiful blue and white porcelain pot and from that moment, it was Zheng He's dream to find that vibrant blue colour.

It took him almost a lifetime to find the cobalt, which was a pigment used to make the brilliant blue colour. This blue pigment helped Zheng He make the beautiful blue and white porcelain we can see today.

Using these original ideas from Zheng He, the children's aim was to recreate their own porcelain plates. They first started by looking at, and practicing, different patterns and designs before finalising the design which was to be used for the final plate.

Using their final design, the children then applied this to their white porcelain plate using a blue permanent marker. The plate designs looked vibrant and were so good that, in the end, we decided to make a display with them. If Zheng He was alive today, I am sure he would be very impressed!



AMAZING CHINA!

by Blerta Prendi

Term 2 has been filled with exciting projects which focused on learning about the amazing country we live in. As part of this learning journey, the Year 4 students prepared a wonderful Chinese New Year performance, which involved singing, dancing and acting in front of a large audience. It was a joy to see them perform with such outstanding confidence on stage, dressed up in their colourful traditional costumes.

Additionally, in lessons the students have been reading and analyzing the famous tale of 'The Magic Paintbrush', producing their own 'comic strip' version of the story. They thoroughly enjoyed reenacting and freezeframing the key events of the story, as well as painting the characters using traditional Lingnan artistic techniques.

One of the highlights of the term was the dragon dance competition, an incredible event where all the children supported their houses, hoping to emerge victorious. In its entirety, this term provided the children with an exciting educational journey and some very fond memories.



“HOUSTON, WE HAVE A SOLUTION!” YEAR 5 ASTRONAUTS

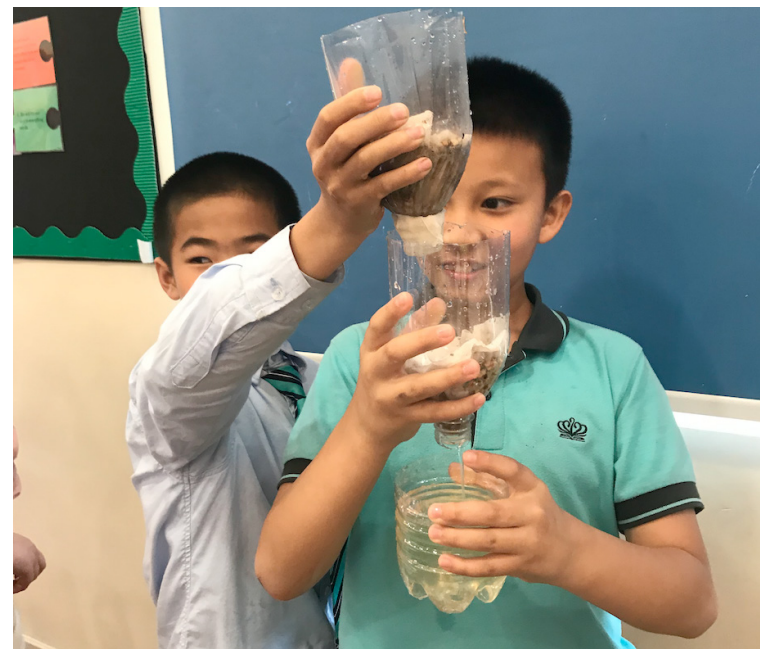
by Chris Thomas

3.....2.....1.....Blast off! Houston we have some exciting learning. That was the sound you would have heard if you went past Year 5 last week. To celebrate the start of their new space unit and the beginning of STEAM week, the students all took part in ACTS (Astronaut Cadet Training Service).

After a brief introduction to the activities, the students shot to the dance studio where they were blasted straight into their training. Not only did they have to complete an endurance challenge which tested their ability to cope with the physical challenges of space but they also faced the mental fitness course, which required excellent communication, teamwork and memory skills. Additionally, the students had to delve deep into the unknown of our STEAM challenge linked to MIT; investigating which filters would be able to work best to give us breathable air on another planet! WOW!

It was fantastic to see ALL the students pass the tests as well as showing a true passion for science investigations. After completing their space cadet training, they are certainly ready to accelerate into the space unit with pride and focus. As the term goes on, the students will continue to learn about the solar system with specialist assemblies and specific investigations where they will be challenged to identify whether there are other planets in our solar system which could sustain human life.

That certainly sounds OUT OF THIS WORLD!



STEAM WEEK IN YEAR 6

by *Jordan Smigelsky*

For STEAM Week this term, Year 6 were challenged by ex-astronaut, and current MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) professor, Jeff Hoffman to help test filters that could eventually lead to humans living on Mars. With Mars having an extremely dusty atmosphere good filters will be needed to combat this harsh environment. The filters will be put aboard the Perseverance rover which will then collect data to measure their suitability. An exciting and interesting challenge which Year 6 students attacked with great enthusiasm!

After having our assembly introducing the challenge and learning more about the Perseverance rover, that coincidentally just landed on Mars, we dove into 2 big investigations to decide which filter would be recommended. The first investigation involved building our own water filtration system using one or many of the layers of the 2 masks provided by teachers. This led many students to find that both masks had an impermeable layer which caused issues as it wouldn't filter the water.

After deconstructing the masks and choosing the different layers the students all built successful water filters. It was noticed which mask layers performed the best and we then moved onto our next investigation. For the last investigation we got to use microscopes for the first time to get an up-close look at the material of the masks. This gave us some great observations to make a final recommendation to the Perseverance team at NASA. All-in-all a successful and exciting week in year 6!



SECONDARY & SIXTH FORM

YEARS 7-13



VIRTUAL JUILLIARD VISIT

by Lindsey Elkins

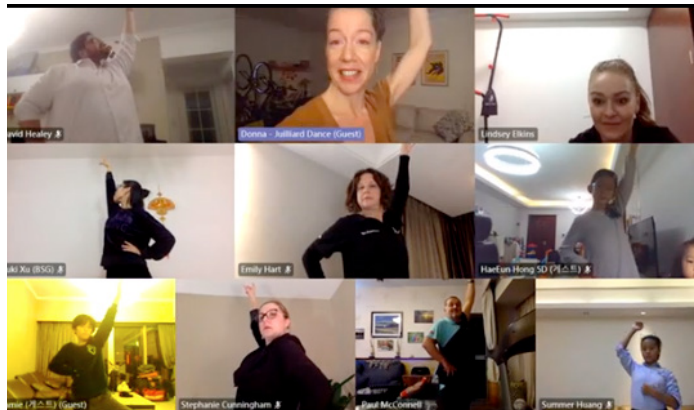
This past term has seen another two visits from our Juilliard Curriculum Specialists Stephanie Cunningham (Drama) and Donna Costello (Dance). During their virtual visits, they spent time with the performing arts staff as well as delivering lesson introductions and a parent/student workshop.

It has been fantastic to see many students making the most out of these opportunities and developing their skills. We look forward to their next visits which take place next term.

This year has seen a further implementation of the drama curriculum in collaboration with Juilliard and students in Years 7-9 have continued to develop their expression and creativity within their lessons.

Year 8 students have been looking at Shakespeare and have developed their vocal expression as well as demonstrating their understanding of the old English language.

Year 7 students have been working on their ability to become effective narrators and also developed their understanding of physicality through the use of masks whilst Year 9 students have been exploring the core elements of a play and developing their use of character and staging.



VIRTUAL MUSICIAN OF THE YEAR WINNERS

This year's Nord Anglia Education Virtual Young Musician of the Year Competition was bigger and more impressive than ever! Over 1300 students from 61 schools entered the the competition, submitting over 6,500 minutes of performance videos, and we are very pleased to announce some winners!



Woodwind aged 10-14

Hyun Kim - 2nd Place

Plucked Strings aged 10-14

Rou Yu Yap - 2nd Place

Percussion aged 9 & under

Edward Lo - 1st Place

Piano aged 15-19

Alisha Lowe - Special Mention

Bowed Strings aged 15-19

Erina Liu - Special Mention

GROWING ELOQUENCE

by Vilo Elapata

Last half term, English lessons in Key Stage 3 had a specific focus on developing oracy, with the aim of growing confidence in speaking and listening skills from our learners.

Year 7 students developed teamwork in their “News Features” unit, which culminated in an exciting House competition. They had to plan, rehearse and produce a news feature on the theme of “Beautiful China”, in the lead up to Chinese New Year. Students voted for the group they thought would best represent their house, evaluating their quality of research and use of technology, as well as clarity of language and delivery of oral presentations.

Year 9 students took this a step further, delivering individual speeches and “Taking a Stand” on topics they felt passionately about in the annual House Speech Competition. Students learnt how to manipulate language for effect, using rhetorical devices and non-verbal techniques to communicate powerfully with their audiences, to realise their intentions. Well done to all students for their brave efforts, performing their well-crafted and rehearsed speeches in front of their peers and the guest judging panel, who were very impressed!



HOUSE COMPETITIONS

by Tom Hart

It has been a busy time for the House System with lots of competitions and events taking place for the students and staff to get involved in ranging from Chess and quizzes to Football and speech competitions. The Romans are currently in the lead, but it is still all to play for with the of the Chess, English, Volleyball and Football winners still to be announced and the Easter Egg Hunt and UNO Championship on the horizon. It has been fantastic to see so many students and staff participating. Good luck to the houses in the upcoming competitions.



STEAM WEEK Snaps

