



# News from the Dragon's Den



## From the Head of School – Mrs Anne Fowles

Dear SSIS Parents and Community,

Happy New Year! Welcome back to the Year of the Dragon. I hope that you all had a wonderful break over the holidays. All of our students and teachers have come back refreshed, energized and ready for learning in the second semester.

The secondary students and teachers prepared an array of performances to welcome in the New Year at their assembly this Friday.

We have had over 80 new students start at SSIS this semester with another 20 expected to begin by the end of the month.

During the break, our new Korean Counsellor; Mr. Hyuk Son, visited a large number of universities in Korea to build relationships with the admissions staff and introduce SSIS. He was delighted to learn that many of the top universities already knew of SSIS as they had admitted some of our senior students in the past. They welcomed the opportunity to hear more about our school and plan to send admissions teams to visit us in future. Mr. Son will be providing opportunities for parents and students to meet with him in the coming weeks to learn more about admissions to these universities.

Best wishes,  
Mrs Anne Fowles  
Head of School



**Issue: 18**

**Date: 3 Feb 2012**

### Inside Newsletter

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### Calendar Dates:

4 February  
SISAC Basketball

8 February  
Parent Teacher Conferences

9-10 February  
Parent Reading Volunteer Training (Elementary)

9-11  
ACAMIS Basketball Tournament (Hong Kong)

10 February  
Parent Morning Tea – Learning Chinese G3 Assembly

13-17 February  
ISA testing



## From the Elementary Principal – Mr Mark Treichel



A warm welcome to all our returning families and the many new families who have joined SSIS this semester. It is great to be back after the Christmas and New Year break. As always Semester 2 is full of exciting activities and events for students and parents to look forward to.

### Parent-Teacher Conferences – Wed 8<sup>th</sup> Feb

All Elementary students will have taken home information on Wednesday regarding the Parent-Teacher Conferences scheduled for next week on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> commencing at 3.50pm. This is an important opportunity for school and home to share information about student progress. I look forward to having you join us on this date. A shuttle bus service will be available from Singa Plaza for your convenience. Please check our website for the bus schedule.

### Parent Morning Tea – Fri 10<sup>th</sup> Feb

The topic of our monthly morning tea this week is "Learning Chinese @ SSIS" – please come along and learn more about our Chinese program at SSIS and meet other parents. The meeting starts at 10.45 am in the Elementary library. Stay afterwards to watch the Grade 3's host assembly at 11.45 am and then join your children for lunch if you wish.

### Parent Reading Volunteer Training – 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Feb

We invite interested parents to contact Michaela Simpson [michaelasimpson@sis-suzhou.net](mailto:michaelasimpson@sis-suzhou.net) regarding the upcoming reading training program for parents. Come along and learn techniques to help students during reading, learn more about the 3P's in reading (Pause, Prompt and Praise). The training program will be held on the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> of Feb from 9.00-10.30 am. This is worthwhile training for any parent.

Elementary Photo Gallery: <http://www.ssis-suzhou.net/ESPrincipal/Site/Gallery/Gallery.html>

Homeroom Sites and galleries: <http://es.ssis-suzhou.net:8088/esict/ES/Start.html>

### Upcoming dates for February:

Jan 30 - Mar 2	Grade 3-5 Swimming
Feb 1	Grade 3 Excursion – Suzhou Silk Museum and Panmen Gate
Feb 2 - Mar 29	CCA (Round 2)
Feb 8 - Mar 23	Lunchtime Clubs
Feb 8	Parent-teacher conferences (after school)
Feb 9-10	Parent Reading Volunteer Training (9.00-10.30)
Feb 10	Parent Morning Tea – Learning Chinese @ SSIS
Feb 10	Assembly hosted by Grade 3
Feb 13-17	ISA Testing – (Grade 3-5 students)
Feb 24	Assembly hosted by German Department





## Becki's Blog

Welcome back and a warm welcome to all our new families. I hope you had a wonderful break. It's great to be back and I look forward to catching up with you all during the semester. This semester I will be continuing with my newsletter articles offering you advice and ideas for supporting your child's education at home. If you have any issues or ideas you would like me to address please email me or drop by. We will also be continuing with the parent 'support a reader' programme. This has been highly successful during the first semester and has helped raise the reading level in many of our students. If you wish to volunteer for this programme please contact me and I will give you more information. Please feel free to contact me with any questions you have throughout the semester.



본교의 가족, 특히 새롭게 시작하는 가족들을 환영합니다. 부모님과 아이들 모두에게 유익한 방학이 되었길 바랍니다. 다시 아이들을 만날 수 있게 되어 너무 기쁩니다. 여러분과 못다한 이야기들을 이번 학기동안 하고 싶습니다. 이번학기에도 가정에서 자녀들의 교육에 필요한 유익한 정보를 담은 안내글을 작성할 계획입니다. 좋은 아이디어나 다른 가족들과 공유하고자 하는 사항이 있으시면 메일로 연락을 주셔도 좋고 방문하셔도 좋습니다. 지속적으로 '독서 지도' 프로그램을 부모님과 함께 운영할 계획입니다. 지난 학기동안 아이들의 독서 능력 향상에 많은 도움을 준 프로그램이라고 감히 말씀드릴 수 있겠습니다. 만약 학부모님들중에 '독서 지도' 프로그램에 자원봉사를 하고자 하시는 분이 계시면 제게 연락 주시기 바랍니다.

다른 문의 사항이 있으시면 언제든지 연락주세요.

欢迎大家重返校园，并热烈欢迎我们的新成员。我希望大家度过了一个精彩的假期。返校很兴奋，我期待在这个学期里能赶上你们的步伐。我将继续在本学期的周报中为你孩子的家庭教育提供建议和帮助。如果你有任何问题或想法希望能发表，请发电邮或直接来找我。我们将继续与家长合作“阅读志愿者”活动。这项活动在第一学期取得了很大的成功，帮助许多学生提高了阅读水平。如果你有意愿参与这个活动成为志愿者，请联系我，我将提供你更多信息。如果你在这学期里遇到任何问题，请不要犹豫，随时与我联系吧。

## From the PYP Coordinator – Mr Dom Thomas

### Welcome to Semester 2

After our long Winter break it is time for us all to get back to inquiring, investigating, questioning and learning. I hope that you all had the opportunity to relax, spend time with family and maybe visit other parts of the world.



I had the chance to visit former colleagues in Singapore and Thailand and it was great to catch up friends who I worked with in Suzhou and who have now moved to different places. As an international school community many of us are far from home and the connections that we make here can turn into long lasting friendships.

Grade 2 will be inquiring into this as part of their 'Where we are in place and time' unit. They have the central idea 'Relocation causes challenges and benefits' and will be finding out how these challenges and benefits appear to different people and also what can be done to prepare for when you move, or when your friends do.

This is particularly relevant at this time of year as we have new students starting and we also said goodbye to students at the end of Semester 1. The nature of International schools means that people will be coming and going and I am curious to see what our Grade 2 students discover about this.

This is just one of the exciting new units of inquiry starting this semester across the Elementary School.



## ESL Corner



### Comprehension

It is very important that the student understands what he is reading. While he may not be able to express himself adequately in English his parents can question him in his own language and he can express his understanding in his own language thus avoiding “barking at print”. This phrase means that he can read the words but not comprehend what he is reading and so he will gain little from it.

## German Department

Liebe Eltern

Wir hoffen, Sie und Ihre Kinder hatten schöne und erholsame Ferien und einen guten Start ins neue Jahr!

Am Mittwoch, den 8.02.2012, findet nach der Schule ein Elternsprechtag statt. Sie können sich wieder über das Online - Buchungssystem der Schule in die Sprechzeiten eintragen. Wir freuen uns, Sie dann zu sehen...

Herzliche Gruesse, Ihr Kollegium





## From the Secondary Principal – Mr Nicholas Little

I hope that you had a great break, and have come back rested and ready for all the challenges of the new year. Anne Fowles, Mark Treichel and I spent much of our time away from school in January at recruitment fairs in Sydney, Bangkok and London looking for new teachers needed for the next school year.



It is always interesting interviewing teachers and discussing education. We are looking for particular things in our staff: they have to be able to adapt to a new and very different culture, they need to know their subject thoroughly, they must care for students; things any good school would want. But as an IB school preparing students for the twenty-first century world we look for a bit more: teachers who can create a student centered classroom, who can motivate students to become lifelong learners; who can themselves adapt to a fast changing world and encourage in their students those skills of adaptation.

Technology is revolutionizing our world, and education is part of this seismic change. It is an exciting time, but also a time that makes our periods of rest so very important.

## From the IB Diploma Coordinator - Mr Matthew Marshall

I hope everyone in the SSIS community had a great winter holiday and happy new year.

Semester 2 is a crucial time for our Grade 12 students and hopefully they had a productive winter holiday working on assignments and preparing for their mock exams. The mock exams, which will take place from March 19-30 are an invaluable exam preparation experience and will allow the Grade 12 students to understand the DP exam procedures and also to see what areas of the curriculum they need to pay more attention to as they prepare for the real DP exams in May.

Grade 12 students should be starting the review process and going over the course materials that they have covered since G11 in order to prepare for the May exams.

On Wednesday, February 8<sup>th</sup> after school there will be a Parent-Teacher Conference to discuss student progress and the Semester One reports. Events such as this are very productive for our school community and communication between the school community and the staff at SSIS is vital for the success of our academic programmes. Therefore, I hope we have a great turnout at the Parent-Teacher Conference on February 8<sup>th</sup>.

Important upcoming academic deadlines for Grade 12 students are:

- February 6<sup>th</sup> – Extended Essay
- February 13<sup>th</sup> – Business and Management Internal Assessment
- February 13<sup>th</sup> – Geography Internal Assessment
- February 20<sup>th</sup> – Math Studies Portfolio
- February 24<sup>th</sup> – Math HL Internal Assessment
- February 24<sup>th</sup> – Psychology Internal Assessment
- February 25<sup>th</sup> – Visual Arts Mock Exam
- February 27<sup>th</sup> – Design Technology Internal Assessment

If there are any questions regarding the DP or HSD at SSIS please contact me at [matthewmarshall@sis-suzhou.net](mailto:matthewmarshall@sis-suzhou.net).



## Suzhou Singapore International School

### Tech Tips and Tools

#### Computers and Sleep

We all know that computers can be a distraction and keep us busy for hours. I know I can sometimes stay up far later than I want to, especially when using my computer. For teenagers having the self control to shut down the computer and get the required sleep can be very hard indeed.

Researchers have confirmed what many have already suspected; teens with a television or computer in their bedroom get less sleep. Sleep is important for everyone, and especially for growing children. During sleep, restorative processes take place in the brain. According to the National Sleep foundation, teens need 8.5 to 9.25 hours of sleep each night. Researchers in one study found that teens with TVs or computers in their bedrooms slept less during the school year than those without such electronics in their bedrooms.

Not getting enough sleep can limit students ability to learn, listen, concentrate and solve problems. They may even forget important information like names, numbers, homework or even where they live.

What can we do?

- Make sleep a priority.
- Get your kids to keep a Teen Sleep Diary. Decide what needs to change to get enough sleep to stay healthy, happy, and smart!
- Establish a bed and wake-time and stick to it, coming as close as you can on the weekends.
- Don't keep computers or televisions in your teenagers room (they are just too much of a distraction)
- Use Parental Controls to limit the number of hours or when your teenagers can use their computer. You can set up computers to turn off at a predetermined time.

For more information go to <http://www.sleepfoundation.org/article/sleep-topics/teens-and-sleep>.

Geoff Derry

Learning Technology Teacher - Middle School

[geoffreyderry@sis-suzhou.net](mailto:geoffreyderry@sis-suzhou.net)

# Suzhou Singapore International School



## Activities

### Activities Session Second Semester

Welcome back to a New Year and the second semester activity session.

Secondary students will receive all the relevant information in Homerooms this Friday, 3 February. Activity information which includes Saturday morning events and those run by outside providers will be placed on notice boards in the foyer, BN corridor and on DragonNet under 'Activities' for students and included on the 'Parents page'.



Elementary CCA's and after school activity inquiries need to be directed to the Elementary Assistant Principal, Rebecca Clentworth.

*Payments:* With the exception of Gymnastics and Tae-Kwondo all activities that incur a fee can be paid for at the school finance office, between 8.30 am and 4.00 pm Monday to Friday.

*Communication* regarding activities is through student notices and *Dragons Den*.

For Tae-kwondo and Kickboxing contact Bruce Beaumont at [ssis-taekwondo@hotmail.com](mailto:ssis-taekwondo@hotmail.com) and / or meet him at the advertised time and location.

For Gymnastics students contact [zeching@sportforlife.com.cn](mailto:zeching@sportforlife.com.cn) or [www.sportforlife.com.cn](http://www.sportforlife.com.cn) or phone 134 5199 7943 to confirm times and enrollment.

Stephanie Low who runs various dance classes can be contacted at [stephlowpk@hotmail.com](mailto:stephlowpk@hotmail.com)

#### *Saturday morning activities:*

Swimming lessons will hopefully commence in February, you can record your interest and contact information at the Finance office and you will be notified as soon as we have a confirmed schedule.

Football for Fun will be scheduled when the weather is warmer, but your interest can be registered at the Finance office.

*Transport:* The 5pm activity bus will run Monday to Friday. The Saturday morning bus departs Singa Plaza at 8.45am and leaves SSIS to return to Singa at 10.45am.

Students must be enrolled in an activity to use these buses provided by the school.

For any concerns or issues please e-mail or contact me directly.

Kind regards

Peter Fowles

E-mail: [peterfowles@ssis-suzhou.net](mailto:peterfowles@ssis-suzhou.net)

Phone: 62893179 ext 679

Room BN 116 Athletics and Activities



## PVO

### PVO Meeting

The next PVO monthly meeting will be February 15th at 2:00 pm in Conference Room 4 (the meeting room nearest the Admissions Office).

### Lost and Found

Lost and Found items will be on display for parents and students viewing during the Parent-Teacher Conference on February 8th.

## English Plus

# 2012 ENGLISH - PLUS PROGRAMME

## English as a Second Language support

Please **Enroll** Now

**Course duration: Feb 21 – May 10, 2012**  
**5:00pm-6:30pm (1.5hrs x 20)**

Tuesday and Thursday evenings  
 Snack and bus transportation provided  
 10 students minimum per class

**All classes are taught by SSIS teachers**

### Programmes available: (RMB 60 per session)

For Students		For Parents	
TOEFL		Adult English (Beginner)	
Elementary English		Adult English (Intermediate)	
Middle School English		HSK* Bridging Course (Extra)	
Other proposal (if any):			

\* HSK (Chinese Language Proficiency Examination) is the official examination of Chinese language offered by the National Office for Chinese Language (国家汉办)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ (student only)

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ M/Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Please email Susan at [susan Cheng@ssis-suzhou.net](mailto:susan Cheng@ssis-suzhou.net) ASAP

# MEDICAL NEWSLETTER



SINGHEALTH MEDICAL CLINIC

January 31, 2012

## MYTH BUSTED !

### COMMON VACCINATION MYTHS REVEALED AND EXPLAINED

**New parents often get flustered by the array of vaccinations that their child has to go through.**



Most countries have their own recommended vaccination protocols, which in the first 4 years of a child's life can amount to more than 10 different types of vaccines.

Most parents are fearful of the harmful effects of these 'foreign' particles that would be injected into their children at regular intervals. A while back, there were even reports of autism being linked to some of the vaccines. As such, we find that many parents tend to forgo some of the vaccines on their own accord.

As a case example, before vaccinations were introduced in the US, polio would paralyze as many as 10,000 children in

a given year. Measles affect as many as four million children, killing 3,000 a year. Haemophilus type B influenzae would cause meningitis in 15,000 children a year and rubella caused birth defects in as many as 20,000 newborns.

In most developed countries, we have forgotten about such an era where infant mortality rates were much higher due to infectious diseases and poorer hygiene conditions. It is partly through



vaccination programs that most of us do not fear these illnesses anymore. However, it is still necessary to dispel some myths surrounding the use of vaccines.

## Demystifying the fears

The fear that motivates parents to get their children vaccinated (or not) has changed, and it is related to many of these myths about vaccine dangers rather than the diseases they prevent.



**Myth: Vaccines cause autism.** It has been very well-documented in hundreds of thousands of children that there is no relationship in the rate or risk of autism. Studies have shown that children of equal age that receive the vaccines and those that don't, do not show any difference in the risk of developing autism. Nonetheless, time and time again, the fear of vaccination-linked autism continue to plague the list of concerns that parents have. Delaying vaccines only increases the risk of the many other serious diseases that can occur in childhood. ( For quick : [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/MMR\\_vaccine\\_controversy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/MMR_vaccine_controversy) )



**Myth: Too many vaccines overload the immune system.** There is an inherent fear in all of us when it comes to injecting a foreign 'chemical' into our system. The local cultural belief that all medications are somewhat 'poisons' only serve to reinforce the idea that 'less (medications) is better'. The vaccine schedule may seem intense to many parents, but the reality is that the vaccine given is only to stimulate a response from your child's immune system (rather than giving him the disease). Through evolution, our immune system has built to fight off infectious particles in the environment constantly. There is absolutely no reason to believe that vaccines will overload the immune system or cause a reduction in immunity.



**Myth: Vaccines make you sick.** This concern comes up most often with regard to the flu vaccine. The injectable vaccine is made of a 'dead virus', so in theory, it is not possible to get the full disease from the vaccine. However, there is an inhaled form which is a weakened virus, and in theory there is a small risk of getting mild symptoms, but nowhere near to the degree that getting the actual flu would be. With other vaccines, the most common problems are site reactions, such as bumps, soreness, or, less frequently, a rash, but children cannot get the measles as a result of the MMR vaccine, for example.



**Myth: Vaccines aren't safe.** Vaccines are studied intensively. Not only are they studied separately, but also in combination to make sure that taking more than one at a time is still safe and effective. Pharmaceutical companies usually spend millions of dollars and years of clinical trials to ensure their safety and to document any possible side effects and adverse reactions. An analogy that can explain the risks involved is like saying, 'a serious accident in a car is 1 in 100,000 and a serious vaccine reaction is like one in one million.'



**Myth: The “herd effect” will protect my child if I decide to skip vaccines.** This is actually true — to an extent. It means that if everyone else is vaccinated, then there is little or no risk of getting the disease, since no one can physically spread it to the unvaccinated child. This herd effect is real but the other problem is that if an increasingly large number of parents believe this and opt not to vaccinate their children, then there will be no herd to have an effect. In that scenario, the unvaccinated children could not only become sick themselves, but also become carriers and infect other children or infants.

**Myth: Vaccines aren’t really necessary.** This myth is based on the idea that once a disease is eradicated, we no longer need the vaccine. While this is theoretically true, most of the vaccinations on the childhood schedule are diseases that are very much commonplace still. Besides, there is always a minuscule risk of re-emergence of an illness. Sometimes, what we do not see or hear does not imply doesn’t exist.

### ‘Peculiar Population Dynamics’ in Suzhou

Most people who live in isolated communities have a lower rate of imported illnesses. However, being in a place like Suzhou Industrial Park and probably living in areas with a higher proportion of foreigners, the dynamics tend to differ from back home. When there is more frequent traveling and interaction with others who travel, there is an increased risk of illnesses for the following reasons:



1. People move and travel frequently. This poses as health risk as traveling through busy airports, train stations or other countries tend to make ‘imported’ diseases more common.
2. Children tend to play together in small communities, made up of people of different races and lifestyles in Suzhou.
3. International schools are made up of ‘frequent travelers’ who take advantages of short holidays and weekends.

### CONCLUSION - KNOWLEDGE DISPELS FEAR

- Read frequently and understand which vaccinations are important. Understand the diseases that are being vaccinated against. These illnesses usually have a much higher complication rate than the vaccines themselves. Speak with your doctor on the local vaccination schedule and understand the common side effects of vaccines, rather than being fixated on the the most uncommon adverse reactions.

**PLEASE FEEL FREE TO DROP BY TO ASK ANY QUESTIONS IF YOU ARE STILL UNCLEAR ABOUT YOUR CHILD’S CONDITION**

**SINGHEALTH MEDICAL CLINIC**

**新宁诊所**

**APPOINTMENTS : 67671655**

[WWW.SINGHEALTH.ASIA](http://WWW.SINGHEALTH.ASIA)