



Welcome to the EtonHouse® Newsletter!

Message from Mrs Ng Gim Choo, Group MD

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My mother passed away recently at the age of 88. One of the best gifts she gave me was to convince my father to send me to university. Though she was illiterate, she knew the best thing she could give her children was a good education. My father thought sending girls to university was a waste of time as they would eventually marry out of the family, but my mother believed in equal opportunities for women.

**'She knew the
best thing
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- Madam Chua Siew Nai, Mrs Ng's late mother

My mother even sent my brother (with his wife) to the UK for his tertiary education. People told her she could have bought herself a luxury house with the money she spent on her children's education, but she never regretted it. She was always proud of our academic achievements and encouraged us to aim high.

Like my mother, many EtonHouse parents believe that education is the best investment we can make for our children. We would like to thank you for allowing us to share this dream with you. Investing in early childhood education is especially important as it sets a strong foundation for a child's future journey of learning. In fact, the younger the children the more difficult it is to teach them well. We rely on parents to support children in our Inquire-Think-Learn approach to education.

My mother's passing has also reminded me to treasure time spent with our loved ones. All too soon, our children will grow up and prefer to spend their time away from home, socialising with their friends. As parents, we have to allow them time to explore, space to think and become independent learners, while laying the foundations to stay their best friends for life.

My family and I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone in the EtonHouse community for your steadfast support during my mother's wake.

Warm regards,

Ng Gim Choo

What Makes a Good School?

By John Cooley, Executive Principal, EtonHouse Singapore

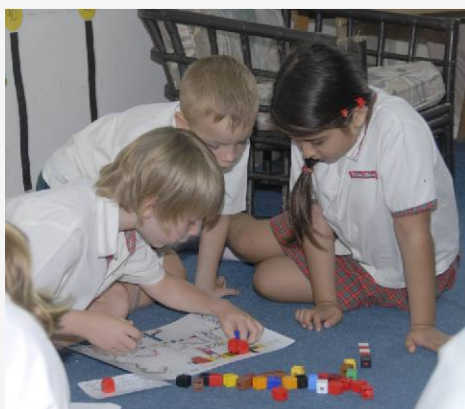


The article that follows is reprinted from a Broadrick Newsletter editorial that was written earlier this semester. It is a reflection on the nature of modern schooling in an ever-changing and demanding world - and was prompted by the experience of two days of Open House that had been held on the Broadrick campus.

Open House Days offer a pre-school/primary school the opportunity to review its core values and how a prospective parent may be answered if s/he asks: 'Why should I send my child to Broadrick (or any EtonHouse Pre-School/PrimarySchool)?'



What is it that makes a pre-school /primary school so special that it should be the campus of choice and financial commitment by a family living on the east side of Singapore. While all pre/primary schools will have their strengths and deficiencies, critics and advocates, it seems to me that the core values of Broadrick (and good schools) can be summarised as follows:



A School with a Heart. While no school will get it right every time and on every occasion, Broadrick constantly strives to be a setting in which children feel respected, cared for, listened to, and valued for who they are and what they offer, no matter how mainstream or different that individual contribution may be.



A School that is a Family/Community. Malcolm Gladwell's analyses in one of his bestsellers *Blink* identify how important it is that we trust our instincts when we enter any new setting. Our instincts tell us whether we belong or are an outsider. Broadrick offers a sense of belonging and connectedness to a 'family' beyond that of our immediate kin. It is a school community in which children, teachers, staff and parents know each other, care for each other and feel a genuine sense of belonging and trust. Hopefully, it will also be a community in which the great majority of our children will remember and cherish the influence that their teachers have had upon their lives.

A School with a Curriculum for the Future. In an ever changing world, in which the future for our children will be almost unimaginable in even 20 year's time, the contemporary curriculum must be based on skills, concepts and attitudes that can be transferable, adaptable, sustainable, character-driven and built upon the wisdom of the past. The Broadrick Inquire-Think-Learn and International Baccalaureate Inquiry Programme represent the pinnacle of research-based curriculum, designed to equip students with the qualities they need to be successful, compassionate, principled citizens and leaders of the future.

What Makes a Good School?

By John Cooley, Executive Principal, EtonHouse Singapore

A School with an Excellent Language Programme. Broadrick and EtonHouse offer what is acknowledged to be amongst the best 2nd language programmes in Singapore. Talented, fluent bilingual and multilingual graduates in the future will have career opportunities far greater than those of monolingual speakers. Broadrick's Mandarin, Mandarin Pre-SAP, Japanese, Hindi, Japanese and Korean Supplementary classes, English as a Second Language (and some Malay) presents as one of the richest, most diverse language programs offered by any school in Singapore. Bilingual and multilingual students will develop perspectives and cultural insights that will enrich them with an international-mindedness throughout their lives.



A School that Values the Balanced Student. Future work models will place great reliance upon flexible teamwork and individuals with the capacity to find solutions using the widest possible range of skills and sensibilities. Solution-finding will necessitate divergent thinking built upon an appreciation of all human potential. This is the reason for students to be engaged in a school program that is as diverse and challenging as can be designed. Academic success, sporting participation, cultural engagement, creative endeavour, computing acumen, social responsibility, confident language skills and a sense of caring for one's friends and classmates all rate as qualities to be valued with equal respect. It is this desire to foster the growth and development of truly balanced school citizens, with self-knowledge and sensitivity to the full diversity of their curriculum subjects, that lies at the heart of the school's integrated curriculum.

While subjective and certainly open to much further discussion, these five perspectives offer a persuasive opening discourse on the reasons for the prospective and continuing enrolment of children on the Broadrick (or any other EtonHouse Pre-School/School) campus.

John Cooley



Intentionality through Questioning

This conversation was overheard between M and E, the teacher, during one shared drawing activity.

M (child): (His right finger pointing to his drawing) "Here is a butterfly ... (his finger tracing an imaginary line to trace the distance) it's flying to the flower."

E (adult): "Oh look! I see some ants are crawling up (drawing tiny ant-shaped objects around the stem all the way up to the petal). Where do you think they are going?"

M: "I think to the flower petal. But ... what are they doing up there? (Trying to look at the drawing closely with his eyes widened)"

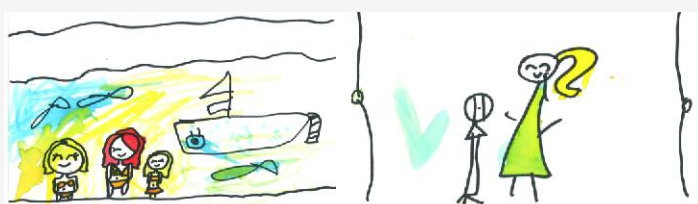
E: "I wonder what they are interested in doing up there! How do you think we can find out?"

M: "How about looking at the books at the library upstairs?"



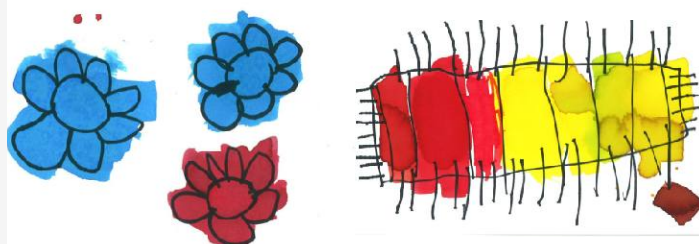
Children's graphic representation of their understanding of the concept of 'theatricality' after visiting the venue to make a connection with a proposed question of "Who lives in the environment?"

The scaffolding process where looking at details becomes a natural practice between the above two learners, executed with a high degree of partnership. The focus of learning is about listening to each other through intentional questioning. The questions act as strategy tools to synchronise any differences in perspective. The school takes the form of a democratic institution that is built with a construction of valuing learners' opinions with the underlying principles of respect, purpose, and relationship building.



Through professional dialogue we took a step back to look deeply into our mindsets to redefine our roles as educators. At the beginning of the year, we demonstrated our commitment to the process of thinking about practice into a collective statement - our Declaration of Intent. The declaration stands as our 'mirror' through which we see our work.

Reflecting on our practices, we, as the educators at Vanda, realized that intentionality in our questioning technique should be the next step to understand our image of child stronger. Hence, we learn to listen to our self-reflective views as we study our teaching. Learning through professional development, encouraging each other to give feedback on the process and by inviting parents to express their voices over the progress their children are making, are some of learning experiences we highly value to develop our listening skills. Our questions should be respectful tools of understanding individuality and diversity. The questions should be able to stand alone in articulating our respects to the individuality of our diverse child and family.



Clark, Kjørholt, and Moss (2005) define listening as an ethic of openness to and respect for the other. Listening becomes a value of respect, a visible means of being present for others. Positive relationships among learners are built up in a climate of mutual respect as these relationships are usually focused on the work itself and develop as both parties put their energies and thoughts into the task at hand (Ebbeck, 2010, p15). In the words of Rinaldi, "the value of listening is a metaphor for having the openness and sensitivity to listen and be listened to – listening not just with your ears, but with all our senses (sight, touch, smell, taste, orientation)" (Rinaldi, 2001, p20).

We are learning to listen more closely to the many different languages that children express to communicate their ideas, thinking, and feelings. Being such a universal language of building understanding for the learners, it is very significant for educators, who come with diverse backgrounds, to be sensitive to the complexity of differences. We should be attempting to create opportunities whereby we can actively listen to individuals and small groups of children. Baron and Norbert (2003) support the crucial consideration of the size of the group - in smaller groups a higher proportion of people are likely to participate by having more time for each individual to voice out his or her opinion. The children's role in the relationships is more akin to apprentices than targets of instruction (Katz, 1998).

Emelia Prayogo

Used by permission.

Children's graphic representations of their understanding of the concept of 'theatricality' after visiting the venue to make a connection with a proposed question of "Who lives in the environment?"

The Importance of Reflection in the IB Primary Years Programme

John Dewey once said: "We learn by doing, but only if we reflect on what we are doing."

This powerful statement emphasises the importance of reflection. At EtonHouse Orchard in Singapore, educators and children reflect on their learning all year long. At the end of the school year, all shareholders of the community are invited to share their ideas about the teaching and learning at the school. These reflections are published in the last newsletter of each class.



Over the last couple of weeks, we have given the children many opportunities to reflect on their year together. We asked them to think about all the experiences they have shared, the things they might have learnt and the friends they have made. As you all know, they are a talkative bunch, so, take a deep breath, here we go...

"Before I was sad and sad and crying and crying and crying. I carry my bag in the garden because I shy in the Zebras. When they come I didn't talk. Now, I am happy and I talking and I am everybody's friends and nobody hiding from me. I love the ballerina song, the Magic Movement Day, 'One Banana Two Banana Three Banana Four,' Student-Led Conference and when Phoebe's Aunty bring the pizzas. I like the Zebras class, I love my friends." Hamda

"I was nervous and I didn't know anyone in that class. I keep getting nervous but, when it was 2010, I was super happy because I knowed everyone now. I remember that we played hopscotch from Lucius. I remember we played the bear swimming on to each island and this makes us learn our letters. We read lots of books. I super love Student-Led Conference because it was so nice and I know the things and I show my mum I know how to do everything now. I remember we forgot the Agreements one time and Ben is feeling sad but we remember them now and Ben feel happy. I learn so much in Zebras. We did a dragon dance because it was Chinese New Year and I learn to listen. I find out reflections is bouncing off something and learned not to leave the caps off the pens. I love the Zebras

because it's my favourite class and I am learning every day. The Unicorns have got the same lamp in their class but I want to stay in our class because I am Zebras and that's it." Nicholas

"I am happy on the first day because I listen to the Agreements and Alex is my friend. We make the Zebra sign and put on the wall. We did a big, big painting. Everybody did it and we put it in the wall. I know Christmas and we put the toys in the box for the people have no toys, they happy. I like shadows and "What's the Time, Mr. Wolf?" in the garden so we can make so much line. I laugh when we throw the eggs down because it's funny. The children are all my friends and I happy because I like Zebras." Phoebe

Some Parents' Reflections On The Year In Zebras Class

"Lucius has thoroughly enjoyed his year of investigation and learning. We've seen him grow over the past months from a toddler to a young boy. His interest in the world around him has been heightened by the marvelous challenges and provocations set by the Zebras' teaching team. Many, many thanks to the Zebras community for making it such a great year for our little man!" Melanie and Tom

"I think that I am not only proud of Jiya but Zebra's class as a whole. They have not only grown in terms of their thinking and matured over this year but have blossomed as individuals. I have seen them participating in selfless causes learning about the world around them, charity, caring and giving. They have used their creative and imaginative thinking to prove to us parents what they can do. To be honest I as a parent have learnt a lot from them, the simple pleasures of life that we forget. The reflection of Zebras cannot be complete without the support and dedication of their loving teachers and I would like to thank Ben, Rajani and Lao Shi for giving them the direction, love and education that will help them become strong and better individuals!!!" Shweta

Teachers' Reflection

As teachers, we have tried to provide your children with a safe and stimulating environment, where they feel valued and trusted and where their natural curiosity can run wild. We have strived to provoke and challenge them in different and interesting ways, to encourage them to think outside the box and take risks when facing these new experiences. We hope we have supported and promoted inquiry and taught them to always question things, to take the initiative and seek out answers themselves. At the same time, we have tried to give them an idea of their place in the wider world and their roles and responsibilities within it. We hope we have made them feel special.

These powerful reflections provide another opportunity for us to reflect, this time on the reflections of children, parents and colleagues. By providing 'layers and layers of' meaning making over time we hope to reach depth in our understanding of our work alongside children. It supports us in our goal to be a school that respects the potential and rights of children.

Anne van Dam

Pennies for Peace

In late March Ms Lim, Ms Katrina and I were very fortunate to be able to be part of the International Baccalaureate Regional Conference here in Singapore. The title of the conference was Unlocking the Treasures Within. We had the opportunity to listen to a number of world class, motivational speakers with topics ranging from understanding cultural diversity to understanding education in third world countries. One of the outstanding speakers to address the assembly of educators was an explorer, author and founder of an organisation called Pennies for Peace, Mr. Greg Mortenson. You may know the name as the author of books such as Three Cups of Tea and Schools from Stones, both available from Borders. Mr. Mortenson shared his journey of being a young man setting out to climb the 2nd tallest peak in the world K2 in Pakistan. He was unsuccessful in this quest to reach the summit but as he came down the mountain he found an even bigger mountain to climb. That is: bringing education to the children of Afghanistan and Pakistan.

At the conference he shared the story of how he returned to America determined to keep a promise to build a school in a small village in Pakistan only to find obstacles in trying to raise funds in the corporate world. His mother was a principal of a school and suggested to him that the children could help. They started a fund raiser of saving pennies and in a very short period of time had raised enough pennies for Greg to return to Pakistan to build that school. So inspired was Greg Mortenson with the enthusiasm of the children who helped him raise money, one penny at a time that he started an organization called Pennies for Peace.

Schools all around the world are now invited to be part of the effort to raise money that will go towards building schools, in particular for girls, in Pakistan and Afghanistan. The philosophy that has inspired Pennies for Peace is a quote from Johnette Cole who said "When you educate a man and you educate an individual, when you educate a woman you educate the whole family".

So enthused were Ms Lim, Ms Katrina and I that children could play such a valuable part in this process that we decided to bring the information back to Newton and share it with the teachers here. Like us they immediately began to think about how they could take this valuable knowledge into their classrooms to share with the children and how the children could play a vital role in assisting in raising money one penny at a time. As a school community we enrolled in the Pennies for Peace Fund Raising drive. We asked parents to be part of this with their children by collecting those annoying coins in the bottom of their bag or weighing down their fob pockets. It was our hope to involve the children, the parents as well as companies who may be associated with the school. Much to our absolute delight the school community embraced the initiative and just as Greg had found in his mother's school we found the most enthusiastic participants in our children. We received stories where dads were asked to empty their pocket each morning, asked to take money boxes into the office to collect from colleagues and even grandparents visiting Singapore were encouraged by the children



to donate. Some comments received by parents about the drive were most encouraging:

"Pennies for Peace is a great idea! Will be sure to hunt them down with the kids and send them to school. Cheers."

"First of all, I am really jealous and excited to hear that you got to meet Greg Mortenson. Three Cups of Tea is my most favourite book to read and to give as a gift. Secondly, it's equally exciting to know that EtonHouse has also joined in the effort. It sets a great example for the kids and is an equally great thing to learn. I will definitely reinforce this at home and encourage my son to join in. Great effort! Thanks."

"I applaud you on joining the Pennies for Peace movement. What a great way to raise awareness in our community, encourage our community to help the less fortunate, and remind us of what privileged lives we lead here in Singapore."

As an aside, in addition to this the teachers began using the notion of money in class as sorting and maths activities and to do comparisons between what we have and what people in other parts of the world have.

The N2 for example were looking at schools and had planned a field trip to our sister school in Orchard so children could note similarities. Now with Pennies for Peace the teachers decided to take it one step further and look at the schools in Pakistan to compare both the similarities and the differences between all of the schools.

We are most hopeful that this caring attitude engendered through this initiative will become an integral part of the children's learning.

A huge 'thank you' must go to those who supported the Pennies for Peace initiative. We have to date raised SGD \$1043.00 Well-done everyone!

For further information visit the website

www.penniesforpeace.org



A place for children to discover, express and represent Our new art studio at EtonHouse Outram.

The teaching team at Outram are very proud and excited to introduce our new art studio at Outram. This beautiful space has been transformed from an outdoor dining area to a space where children can create as young artists!

The experience of transforming the area has united teachers as a team; we strived to contribute and collaborate to make this space special for the children at our centre

After many meetings, brainstorming sessions and friendly debates..... We then began implementing ideas and engaging in the collection of resources to make our art studio come to life!

Our dedicated teachers have participated in shopping ventures, sorting, classifying, and presenting this space. The object and aim was that it would be accessible, organized and child friendly. This is a space where every thing has a home, where every child can find and use things with ease.

Before the transformation – Our outdoor area catered for dining needs...however the children now eat in their classrooms. They find this cooler, calmer environment more relaxing. Teachers, parents and children have commented that it is now a more peaceful time where all members of the class can exchange dialogues and model good 'eating behaviours' through this personal classroom dining.

Introducing our new transformed space.....

Welcome to our vibrant space for the '100 languages of children' to be explored.

Loris Malaguzzi (Loris Malaguzzi (1920-1994) who became the inspiration behind the educational experiences in Reggio Emilia) believed that children have over 100 languages to express and demonstrate their thoughts, feelings and ideas. By providing children with more opportunities and access to these languages such as clay, wire, drawing, painting, collage etc. We then give the children many ways to share their competencies as young learners and inquirers!

We are delighted to share:



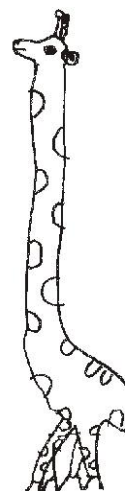
The view of our new art studio from the door way. We have created small group working spaces for children and teachers to enjoy quality interactions and creative sessions.



Our innovative teachers have created a beautiful display area using recycled wooden crates. These crates have been sanded down, made safe and mounted to the wall. We can see how effective they have been in creating this aesthetic environment. All 'mark making tools' have been displayed here, in transparent containers for the children to observe and evaluate what they need.



Our construction material area, where all items are displayed in transparent containers. This vibrant display entices young artists to explore and engage with rich materials such as ribbon, varied paper, straws, strings, plastic items and more! We are aiming to embed reducing, recycling and reusing as a key value in this area. Hence, many of our materials are supporting this goal. We now have a 'mini recycling' area at our reception, this invites parents to contribute and support the continuous replenishing of materials.



EtonHouse 764 Celebrates Earth Day!

Celebrating Earth Day has become a tradition at our school since 2007. Every year, the organising committee and staff organise learning experiences that parents and families get involved in and our students learn more about the environment and the conservation of energy.



Earth Day Parade the N1 Sunflowers with their Green messages, "Don't waste!" and "Throw rubbish in bin"

This year, the school decided to involve parents and families through their participation in a Veggie Food Fair where parent volunteers prepare and serve small servings of vegetarian/healthy food from their home countries. Apart from environmental awareness and care, this event was planned to help bridge the gap between cultures, in view of the diverse cultural backgrounds of the 764 community. The Veggie Food Fair idea was also inspired by the school's aspiration to promote the eating of more vegetables in our students and families, in line with our commitment to educate our students in healthy eating and an early start to thinking about the (environmental) effects of our actions and inactions in the long term.



Mrs. Fatima Mustafa, mother of Nina Palany of N2 Petunias serving Mr. John Cooley, Executive Principal (Singapore) string-hoppers (putu mayam) at the Indian Food Stall during Veggie Food Fair.



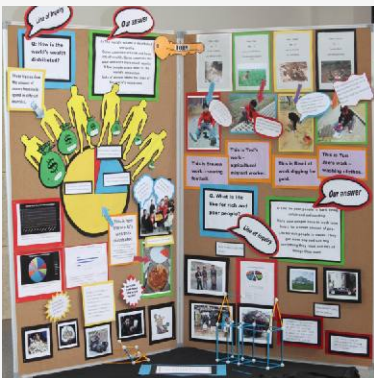
Tree planting by K2 Orchids during Earth Week.

Y6 Exhibition at Suzhou EtonHouse

The Y6 Exhibition is the culmination of the Primary Years Programme in an International Baccalaureate school.



At Suzhou this exhibition took place at the end of May, and began with the premiere of a song written especially for the occasion Sharing the Planet. The students' performance, in T shirts they designed themselves to reflect the central ideas in their units of inquiry, was greeted enthusiastically by the parents.



The event continued with displays detailing the whole process of the inquiry from the tuning in activities undertaken several weeks earlier, to the students' exploration of the inquiry and the questions they wished to raise. This led to the final presentation of their ideas displayed in the school's auditorium. Parents then became keen participants in the interactive items the students had prepared. This involved activities such as studying bacterial growth from samples collected around the school, playing a game to show how wealth distribution is not fair, to a quiz encouraging the parents, and later on the rest of the children in the school, to find out facts and figures from around the displays.



The whole exhibition process had started several weeks earlier with members of staff throughout the school providing and delivering tuning in activities and visits on the theme of Sharing the Planet. The children decide to inquire into ideas on the distribution of wealth and poverty, and the patterns of disease throughout the world.

They explored their ideas and questions in many ways using books, the internet and local visits. For example, they visited a local village that was being displaced to make way for economic development. The students interviewed the villagers in Chinese on their views of their new homes and the loss of their village, and how easy it was for them to access medical care

This was real learning grounded in the students understanding of the world and their place in it. It exemplified so many of the factors of good learning that are being developed here at EtonHouse. It was a focus not just for the Y6 students and their teacher but for the whole school community. The standards the children demonstrated were an impressive culmination of their International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme primary and delivered in a language that is not the mother tongue of any of them.



Students from Y6 presenting their work to the parents and visitors of the Exhibition

Xian Hi- Tech International School (XHIS) has had an exciting year of redevelopment in both curriculum and the physical environment.

From August to December 2009 we completely refurbished the school. The school was given a much needed face lift - fresh paint throughout the building, the addition of dividing walls to create additional language rooms, and boys and girls locker rooms. An art room was created this has provided not only specialist art lessons to students but also helped to create a warm school environment.



This was the school's first year using the International Baccalaureate (IB). XHIS has started to implement the framework for the Primary Years Programme (PYP) and the Middle Years Programme (MYP). This has been largely very successful and provided the parent community with clear direction in curriculum and assessment. A number of parent information sessions have been held to keep the community informed of the changes. This has been on the whole well received and has been a year of education and change for staff. 2010/11 should see further development in the PYP with the literacy and numeracy resources arriving. This should tighten the programme and provide depth in curriculum and assessment. The MYP will continue to look at assessment and curriculum development. A concern from parents is external validation. Next year the school will look into the viability of the ACERS. This will provide validation to our MYP/DP programmes.

Next school year will have two major focuses:

- We are now an International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP) Candidate school. We will be preparing ourselves for pre-authorisation visit early September. The visit will give us important feedback on where to next. The goal is to gain full authorisation by the end of June 2011.
- Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). We will begin our schools self-study. This will involve the entire staff and members of the community critically viewing the school. As a school we will write our report with the four focus areas being:
 - organisation for student learning
 - curriculum, instruction and learning
 - support for student personal and academic growth
 - resource management and development

A solid school foundation has been laid this year; next year we can further develop IB programmes and create rigor in our curriculum and assessment.

Alasdair Maclean

EtonHouse Education Centre (EEC) in China:

In 2008, five young early childhood graduates from the early childhood course at Shandong University in China, commenced their studies in Singapore as students enrolled in the Diploma of Preschool Education (Teaching) at EtonHouse Education Centre. The students were also 'attached' to several of the Singapore preschools for on-the-job training to ensure sound connections between their (theoretical) studies and their classroom practice. Their learning journey was complicated by language (studying in English) and distance from home and family, however all students successfully completed their studies.



Ms Carol in her classroom in EH Yiwu

Two of the students, Lucy Qu and Susan Zhang returned to China upon completion of their Diploma to commence their teaching careers at EtonHouse Jinan in 2009. At the beginning of 2010, Ellen Yang and Carol Yang joined the staff at EtonHouse Yiwu and Alex Liu joined her colleagues in EH Jinan. All graduates currently hold positions of classroom teacher in the Chinese divisions of the EH International schools and work to support local colleagues in understanding more about documentation and inquiry as a means of learning and teaching.



Ms Ellen Yang (second from left) at the EH combined Professional Development session at Wuxi 30th May 2010

The EEC has just interviewed a second group of early childhood graduates from Universities in Jinan and Chengdu. It is hoped that 10-12 students will commence their studies with the EEC in September this year, ready to take up positions in EH China early years settings in August 2011.

Having such diverse experience in both Chinese and Singaporean teaching contexts, ensures our teachers are well equipped to work across International settings.

Heather Conroy,
Academic Head EtonHouse Education Centre



(L-R) Ms Belynda Seale (Wuxi); Ms Lucy Qu; Ms Heather Conroy(Singapore); Ms Alex Liu; Ms Marion McMahon (Principal EH Jinan) (Absent Susan Zhang)

Edvance Pre-schools with the help and support of EtonHouse, is geared up to start global quality early childhood education centres in India. Our vision is to create responsible global citizens and brilliant leaders of tomorrow by laying a superior foundation through quality early childhood education. **Our model pre-schools at Pune and Mumbai** have been immensely successful and have become a preferred choice of the discerning parents desiring a holistic learning experience in the early years of their child's life.

Over the next few years, we aim to provide quality pre-school learning across the length and breadth of the nation through a strong franchisee network. We look forward to working with franchise partners who share the commitment, and are motivated to create a social impact through a rewarding financial venture.

"We aim at providing a broad and balanced international curriculum, which supports individual needs and allows students to achieve their full potential and to enable students to acquire the necessary life skills. At Vivero, we foster the future leaders of India into global citizens of tomorrow in a multi-cultural environment" says group **CEO Anshul Arora**.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Teachers like children and everyone else- feel the need to grow in their competencies; they want to transform experiences into thoughts, thoughts into reflections, and reflections into actions.

Loris Malaguzzi



Anne Van Dam, the Pre-school director of EtonHouse Orchard spearheaded a professional training program for the team of Edvance Pre-schools, teachers of VIVERO and SERRA on the 1st and 2nd of June 2010. Over the two days Anne shared with us topics that drive Learning and Teaching Process - The Educational Project of Reggio Emilia Approach, The 7 big ideas of EtonHouse, Understanding Inquiry-based Learning, Teachers as researchers, the Image of the Child and what encompasses a well-designed Pre-school Education Program.

To share the context of each topic of the PD, Anne shared several powerful videos which supported us in understanding the principles of the topics. Involvement in small group discussions helped facilitate sharing of experiences. These thoughts collectively encouraged powerful threads for reflective thinking. This workshop helped the educators think deeply as to how the principles shared,

can relate to our school's local context; to reflect on our own values and beliefs in relation to teaching and learning process.



The interaction with Anne has been extremely enlightening and all three centres have started their new academic year with rich thoughts and provocations.

VIVERO INTERNATIONAL PRE-SCHOOL, Pune - jump starts year 2

The flagship centre commenced session in June 2009 in a 10,000 sq. ft. specially renovated bungalow in Kalyani Nagar, an up-market area in the heart of Pune city. The centre has met with phenomenal success and has **ninety-eight children across 15 nationalities**. This year the centre has initiated the "Friends of Vivero" support group to facilitate partnership with parents and to strengthen the bond between parents, children and the school.

An Inquiry into Exploring their world at VIVERO, Pune.

The Children in Kindergarten I are currently exploring and investigating senses. To support this inquiry, Paul Marty's mother Marie wanted to share a cooking lesson to give the children an opportunity to explore their senses during an engagement of baking "Pat Sables" - a French Sweet Cookie. Children participated in the process of making the cookies at school. Marie (a member of "Friends of Vivero" group) involved the children in the process of experiencing and sharing their thoughts and ideas about what they thought of foods from different parts of the world. Marie shared with the children interesting facts about food from France. This multi-cultural environment provided children an opportunity to learn, to respect, and to be aware of the similarities and differences within our socio-cultural context.



Balancing Academic with Play at SERRA INTERNATIONAL PRE-SCHOOL, Pune

The key challenge we face at SERRA is balancing the traditional needs of academics with a play based curriculum. We value the importance of academics but have been working at integrating the elements of play in the teaching-learning programme. The school offers quality learning flexible to accommodate child responsiveness to the curriculum and is teacher framed.



SERRA kick started the second year with over fifty-six children. The Pre-nursery is exploring "Who we are" while Nursery explores the sense of belonging with families. This year, the batch of Kindergarten-1 explores the concept of Friends and School.



At SERRA International we work towards high quality teaching staff who have a deep respect, compassion and understanding of young children. Regular Professional Development workshops are held to provide teachers with guidelines and updates in the field of Early Childhood Education.



Quality Pre-school now in Mumbai - VIVERO Powai



Housed in an exclusively built imposing building, Vivero, Powai started the academic year on 15th June 2010 with seventy children from eleven nationalities. The state-of-the-art facilities with child friendly interiors and exteriors at Vivero are unique and have left parents spell bound and the new pre-school has created a buzz amongst the pre-school fraternity and educated parents in the vicinity.

Pre-Nursery 1 & 2 (Buzzing Bees & Fireflies):

The line of inquiry that both Pre-nursery classes are following is "Who we are". At the tender age, the toddlers showed curiosity to explore the parts of the body. The concept unfolded as teachers provided hands-on experiences with real life objects. The children have begun to communicate and express themselves.



Learning through play

Nursery 1 & 2 (Busy Beavers & Buddy bears):

The Nursery children have settled in well to inquire into 'All about ME'. Elements of music and art have helped to reinforce the concept of the body parts and has encouraged the children to explore themselves.



Snack time is bonding time

"What has been very encouraging is that our children are reluctant to go home and want to continue being in class" says **Principal Barkha Gulani** who has been in the field of quality education for the past 19 years.

Field Trip to Pasir Mukti, Cibinong

When all the children were ready with their 'setting off' preparations of toileting, putting on insect repellent, getting their gear and hats, we got on the big blue bus and off we headed for Pasir Mukti at Cibinong, Bogor. It was a lovely morning and traffic was smooth running. We left school at 8.15am and arrived at the venue by 10.30am. On arrival everyone was guided to a large airy covered space where we sat down to rest a bit while waiting for our guide Mr Ade's instructions and awaiting our eventual tour.



Mr Ade spoke in Bahasa and it needed some translation from one of our teachers. The group was taken for a walk first to the fish pond, where they could see a live big gurame fish. Mr Ade told them about how fish swim, how they breathe and labeled the different fins and their functions.



After several minutes of photo taking and each child exploring the fish, we were taken for another walk to the fruit gardens. Here the children could see small plants of limes, oranges, passion fruit, guava, and many other fruit plants that they could water. Mr Ade spoke about how plants grow, what they needed to grow and how we should take care of them. At the site was also a glass container of different types of bugs which engrossed the kindergarten children too.



We then harvested the 'kangkong' plants. The N1 children pulled out the plant and discovered that it had long roots; the N2 could better relate their understanding of this because they had grown beans in class in a clear plastic container and watched day by day as the roots grew longer and longer. We harvested quite a bit; the school cook prepared for lunch the next day. The children also fed the fish in the pond and learnt that different animals eat different things because they were given fish food pellets for the fish and 'padi' for the feeding of the fowl (ducks and geese).



An Art Exhibition for a good cause

The children, their parents and teachers worked hard to put together an Art Exhibition using the theme of: Reduce, Reuse and Recycle. All material used for the art products were made from recycled items collected or donated to the school during 'Earth Day celebrations' and the Art products made were sold to parents and visitors at the exhibition on 4th and 5th June 2009. 'EtonHouse cares' and has always played a great role to help the lesser people in our community through donation drives like this one. The proceeds from the sales went to our beneficiary, the Yayasan Oikumene Merpati Orphanage. We are very thankful to have with us 'involved parents' supporting us in these charity drives. To them I say, "a big thank you".



These and many more items were sold at the exhibition which collected in total: Rps 4,260.000

All parents and teachers share in their pride of the children's ideas and creativity and empathetic disposition to helping in the donation drive.



Rambutan Harvesting on Monday, 22 February 2010

What is everyone looking at? Oh...it's the gardener, Pak Pomo and his men harvesting the rambutans in our garden. The Kindergarten children got into the act too and wanted to climb the ladder to pick some of the fruits. The rambutans were juicy and sweet. The kindergarten children related this to their current topic of study on 'plants we eat'.



At EtonHouse JKT we are fortunate to have growing in our garden many types of edible plants that children can relate to their learning. Some of these fruit trees are pumpkin, grapes, rambutans, mango, bananas, and papaya. The children are provided opportunities to watch things grow, take care of them and harvest the fruits of their labour.

To provide more of nature's wealth and to teach about taking care of plants, we will be planting more trees and growing food such as vegetables as part of our sharing for the coming Earth Day.



K2 Sunshine Graduates 2010



The K1 and K2 Sunshine class have had an amazing journey this year which has been full of discovery and exploration. All of the children have embraced all our units of enquiry with great enthusiasm and curiosity. The sunshine class are very active and creative thinkers making our learning environment rich with new ideas and exciting experiences! Each member of our class has made a valuable contribution to our team ensuring that our year has been fulfilling and rewarding for everyone. The K2 children are now secure to take their next step to Primary and the K1 are ready for all that is ahead of them in the next year to come. It has been satisfying to see the children develop in confidence with their problem solving skills, social skills and thinking skills. Sunshine class, I am extremely proud of each and every one of you and it has been a huge pleasure to teach the class. You have achieved so much this year and it has been a joy watching you all grow as individuals and I wish you all the best for the future.

Firstly, a big thank you to my two wonderful teaching assistants, Miss Ingrid and Miss Debby. Your continuous energy and support has been fantastic for all of us. A huge thank you to all the parents for your support, understanding and involvement in your child's learning journey.

Congratulations Sunshine Team! I will miss you!

Lucy Penn

EtonHouse Tokyo Opens House:

Staff and management at the new EtonHouse Tokyo preschool were pleased to share their new building with prospective families at the recent Open House held 9th -10th July.

Over 40 families attended across the two days. It was wonderful to see children interacting with newly employed EH Tokyo staff. Children also had the opportunity to interact with the learning spaces that had been created for them as parents met with Mr. Peter Ackerman, Principal, EtonHouse Tokyo and Ms. Heather Conroy, Senior Director of Pedagogy, who flew to Tokyo to support the new team.



The learning environment has been designed with the values and principles of Reggio Emilia in mind i.e. a focus on light and transparency; the creation of spaces which support small group collaboration; the inclusion of natural materials as resources for Children's play; and the provision of spacious art areas in the classrooms so that children have access to a wide variety of materials with which to express their ideas, thoughts and feelings.



Congratulations go to managing directors, Mr. Anli Tan and Ms. Asami Seo for their commitment to quality in establishing the newest EH setting. Planning started 2 and a half years ago, when Asami asked where can our children go to a quality bilingual (English/Mandarin) school in Tokyo? and the rest was history. It was also a coincidence or rather fate that brought Anli, Asami and EtonHouse together through a mutual colleague in Singapore. What the partners envisioned in Tokyo and what EtonHouse has to offer was a perfect 'fit'. The development process was at times difficult; however with amazing support from EtonHouse Singapore the final product was flawless. This will be the new beginning in the "land of the rising sun".



EtonHouse Tokyo is located in a newly renovated 5 storey building next to a prime shopping and residential area, Tokyo Midtown. The preschool has employed a highly qualified and committed teaching staff representing 5 different cultural backgrounds who each bring with them a wealth of rich experience.

Heather Conroy,
Senior Director of Pedagogy, EtonHouse Preschools