

PTA Newsletter 2020/21 Term 3

Dear Parents, Teachers, and the entire IMS Community,

The 2020-2021 year has been a tumultuous period which will forever be etched in our memories. Although we have been saddened at how difficult this year has been for many families with personal challenges, regularly changing schedules and lost school and social time for the children, we cherish all that we were able to accomplish in spite of the circumstances. We would like to take a moment to thank all members of our community for pulling together to ultimately ensure a good education for our children. IMS has lived up to the recently received HK Living Readers Choice Award of being 'Best Student-Centered School'.

Message to Teachers, Parents, and Founders



OUR TEACHERS & MANAGEMENT

A huge thank you to our wonderful teachers and management team for all their hard work and commitment. To successfully bring the Montessori classroom to the virtual classroom was no mean feat! We acknowledge all the extra hours and sacrifices you have made.



OUR PARENTS

Warmest thanks to all our parents for supporting the teachers and the school with the home learning journey. We know it has not been easy, but your efforts (including all the printing and cutting) were much appreciated! We are also grateful to the parent volunteers for all the time and effort you have dedicated to the PTA. Without you, we could not have pulled off our first ever Spirit Week, the most amazing Memory Book, or the 2nd Virtual International Festival. And to our PBLs and Class Parents, you have helped keep the community together, for this we are filled with gratitude.



OUR FOUNDERS

This year more than ever, we would like to specially thank our wonderful founders, Karin Ann and Anne Sawyer. You have both worked tirelessly to make sure that even through the different hurdles and challenges faced throughout the year, you have always prioritized the children of IMS and continue to do so. Regardless of the difficulties put in front of the school, you made sure to retain the quality and standard of education our children received, for this we are forever grateful.

Coming Events



20th ANNIVERSARY

We will be celebrating a big milestone for our school in the coming year - the 20th Anniversary of IMS. The school and PTA are working hard on planning many different events to mark this significant achievement. It will be a special year and together with the help of all the parents, we hope to further strengthen our sense of community! Stay tuned for more information on the different events being planned!



SECOND-HAND UNIFORMS SALE AND CALLING FOR VOLUNTEERS

PTA will start off the new school year with the Second Hand uniforms sale on Wednesday, 18th August 2021 across all campuses and the Parents Coffee Morning will follow at the end of August subject to social distancing measures. We are calling volunteers for the second hand uniforms sale. If you are interested and would like to volunteer, please sign up [here](#). If you have any clean, undamaged uniforms, please consider donating them by dropping off laundered uniforms at your campus' admin desk by Wednesday, 30th June.

Congratulations and Farewell

To all the graduates and parents, a massive Congratulations! It has been an extraordinarily challenging year, but you dealt with it and made it through! We wish you all the success in your future studies. To all that are leaving IMS, we wish you the best of luck and thank you for being a part of IMS. To the families returning, we look forward to seeing you in August and hope we are able to go back to a traditional Montessori style school year.

The PTA is always here to support the IMS community. This school year may be ending, but please know we can be reached at pta@ims.edu.hk throughout the summer. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us with any suggestions, questions, or to volunteer. If you would like to volunteer, please fill out this form and we will get in touch with you. We look forward to welcoming the IMS community back for 2021/22.

Wishing all of you a lovely and safe summer!

Warmest Regards, Reema, Simon, Yan, Yihan, Xing, and Patrick

Montessori Over the Summer



Are you anxious about what your child will do over the summer? Or are you concerned about how to maintain your child's Montessori work habits over the summer? Many parents in our community share the same worries, so we put together a list of suggestions from the school's staff.

Casa Aged Children 3-6



- THE GREAT OUTDOORS

Children at this age are still learning through their senses so use the summer as an opportunity for them to explore! Take your child to the beach and have them dig to feel the weight and grittiness of the sand, dip their feet into the ocean to feel the chilliness of the water, and bask in the sun to feel its warmth while enjoying the light ocean breeze. Or take advantage of Hong Kong's many hiking trails and go on a nature walk. Encourage your child to listen to sounds of different animals and insects, talk about the different plants and trees along the walk, or help your child start a leaf collection.

Activities
Go to the beach, camping, on a nature walk
Start a collection (leaves, rocks, seashells)

Sort the collection by size, color, etc
Display the collection (frame seashells, glue leaves to a flowerpot)
Play a game of “Categories” (taking turns to list different colors, leaves, animals)
Play a game of “I Spy”
Start a new or master a physical skill (scooting, biking, swimming)



- HOME

While the Casa aged child loves to play and have fun, they also love “work”, order, repetition, and responsibility. Allowing some time for your child to engage in free play is important, but one of the most natural ways for them to “work” and keep up their Montessori work habits is by including them in the daily chores around the house. Consider some of the following activities for your child:

Activities
Go to the beach, camping, on a nature walk
Start a collection (leaves, rocks, seashells)
Sort the collection by size, color, etc
Display the collection (frame seashells, glue leaves to a flowerpot)
Play a game of “Categories” (taking turns to list different colors, leaves, animals)
Play a game of “I Spy”
Start a new or master a physical skill (scooting, biking, swimming)

**Elementary Aged Children
6-12**



At this age, our self-developing and ever-growing children are eager to go out and explore the world. As parents, we need to support them in helping to build and set limits for their environments, activities, and relationships. In addition to the summer and sports programs you may have already signed your child up for, here are some additional suggestions on activities your child can engage in throughout the whole summer:

Creative Arts
Sew, knit, paint multi-day projects
Start a photography project with a theme
Write a play with friends and record/edit
Learn or master a musical instrument

Language/Literacy
Join a book club
Write letters to your friends and family
Find a penpal
Keep a journal
Play Scrabble or Bananagrams

Maths
Keep statistics and graph it out (time you wake up every day, how many pages you read, how many laps you swam in the pool)
Keep a portion of the family budget (how much was spent on groceries, etc)

HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY
Interview someone from another country
Make a map of all the places you visited in Hong Kong or places you visited during the summer holiday

SCIENCE
Conduct science experiments and don't forget to document the entire process!
Visit the Hong Kong Science Museum or Hong Kong Space Museum

SERVICE
Learn more about global issues
Learn more about local Hong Kong nonprofit organizations and volunteer
Participate in a beach clean-up

Reading

Reading is a wonderful activity for children to engage in year round! With more time on their hands this summer, children can visit the library or explore book stores where they can try out many different books and genres. Try making visits to different libraries and bookstores so your child can get a sense of the different offerings at each location.

Of course, don't forget to check out [Miss Coco's Virtual Library](#)! There are English and Chinese books, with suggestions by topics and reading levels. She will be updating her library throughout the summer so don't forget to check in often!

Many of our suggestions came from or were inspired by the below readings. For more suggestions on summer activities with your child, consider supporting AMI USA through these purchasable readings:

[Taking Montessori Home for the Summer | Association Montessori International USA \(amiusa.org\)](#)

[Summer Ideas for All Ages | Association Montessori International USA \(amiusa.org\)](#)

Champimom Interview with Our PTA Co-Chairs



(<https://fb.watch/6jTn4di5k0/>)

Read and watch as Champimom sits down with our very own PTA Co-Chairs, Allie Wieser (2019-2021) and Simon Hui (2020-Present), to discuss their experiences as parents and board members of the IMS Parent Teacher Association.

Simon highlights the enthusiasm of IMS dads to be involved with their children's education and school community. Allie speaks about her time as a board member and how she has made lifelong friends through the experience. Thank you, Simon and Allie, for showing Champimom and Hong Kong the passion, eagerness, and warmth of the IMS parent community!

Watch the [Video Interview](#) (Cantonese and English)!

Read the [Champimom Article](#) (Chinese only)!

Interview with Anne Noonan



Anne Noonan, our Casa Curriculum Director in Stanley, has been an integral part of the IMS Community for the last 19 years. As Anne takes a step back from full-time leadership at IMS, we thought it would be nice to sit down with her and talk about her experiences at our school.

How did you start at IMS?

Anne: I went to this Montessori talk in the Pacific Place in 2002 and heard Anne Sawyer, the co-founder of IMS, speak about the Montessori philosophy. The room was full. I was so impressed by Anne's talk and how she delivered it. I felt then that Anne was a Wonder Woman and I really wanted to meet her. I approached Anne after the talk and introduced myself. I explained that I was a Montessori teacher and I was ready to come back to work after having taken some time off to have my children. Anne arranged a meeting for her, Karin Ann, and myself to meet and asked me to bring my albums. Albums are books that we make in our Montessori training. It covers the different sections of the classroom, including practical life, sensorial language, and mathematics. In training, you make an album with each lesson in it, explaining each lesson, how each lesson's steps progress and the process of the lessons. At my time of training, my albums were all handwritten. It is like your Bible. Anne and Karin asked me to meet at four o'clock on the Friday of Rugby Sevens. So my dilemma was how do I dress up for the South Stands at the Sevens and for an interview? Can I go with my husband to the Sevens wearing my suit? And how am I going to lug my albums to South Stands? So, I brought a big rucksack with my albums to the interview and to the Sevens. So I was on board. The first school was on Queen's Road East where Pure Yoga is now. It was such a beautiful location. I joined in March and we started interviewing children in April. I brought materials from home to do the interviews. It was a construction site at the time so we blocked off an area to do the interviews. From March until August, we were working with the architects, measuring shelves and figuring out what materials we needed to order. We were also employing teachers. We set up two classrooms. The first classroom was called Asia. The second classroom was called North America. The kids arrived in September. It was amazing. We started off with 14-15 children in each classroom. By Christmas, they were full. Then, we opened up another classroom. They were such great times, great days. It was just so lovely to be part of the beginning process of IMS and setting it up.

You were part of so many "firsts" at IMS. Can you talk about some of your firsts at IMS?

Anne started the co-teacher relationship that we have now in each classroom!

Anne: I used to work in another Montessori School in Hong Kong and Jane Wong was my co-teacher there. When you get a co-teacher, it is actually like a marriage. You are with them for seven to eight hours a day. Jane joined IMS with me in Asia class and started the bilingual program. Jane helped guide how

the Chinese program can be implemented in a Montessori way and she was a great mentor for the other teachers.

Anne was also the first school nurse!

Anne: My previous background to teaching was in nursing and so I became the first school nurse. I worked with children in my nursing career which prompted me to explore children's education. That is how I found Montessori. Still, today, if there is an issue and the nurse is away, I will still be called.

Anne started Sports Day!

Anne: We organized the first IMS Sports Day at the Cricket Club. Montessori is about developing the whole child, including the academic child, the physical child, and the moral child. Sports Day is part of this development and I was eager to set it up. We set up different stations and snacks on the lovely Cricket pitch. For the first Sports Day, there were only fifty of us and we, with the parents, were on the pitch together participating in different sports. The snack that the Cricket Club gave us - a brown bag with a banana, raisins and biscuits - is the same snack we serve today!

Anne was also the first curriculum director!

Anne: When we moved to South Horizons, we had six classrooms when we started the Foundation Program. With the campus growth, managing the campus became a much larger job and I moved out of the classroom in order to have adequate time to actually manage the campus. I became the first curriculum director for South Horizons campus.

What are some of your favourite memories with the children?

Anne: I love the pure joy of seeing children when they come into school each morning. My favourite part of the day is standing at the gate seeing these children coming in and greeting them. I love seeing how they are and listening to their comments. I also love to see the children that had been in Foundation and in Casa coming through all the way to Upper Elementary. It's been lovely to see them here.

I have a funny memory of one time when I was dying my hair quite light. I went to my daughter's graduation in November and I was looking at a photo from the ceremony. The colour of my hair was horrible! I went back to my normal hair colour. When I came to school on Monday morning, a few of the children said to me, "Miss Anne, what happened to your orange hair?" I thought, "That's it. I am never going to do that again!" While that was a funny memory, I love all the memories of the children's comments like "Oh Miss Anne, you are wearing glasses," Or, "Your hair is messy today." The way the children see the world. It is just lovely.

I also love seeing the children become independent as they go through Casa. I have lovely memories of being there for children whom I taught in Casa and are now in Upper Elementary, who still come to me if they are having a hard day.

One of my other favourite memories is the first IMS Thanksgiving. I remember collecting six turkeys from the Cricket Club to bring to the six Casa Classes. We sat down and celebrated the holiday. It was beautiful.

What was one of your most rewarding experiences as a teacher?

Anne: For me, being a teacher is about developing the whole child. I believe being a teacher is to teach the skills of being empathetic and helping to develop executive functioning skills. As a teacher, I ask myself what do the children need so that they can excel in the world? I also ask myself how can they be independent in the environment? They need to be able to speak to people. They need to be able to understand if a conflict happens and have the skills to resolve it. They need to develop grace and courtesy and learn eye contact. These are the skills they need for life. Academics happen, but learning how to be kind, how to be empathetic, how to understand the world we live in, these skills are a process. It is hard to learn these skills later on in life. These are the skills that I feel are more important to develop as a teacher and developing these in the children are my rewarding experiences as a teacher. For me, teaching these skills is the most rewarding and that is why I love Montessori so much. I was glad that my children were able to be in a Montessori environment. I think Montessori teaches children to be better citizens of the

world. I also love seeing the Montessori process coming together in Casa. At first, a child may struggle with letters and then all of a sudden the child is in the exploration of reading. That is so wonderful to see. A child will say, "Miss Anne, I am reading my book," and the child gets so excited about it. I love when a child just gets a mathematical equation. Again, the child is so excited about it. For example, when a child is able to put together the trinomial cube, the indirect preparation for algebra, and then the child says, "Wow! I can do it," or "I get this." It just all comes together for them. That is why Montessori for the three-year cycle is very important. In the first year of Casa, we are giving skills to three-year-olds. In the second year, one is bringing the skills together. For the last year of Casa, it all comes together. The children develop from concrete to abstract. I love when I see a child develop like this.

What will you miss the most?

Anne: I will miss my colleagues, the parents, the children and the housekeepers. The housekeepers keep everything running! There are a lot of people here that have been here a very long time and I will miss them very much. The longevity of the teachers and staff at IMS speaks to the strength of the working environment here.

What are you most proud of?

Anne: I am very proud to have been here since the start and to be part of the process of building the school. IMS will only get bigger and better.

What is a fun fact about you that others may not know?

Anne: I do half a marathon every year in a different country in Asia for a charity run. We have raced in Cambodia, Malaysia, Singapore and Dubai. Next year, we are hoping to go to Europe. I also sing in a choir and love hiking, walking and I am learning Mahjong. I love meeting friends and experiencing different cultures. I also do charity work in Hong Kong and go to the soup kitchens in Mong Kok.

What are your plans for the future and what are you looking forward to in the future?

Anne: I would like to continue helping parents and children. I am looking forward to seeing my family, of course! I am also looking forward to travelling with my husband. Life is a journey. You are 90% in charge of your own life and the other 10% is, well, life, but 90% is how you make it. And that is very important.

A Look Back on:



SPIRIT WEEK

From May 8th to 15th, the community came together for our first-ever IMS Spirit Week to encourage connections between students and families, and raise money for the school. The three main Spirit Week initiatives were a school-wide coin drive, a Walkathon and an afternoon of virtual Bingo. From these initiatives, we raised over \$100,000 HKD - an amazing effort by everyone!

Coin Drive



Children were encouraged to bring in coins from home, and each day the total amount of coins were weighed in class. At the same time, class teachers were able to integrate the coin drive with their everyday lessons. After all the coins were collected, one representative from each Upper Primary class went with Mr. Adam to the Coin Van in Ap Lei Chau, to have it all counted and sorted by a machine. The total money raised was over \$40,000 HKD!



IMS International Festival 2021

INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL

While we were not able to hold our annual event again this year, the passion of our families and staff made it possible to share the diverse cultures that make up our unique school community! This year, we highlighted the diversity of our community through a Community Cookbook and the sharing of cultural videos.

Community Cookbook



If you haven't tried the recipes in the **Community Cookbook** yet, summer is a great time to pick some out and try it with your child! Our Community Cookbook consists of 38 recipes from 20 different cultures and has delicious recipes ranging from Hong Kong egg tarts to Brazilian cheeseballs. What better way to learn about cultures of the world than through food!



MEMORY BOOK

What better way to reflect on the memories of this past school year than to look through the Memory Book? If you have already ordered and received the Memory Book, you will have seen your children looking through the Memory Book, pointing themselves out, finding their friends, and reflecting on the unforgettable events of this school year. This year's Memory Book has a refreshed look and new content, including a highlight of the Upper Elementary class pets and a favorite jokes section, with jokes submitted by our very own IMS children! Also, as we say goodbye to our 2021 graduates, do not forget to go through the Graduating Class section. It is a wonderful highlight of our graduates, many of whom have been with the school since their kindergarten years.

Special Thanks

This wonderful collection of memories would not have been possible without the help of our school and lovely group of parent volunteers.

Cultural Videos

Walkathon



Throughout the duration of Spirit Week, IMS families were encouraged to explore the trails of Hong Kong together. Many families were able to finally meet each other in person, and our dedicated parent volunteers made things even more special by placing items on trails for children to find.

Virtual Bingo



Kids and adults alike had a great time at the online Bingo afternoon on May 15th, a fun weekend event for the whole family. It was organized and hosted by several enthusiastic parent volunteers and the winners received gift certificates to Bookazine.

Special Thanks

The last year and a half has presented a challenge in terms of connecting with other families, but the excitement and activity around Spirit Week reminded us of our community's warmth and strength. We hope it is a sign



In addition to the Community Cookbook, many of our families shared their cultures digitally! There were videos covering a range of activities- from cooking to reading to art. Thanks to the generosity of our families with their time, we were able to share 23 videos representing 12 regions and cultures. Don't worry, **the site** will be up all summer so you and your children can visit as many times as you'd like!

Special Thanks

Thank you to our parents and staff who contributed to the Community Cookbook - your wonderful recipes filled many little bellies with deliciousness! A special thanks to families that took time to film video content - your generosity helped us to be global citizens and stay connected!

Melissa Brewster	Memory Book Chair
Sylvia Young	Event and School Sections Chair
Yas Mostashari	Dedications Chair
Stephenie Huang	Event Pictures Selection
Jessica King	Proofreader
Imelda Lam	Proofreader

Special Thanks

Thank you for all your efforts and hard work!

If you were unable to pre-order the Memory Book, you may still be able to get one! Please contact your campus admin to see if there are any extra copies at your campus.

of better times to come. Many thanks to our parent volunteers who helped with Spirit Week. Because of your time and dedication, our children and community were able to enjoy the Walkathon and Virtual Bingo!

Walkathon

Wing See Lau, Charmaine Yip, Laura Valderrama, Shefali Gayawal, Suzanne Saw, Vicky Chung, Janice Wang, Katherine Kwai, Skiee Hui, Suzanna Tsai, Stephenie Huang

Virtual Bingo

Michael Chan, Stella Wong, Amber Lei Tung, Jessica Farthing, Kris Lui, Nina Boguslawski

Looking For Newsletter Volunteers

Do you have a way with words and want to be more involved? The IMS PTA Newsletter team is looking for volunteers to help with writing and proofreading for the 2021-2022 school year! We appreciate any time you are able to contribute!

Please volunteer [here!](#)
