



From the Principal

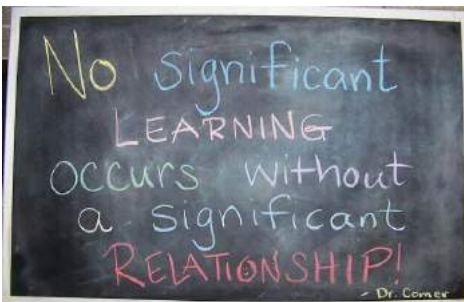
Mr Simon Leese



I have recently travelled to Mongolia, to attend a business meeting of FOBISIA (The Federation of British International Schools In Asia.) The greatest value of these meetings is to share experience and opportunities with fellow Heads across the region, but the region itself claims a unique place in the history of the (not always so) civilised world. As always when visiting somewhere new, I never find the time to do my homework in advance, and am left wanting to find out so much more afterwards. There is never enough time to learn enough. I still wince when I read in school prospectuses about the objective of creating 'lifelong learners' as if this was a new and laudable aim. (Also in my last school I strongly discouraged the use

of 'well rounded individual' - emphasising moderation in everything - and physical activity!)

The benefit of airport time-wasting is the opportunity to read, this time including the journal of the UK Chartered College of Teaching, of which I am pleased to be a Fellow. The edition is exclusively devoted to the neuroscience of learning - examining the effectiveness of teaching and learning related to brain function. Article after article looks at the issue from many directions, debunking many myths some of which teachers have clung to determinedly for years. But if you cut through the research, beneath



it all (literally) is the amygdala, a small region at the base of the brain known to generate emotional response. The research of decades distils to the simple truth - if the amygdala sends out a good response, the rest of the brain works with you; if it sends out a negative one you are up against it. It is obvious in all life situations, that if there is a positive relationship between the parties, the outcome is going to be better. Of course teaching and learning



demands a good personal relationship with the teacher, characterised by good humour, friendliness and warmth. Or does it?

One of the most remarkable teachers I ever worked with was grumpy, unsociable with his colleagues, had little sense of humour, and was unrelentingly strict with his classes. He appeared to be always on the verge of exploding with rage, but never actually did. He put pupils in detention for being just 'on time' for his lessons after lunch - on the basis that they should have been early so he could start promptly. If he had an amygdala at all, it was likely to be permanently inflamed. The students loved his lessons. Why? He had the most extraordinary passion for his subject, which was history, and let it be known he expected every student to join him in his enthusiasm. He spent his working life amassing the most extraordinary source material - there was no Google and no YouTube, no syllabus support material - just the accumulation of fascinating material over many years, which made for irresistible learning. He is talked about now by his students many years later, for his scholarship and *(continued on pg2)*

Photo Gallery - Swimming Gala



his passion which swept them along; no one remembers him for being 'nice' and no one thinks that remarkable or that it was necessary

But in general, the world spins more freely when lubricated by warmth and emotion. Some activities require a greater personal investment than others, and in schools stage work is high on the list. Last week, our production of Wizard of Oz showed what can be achieved when young people commit to an ambitious endeavour, encouraged and nurtured by experienced teachers. Most extraordinary were the pivotal roles played by some of our senior students, themselves remarkable role models inspiring those to come after them. To see our beautiful auditorium full of enthusiastic audiences was both exciting and gratifying. I assure our student performers they will remember their time on stage when they look back in the future, more vividly than perhaps anything else they engage in at school. My thanks to them all for a production we too will long remember.

Easter in the northern latitudes (a more important festival in the Christian tradition than the materialistically hijacked Christmas) occurs in springtime. New growth, new life, a fresh start. A time for optimism and looking forward. I hope our students are optimistic as they look forward to the new season of examinations, and use the time over the break effectively. New growth needs to be watered! ☺

Sixth Form Notice

Miss Bowden

To all parents and guardians,

We are looking to broaden and extend the Sixth Form's opportunity in the wider world outside of POWIIS and within the world of work.

If you are interested and are willing to be a part of our upcoming 'Futures Week'. Please contact Miss Bowden. ab@powiis.edu.my

Thank you. ☺

Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Practice Adventurous Journey

Mr Garlick



On Friday the 2nd and Saturday the 3rd of March our year 9 students completed a Practice Adventurous Journey for their International Bronze Award. 64 students set off from Taman Rimba car park with their food and tent on their backs and a map and compass in hand. They chose their own level of physical challenge and several groups took on a very demanding hike. 4 hours later we were absolutely delighted to find all 64 students had made it to our campsite at Turtle Beach in Taman Negara! Of course each of the 12 groups was accompanied by an experienced guide with GPS in their backpack but the students showed great independence in their navigation. In the evening we learnt some more practical camp craft skills, cooked dinner and there was still time to play cards, relax and watch a stunning sunset. Excitement was high, along with the temperature, and neither staff or students got much sleep! The resilience

of the students the next morning was all the more impressive as we got them up at 6 am and pushed them hard to pack up properly and in time. They then re-traced their journey of the day before, returned to school and packed up all kit in impeccable order. We were impressed by the level of responsibility shown at this, when all were tired and thinking about a good shower. The two days were a great challenge for all and I cannot think of a person who did not learn a lot from the experience. I am already looking forward to our Qualifying Adventurous Journey in May. With further preparation I think this year's group could pass the Adventurous Journey element of the Bronze International Award with flying colours. This is chance to remind all that if they wish to gain the full Bronze Award they must register on the Online Record Book (ORB) to record their achievements.

☺



Boarders' Nutrition and Fitness Workshop

Mr Daniel Alexander

This term, the boarding community organized a Nutrition & Fitness Workshop. The aim of this initiative was to create an awareness of a positive lifestyle and on eating well-balanced meals. This workshop was also meant to educate boarders on the importance of nutrition and exercising regularly. About 30 boarders attended this interactive workshop which lasted two hours.

In the first hour, Fitness Trainers taught our boarders some simple truths about good nutrition and how to take the restriction and

confusion out of eating healthily. They also learnt about:

- What makes a good snack
- How to choose them, and
- Some strategies for making sure they never go hungry.

In the second hour, our boarders joined the Fitness Trainers to perform simple workout sessions in pairs and also as in small groups. It is our hope that more educational and fun-filled activities will be organized for our boarders in the next few terms... 🎯



Boarders Shoot Arrows

Mr and Mrs Clarke



On Saturday 10th March 11 students took a trip to Penang Indoor Archery to learn how to shoot a bow and arrow. After a lesson from the experts they were kitted out and took aim and soon found it wasn't quite as easy as it looked! By round two though

they were managing to get more shots on targets moving closer to the bullseye! After three rounds there were a few sore arms but a lot of fun was had. Look out Green Arrow – the boarders are armed! 🎯

Pi Day 3.14

Mrs Clarke



Pi day fell on the 14th March and this year was celebrated at POWIIS with a number of Pi and circle themed events. Students across all year groups were tasked with learning as much of pi as they could. The eventual winner was Chu Jia Xian from Year 7 with an amazing 279 decimal places recited!

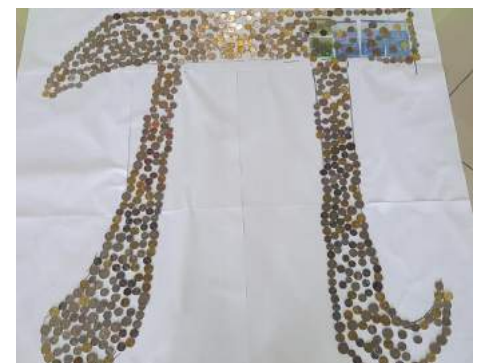
Each house had to take a photo of the Pi symbol using their house members. A lot of creativity was shown and after much deliberation from the judges, Somerset were crowned the winners.

During lunchtime students took part in different games, earning house points and raising money for charity. There were circular battleships, balls in jars, netball, football and darts competitions, plus a challenging Pi symbol to try and move around without setting the buzzer off – only for the steady of hand! However the highlight for most was the opportunity to throw a sponge at their teacher. There were some soggy members of staff on the day.

Finally we collected loose change and formed a Pi symbol in the reception area. Over Rm 400 was raised and passed over to the Humanitarian committee for charity.

Congratulations to Rutland who were the overall Pi House Champions.

All in all it was a great celebration of a very important number, and thinking hats are already on for next year! 🎯



Wizard of Oz Musical Camp – Sat 17 March – Sun 18 March

Mrs Boyd

Over 100 people attended the WoZ Camp this year. Every year the school holds the annual school musical theatre camp where students who are actively involved in the production stay in boarding and all elements of the production come together (lighting, sound, orchestral music, scene changes, costume changes, special effects, projections, etc). Over 20 hours of intensive productive work is condensed into two days; needless to say, the effort was well worth it as the musical's end result was a roaring success! ☺



Theatre Review

Mr Cranwell

"Next time I enslave a whole nation, I must check out their intelligence first."

I was privileged to have been involved in our production of *The Wizard of Oz* from the first production meeting, last October, and the ensuing auditions, to the final curtain call on Saturday afternoon. It was clear from the very beginning that the plans were for something special; and I must confess to having (but, unusually for me, not expressing) my doubts about the wisdom and ambition of the whole thing. The sheer numbers of people involved meant that it simply could not and would not fail: an orchestra; an army of mums for costumes; sound crew; lighting crew; set design and building crews; backstage crew; supporting crew; make-up; front of house and production teams. Last, but by no means least: the on-stage talent. I counted 178 names in the programme and that did not include the drivers, canteen staff, office staff, cleaners and maintenance colleagues who all played their parts. I have not forgotten the actors and it is on these (and a few others) that I will concentrate. I apologise if I do not mention all individuals by name, but nobody's contribution went unnoticed. I pity the poor teacher who will be taking on the challenge of next year's production because I do not feel it can possibly match what POWIS has just achieved!

I watched the Wednesday and Thursday productions from the 'gods' and the last two from behind the acting arena and I can honestly say I have never experienced a calmer backstage than what we had. Normally it is chaos, stress, swearing, tears and tantrums; but all was serene behind the scenes, thanks to the tireless efforts of April Boyd and Suzie Allen and their army of mums always on hand for running repairs. I just stood back and watched in wonder as their busy crew operated seamlessly. Everybody knew their roles and this can be said of everybody involved in all the other aspects of the production. Never once did I see an 'artistic ego' rear its ugly head. This was teamwork that would put Germany's vaunted "Mannschaft" to shame! As vocal coach, Khalifah Bennett was truly inspirational, patient and energetic: if anyone is capable of showing how it should be done it is she. The cast learned so much from her!

With something so technically ambitious, a few small glitches are inevitable, but the sheer professionalism of all involved meant that audiences were blissfully unaware! When you have a 36-piece orchestra, microphones are essential and these always provide a headache and ample scope for occasional malfunction. Shauni and her team worked wonders to keep everything going!

The play begins and ends with Dorothy (Shereena, Yr 10): she had the intimidating task of singing one of Hollywood's most iconic songs, "Over the Rainbow". She gave a beautiful and moving rendition and, throughout, displayed the vulnerability and wonderfully steely resolve necessary for her

characterisation. As Toto her dog, Daniel (Yr 8) was, in rehearsals, initially rather reserved and reluctant to get into his part but he grew in stature and was clearly having fun with his performance, as was the audience. Some of his teachers now leave him a bowl of water by his desk! Playing the scarecrow, Karen (Yr 13) showed a remarkable talent for physical comedy and was not afraid of the double entendres! She was also quite clearly in charge on stage, keeping up the pace and urging her stagemates. Jia Ying (Yr 10) was a marvellous Tinman in search of the essence of humanity: she gave power and emotion to her performance and there was a wonderful quality to her voice in "If I only had a heart." As the cowardly lion, Pei Hong (Yr 11) was unbelievably confident – she nailed the role from the first opportunity and, dodgy knee notwithstanding, revelled in the physicality of the role. Like Daniel's her costume was fantastic but not the most comfortable to wear under lights and being so energetic! Ingeniously, both had ice packs at the back of their costumes!

As Professor Marvel, Cecilia (Yr 12) put in a whopper of a performance and got better and better as the audiences got larger – she also had an intimidating number of costume changes! Ming Min (Yr 12) put in a bravura display as the Wicked Witch of the West: cast, I know, because there are few students with less evil in them! How she maintained that rasping voice through four performances I will never know! What a character! Yee Xin (Yr 9) had a multitude of roles, but will best be remembered for *The Wizard* – primary children may still be having nightmares recalling *(continued on pg 5)*

the power of that voice! I hope she rests her vocal chords. Emily (Yr 11) was another with a plethora of roles and, of all the actors, she was the one who put most heart and soul into their different characterisations. As Glinda, Aunt Em (and plenty of others), Hannah (Yr 11) was the epitome of elegance and niceness – typecast, one suspects!

And now, I turn to the student leaders of the production: Jaslyn (Yr 12) was forceful as Almira Gulch and utterly wholehearted in the multitude of roles she took on. However, it is as Choreographer that I really take my hat off to her. Dealing with the wide range of dancing talents in the ensemble must, at times, have been like herding cats. She had the admirable skills of Charity (Admin) on which to fall back.

However, it is to Gabriel (Yr 13) that the most accolades should go. His orchestration and control of a large (for a school) orchestra was awe-inspiring and the quality of sound was, in a word, stunning! The amount of work he put into this beggars belief!

In essence, visually and aurally this show was simply superb and I cannot adequately express how (metaphorically) blown away I was. Dylan Boyd's directorial skills were unbelievably impressive: he was gentle in persuading and I never once saw him lose his cool. He extracted performances from his cast that I'll bet they never knew they had in them. Actors are actors and drama queens – we never saw any of that. Dylan deserves every bit of praise coming his way. 🍷

Behind the Scenes of The Wizard of Oz

Miss Lane

A brief look behind the scenes at POWIIS' recent production of The Wizard of Oz. 🍷



Wizard of Oz Photo Gallery



Meet Our People



Miss Prianka Sedov

Prianka joined us in 2015, after teaching A level chemistry in London. She started teaching after 5 years working as a research scientist, having gained her chemistry degree and masters at the prestigious University College, London.

From her chemistry specialism, she has also taken on a full pastoral role as a Housemaster and enjoys the engagement with those in her house and their parents. A scientist at heart, she is pleased with the new science department website, and remains an enthusiast for her subject!

Prianka says she enjoys the supportive, family atmosphere at POWIIS and despite being a long way from her UK home, is very comfortable here. She loves the weather, the food, the diversity and the mix of cultures here in Penang.

She has seen changes in POWIIS since she came and welcomes the increased emphasis on student fitness and wellbeing. Very sporty herself, she says she can enjoy outdoor activities more easily here than in the UK, and her passion for Cross Fit and weight training has taken her to competitions across Malaysia. She enjoys the music scene in Penang, as well as exploring and travelling around Asia. 🌍

World Poetry Week at POWIIS

Miss Allen

March 21st 2018 was World Poetry Day and POWIIS celebrated its poetic spirit! The warmup started the week before with a limerick writing competition; congratulations to Ethan Chan in Year 7, Xiao Ya Geng in Year 9 and Alice Wang in Year 10 on their winning limericks.

On the day, there was poetry in every corner of the school: lessons began with a little

poetry, students were challenged to find a selection of poems posted around the school for Poetry Bingo, and staff and students expressed their poetic voices on the Poetry Walls in the English corridor. Assembly was turned over to poetry from all over the world as Mr Odeny, Mr Kearns, Mr Peak and Mr Cranwell shared pieces from their home countries. 🌍



Important Dates for March & April 2018

[Click here for full school calendar](#)

30th March to 1st April	World Scholar's Cup Penang
30th March to 15th April	End of Term 2
16th April	Term 3 Begins
20th April	Entrance Assessment Day
21st April	Outreach Program
30th April	Beginning of CIE and Edexcel Examinations
30th April	Beginning of Year 11 and 13 study leave

Watch for future Pulse editions!