



## Principal's Blog

3 November, 2014

I cannot believe that I have been living and working in Hong Kong for 10 months. The time has simply flown by because of the intense activity of opening a new school, appointing the staff and enrolling the pupils. It has been a tremendously exciting and rewarding experience.

To be able to start with a blank sheet and place your imprint on it from the beginning has been the most satisfying aspect. It has been a privilege and an honour to appoint staff of such quality who share the same values and principles and who have the same motivation: a desire to ensure all the children are happy and successful. Everyone, of course, is new to the school – the staff, the pupils and the parents. While this is exciting, it is also a daunting prospect. I am very proud of how the school has come together, establishing an identity and a sense of community in a remarkably short time.

Most staff did not know each other and many had never been to Hong Kong, so to see how well they have settled and how effectively they support each other is a testament to their enthusiasm and commitment.

In the same way, both the children and their parents mainly did not know each other and it has been rewarding to see how happy the children are and how friendships and bonds are developing.

This all came together for me in two events. Firstly, the assembly we had on our opening day was amazing. I was very struck by everyone's excitement and enthusiasm, which made me very proud of all of them. Secondly, the impact of the Parent Events, where all the children were performing, the strength of connections made with class teachers and the displays of the pupils' work was inspirational.

We pride ourselves on knowing children as individuals and I think we have already shown that class teachers have got to know the children in double quick time.

We are also committed to standards and a quality delivery of education. That is why it is so significant that we have become the only school in Hong Kong to be a member of the Council of British International Schools (COBIS).

Being a member of COBIS is a benchmark and verification of quality. Regular inspections will be held to ensure that standards and quality are maintained as well as our own

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quality assurance mechanisms.

Why be a member of COBIS? Well it is a not-for-profit organisation which represents the interests of British International Schools with the British Government and other bodies. Other reasons are:

- Provides professional development for staff, helping to keep them up to date
- Networking opportunities in other British International Schools
- A wide range of competitions for pupils in the Arts, Sport and Debating, for example
- Providing up to date information about trends and developments
- Career opportunities – any of our vacancies can be advertised around the world to experienced British International teachers.

The most exciting aspect is our selection to be part of the COBIS Primary Games in Athens next May. It is a great honour to be chosen and an exciting opportunity. I know both the PE staff and the children are looking forward to it very much – there will be a lot of organisation and training involved but what a great experience!

COBIS also runs a series of conferences, seminars and webinars. One conference is being held in Beijing in March and we aim to send staff to that while the Annual Conference is held in London in May, at which I have been invited to speak.

What we are busy doing is working towards our aim to be the best school in Hong Kong. With that in mind, as the building work finishes and all the facilities become available, we will be well placed to deliver on our promises and help to achieve that aim.