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From the Founder & Group MD

The earthquake in Japan has had an indelible effect on our minds. The images that we have seen and the stories shared by the media made us stop and think about life and how precious it is. The tragedy was difficult to fathom - the scale of destruction and the suddenness of the event that has caused immeasurable damage to human life will take time to heal.

As evidence of the strong ties between the EtonHouse family, the pre-school/school communities spontaneously engaged in the organisation of fundraising events to collect donations to support the Japanese disaster victims. EtonHouse has many Japanese families and staff members amongst our community, as well as our new EtonHouse Tokyo pre-school. Our thoughts and prayers go out to you in particular. I would like to add that I am very proud of the EtonHouse team that has so selflessly and spontaneously organised fundraisers for the quake victims and I sincerely thank the children, parents and staff members who have contributed to these initiatives.

STRIVING FOR EXCELLENCE:

The Big Ideas:

In this age of information saturation where access to knowledge and content is aplenty, we often end up reacting to stimuli on a daily basis. Our lives are therefore akin to a constant jostle with a pre-determined agenda which may not be of our choosing.

As educators with the very important responsibility of creating environments that inspire, engage and support our young global citizens, it is critical for us to sieve out the trivia in which we so often get embroiled and determine an agenda that propels and strengthens our cause.

The EtonHouse Big Ideas established by our leadership team offers a framework that determines how we function in our role as educators, as providers of high quality international education to children in our 43 EtonHouse schools and pre-schools in 8 different countries. The Big Ideas creates a sense of cohesion, not just amongst the teaching community, but also the non-teaching staff and most importantly the parents and the wider EtonHouse community.

SPARK - Singapore Preschool Accreditation Framework (Quality Rating Scale) This accreditation is built onto the basic licensing of a centre and is aimed at working towards excellence in preschool education. EtonHouse Vanda, 764 Mountbatten Road and Outram pre-schools have been amongst the first educational settings in Singapore to participate in the new SPARK quality assessment. Staff in these pre-schools undertook a comprehensive self-study of

their health and hygiene practices; their learning environment and their curriculum and pedagogy, measuring themselves against established SPARK assessment criteria. Government appointed inspectors, assessors from the Ministry of Education then made visits to the pre-schools to validate the self-study documentation. I thank the Preschool Directors and their staff teams for their hard work in preparing for these visits and wish the pre-schools all the very best in their assessment reports.

Strengthening our practice: Singapore hosts EH China educators:

One way to strengthen our practice is to strive towards collaboration amongst our diverse staff teams. Creating opportunities for staff to meet and exchange ideas provides opportunities for all participants to reflect on and consolidate aspects of their teaching. Monday 21st – Friday 25th March saw leadership teams from EtonHouse Zhuhai; Nanjing, Chengdu, and Jinan (China) visiting our Singapore pre-schools to learn more about inquiry based teaching and learning. The first two days of training were spent at the EtonHouse Education Centre working with EtonHouse Preschool Directors and our pedagogy team. Singapore teaching teams shared their documentation and hosted classroom visits for the Chinese delegation. It is to be hoped that networks established as part of the in-service can be supported via technology to maintain the connections forged during the week of professional development.

A vision of excellence: As we move forward into 2011, we reinforce our commitment to achieving greater excellence in all that we do to make the EtonHouse schools and pre-schools vibrant educational institutions. We want our pre-schools and schools to be places where children are respected and motivated to challenge themselves; where teachers, parents, children and the wider community work in collaboration; where we develop a sense of belonging, international-mindedness and a deep-rooted responsibility towards the environment. On that note, I would like to thank all parents, staff and children of EtonHouse for their strong support. I hope you enjoy this edition of the corporate newsletter that represents best practice in the EtonHouse schools and pre-schools.



Warm regards,
Mrs. Ng Gim Choo

Big Ideas in the Classroom and in Life

John Cooley Executive Principal, Singapore



Sociologists have now identified the astounding fact that even the most introspective of individuals will influence at least ten thousand people during the course of his or her lifetime. All of us are being influenced by and influencing others throughout each and every day. Although, at first reading, this seems to be an absurd statistic, upon further examination we can begin to see the daily occasions when we do interact with others in a manner that will very clearly have an impression upon the immediacy of their lives.



than just words, for we hear a never-ending stream of words around us every day. Accompanying the words would have been an attitude, a conviction, a purposefulness or a sense of profound respect that embedded the message into our deepest being. The messenger would very likely have been the embodiment of the message.

And of course within the context of family life and the multiplier effect of an education setting, we can see children, parents and teachers in a constant state of interplay in their multiple daily influences upon each other.

Great and lasting education needs a learning environment that is uncluttered by the busyness that often mistakes reaction for action, movement for direction. That is why the

Which of these influences will have a lasting impression on us is a different matter again - as the number of people we may influence or be influenced by over a lifetime is largely a statistical nonsense compared to the very small number who will genuinely blueprint the thinking and direction of our lives.

EtonHouse Big Ideas are such an important statement of intent for classroom practice - for they seek to identify what is truly and genuinely meaningful and fulfilling in the lives of our children - and not just the busywork activities that will have little influence beyond the setting down of a pencil after a completed task.

If we pause to reflect back over our own personal history, we will probably identify only a very small number of people, or confluence of events, that have stamped an indelible mark upon our character and the shape our lives have taken.

The Big Ideas have at their very heart, an explicit recognition that it will be through a profound respect for the individual, and the co-construction of an educational relationship/partnership connecting truthfully with the learner, that influential learning will take place and lasting impressions will be forged.

These life mentors have most likely been our parents, a grandparent, a teacher, a best friend, a workplace leader or an admired international figure such as Mother Teresa or Nelson Mandela.

The Big Ideas' opportunities between teacher and student in the early years of schooling experience will hopefully bring, for each child, a sense of mentorship, trust and true north direction that can be the foundation for a life filled with purpose, respect and engagement in the community as a global citizen.

What will be of even greater importance to reflect upon are the qualities that these people of influence, and inspiration, have communicated to us that have connected so personally and so deeply. These qualities will very likely have been different in each case, but no less resonant in their effect upon our character and identity. These qualities will also have been expressed with more

These are indeed Big Ideas to aspire for in the classroom and in the world beyond. *

John Cooley
Executive Principal
EtonHouse Schools Singapore

* Inspiration for this article has been drawn from the EtonHouse Big Ideas document and John C Maxwell's 'Developing the Leader Within You'.

The Big Ideas

Heather Conroy Executive Director of Pedagogy, EtonHouse Pre-schools

Towards the end of 2005, the EtonHouse Education Centre (EEC) was established as the training arm of the EtonHouse International Education Group. The EEC was approved by the Preschool Qualifications Accreditation Committee (PQAC) in Singapore as an accredited training centre registered to deliver early childhood qualifications at the Certificate, Diploma, Specialist Diploma and Diploma in Leadership level. Many of today's EtonHouse teaching staff are graduates of the EEC.

- **Image of child as competent** – acknowledging children as capable communicators and thinkers; acknowledging the rights of young children to make decisions about matters that involve them; making a commitment to study the pedagogy of listening and to incorporate pedagogical documentation into our practice (to make our teaching and learning visible to others)
- **Play and conversation** are the central modes of learning for young children
- Ensuring curriculum has **intellectual and pedagogical integrity**
- Acknowledging the significance of the **socio-cultural context**
- **Teacher as researcher**
- The importance of **flexible learning environments**
- Creating an **alliance** with parents
- Recognizing our **accountability** to children, parents, management and the community (we aim to achieve this through our pedagogical documentation)

The EEC, through the position of the Director of Research and Head of School, Dr Deborah Harcourt and the position of Senior Pedagogical Advisor (now the Executive Director of Pedagogy) was invited by EtonHouse management to initiate a process of change within EtonHouse pre-schools to enhance the quality of preschool education offered within each setting. Curriculum initiatives were to be supported by current research; inquiry driven and integrated i.e. not subject specific.



To ensure consistency across the various preschool and International school settings, a suite of 8 guiding principles were established to both guide the work of the Pedagogical Advisor, and to serve as a benchmark in terms of evaluating progress in each setting. These guiding principals have become known as the EtonHouse Big Ideas.



This edition of the corporate newsletter is dedicated to these Big Ideas in order to highlight how they are interpreted across EtonHouse schools and pre-schools.

The Big Idea of Image of Child:

Children's Rights: Children's perspectives in writing a Code of Conduct-EtonHouse Vanda

The number of child-abuse cases in Singapore went up nearly 50 per cent to 247 last year, compared to 2009 (Today, 2011). This increase may be attributed to greater community awareness, as a result of public education.



Therefore, believing in our roles to advocate for children's perspectives to be respected in the larger community, we invited children to a group dialogue to facilitate 'listening' as a way of 'giving voice to children' in developing the Children's Code of Conduct. "Good information about childhood must start from children's experience" (Mayall, 2000, p121 as cited in Clark, Kjørholt, & Moss, 2005).

How do we share our current understanding?

Katie: How do you know he or she is a stranger?

Gleb: When you don't know his name and when you don't know anything about them.

This experience of discussing with children led to a debate and discourse on children's abilities to **think critically** of situations.

How do we share our thinking?

"What if the police were the bad guy?"

"Can a police be a bad guy?"

Encouraging children to speak up and support them to be heard reinforces our commitment to democratic practice.

How do we share our strategies?

Kay Gene: When a bully bullies you then you can ignore them or if it's not a small problem then you tell your teacher.

Freemund: When you get lost, you can call your mummy to tell where you are or you can go to the person with the microphone to announce.

Reference:

Clark, A., Kjørholt, A.T., & Moss, P. (2005). *Beyond listening: Children's perspectives on early childhood services*. Bristol, UK: The Policy Press.

Today (2011). *More child-abuse cases last year*. Singapore: Today, March 4, 2011.

The Big Idea of the Pedagogy of Listening: What does it mean to (really) listen to children?

Heather Conroy Executive Director of Pedagogy, EtonHouse Pre-schools



As educators within EtonHouse pre-schools and schools, we have been privileged to have contact with colleagues from the Reggio Emilia pre-schools and infant toddler centres of Northern Italy. Several EtonHouse teachers have travelled to Reggio Emilia to visit these renowned early childhood centres, to study the learning environments and pedagogy. The EtonHouse Education Centre (EEC) has also established professional development opportunities whereby EtonHouse teachers have been able to build deeper understandings of documentation as a means of making children's learning, as well as our teaching, visible to others. In 2010, EtonHouse and AECES (Association of Early Childhood Educators in Singapore) co-convened the first Reggio Children Conference in the Asia Pacific region. More than 400 participants attended this conference to hear speakers directly from Reggio Emilia and the International network share their understandings of this respectful and cognitively challenging approach to working with children.

As EtonHouse educators we are coming to understand the pedagogy of listening as a way of working with children which reflects our deep respect for children as active learners; protagonists in their own learning; capable communicators and thinkers.

As such we strive to:

- Respect the inherent need and right of children, to play; to make decisions about matters that impact on them
- Observe and listen with sensitivity to children's ideas, interests and theories about their world as a means of informing curriculum design
- Value, acknowledge and support each child's unique learning style
- Ensure daily access to a variety of different 'languages' (painting, drawing, dance, construction, clay) with which children can communicate their ideas and understandings
- Reflect deeply (through our documentation and our collaboration with colleagues) to understand the events and interactions that have meaning in our classroom.

Listening with all our senses... listening to the hundred, the thousand languages, symbols, codes we use to express ourselves...

Listening is also a time of silence – an interior time (of self reflection and analysis)

Rinaldi, C. (2006).
In dialogue with Reggio Emilia. UK. Routledge

Creating Alliances @ Newton

The Big Idea of creating alliances with parents: Three way Conferences for K1 and K2 students at Newton

Three-way conferences involve the student, parents and teacher. Students discuss their learning and understanding with their parents and teachers, who are responsible for supporting the student through this process. Students are responsible for reflecting on their learning and expressing their learning to the adults at their conference. Together, the student, the parents and the teacher establish and identify student strengths and areas for improvement and students reflect on their learning in relation to the elements of the IB learner profile.

The 3-way conferences that were held in February were a resounding success. It was wonderful to see parents, teachers and students engage in very meaningful discussions about learning and students actively discussing and establishing goals. Children took great pride in sharing with

parents about their learning experiences and parents were pleased to hear their children speak so knowledgeably about these experiences.



How this helps students:

- Enhances self esteem by supporting them to share their learning opportunities in a positive environment

- Critically involves students in self assessment and encourages them to take responsibility for their own learning
- Empowers students as they work toward and achieve established goals

How does it benefit parents:

- Increased understanding of how their child learns
- Increases engagement between school and home
- Participation in the reporting process rather than merely responding to it

The major benefits for the teachers are:

- Encourages shared responsibility of student learning, assessment and reporting
- Flows naturally from inquiries that occur in the classroom
- Strengthens communication channels with parents about student's learning and progress

EtonHouse @ Orchard:

Setting Benchmarks - The First PYP Pre-school Exhibition In Singapore



'The K2 Pea-Crocs Exhibition -Learning is Everywhere'; making teaching and learning visible to others

The practice in the pre-schools of Reggio Emilia inspires teaching and learning at EtonHouse Orchard. The educators in Reggio Emilia refer to their work alongside young children as 'the pedagogy of listening'. It communicates a shift in tradition, a shift in which educators are no longer seen as transmitters of knowledge. Teachers are viewed as facilitators who support children in their ongoing effort to make sense of the world.

During the extensive discussions and preparations for the very first K2 PYP Exhibition in Singapore, listening carefully to the children enabled the

teachers to facilitate the collaborative planning sessions and follow the children's suggestions down the finest details. The students of the K2 Crocodiles and Peacocks classes formed several committees and took on roles and responsibilities related to the Exhibition, including set-up, posters, invitations, guest relations and feedback. As the children worked collaboratively and made key decisions about the Exhibition, the teachers documented their thinking to record in an online Exhibition Journal. The children decided to call the exhibition 'The K2 Pea-Crocs Exhibition -Learning is Everywhere'. According to the PYP, "The Primary Years Programme (PYP) exhibition represents a significant event in the life of a PYP school and student, synthesizing the essential elements of the PYP and sharing them with the whole school community. As a culminating experience it is an opportunity for students to exhibit the attributes of the International Baccalaureate (IB) learner profile that have been developing throughout their engagement with the PYP."



EtonHouse @ Mountbatten 764 :

Making teaching and learning visible

Curriculum Evening for Parents at EtonHouse 764 Mountbatten Road

Integrated curriculum has a long history in education movements. The idea that curriculum should be taught from a holistic perspective with a child centred approach had been proposed by some of the pioneers in early childhood education (e.g. John Dewey, who encouraged active learning and meaningful authentic activities).

(Hurless & Gittings 2008 p 40)

A curriculum evening was held in February where parents had the opportunity to find out more about the Inquire Think Learn approach to teaching and learning and ask questions specific to their own child's learning.

Ms Heather Conroy, Executive Director of Pedagogy, spoke about the foundations of learning and teaching at EtonHouse (The Big Ideas) and the importance of planning rich (**integrated**) learning experiences, which are **purposefully planned** to progress selected learning goals based on observations of children's



understandings, skills, ideas and interests. She spoke about the importance of **teacher intentionality** – placing emphasis on planning and evaluation as a cycle of teacher decision making which informs curriculum design in an ongoing way.

The teachers also shared two inquiry projects that took place in the kindergarten classrooms that highlighted the literacy and numeracy learning that occurred during the experience.

Another interesting project undertaken by the K2 children was towards developing a Singapore Guide Book with written recommendations about places to visit in Singapore, detailed maps to show how to get to each site with taxi numbers and MRT routes. This project clearly highlighted how literacy is embedded within an integrated project.

Reinforcing the commitment to be accountable to parents about their children's learning, the pre-school continues to make its teaching and learning visible through documentation (wall documentation; newsletters and portfolios) throughout the year.

Documentation-Making Learning Visible @ EtonHouse Outram

At EtonHouse, we document children's work in three main ways: display boards, newsletters and children's portfolios. We ensure that each documentation panel includes evidence of how children learn through play e.g. photographic narratives, children's voices and conversations to **showcase the children's learning** and their **progress towards stated goals**. In addition, the teacher adds her **analysis** and personal reflection on the experience. While the analysis makes connections to the learning goals, the reflection advocates for the type of curriculum we value at EtonHouse preschools.

The main purpose of our pedagogical documentation is to support teachers in reflecting upon their teaching e.g. the learning experience that best supports the learner; the questions asked and ways to engage children in a particular experience.

We also display the children's work to foster a sense of pride and a stronger sense of belonging to their classroom. Children see

their work valued and respected and feel good about themselves as learners. We also use the documentation to support children in re-visiting their learning.

It also helps others to understand **how we work with children; how we create/plan engaging learning experiences**.

Displaying evidence of learning in all areas of development reinforces our **belief in supporting children to be lifelong learners**.



Inquiry @ EtonHouse Broadrick

Year 3 students and their teachers have been inquiring into how our planet is shared by its living creatures. Central to the inquiry has been group reading of Grant S. Clark's 100 page chapter book titled "Monkey Magic - The Curse of Mukada". Adapting the book's themes to a stage script and performing for our school audience has been one exciting adventure for young researchers and expressers.

Also students have been involved in fun experiments related to habitats. Reports about these included: "We have left a slice of bread in moisture and sun to see how the spores in the air use the bread as a habitat", and "We taped up our thumbs and did various activities to see the importance of opposable thumbs".

After viewing fantastic videos about 'Habitats' more written reports followed: "In ICT we created a PowerPoint each on an animal or plant adaptation of our choice.

During a class reading session about our central idea: plants and animals adapt to their habitats, questions emerged about food chains. Action ensued with a supportive parent, also a Science Teacher, visiting to offer an engaging lesson to demonstrate energy transference from the sun→plants→rabbits→foxes. This has been referred to a number of times since, as the children continue to make connections with our work about habitats.



A very active lesson about energy-food chains with 'grass', 'rabbits' and 'foxes'

EtonHouse @ Mountbatten 718:

The Big Idea of Flexible Learning Environments

The environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning, offering opportunities for rich discovery, interaction and sharing. The outdoor environment invites children to be active, to communicate, to investigate and to use their whole body to do so.



At Mountbatten 718, the extensive and stimulating outdoor environment offers opportunities for many meaningful learning encounters to take place.

Lex brought a coconut found outdoors into class. He continued his investigation using touch and sound as he spun the coconut around and shared his discovery "water inside!"



Watching this learning unfold in the outdoors in the early days at this campus is a truly satisfying experience. Careful thought has been given to every space and feature and how the children might choose to use it. Teachers are also intentional in ensuring that they offer sufficient challenge and supported investigation opportunities.

Rina responded to a physical challenge when the wooden climbing board was placed at an angle, rather than a straight plane.

The children as competent explorers display their innovation and share their unexpected findings as they construct knowledge through active experience. This truly demonstrates how children really are in charge of their own learning. As adults we facilitate the learning encounters, empowering children to ask questions; experiment and to share their findings with their peers.

An earth mound intentionally situated within the playground invites children to construct knowledge through action.



The child discovers that his truck travels faster down a slope "fast!" and also realises that he has to move fast in order to retrieve it "go fast down!"

As the children have opportunities to revisit, refine and consolidate their skills and thinking in the various spaces outside, we observe their deeper discoveries. Their sensory and physical explorations affect the patterns that are made in the brain, laying the foundations for future learning and the ability to make connections.

Bruner (1977) suggested that when an adult or more knowledgeable 'other' child ensures manageable steps and gives unobtrusive support and encouragement for a child trying to do or to learn something new, they are scaffolding the learning. As some children begin to explore the range of tricycles at 718, we see them investigate how to use the pedals to make the bike move. The teacher intentionally invited another child to share a strategy, Josh pointed at the pedals (bottom left) and guided "put your feet there...then push!" They continued to successfully move together (bottom right) and will learn this new skill through time, observation and further support.



We anticipated that children would investigate the movement of the water in our water course by watching objects floating but they keenly removed their shoes so they could paddle, feeling the movement of the water with their feet rather than observing its properties.

The teachers responded to the children's interest and actions with the water course to provoke further thinking as they asked "how does the water feel?" "Where is it going?"

The lush environment at this campus lends both outdoor and indoor spaces to be used as one seamless environment thus offering children endless opportunities to explore and discover.



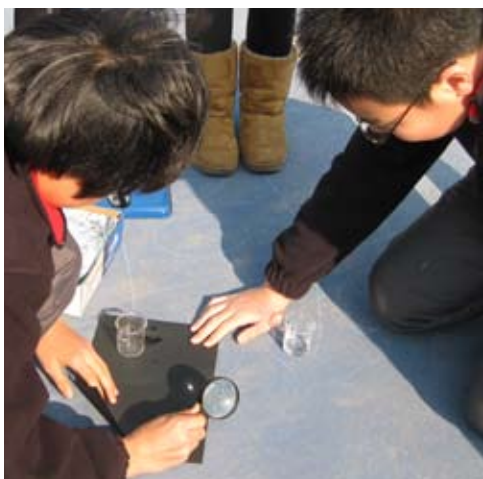
Reference:
Bruner in David, T., Gooch, K., Powell, S. and Abbott, L. (2003) *Birth to Three Matters: A Review of the Literature*, Nottingham, UK: Queen's Printer.

EtonHouse @ Suzhou:

Reflective Practice – EtonHouse International School, Suzhou

At Suzhou, as is the EtonHouse way, the child and the learning and teaching they experience are at the very heart of programme offered. Teachers have participated in 2 afternoons of peer and self pedagogical reflection using the 5E instructional model during staff professional development days. This contains the following phases:

- Engagement
- Exploration
- Explanation
- Elaboration
- Evaluation



In using this model teachers have been able to move from general observations of classroom practice to identifying key factors and components that enhance teaching and learning within our classrooms. This is because they now have criteria and descriptors to attach to their observations and to focus the lens of their self and peer reflection.

This is just one of the ways that teachers at EtonHouse Suzhou demonstrate the pursuit of best practice through their collaborative professional development.

The reason that this process is so effective is that it does two things:

Draws on what teachers know in terms of their:

- Pedagogical knowledge
- Pedagogical content knowledge
- Disciplinary knowledge
- Knowledge of the learner and context
- Curriculum framework
- Instructional design and strategies
- Instructional methods and skills



Guides teachers to:

- Reflect on practice
- Provide feedback and informs assessment
- Consider new knowledge of learners to inform the next stage of instruction
- Moderate student work with colleagues

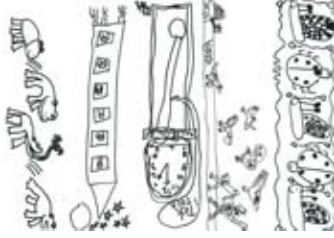
We have used this model during Teaching and Learning walks to focus on two key factors:

1. How do we truly differentiate within our classrooms to meet the diverse needs of all our students?
2. What will our classrooms look like when our students are truly engaged in the inquiry process of learning?

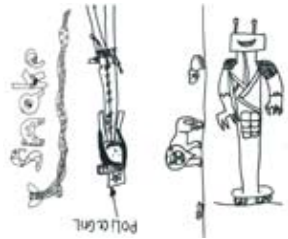


EtonHouse @ Wuxi:

Using Cutting Edge Technology – The Ipad Project at Wuxi



The “Year of the Rabbit” will be known as the “Year of the Borderless Classroom” at EtonHouse International School Wuxi. The first half of 2011 has seen a Learning Management System (LMS) set up for the middle school students. Their laptops are to be replaced with ipads. The purpose behind the LMS was to allow students, parents and teachers to remain in contact outside of the classroom. It is a place where students can access work from class, parents can view what is being covered in the curriculum and teachers can collect work from students. The great thing about the LMS is that even when students are absent from school, they can stay up-to-date with the rest of the class. As the LMS is based on the internet, it can be accessed from anywhere in the world.



The introduction of the ipads into the classroom will also allow students to take their learning to the next level. As well as being able to create documents, PowerPoint presentations and surf the web, students will have access to the endless supply of educational apps that are available. EtonHouse Wuxi sees huge positives coming from this project.



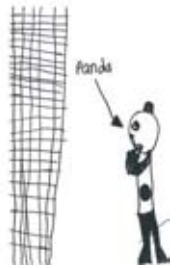
Global Learners @ EtonHouse Yiwu

EtonHouse Yiwu in China’s Zhejiang province has both an international department with students from 3-12 years and a Bilingual Kindergarten department with Chinese and expatriate children aged 2-6 years. At EtonHouse, we believe that it is important to recognise the multicultural nature of our learning community. We celebrate the cultures and traditions of all members of our school and wider community every day.



In our weekly sharing assemblies, students and staff demonstrate what they have gained from the learning experiences they have shared that week. Short plays, songs and dance fill our presentation hall each week in a celebration of children’s interaction with the world around them and their individual contribution to their context.

It is important to us that education is a team effort. Each week, parents at EtonHouse Yiwu attend our assemblies and often participate in classes and special school events. On March 14-18, students, parents and staff worked together to celebrate “Literacy Week”. Special activities such as our book character dress-up day, special guest readers and class book writing workshops helped to motivate our young readers and writers to feel excited about literacy and learning more about languages. Parents who came in as “special guest” readers read and spoke with students in English, Mandarin, Cantonese, Korean, Spanish, and French.



EtonHouse Yiwu is proud of its multicultural and multi-language community of learners and leaders. We appreciate the contribution each student, parent, and staff members make to our unique community within the larger community of Yiwu.

EtonHouse @ Jakarta:

What Does It Mean To Be A Teacher Researcher?

As early childhood teachers, we develop curriculum from our purposeful observations of children's skills, ideas and understandings as they interact with people, the learning environment and materials. This observational data supports our ability to build a sound picture of the individual learner (their learning style; their current competencies) and how best to support their on-going development.

As we observe and analyse, or make meaning of the data, we come to better understand the 'next step' in our teaching. It is the intentionality of the data gathering process that makes this type of teaching so relevant to individual children.

An example of teacher-researcher-at-work

After a recent morning meeting, we could see that many of the children were showing interest in what was inside their bodies.



How does food get into your tummy? asked Audric.

It goes to the gut and then the food goes to your blood and then the oxygen goes out of food to the blood responded Matthew.

Children form 'theories' about how the world works, based on what they currently know and understand – however 'incorrect' the idea might

be, it opens for the teacher researcher a window of opportunity to work beside children in constructing inquiry curriculum.

After the initial discussion (about what was inside your body), the children drew their first draft drawings of what they currently thought was inside their bodies. The children mostly drew random circles and lines. The children expressed their thinking through art and that supported the teacher researcher in understanding the children



better and to 'see' their thinking. The drawings are also useful to support children in re-visiting their thinking; and in reflecting on what their initial thoughts were later when they understand the subject better.

These drawings support the teacher researcher in understanding not only what children currently know and understand, but also where to begin in terms of challenging or re-affirming their theories i.e. the next step in teaching.

Thus begins the new project study. The process will be an engaging learning journey for the children and also one for the teacher researcher to reflect on their thinking as a part of this process.

EtonHouse @ India

Charting New Milestones - India



In the third year of its operation, Edvance Pre-schools (a partner of EtonHouse) has achieved many a milestones.

The flagship pre-school, Vivero International in Kalyani Nagar - Pune has become synonymous with quality education; transforming toddlers to thinking individuals. Taking the legacy set by the flagship pre-school forward is Vivero International in Powai, Mumbai.

Combining both the pre-schools, the Vivero International family comprises of over 200 children across 21 nationalities.

The pre-schools have also reinforced their commitment towards community based exercises through fund-raiser events organized in alliance with parents and children. Christmas saw Vivero parents and the entire pre-school community come together to celebrate the spirit of Yuletide in its true sense. The season of sharing and giving witnessed the parents sponsoring and putting up games, entertainment and food stalls. Both Vivero Pune and Vivero Powai donated the entire proceeds from the event to NGO's working towards the education of lesser privileged children.

The model franchising centre in Serra International in Pune is now two years old, providing quality education to 112 children across four nationalities. The pre-school focuses on seeing children in a socio-cultural context where

knowledge is co-constructed as the child interacts with the physical and human environment. The pre-nursery children started their inquiry into the wonderful world of plants and trees; the lush green garden thus becoming their laboratory. Children were seen indulging in creative expressions with leaf printing and making their own representations of a tree/plant. The Kindergarten 1 children started their enquiry into transportation and visited the Tata Motors factory. Serra children were the first visitors permitted at the factory in the history of the company. The children were intrigued by the assembly line and a video played for them on the manufacturing of a car.



The fast growing Serra family now has 12 pre-schools across India with franchisee business partners who share the passion and commitment to early childhood education. Six Serra centres went "live" in November 2010 and with the backing and support of the head office have met with tremendous success, creating their own niche in various cities in India.

The ever supporting parent community has aided us in our efforts to transform the educational landscape of India towards a teaching / learning methodology that brings joy and learning to young minds.