Message from Principal
Dr. Deborah Priest

Last week we welcomed our new and returning students to the 2015 academic year at AISM. Within a few hours of our welcoming assemblies on Wednesday, all students had received their timetables and lockers, had met their new Home-room or Primary Class Teachers and had commenced their learning journey for the year. I would like to thank all of the staff members who have worked tirelessly throughout the vacation in preparing facilities and resources for the students and to all of our teachers and members of the support staff for contributing to such a smooth commencement to the year.

In a competitive educational environment where the media chooses too often to focus only on standardised testing results and comparing schools only by academic outcomes, I would like to remind everyone about the hallmarks of a great education. In pursuit of academic excellence we must always remember that it is the holistic development of each and every student that should also be our focus. We want our students to not only reach their academic potential, we also want them to develop important life skills such as resilience, tenacity, and strong regard for their health, happiness and wellness. We want them to have a strong sense of responsibility to their environment and to their community. We still want them to be individuals.

Speaking of very special people, thank you to everyone who has donated toiletries and other items for distribution to families affected by the recent floods in Malaysia. We will be leaving the collection box in the Main Reception for the foreseeable future so that we can collect further toiletries for future distribution at the Asrama Desa Pukuk (Matilda Project Home) and perhaps to other registered charitable groups who are in need from time to time. We welcome ongoing receipt of complimentary toiletries from your travels throughout the year. The collection, storage, packaging and distribution will be overseen by the Service Learning Committee lead by Colleen Derham.

In the teacher professional development days leading up to the commencement of the year, I shared greater detail about the 2015 Strategic Priorities and Projects with the staff and I made particular note of how special our school is and how special each parent, student and staff member is to our team. There are plenty of ordinary schools out there and plenty of ordinary people. I hope that the Australian International School of Malaysia and its students will never be ordinary...I hope that AISM will remain a strongly connected community and will continue to graduate students who know their worth, individuals who have the confidence to stand up for themselves and for their values, students who strive to improve themselves and by doing so, inspire others — students who have the courage to explore, extend and excel every day.

Our multicultural school community is a vibrant and inclusive one and we all have a part to play in leading our students forward in their development. The more often children see their parents working alongside school staff, the more often they are reminded about the strength of the team. Many and varied opportunities, such as being a Parent Year Level Representative, assisting in Junior School classrooms, cooking some sausages at sports carnivals or assisting to make costumes for the School’s play, will arise throughout the year and I would encourage you to take up these offers. Not only will you be providing an excellent service to the School and the students, you will also meet new friends and contribute to making AISM a very special school full of very special people.
AISM Students Accepted to Top Universities Worldwide

Our Year 12 students, Ashwen Parthiban, Kevin Kam, Jasmine Chow and Gregor Moonen visited AISM recently to celebrate their achievements in the Higher School Certificate (HSC) examinations. Their excitement was evident as they chatted about their next course in life.

Ashwen who scored an outstanding 98.35% has been ranked as top 2% across Australia and the world. As amazing as it sounds, he attributes his success to hardwork and good time management. Ashwen awaits news of being accepted into the two top universities of his choice, both in the United Kingdom for the study of Chemical Engineering. Kevin with an ATAR score of 93.35% has been accepted into the University of Canterbury, New Zealand to pursue his passion. Jasmine on the hand has received numerous offers from universities in Australia and Malaysia, but has decided to take a gap year to gain experience in the finance and accounting world before she decides on her future pathway.

Gregor has always been inspired by technology and pursued Software Development as one of his electives in the HSC examinations. His decision to pursue a degree in Software Engineering thus is not surprising and he has been accepted into the University of New South Wales, Australia for a Flexible Engineering degree programme. He has won a scholarship worth AUD $4000 from this university and hopes to decide on a specialisation after the 1st year.

"Ashwen who scored an outstanding 98.35% has been ranked as top 2% across Australia and the world”

These are just some of the stories from our highly successful students as they make important choices in the lives and head off for their tertiary education. Overall, 62% of AISM students were placed in the top 40%, giving them wide tertiary education and scholarship options. We will share more stories on our 2014 Year 12 students as and when we get confirmation on their destinations.

Every year, AISM students have not only benefited from seamless transitions into education pathways in Australia but, have been accepted into universities all over the world including United Kingdom, Canada, United States, Japan, Korea, Malaysia and much more. The Higher School Certificate is an international qualification which emphasises holistic education and helps students equip themselves with skills necessary for their future.
The first two weeks have been very busy with the students and teachers beginning to settle into their routines. Students seem to be very pleased with the new facilities, particularly the classrooms which look very inviting.

There is still some furniture to arrive for the Reception and Careers and Senior Study Centre, however we are in the process of seeking student input to ensure that the space meets the learning needs of all students.

This year we have a strong focus on improving our academic standards as we move into the next phase of the implementation of the Australian National Curriculum. In addition to this we will be moving further toward becoming a ‘Visible Learning’ school, which will ensure further enhancement of our pedagogical practice and student learning.

I am very pleased with the presentation of our students this year. The students in the most part have adhered to our new dress code. There are still a number of girls who need to have their skirts adjusted to knee length and a number who are still wearing ballet-style shoes. Please ensure that the shoes meet our dress code regulations. I thank parents for their support in ensuring that students are in correct uniform when they come to school. A reminder that any student who needs a ‘Variation to Uniform Pass’ is asked to provide a note of explanation at the Middle & Senior School Reception before Homeroom. We are aware of the problem with the larger socks and they are currently on order.

Structure
Our organizational structure remains relatively the same this year. Mr. Martineau will still be responsible for the operational aspects of the Middle and Senior School. Any questions regarding events, timetable and curriculum will need to be directed to him.

The Middle and Senior School Reception entrance is now located opposite the elevator doors. We anticipate an appointment of a new receptionist over the upcoming weeks to assist in this area.

Communication
On-going and open communication is vital in ensuring the support and academic success of your child. A reminder that your first point of contact is your child’s Homeroom Teacher or Subject Teacher. All Homeroom Teachers will be sending you a letter of introduction with their contact details, if they have not already done so.

A reminder that any student who is late or absent needs to have this verified by a parent email, phone call or note of explanation. Students will need to bring notes to the Middle & Senior School Reception prior to the commencement of Homeroom. All emails need to be forwarded to principalrm@nsm.edu.my.
New Term Opens with a Careers & Senior Study Centre

We opened the new term with an exciting new Careers and Senior Study Centre. The Centre is a focal place for students to study independently between classes, to work collaboratively in small groups and a place to explore pathways to careers and tertiary courses. The AISM Career Guidance Counsellor works closely with the senior students to customise their subject selection that will maximise their likelihood of reaching their career goals.

Information and communication technology (ICT) literacy and research skills are a significant focus in the Study Centre through the provision of a MAC lab which allows students ready access to the internet including a plethora of online and school-based resources. Students who prefer to bring their own device are provided with a number of charging stations. Access to this technology allows AISM students to extend their knowledge and explore new horizons within this new and flexible learning space.

Other new teaching spaces in 2015 include two new Science laboratories, making a total of five Science laboratories at the school, and a large Design & Technology workshop housing a computer design suite and other modern technologies.

Careers Corner
Christopher Broadbent, Careers and Pathway Planning Coordinator/Teacher

Welcome back to school! 2015 proves to be another very exciting year for the Careers department. Our new Careers and Senior Study Centre has been built, and we are now in the process of furnishing this fantastic space so that it can become a focal point for our Senior students to work and research.

AISM is now a UCAS Centre for United Kingdom

Over the holidays a number of our departing Year 12 students were able to take advantage of AISM’s new status as a Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) Centre to submit their applications to universities in the UK. Being a UCAS Centre allows us to provide much greater levels of assistance to students applying to the UK and this is an exciting new development for us.

Collaboration with Taylor’s International Alliance Network (TIAN)

At the end of last year, AISM also began working with Taylor’s International Alliance Network (TIAN). TIAN is a service created by Taylor’s Group with the role of providing Taylor’s Group schools with personalised counselling and information on admission requirements, application procedures and guidance with application for scholarships.

Our first collaboration with TIAN this year will be a presentation entitled ‘Study in Australia, Canada, UK and US: Options After Year 12’. This will be an after school session open to all interested students and parents in Senior School in early March. TIAN and AISM are planning a number of other ways in which we can add to the support that we already offer students, so please watch this space for future information on workshops and counselling services.
Message from Junior School
Gracie Naftal, Head of Junior School

What a fantastic start to the year! The children have so quickly settled back into their friendships and routines, and the new students seem to be fitting in beautifully.

Welcome back to all the returning families and a special welcome to all of the new families who joined the Junior School community this year. I have enjoyed speaking with many of you over the last week and look forward to speaking with more of you in due course.

I have the pleasure of welcoming Mrs Kerry Smith (Deputy Head of Junior School), Miss Rebecca Lim (Nursery), Mrs Serena Barker (FG), Mrs Leigh Jannet (IM), Mrs Renée Dikini (IW), Miss Adelia Tommy (2G), Mr Elliot Roberts (2M), Mrs Amanda Kennedy (3G), Mr Justin Kennedy (3G), Miss Stephanie Lord (4M), Miss Annabelle Oughton (5G - Stage 2 Leader), Mrs Lisa Miller (Learning Support - Stage 1 Leader) and Ms Kelly Holmes (EAL) to the Junior School team. I know their experience and enthusiasm will be a real asset to the Junior School.

I wish everybody a wonderful year ahead and please feel free to come and see me if you need my assistance with anything at all.

Junior School Structure / Communication

The appointment of Mrs Smith to the position of Deputy Head means that the Junior School’s leadership structure is now better able to accommodate the needs of a school of our size. The Junior School Leadership Team consists of myself, Mrs Smith, Mr Pietsch (CCA Coordinator), Mrs Kerry Brown (ELC Lead Teacher), Mrs Miller (Stage 1 Leader) and Miss Oughton (Stage 2 Leader) and we all have different roles to play. If you have any concerns about your child, please contact your class teacher first. If you require additional assistance related to the ELC, please contact Miss Kerry. If your concerns are in relation to curriculum, please contact the appropriate Stage Leader. If you have any queries about CCAs or Sport, please contact Mr Pietsch. If you have any other queries, or you feel your concerns have not been addressed to your satisfaction, please contact Mrs Smith or me. Our offices are located in the Junior School Reception.

Parent Information Session

It was wonderful to see so many parents at Wednesday’s Parent Information Session. At this session I briefly outlined the work the school is undertaking in relation to student academic achievement. The teaching staff all participated in professional development on the Naidoc Week public holiday, where we were all reminded of the importance of fostering cultural awareness. I also reviewed the new curriculum and the role of the teaching staff in supporting the students’ learning. The teaching staff all participated in professional development on the Naidoc Week public holiday, where we were all reminded of the importance of fostering cultural awareness. I also reviewed the new curriculum and the role of the teaching staff in supporting the students’ learning.

KL Maths Challenge

Eight students from Year 5 will participate in the KL Maths Challenge being held at Nexus next week. Students from international schools across KL will attend this annual event and will engage in extremely challenging mathematical tasks for two days. A report from this event will be published in the next newsletter.
Sports
Athletics Carnival
Kim Bradley, Middle & Senior School Sports Coordinator

Thursday, 12 February 2016
AISM is having its annual Track and Field event on Thursday 12 February 2016.

Venue - Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia
JALAN REKO
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Bangi, Selangor

GPS - 2°55'55.45"N 101°47'06.57"E
Check Google maps 'UKM University'.

This event will start at approximately 9.30 am
School will start at normal time (8.50am) with buses taking the Middle and Senior students to the venue at 9:00am.

Information for Students/Parents - Food/Drinks; What to Wear; What to Bring
- Please remind your child to wear PE Shorts and coloured house shirt, hat and bring a water bottle and sunscreen and insect repellent.
- There will be some food and drinks available for purchase on the day. It is recommended that students bring snacks and fruit as well as lunch if they do not wish to purchase what is available.
- Students are to bring their water bottles as filtered water will be available on the day to top up water bottles.

If there are any parents who would like to help on the day please email me at: kimb@aism.edu.my

New Age Groups
Due to the amount of entries and ISAC (International Schools Athletic Conference) requirements we have introduced the Under 11 age group at this year Middle Senior School Athletics Carnival.
The new age groups and events will be displayed on noticeboards around the school for students to check. This means the age groups for this year’s carnival are:
- Under 11
- Under 12
- Under 13
- Under 14
- Under 15
- Under 16
- Open - 16 and above

Ages are taken from what age the student was on 1 August 2014. An example is: If your child turned 14 on or after the 31 August they are in the Under 14 age group.

I ____________________________ parent/guardian of
____________________________ in Homeroom _________ will be
responsible for the transportation of my child for the athletics
carnival being held on Thursday, 12 February.

_____ I will be taking my child to the venue
_____ I will be picking my child up form the venue

Parent signature________________________Date__________
Message from Performing Arts

Years 3 and 4 String Program

Paul Herron, Music Teacher

This year AISM is introducing a new instrumental program that will operate during timetabled classes in Years 3 and 4. The aim of the program is to add to the skill set already being developed in the classroom and to identify students with an aptitude for stringed instruments. Performance opportunities resulting from this instrumental program will be available in the established Year 5 Band and newly formed Orchestra program.

It is important to note that instruments and texts will only be available for use in the classroom, as they are a shared resource. If students are already studying a stringed instrument, they may use their own instrument. There is no additional fee or cost to parents for participation in the Years 3 and 4 String Program.

If you have any queries about the Junior School Music Curriculum or the new Years 3 and 4 String Program, please see Mr Paul Herron at the Parent Information Evening or contact him through the Junior School Reception.

Message from Parents Association

Nooraza Gatrex, President

First let me say “thank you” to all of you who attended our first Parents Association morning tea for 2015. It was a fantastic turn-out. Our first Parent’s Association Meeting will be held on Friday, 13 March followed by the AGM on Friday, 20 March.

All parents are welcome to come along and join us. We would especially love to see some of the new parents in the school. It’s a great way to meet people and get involved in some fun (and very worthwhile) activities. If nothing else, just come along and join us for a cuppa.

Our first meeting for this term will be on Friday, 13 March 2015 (Library, 9.30 - 10.30am). The following week on Friday, 20 March 2015 (Library, 10.00 - 11.00am) will be the Parents Association Annual General Meeting (AGM). Anyone who might be interested in being a part of the Parents Association as an Executive member or has someone in mind for a post should start thinking about this now!
Ski Trip 2015, 9 - 18 April
Wenche Naftel, Teacher

Snow, Snow & more snow

We are going to Switzerland this next holiday (9 April - 18 April).

JOIN US!

Never skied before?
Beginner?
Advanced?

It does not matter either way. 6 days of skiing with expert ski instructors in small groups tailored to your abilities.

Contact Mrs Naftel for more information or to register your interest.

HURRY, HURRY we need to pay our deposit by 15/2/15.
(approx. cost RM 9500)

The 2015 Ski Trip will be to the Verbier Mountains in Switzerland which provides a perfect opportunity for your son or daughter to experience fantastic snow and great skiing, whether they are advanced or intermediate or perhaps have never seen snow before. Our camp provider, Les Elfes International, has decades of experience and will provide small group instructions based on experience.

Two sessions of ski lessons per day for six full days of skiing are included in the price. The cost, which will be approximately RM9500, includes return flights, accommodation, all meals, ski hire and insurance. A 30% deposit is due on 15.2.2015. To book your spot or for further information contact Wenche Naftel ASAP at wenchen@aism.edu.my

Library
Denise Miller, Umi Salmah, Erin

Welcome to our wonderful library for 2015. The students are enthusiastically using the various library spaces for a variety of activities such as private study & leisure reading.

Plastics & Pastries, Book Covering Workshop

Wednesday, February 11 @ 9am
Our parent, Mei is holding a book covering workshop for interested parents on the above date.

Light refreshments will be provided as an incentive.