

SPROUTS ESC NEWSLETTER WINTER 2013

Greetings from All at Sprouts ESC



Fai Chun -Chinese New Year Calligraphy -in English

The PLK, Sprouts Foundation and FCC Education Services Centre has been operating since October 2011 to provide English, Putonghua and Storytelling lessons to primary school children from disadvantaged families living in the Tai Wai area. This after-school programme is designed to make learning English and Putonghua, fun and interesting. It caters for 144 primary school age children, half of which are drawn from our host school in Tai Wai Hong Kong in which the centre is located and the other half from the wider local community. Part-time native English and Native Putonghua teachers work with fulltime staff to support the children's learning in small groups through interactive lessons, storytelling and a rich and diverse range of activities where students get to cook, explore art and craft, music, drama, games and many other interests, using authentic language communicatively. Outings are a regular and important part of the programme affording learners and their families opportunities to engage with many areas and facets of Hong Kong's places of interest and attractions that without this programme, they may have limited or no access to.

Half The Sky



A hike on behalf of this very worthwhile charity operating in Chinese orphanages to provide care-giver services to resident children, 'Half The Sky', took place on Saturday 3 November 2012. Staff from the Centre, the Shupers and volunteers and their children walked in perfect conditions with 35 ESC children on stage 5 of the Maclehorse trail for a little over an hour. Thanks to the Shupers and Harry De Pree and his team for organising this worthwhile and fun event. This was a truly amazing experience for the kids and for all who took part. As well as to the Shupers, we are grateful to Markus Eichacker, Raffaella Marinucci, David Nichols, Anh Lu and Jane Kim & family who made this experience possible. Much anticipated participation certificates were presented to the walkers just before Christmas by Mark Shuper and his daughter Anya.



'Half The Sky' Walkers with Mark & Anya Shuper

Classes

All levels have been working well through Task-Based Language learning activities (TBL) which continues to support their language acquisition and use. A day school P6 teacher related to us that the school's November 2012 exam results for her class showed that the students who attended the ESC programme scored 10-15% higher grades in their listening tests than their classmates. Well done students, well done ESC!

Students have enjoyed shared reading, songs, role plays and new games. As well as work on the seasons, craft and art making activities and of course the perennial favourite, food, board and card games and movie time were also on offer in the lessons and in the storytelling. The upper primary has been reviewing and practising interview skills, techniques and protocol through roleplay, watching good and bad interviews on Youtube and exploring interactive games in preparation for the coming interview season.



Individual soft copy work folders have been set up for each student to archive their work for records, diagnostic purposes and continuous assessment. Student's assessment reports are filed there also.

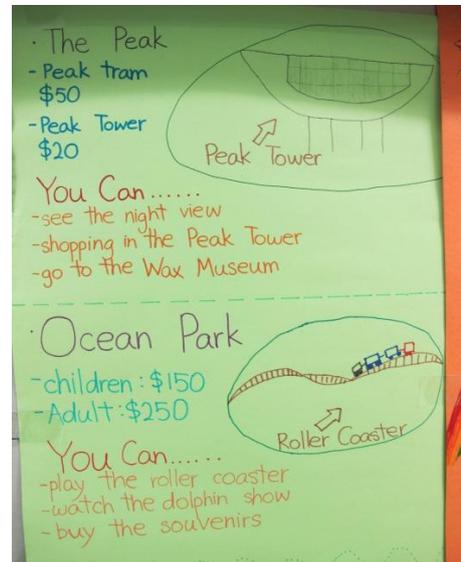
Storytelling and Putonghua lessons have been busy, focusing also on the seasons and children's interests and generally have been going along very nicely with storybook work, classroom activities, movie time and games from the centre. Chinese New Year was a great opportunity for combined Putonghua classes to spoil everyone with superb dumplings, Beijing style. A big thanks to all the teachers, TAs and storytellers for their tremendous input.

Programme & Student Progress Evaluation

Extensive discussions between the Centre, our academic consultants and donors took place last year. Learners' monitored progress will form part of the basis for continuing sponsorship arrangements and will be used as data to help support the setting up of new centres. Evaluations only apply to English lessons at this stage and we are using an adaptation of the Common European Framework but with more bands. All four skills are evaluated at points over the year along with an initial assessment for all new students as they enter the programme. These are conducted informally to keep the students' experience as stress-free as possible.



Recent Writing Classes



Tense Workshop

Design a Poster



Storytelling

Putonghua

Christmas 2012



Christmas Bounty in Bunting



Beautiful Cupcakes

Christmas crafts and cupcake making and decorating produced beautifully decorative gifts for the students to take home. Children stuffed stockings and made Christmas paraphernalia which culminated in combined class and group games and parties. While Hong Kong shivered under the coldest Christmas in 12 years, Tony was in New Zealand enjoying a brilliant Antipodean summer and was therefore unable to assist with 'Santa duties' for the centre and the school. Rumour has it, however, that he will be available next year (if a big enough Santa suit can be obtained) and may very well bear an even closer resemblance to the mythical, portly old gentleman by then without any further padding and few extra facial props required.



Party time!



Stockings at the Ready

Open Day Saturday Jan 19 2013

Wong Chi Ho (our host) School held an open day for recruitment of students from the local community for next semester and Principal Yeung kindly invited the centre to take part to promote our services.



Choose a Word & Hit The Jackpot!

This was a valuable promotion for the centre and many brochures and application forms were given out to prospective students' families. The centre staff manned a games booth for the children and dozens of 'Sprouts ESC' balloons were blow up and distributed to advertise the centre further.



Roll-up, Roll-up! ESC Games Booth



Principal Yeung PLK Wong Chi Ho Primary School and Tony Webster Assistant Director of Studies PLK, Sprouts, FCC ESC

Chinese Lunar New Year 2013



Lotus Flowers Extraordinaire



Fai Chun

Chinese Lunar New Year of the Snake was celebrated with gorgeous origami lotus flowers, dazzling Fai Chun (Chinese Calligraphy for Chinese New Year), myriads of lanterns in all forms and sublime Beijing Style dumplings.



Staffing

We bid a fond farewell to our founding P1-2 Teaching Assistant Alice Wong and wish her every success in her new post at Lingnan University. The warmest of welcomes is extended to our newly appointed TA for lower primary, Keith Tsang. Two part-time storytellers, Kannie Chung and Kimmy Lau also have departed for other positions. A big welcome too, to new storytellers for P3,4,5,6 Ada Sung and Cindy Cheng. We hope you will all enjoy your experience at the centre.

Outings



The centre's children, around 100, staff and 20 volunteers enjoyed a Christmas trip to the movies on 8 December, 'The Rise of The Guardians' in 3D. This was well organised, lots of fun and afterwards the children worked on an activity sheet where they got some practice in summarising and re-telling the wonderful story.

On Sunday 20 January a small group of around 12 students were invited to a brilliant musical performance and poetry recital called Carnival of The Zodiac based on Saint-Saens Carnival of The Animals as part of the PLAY programme organised by Premier Performance's Andrea Fessler who generously provided free tickets, kindly arranged by Mark & Winnie Shuper. This was a tremendous concert which inspired the children greatly.



Thank you Andrea and the Shupers!

A trip to the Yeun Long area on January 26 featured visits to a bakery factory, the Kam Tin Country Club and Strawberry Farm and the Tuen Mun Park Reptile House. This was happily enjoyed by around 60 students and their families. Thanks again to the lovely donors!



Strawberry Fields Forever!



Hubble Bubble Tuen Mun



Great Snakes



Wonderful Goldfish

DATES, UPCOMING EVENTS:

- WCH exams are scheduled for the week 11-15 March. School will close at 6pm.
- An outing to Kadoorie Farm & Botanic Gardens is booked for Sat 23 March.
- Easter – last class on Thurs 28 March, resume Thurs 11 April.
- Monday 8 April, Team Outing LTP, CLC, ESC (TBC).
- Friday 19 April ESC Stakeholders' meeting at PLK 10am.

Thanks again to everyone for your hard work and support, wonderful ideas, your patience and sense of fun, for sharing your talents and for the warmth, consideration and care you give to the kids.

Cheers and take care and

HAPPY EASTER TO YOU ALL !

Tony

Tony Webster

Assistant Director of Studies