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## Communities, Families and Us

Every time I attend events in any of the EtonHouse campuses, be it in Singapore or overseas I am reminded of the significance of a school in the life of the families, the community and the country it is a part of. Schools and pre-schools, especially the ones that attract an international community, are the epicentre of relationships, relationships that sometimes last a lifetime. Friendship and collaborations between teaching staff, bonding between children and the teachers, partnership between parents and the school, connections between the school and the community - these form a tapestry of interconnections, a dynamic reciprocal web of relationships that shape our lives and the community in which we live.

I am therefore humbled by the profound impact a school has on the community. The collection of articles in this newsletter is a reinforcement and testament to this. Through community drives, family events, staff forums and many more such initiatives, we reinforce the significance of this collaboration and while we develop friendship and contribute to the community, we have a profound effect on the lives of our children. EtonHouse is fortunate indeed to have such a supportive community of parents, teachers and children who bring with them their expertise and creativity, thus enriching, and making more meaningful, the learning experiences in our campuses.

As the children grow older and graduate from EtonHouse, we often lose touch with them and their families. This has always saddened me. There are so many precious memories I have of the EtonHouse graduates, some of whom are in university now making their families proud. It was always my dream to reconnect with them and keep in touch with the current families and children even after they leave EtonHouse. This year, my dream has started to

turn into a reality. We were able to touch base with a large community of former EtonHouse staff, parents and students to form the EtonHouse alumni. We haven't been able to connect with everyone though, especially those who graduated many years ago. It is my hope however to bring the entire EtonHouse family together where we can reconnect, share and continue to develop relationships with EtonHouse and the other members of the alumni. Imagine the delight of a child who reconnects with his or her favourite kindergarten teacher or that of a parent or a teacher who finds a friend they shared precious memories

with in EtonHouse! We are currently happy to say that we have more than 250 members in the alumni, but we still have a long way to go. I sincerely hope that you will support our engagement initiatives and keep in touch with us through the EtonHouse alumni wherever you may be.

As we start the second half of 2012, I am very happy to mention the many accolades our schools have received - the CHERISH Award by the Health Promotion Board for EtonHouse Vanda, the platinum 'Community in Bloom' award by National Parks for EtonHouse 764, the only pre-school to win this award, the IB PYP and MYP authorisation for EtonHouse Wuxi and Suzhou, the reauthorisation of EtonHouse Broadrick and the very successful Reggio Emilia conference hosted by EtonHouse Education Centre. These achievements are not a result of isolated and individual initiatives but a testament to the culture of positive and genuine collaborations that exist between families, communities and EtonHouse.

I hope you enjoy the 2nd edition of the 2012 corporate newsletter.

*Ng Gim Choo*  
Group Managing Director  
EtonHouse International Education Group



## Collaboration as a Value

Heather Conroy, Executive Director of Pedagogy, EtonHouse Pre-schools



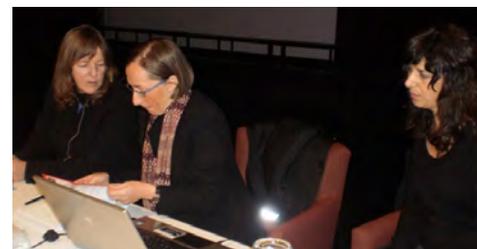
*The Conference offers opportunities to reflect on our own practices – so that children can achieve the best they can...*

Marie-Louise Samuels: National Early Childhood Education Director: South Africa in her welcome address to participants at the AREA (African Reggio Emilia Alliance) Conference held in Johannesburg, 26-28<sup>th</sup> June 2012.

As a means of honouring the commitment to collaboration so highly valued and evident within the system of preschools and infant and toddler centres in Reggio Emilia, representatives of various

Reggio Children Networks are invited to share of the work being undertaken in their own contexts, to demonstrate how they make reference to the values and principles of the Reggio Approach. (There are approximately 30 Reggio Children Networks, including countries in Europe, South America, Africa, and the Asia Pacific, United Kingdom and the USA).

In South Africa, Harold Gothson, representing Sweden, (the first country to form an alliance with Reggio Emilia and member of the Board of Reggio Children); Rita Melia, representing The Republic of Ireland and myself, sharing some of our work in Singapore participated as part of the collaborative that is Reggio Children across the globe. Through sharing we come to understand not



only what others are doing to honour the rights of children, but also come to better understand how we can strengthen our own work and vision.

Reggio Emilia has a long standing collaboration with South Africa which dates back to the 1970's when Reggio Emilia was actively involved in the promotion of the anti-apartheid movement.

One of the strongest values of the Reggio Approach is the defence of the rights of children. This and the desire to strengthen relationships and collegiality across the world gave structure to the AREA conference.



## EtonHouse 764 Mountbatten awarded the CIB Platinum Award



We are proud to announce that the pre-school gardens at EtonHouse 764 Mountbatten have been awarded the Platinum band of the biennial Community in Bloom (CIB) Awards 2012! The CIB Awards serves to recognize and reward gardening efforts by community groups in housing estates, schools and organizations. It aims to promote involvement in creating and maintaining community gardens. The school received the award on 14 July at the Singapore Garden Festival 2012 at Suntec City Singapore.

Congratulations to EtonHouse 764 Mountbatten on being the only pre-school to have received this prestigious award and for having created a great outdoor learning environment for the children.

## EtonHouse Vanda receives CHERISH Junior Award



EtonHouse Pre-school at Vanda has recently been awarded the CHERISH (Championing Efforts Resulting in Improved School Health) Junior Award 2012, in recognition of good health promotion by the school. The CHERISH award is a joint programme launched by the Ministry of Education and the Health Promotion Board in the efforts to improve health promotion in schools. This initiative aims to establish a strong foundation of health and well-being for all children through their childhood years. The health of a child during the developmental years, impact the educational, socio-economic and health outcomes later on in life.

We would like to congratulate EtonHouse Vanda on receiving this award and for having demonstrated exemplary efforts in achieving high standards in health and well being.

## The EtonHouse Alumni

The EtonHouse Alumni, founded in May 2012, brings together former EtonHouse students, parents and staff. The Alumni is an exclusive community created for those who have been a part of EtonHouse.

Through the Alumni, we aim to create opportunities for the EtonHouse family to reconnect, bond, network and engage in meaningful community initiatives. The EtonHouse Alumni is also a community for members to make professional connections amongst themselves.

One of the interesting features that the platform allows is for members to follow ongoing careers of former EtonHouse students, which is an exciting

journey not just for our educators, but for the children and parents as well. In addition, the members of the Alumni have access to a platform where we share relevant articles, photographs and messages thus encouraging engaging and meaningful dialogues and discussions. We are also in the midst of planning an event to bring together all the members of the EtonHouse Alumni later this year.

We encourage everyone to be a part of this bustling, dynamic group of EtonHouse staff, students, parents and friends.

Email [friends@etonhouse.edu.sg](mailto:friends@etonhouse.edu.sg) to join the EtonHouse Alumni.

## EtonHouse on Facebook



The EtonHouse International Education Group facebook fan page is now live! The EtonHouse fan page is where you will find the latest updates of all the EtonHouse centres. Through the fan page, you can keep up with the latest information on education, growth and learning.

On the EtonHouse fan page, you will find photos of everything related to EtonHouse. Updates of children's adventures and learning journeys in school, special events hosted by EtonHouse and many more meaningful bits of information. Everyone is welcome to share photos, stories or updates about the EtonHouse family on the fan page. Like the page if EtonHouse has touched your life in any way.

<http://www.facebook.com/EtonHouseInternational>



To connect with the EtonHouse Alumni, e-mail [friends@etonhouse.edu.sg](mailto:friends@etonhouse.edu.sg) or find us on Facebook under EtonHouse Alumni.

# Collaboration

Heather Conroy, Executive Director of Pedagogy, EtonHouse Pre-Schools



Collaboration means many things. At EtonHouse it refers to a desire; an 'attitude' of wanting to work in partnership with others. Acknowledging that many hands make large tasks seem smaller; that the thoughts and ideas of others are a resource; that negotiation is a more valuable attribute than competition....teachers at EtonHouse aim to collaborate with children, colleagues and parents as part of their day to day practice.



**What does collaborative curriculum look like?**

The EtonHouse preschools working in reference to the Reggio Emilia Approach,

practise the 'pedagogy of listening'. This refers to the adult's capacity to listen with sensitivity and respect to children's comments and conversations; to attend to children's ideas, thoughts and feelings

and to respond to these ideas as part of a co-constructed curriculum. The pedagogy of listening acknowledges children's ways of knowing and learning about the world.

This does not mean that teachers do not have specific goals for each child and for the group as a whole. It does however mean accessing children's motivations (their interests) as a means of introducing the many concepts (science, mathematics and literacy) that we accept responsibility for as early childhood educators. As teachers carefully observe children's interactions with peers, materials and ideas, they are able to project learning experiences which show evidence of a careful aligning of children's theories and ideas with teacher goals. As such, the curriculum becomes child responsive, or co-constructed - a negotiation between children and adults.



An example of a co-constructed experience is the formation of an Advisory Team of 5 year old children to offer opinion on the design of the cafeteria space at 718 Mountbatten Road.

Working over several days, the children discussed, drew and constructed designs from nature with the aim of enhancing the space *to be more beautiful...like a restaurant.*



These small group projects support teachers in better understanding each child's skills, and understandings. They invite collaboration between children and adults and as a result teach us all a great deal about teaching and learning.



We discussed with them the 'job' of an Advisory team; they informed us that advice was *when you don't know and you ask a friend for help...it means thinking about hard things together.* They developed written plans for their ideas – some in words, which they were supported in sounding out; some ideas were carefully sketched. They worked with mathematical concepts when they drew on a paper so large that it required all 9 children to collaborate in transporting the design to the canteen to measure the wall space.



With sincere thanks to Lucy Ahearn, class teacher and the children of EtonHouse 718's K1 class Amelie, Ivan; Jesper, Miggy; Kaoriko; Megan; Alice; Keito and Chanyoung for their collaboration in this project.

## Reggio Emilia comes to Singapore:

by Heather Conroy, Executive Director of Pedagogy, EtonHouse Pre-Schools



Acting Minister, MCYS GOH at the opening ceremony receiving an artwork painted by children of EtonHouse from Mrs. Ng Gim Choo and Mr. Jimmy Oh.

EtonHouse Education Centre (EEC), the professional development arm of EtonHouse International recently convened its second conference with speakers directly from Reggio Emilia in Northern Italy. This event titled *Provocations for Practice* was held at the Concorde Hotel in Singapore 26<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> April.

The conference delegation numbered 350 from 14 different countries across the Asia Pacific region and provided for participants an important opportunity to think (deeply) about their practice. Paola Cagliari and Ivana Soncini, both leaders in the pedagogical co-ordinating team in Reggio Emilia, supported understanding



L to R Ivana Soncini, Jane McCall and Paola Cagliari from the Pre-schools and Infant-toddler Centres Istituzione of the Municipality of Reggio Emilia



Speakers and organisers of the conference

presented the key note on Saturday morning. Titled *Listening with our eyes*, Lorraine highlighted the significance of thoughtfully considered photographic documentation as a means for supporting children's (and their teacher's) reflection on their learning. Critical reflection on practice, stressed Lorraine, is an essential aspect of quality teaching, offering teachers a means to better understand the events and interactions which occur

about pedagogical documentation; deepened thinking about intentional teaching in a negotiated curriculum and provided delegates with opportunities to reflect on their work with special rights children. Participants were privileged, through video sessions, to 'see inside' the infant and toddler centres and preschools in Reggio Emilia and to learn more about the pedagogical principles that underpin this world acknowledged best practice.

within their learning environments.

The panel which followed again reinforced how the values of the Reggio Emilia Approach could be interpreted within an Asian context. Ms Vashima



L to R Ng Shu Ping, Heather Conroy, Vashima Goyal and Junko Cancemi, panellists at the conference

Goyal, Director of Pedagogy - Child at Street 11; Dr Junko Cancemi, Director of the Early Learning Centre, Yokohama International School; Ms Ng Shu Ping, Assistant Principal, EH Vanda and Heather Conroy, Executive Director of Pedagogy EH Preschools all shared their experience and whilst their teaching contexts differed, the consistent principle of *Image of Child* as a strong and competent thinker and communicator was apparent across all their work.

Conference delegates were deeply inspired and motivated by the speakers. The obvious enthusiasm to take action around enhancing the quality of the learning environment, and teaching practice is a true reflection of the quality teaching we have come to expect from our colleagues in Reggio Emilia.



More than 350 delegates from 14 different nationalities

## A Walkthrough Our N2 Memories - A Collaborative Project with the Children

### EtonHouse @ Mountbatten 718

by Lisa Hughes, Assistant Pre-School Director

At EtonHouse 718, we strongly believe in working **with** children as we plan for opportunities to share our learning journey with parents and the community. Recently, we worked with the children to plan for our N2 reflective session of the year gone by. The N2 teachers believe that reflective thinking is a higher order cognitive skill that has been supported throughout the year through intentional teaching moments. The N2 memories exhibit aimed to capture the children's strength in reflective thinking as they shared about their most special memory from the year just concluded. This was a collaborative process between teachers and



children as they discussed, thought deeply together and chose a method to communicate their thoughts and ideas through the languages of paint, drawing or collage.

The children prepared the invitation for the session and other children in the pre-school invested time in creating beautiful mobiles to make the 'walk through' a magical one! The evening was rich in dialogue and exchange, as children took the lead, sharing their work and thinking with their family. We are inspired by the way that pre-schools and infant toddler centres

in Reggio Emilia strongly value participation, believing that "participation generates and

nurtures the feelings of culture and solidarity, responsibility and inclusion." (2010, p.10).

Reference: Reggio Children. (2010). *Indications, preschools and infant - toddler centres of the municipality of Reggio Emilia. Reggio Children: Italy.*



## Working with Parents in the Classroom

### EtonHouse @ Mountbatten 764

by Joy Tan, Asst. Pre-School Director and Class Teacher

In the present context, experiences with parental involvement have extended beyond providing parents with information about the child's success in school. Rather, it has become the building block of a home-school relationship that empowers families to participate in the educational processes of the young learners (Gestwicki, 2004).

The cultural shift in parental involvement has influenced schools worldwide to take the initiative



to establish a positive rapport and partnership with parents. Teachers are no longer viewed as the only experts in children's learning given that parents are now recognized as capable partners who can offer their own unique talents and expertise to everyday learning in the classroom.

At EtonHouse 764, parents and teachers work in collaboration to enrich the children's learning experiences in various ways. For example as part of a fund-raising event for Earth Day 2012, a parent volunteer was invited into the K2 classes

to share her expertise in building terrariums as part of the class' inquiry project into the water cycle. Following that, the K2 children took on a fund-raising task of selling the terrariums during the Earth Day Celebration for their upcoming EtonCamp 2012 and to the Singapore Children Society, our favourite charity.



Reference  
Gestwicki, C. (2004). *Home, school, and community relations: A guide to working with families (5th ed.)*. United States of America: Delmar Learning

## Building a Community

### EtonHouse @ Claymore

by Karen Nicholls, Project Director

When it comes to thinking about how children best learn, research has shown that teachers working from a child's place of knowing - and building 'home-school' connections that foster relationships with parents provide a holistic approach worthy of note.



While teachers understand how children learn best, parents understand their child best. The combination of this knowledge allows for learning to take place that is in the best interest of the child. It permits the shared knowledge to be used to accomplish goals that neither group individually can achieve. Children explore their surrounds and share their wonderings. Teachers use their knowing to set up the learning environments in response to these wonderings in a way that provokes and engages children further. The shared knowledge from parents allows environments to be individualised to meet each child's particular needs.

Although Claymore is a new centre it began by inviting support from parents and children even before its doors were opened. Teachers met with families in a sharing session that sought involvement from the family that assisted in building trust necessary in developing collaborative

partnerships. Now that the school is open, parents are welcomed each morning as they bring their children into school and as they leave at pickup time. Teachers take time to converse with parents about their child's day in school.

To further strengthen the idea of collaborative partnerships, Claymore is extending the idea to develop the community with a whole school approach. It hosted its first family event on June 15<sup>th</sup>. Family and extended family were invited

for a picnic at the school. The event provided opportunities for parents, children and teachers to make connections with each other to further strengthen ties and a sense of common purpose.

As the school population grows over the coming months the school will continue to engage new families in order to build a strong and supportive network. As happened in the beginning for current families, the new families will be invited into school before children commence to meet



with the teaching staff and share knowledge to support the child. Further to this, an orientation day has been set so that all children and adults can find their class and meet with the teachers in order to provide comfort for that first day of school. As the new year progresses,

the school will continue to host events that bring everyone together for the common purpose of building a collaborative community for Claymore.

## Collaboration through Inquiry

### EtonHouse @ Orchard

by Leanne Sunarya, Pre-School Director, in collaboration with K1A

Our K1A class began to consider the central idea that "*People Explore and Discover in Ways that constantly change how we think*". The learning invitation the teachers proposed was an artefact that had been found in the Philippines which provoked thinking around the idea of what it might possibly be.

Children began to pose theories and through collaborative dialogue these theories were tested, challenged, re-thought and adjusted creating forums of exchange amongst the children. It quickly became apparent that the group was beginning to think around the idea of fossils as the children began to collect data as evidence to support their theories.



Books were consulted to research these ideas, representations using clay were explored and the artefacts physical properties were recorded using mathematical thinking; but the children were still no closer to determining the answer to their question; "What is it?"

The idea of an expert was introduced and the nature of the work on an archaeologist considered. One of the children suggested their

father was an archaeologist, extending collaboration for the first time beyond the classroom. Emails were sent, and dialogue entered into - still no solution.

The class then decided to consult the wider school community. Messages were exchanged which challenged the children's thinking and required further collection of data. Reaching out beyond the immediate community was also attempted - their dialogue continues. Has the answer been found? - No! Have deep connections in the children's thinking been achieved through the multi faceted collaborative process? - Absolutely! Collaboration is a process of tensions as we revisit

prior knowledge, reconsider our understandings and thinking and build new learning. The process is exciting and the journey will continue here at Orchard.



## Family Day - Connecting to Children's Worlds

### EtonHouse @ Outram

by Yvonne Yu, Pre-School Director & Theresia Froitzheim, Class Teacher



Educators' practices and the relationships they form with children and families have a significant effect on children's involvement and success in learning. Children thrive when families and educators work together in partnership to support young children's learning. (Early Years Learning Framework p.9)

N2 Voyagers' class had two families who welcomed new members to their family. To enhance the understanding of their own family and the roles the children and others play within their family, we invited parents to come to the classroom and talk about their favourite part of the weekends or their holiday as a family. The parents also prepared their favourite family snacks to share with the children in class.

Matthias' mummy brought with her their newest member of the family, Baby Lucy to be part of this special event in school. The children in class gathered around Baby Lucy while Matthias watched over his little sister with care. Matthias' mum shared Matthias' favourite book, 'The Zoo Animals' along with the different zoo animals' masks for the children, to engage their

participation in the story.

These experiences encourage self expression and conversations between children and adults. These engagements allow the children to actively construct their own understandings and contribute to others' learning in a social-cultural context.



## Building Collaborative Cultures

### EtonHouse @ Vanda

by Emelia Prayogo, Pre-School Director

Valuing the role of parents as our partners in supporting children's learning and development has contributed a significant perspective in the way we view collaboration. Collaboration is seen as a multitude of approaches in providing context to home-preschool relationship. Building a collaborative home-preschool culture means being committed to reflection, openness, and trust. In addition to that, the commitment further leads us to acknowledgement and respect of others' perspectives. The pre-school fosters practices that support the following:

- Mistakes and uncertainty are openly shared, discussed, and examined
- Disagreement is accepted to foster new dialogue

- Interdependence is valued

We understand that collaboration is a complex and demanding commitment. It requires developing trusting, collegial relationships; dealing with



conflict; and maintaining clear focus. Spence (2006) recognizes that structured methods of collaboration encourage self-examination of one's conscious thoughts and feelings. For examples,

ex-parents of our K2 class, together with educators, collaboratively advocated the importance of a holistic approach to the transition to primary years; a parent's initiative fostered a collaborative effort among the wider community in raising donated items to the less fortunate children in Cambodia; parents' feedback is valued as a point of reference for further improvement.

Spence, Muneera U. "Graphic Design: Collaborative Processes = Understanding Self and Others." (lecture) Art 325: Collaborative Processes. Fairbanks Hall, Oregon State University, Corvallis, Oregon. 13 Apr. 2006.



# Collaboration at EtonHouse Newton: EPIC (EtonHouse Parents in Collaboration)

## EtonHouse @ Newton

by Rohini Ramadas, Core Teacher & Tracey Boyle, Pre-School Director

At EtonHouse Newton, parents participate actively in the planning of their child's education. This is done at the beginning of each school year through the parent, teacher and child Goal Setting Conferences. Parents make dynamic and knowledgeable contributions to the pool of information collected by teachers. This provides a platform for a collaborative working relationship based on mutual respect and shared understandings.

As the school year and children's development progress, parents and staff get the opportunity to expand this collaboration. These varied and dynamic school collaborations



A parent teaching students in K1 Polar Bear class how to fold different paper origami during Japanese Children's Day.

develop their global and environmental awareness and appreciation.

Respect, trust, open communication and mutual goals are all positive indicators for effective and collaborative partnerships with our parents, children and staff.

Upon reflection we continually foster and further support the learning and understandings of our children and that is EPIC for all of us at EtonHouse Newton!



Parents participating on Earth Day Celebration.



Teachers, parents and students at Sport's Day assembly waiting for the event to begin.

include Parent Information Sessions and Consultations, Parent Assemblies, Community Events, Cultural and Global Celebrations, School Exhibitions, Sports, Music and Arts School Events. All of these global, school and community based activities honour and celebrate the diverse cultures that are an inherent part of our school

community.

Through cultural celebrations our faculty at Newton supports a positive cultural identity for all children and their families. Through all other celebrations we promote and strengthen a positive and supportive school culture that allows our children to further



Our Early Years Sport's Day. Teachers and parents working together to help our little ones through the obstacle courses.



A parent reading a story book on Easter Bunnies to children in N2 Leopards.



# Be Friends with Books, Be Happy with Books

## EtonHouse @ Zhuhai

by Rain Chang, Class Teacher

World Book Day was one of great importance for us at EtonHouse Zhuhai as it also marked our first 'reading festival.' We asked specialist teachers from the local story club to collaborate with us in our activities and invited the parents along to join in the festivities.

The events included storytelling, trivia and performances all aimed to encourage the children to think of reading as a joyful experience to be treasured rather



Introducing the World Book Day to the children and parents.

than a mundane chore. We planned experiences for children to make reading pleasurable so they think of books as another one of their toys, something that is engaging and fun.

All in all, the event was a great success and helped to spark our book sharing activity that is now flourishing within EtonHouse Zhuhai. Our students are all better off now that they have



access to such a vast and diverse array of new and interesting books that they can change on a weekly basis. We look forward to next year's World Book Day.

# EtonHouse 17th Anniversary Celebration

## EtonHouse @ Yiwu

by Jeremy Van Shuytman, Principal



On June 9, 2012 EtonHouse Yiwu hosted a charitable event supported by the entire community in celebration of the 17th anniversary of EtonHouse. We felt this occasion was not only a chance to celebrate the success and growth of EtonHouse over the past 17 years, but also the collaboration demonstrated time and time again in this community - this time in giving back to the



12,000 RMB will be used to buy books and other school supplies for Chi'An Pre-School, a local school with far less funding and resources than we are fortunate enough to enjoy.

Students, teachers, and parents also prepared performances to highlight the international nature of our school. Colourful dances accompanying songs from around the world

community that hosts our school and its families.

Families donated goods to be sold. Many parents also volunteered to sell these goods. All proceeds amounting to

demonstrated the talent and team work here at EtonHouse Yiwu.

A good time was had by all who attended. As well, the profile of EtonHouse was raised in Yiwu through this cultural and charitable effort. We are grateful for the ongoing support of the community and look forward to further collaborations with Chi'An Pre-School and other organizations in Yiwu area in the future.



## Graduation of the First Batch of Senior Year Students

### EtonHouse @ Suzhou

by Scott Taprell, Principal

EtonHouse Suzhou is extremely proud to have our first graduating senior years group this year. While it was only three students, they have all worked extremely hard to pass the EtonHouse High School Diploma, with two of them achieving a distinction. Masatsugu Saito and Hitoko Sasaki will be returning to Japan to sit entrance exams and eventually attend the universities of their choice, and we wish them good fortune in their applications.

Erina Izutsu has attained a place studying for a Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Fine Arts, in the prestigious Lasalle College of the Arts, Singapore. Erina has worked extremely



hard this year to complete the required portfolio for her Advanced Placement exam in Studio Art, Drawing, which considering she had very little

previous experience in art was not an easy task to fulfill; but with huge determination, relentless persistence, talent, passion and the support of her dedicated art teacher Ms Katherine Webster, she succeeded in completing the required quota of exhibits and more. As a result of her fabulous portfolio she has achieved the accolade of attending one of the best colleges of the arts in Asia, directly entering the BA (Hons) Fine Arts course without being required to complete any prior course. We take great pride in Erina's accomplishments and wish her great success in her future.

## Fostering a Collaborative Ecosystem

### EtonHouse @ India

At Vivero and Serra International Pre-schools India, we believe in fostering an ecosystem that encourages collaboration. Be it collaborating with peers, parents or the community at large, our children are encouraged to foster a genuine and dependable relationship with families and the community early on.

#### Vivero @ Pune:

##### Collaboration, a community effort

We recently went on an excursion to Akanksha Foundation, a non-profit educational organization for the underprivileged. Our children, along with their peers in Akanksha collaborated to create a beautiful piece of art; they then collectively participated in a story telling session. The experience



Vivero, Pune: 'Collaborating, a community effort'

created a positive impact on our children. They later excitedly narrated elements of their visit to teachers and parents, making this collaborative effort an enriching educative experience, taking them one step closer towards Vivero's aim of creating a caring community.

#### SERRA International @ Aundh & Pune:

##### Parents as collaborators

We believe a parent's involvement in a child's education starts at home and should continue at school. In Serra, we believe parents are partners and a collaborator in a child's education, for us partnering with parents is one of our main differentiators. Be it Culmination / Portfolio Sharing Day, 'Daddy's Day Out' or 'Grandparent's Tea Party', the support we have received



SERRA International, Aundh, Pune: 'Parents as collaborators'

from parents has been fantastic.

Our recent Annual Day celebration was a great success owing to the collaborative efforts of Serra parents. From coordinating dances, to on-stage introductions, they actively participated in their child's Annual Day celebration. Parents later shared that being a part of the event not only helped them learn about their child's progress, but also left them with a sense of belonging. This response further reinforced our belief, that it takes more than a just a good school or a home to educate children - it is collaborative effort.



# Collaborations

## EtonHouse @ Tokyo

by Peter Ackerman, Pre-School Director

Schools are social institutions and education is a social process in which learning grows and evolves through social interactions. Schools can provide opportunities for a wide variety of collaborative relationships to form between children, parents, and educators. For these reasons, at EtonHouse International School Tokyo we strive to promote the development and talents of children, parents, and educators by nurturing a culture of working together, learning from each other, while at the same time creating opportunities for all.



in order to build and enhance our collaborative school community. These include the use of the written EtonHouse curriculum document, the Inquire-Think-Learn curriculum framework, which has been designed to enhance collaboration and flexible planning. Furthermore, our curriculum is built around children's own experiences, and is also

play-based, democratic, responsive, and flexible.

The curriculum evolves as children's interests, ideas, views and questions are explored. We then allow children time and multiple ways to express these.

Another way we promote collaboration is through the documenting of children's learning and the sharing of it via displays throughout the school, portfolios, and weekly



newsletters that inform our school community of what is happening in the classrooms, what we value, and additionally provoke further exploration and learning.



There are a multitude of areas in which we focus,

# Father's Day

## EtonHouse @ Korea

by Eunhee Kim, Principal, EtonHouse Dongtan



Although expectations are changing, many Koreans still believe that mothers are primarily responsible for the education of their children. Fathers who are interested in their children's education often appear shy when visiting school and to meet their child's teacher. In order to create a greater partnership between home and school, both EtonHouse Korea schools planned a Father's Day event to help promote fathers' active involvement in their children's education.

The event was held on a Saturday morning so more fathers could attend. Classroom teachers worked in creative ways for fathers to experience their child's classroom life, while minimizing any nervousness for our new participants.

The teachers prepared craft and cooking classes, and the children's fathers (and some grandfathers!) joined in class calendar time. The highlight for many was the gym class where Sue, the gym teacher introduced many exciting games

for the day. Some daddies were very competitive! The children and their fathers left school smiling – a sure sign of success. It was a good opportunity for fathers to understand how their children learn and grow at EtonHouse – and one that will be repeated in the future.

We continue to seek an authentic partnership with families and the community – and encourage parents, and other relatives, to be actively involved in the classroom for the benefit of their children.



## Collaborations through Art

### EtonHouse @ Malaysia

by Claire Blake, Pre-School Director

Feared by many, 'art' is considered a finished product made of paint, paper, clay or collage. Sometimes teachers of young children use art to refer to spontaneous, open-ended and often messy explorations of colour or texture, with little or no teacher direction or involvement. As we explore new possibilities for ourselves as teachers, however, we begin to use the word 'art' to describe a lively process of engagement with a range of materials – an engagement that is sensual and reflective, creative and deliberate, and that deepens and extends children's learning.



Through encounters with a wide range of media

and materials, children explore the sensuousness and beauty of colour, texture, movement, lines and space. They learn to look carefully and discern nuances, to move with thoughtful intention and to follow their intuition. They also learn to find joy in the play of their senses. As children become more comfortable and skillful with these media, they are

able to use them to communicate their understandings, emotions and questions. Their fluency in a range of art "languages", in turn, opens new possibilities for collaboration and dialogue, for taking new perspectives and for deepening their relationships with

each other.

At EtonHouse Malaysia, these understandings of the power of art shape our daily practices with children. Our teaching and learning are inspired by the pedagogy of the schools in Reggio Emilia and its emphasis on "the hundred languages," or the ways in which art media can be used to "speak" about experiences, observations, feelings and theories.

Through the sharing of these experiences in our art exhibition, we aim to embrace beauty and full-bodied sensory experiences. We aim to use art media to anchor these inquiries and bring beauty into our lives.



## A Field Trip Learning Opportunity - "Knowledge Speaks but Wisdom Listens"

### EtonHouse @ Jakarta

by Chris Hartman, K2 core teacher

At EtonHouse Indonesia we provide time, resources and space for our children to have the 'freedom' to Inquire, Think and Learn. We involve the parents as much as possible in their children's learning journeys. We feel that involving parents helps strengthen the quality of the school's program.



*Chef delights at student's focus and concentration*

We have parents from a wide range of nationalities and they come from various unique professional backgrounds which provide for opportunities

for their expert contribution. We often invite the parents to join celebrations and events at school and involve them to enrich the children's learning by volunteering to plan activities or share knowledge with them. The parents are willing to be guest speakers or to help out to arrange and sometimes provide for things needed for an activity involving the children's current topic of study.

For example, last month a number of our children were invited by a parent Master Chef for a tour of the Italian restaurant at Shangri-La Hotel Jakarta.

The children were able to observe the kitchen operations there, where dishes for up to a thousand people can be

prepared, and they even had the chance to try their own hand at cooking five-star food. The day ended with some real Italian pizza and a photo session with all the chefs.



*"Chef of the Day" group photo*



*Token of appreciation to parent, Master Chef of Shangri-La Hotel Jakarta.*