

THE ANGLO-CHINESE SCHOOL (INDEPENDENT) OVERSEAS EDUCATION PROGRAMME
– *An Initiative to Support Environmental Sustainability*

Co-Authors:

Dr Ong Teck Chin, Principal, CEO

Ms Chock Siew Hwa, Deputy Principal 3

Ms Yvonne Lim, Deputy Principal 4

Mr Lim Eng Kong, Director, Year 3

1. INTRODUCTION

This paper from ACS (Independent) covers the Overseas Education Program (OEP) with an emphasis on our *Initiative to Support Environmental Sustainability*. It will be presented in 4 sections covering the Overall Framework, School Curriculum Review, Organisational Changes and Key Educational Activities.

In preparation for the implementation of the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP) in Anglo-Chinese School (Independent), a deliberate plan was established to prepare both staff and students for the demands of the IBDP. To begin with, we capitalized on the illustrious past of the school with its many achievements and accomplishments. The school has a history which dates back to 1st March 1886 when it was founded as a Methodist Educational Institution. Over the years, it sought to provide a holistic education and have been able to establish a clear tradition of scholarship in educating future leaders for the country. The school was first a Government aided school and because of our excellent track records, was selected by the Ministry of Education (MOE) to be one of the first 8 independent schools in Singapore in 1988. The school currently offers a six-form education, covering Year 1 – Year 6 or Grades 7 to 12. It offers two distinct educational tracks, namely the GCE ‘O’ level from Year 1 to Year 4 and the Integrated Programme (IP) from Year 1 to Year 6. The IP was started in 2004. The programme culminates in the IBDP for students in Years 5 & 6.

Special Programmes offered in the school includes the Music Elective Programme (MEP) and the School-Based Gifted Programme. The latter caters to the top 1% of each cohort of students in

Singapore. In preparing for the implementation of the IBDP, several organizational changes which included Curriculum Review and implementation of a number of key activities were instituted. One of the key educational activities initiated was our Overseas Education Programme (OEP) which was initially launched for Year 3 or Grade 9 students and was subsequently extended to other year levels. It aims to provide experiential learning through field study opportunities in a trans-disciplinary context and to provide opportunities for cross cultural living and community involvement overseas. An entire cohort of more than 500 Year 3 (Grade 9) students is involved annually in this programme. Students worked in groups of 3 classes at different destinations in selected ASEAN countries and in the Peoples’ Republic of China. They are exposed to environmental issues and encouraged to consider ways of sustaining the environment and the programme.

2. ACADEMIC TRACKS

The Courses of Study in ACS (Independent) are shown in Figure #1

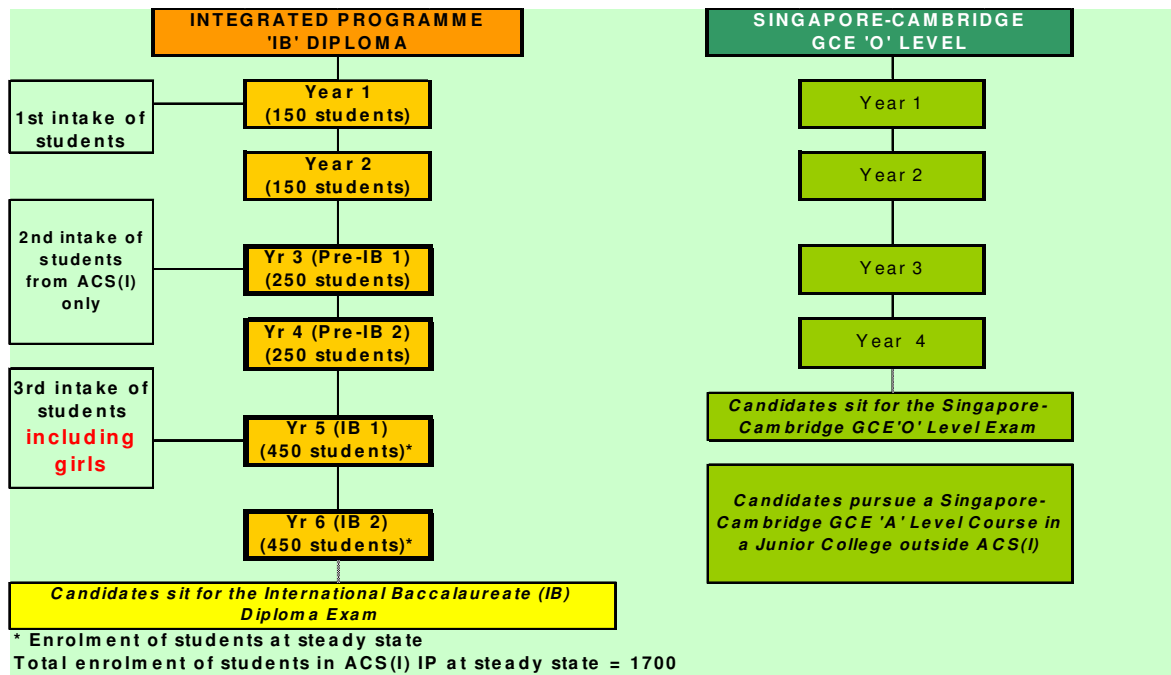


Figure # 1: Academic Tracks in ACS (Independent)

3. CURRICULUM STRUCTURE

The Curriculum Structure of our Integrated Programme comprises 2 main interdisciplinary academic strands.

Strand 1 which is based on the framework of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, comprises the Mathematics and Science subjects.

Strand 2 which is adapted from the ACS(I) GEP curriculum design comprises languages, literature, history and social studies and also elements of performing arts. This strand stresses the historical and social roots of language and communication, with history itself as a means of conveying information across time.

The 2 academic strands are held together by specially designed interdisciplinary modules which are built into the curriculum schemes of work and syllabus; as well as colloquia which are seminars and talks on multi as well as interdisciplinary topics that transcend the curriculum subjects.

4. SCHOOL'S PHILOSOPHY, MISSION & VISION

Our School's philosophy is enumerated below:

- Every student's needs and interests are met by an all-round education.
- Every student can achieve success and excellence in his learning.
- Every student is serious in intent and works hard to achieve excellence in academic and non-academic pursuits.
- Every staff member provides the learning opportunities for each student to excel.
- Every student is rendered support by parents, the Old Boys' Association, the Church, the Board of Management and the Board of Governors.

Our mission is to be a world-class institution in nurturing the holistic development of our students.

Our vision for Years 1-4 is that each student will aspire to be a Scholar, an Officer, and a Gentleman.

One of the most powerful ways of working towards this is the 65 Co-Curricular Activities [CCA] offered by the school. CCAs contribute towards development of academic interests (the Scholar), leadership potential (the Officer) and affective, social and fine psychomotor skills (the Gentleman).

For Years 5 & 6, our vision is that each student aspires to be a Scholar, Leader and Global Citizen.

As a Methodist Institution, the school has Christian beliefs and core values. Our ideal of Christ likeness is manifested in the Fruit of the Spirit which is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

And as members of the school there is the ACS Spirit which stands for Academic and non-academic excellence, a Character of integrity and a heart of Service.

These are demonstrated through self-confidence, humility, generosity, honesty, perseverance, responsibility, loyalty, compassion and care concern for others.

5. SCHOOL ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

Our school's Organisational Structure is shown in the following Figures 2, 3, 4 and 5.

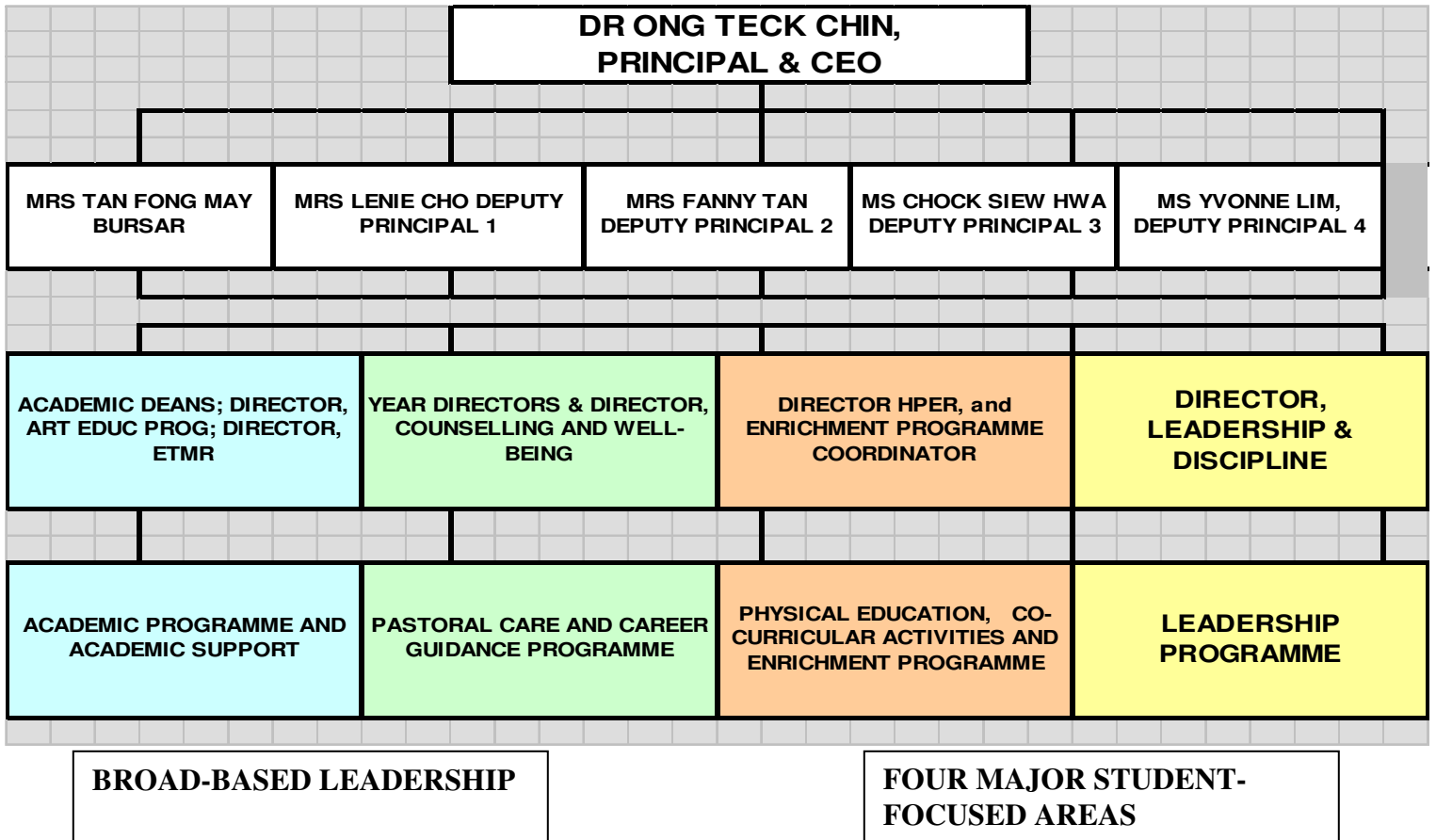


Figure # 2: Organisational Structure

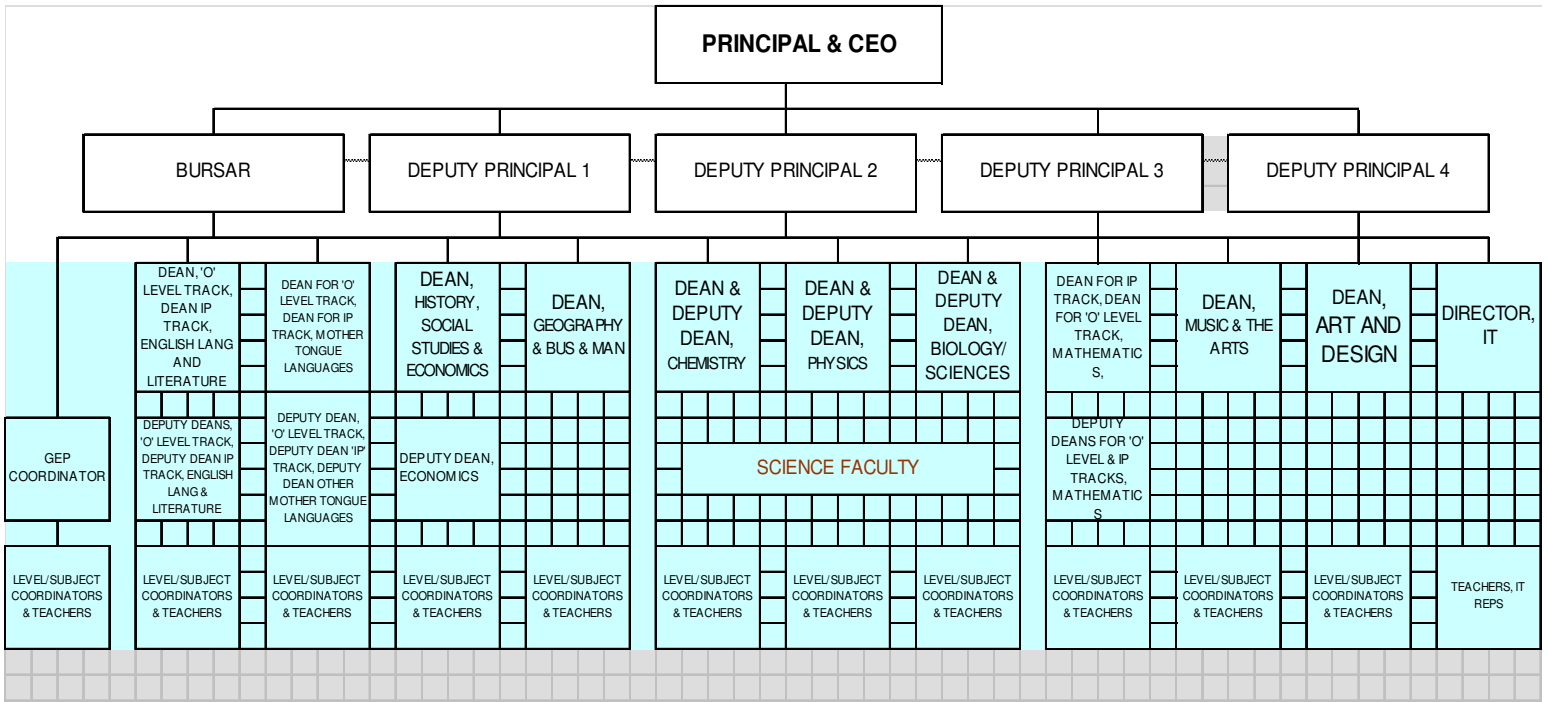


Figure # 3: The Academic Faculty

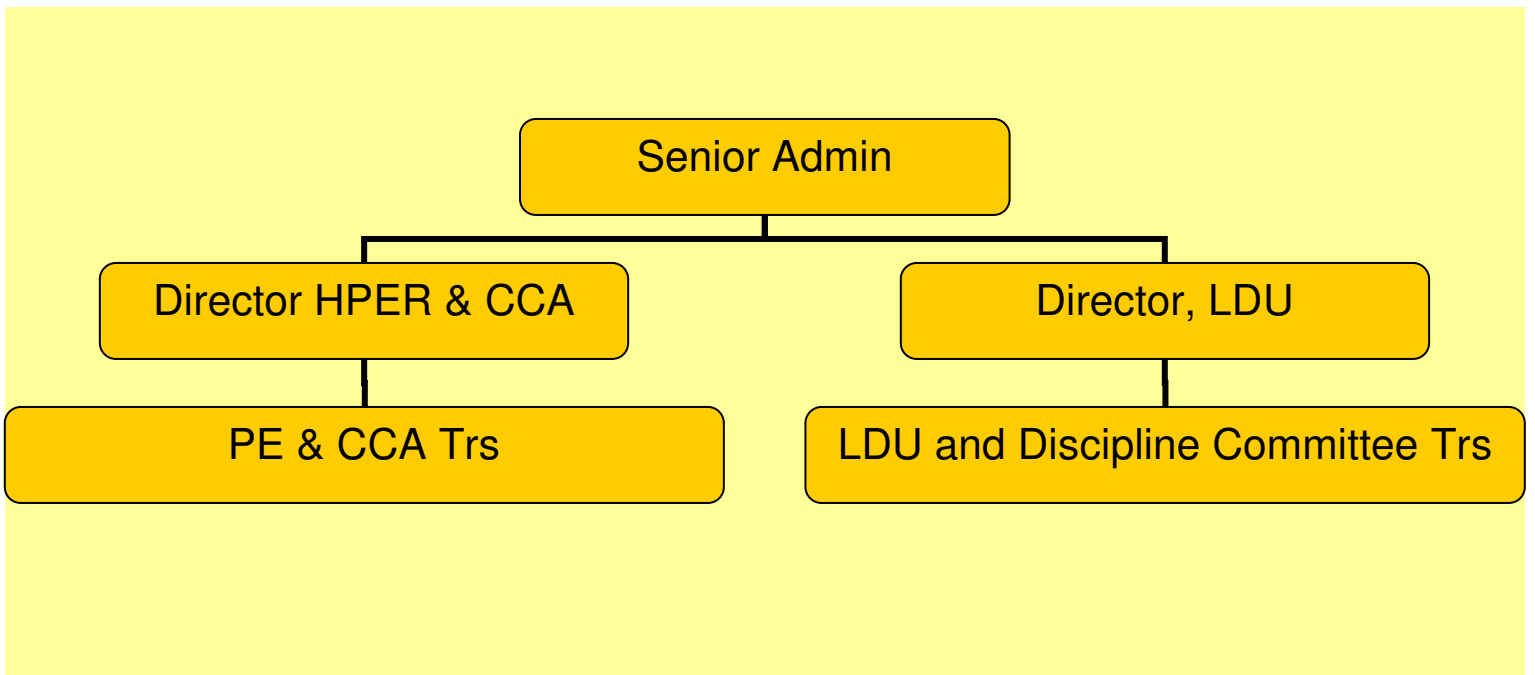


Figure # 4: Directors (CCA, Physical Education & Recreation, Leadership & Discipline)

(Organizational Structure)

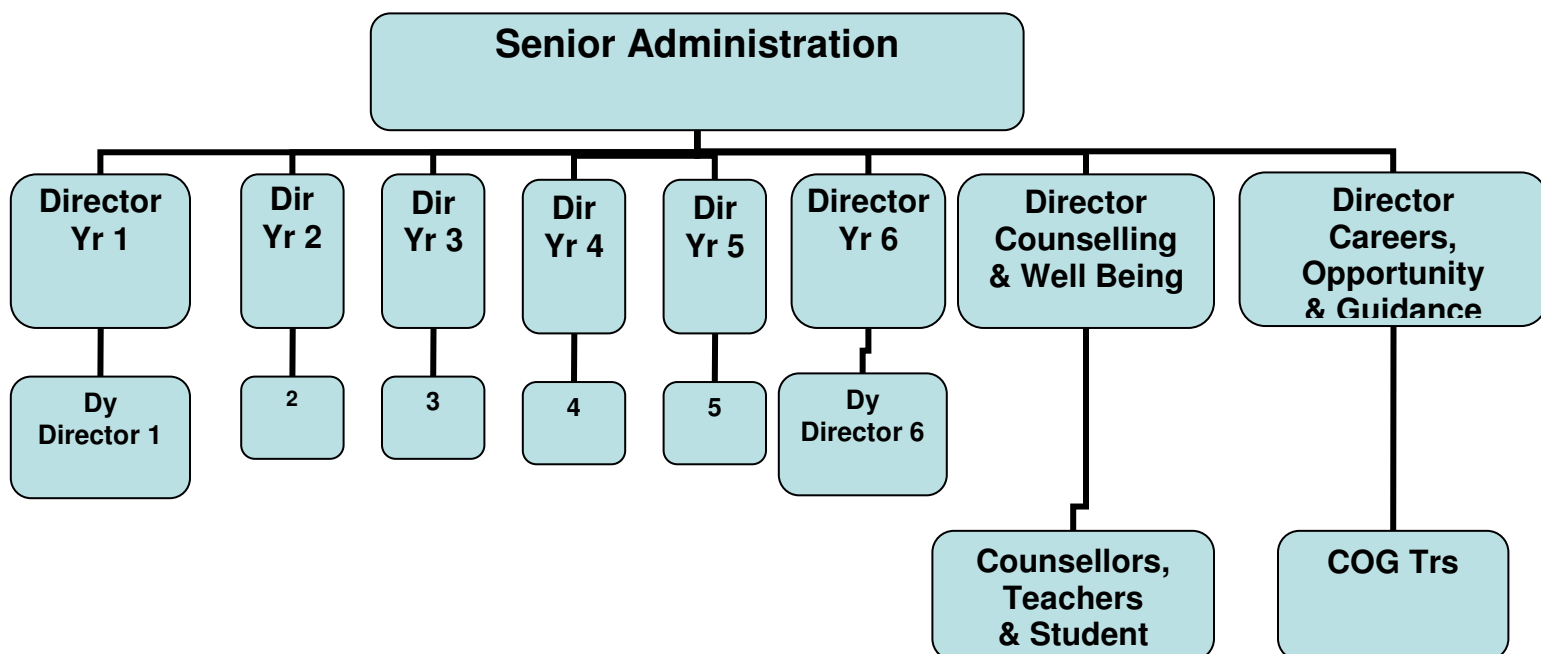


Figure # 5: The Pastoral Structure

The organizational structure supports all the work that the school does. There is the Senior Administration comprising the Principal and CEO, 4 Deputy Principals and a Bursar. Focusing on Academic matters are the Academic Deans. Focusing on the level administrative matters and Affective Education are the Year Directors as well as the Director for Counselling and Well-being. The Director for Health, Physical Education and Recreation (HPER) focuses on the Co-Curricular and Enrichment programmes while the Director of Leadership Development Unit (LDU) oversees the Leadership development and discipline matters.

The leadership is broad-based, comprising 4 major student-focused areas.

As school leaders, we develop the vision and set the focus and direction of the school. The team develops, implements and improves the various management systems to ensure efficiency.

Based on Christian values and the ACS Spirit the school leaders develop the school vision and mission considering the internal/local environment and external/international environmental scans.

As a school, ACS (Independent) has a well-developed whole-school approach to its programme implementation and review processes. This is effected through Regular and Structured Review which is integral to the School Management System where a well-developed whole-school approach is adopted to bring about changes within the School System. This often involves the design of new paradigms and implementation of new systems which are evaluated for integration and consistency within the school environment.

6. SCHOOL CULTURE

The school culture involves Middle-Management in Active Review of Work Unit Plans. The Middle-Management promotes and integrates school values through a school-wide approach in implementation of working key educational activities e.g. the OEP, colloquia and symposium into the action plan, schemes of work, core curriculum and supporting activities.

Student leaders also play a part in transmitting school values and the school provides students wide-ranging opportunities both locally and overseas.

7. RESPONSIBILITY TO SOCIETY

The approach is often structured e.g. leadership roles in academic areas, Student Council, Pastoral Care & Career Guidance (PCCG), Co-Curricular Activities (CCA) classes, Interest Group and Boarding School. Regular review enables us to fine tune our approach and activities.

As a school, we also see ourselves as being responsible to society. We take this seriously and both staff and students are involved in Community & Environmental Programme. Resources available are managed for community improvement and regular reviews ensure effective response to needs, both locally and overseas.

Students have been involved in a variety of community and environmental programmes and the extent of the programme is that of 100% involvement with varying expectations in terms of hours depending on the level the students are in.

All staff including the Senior Administration are also involved in community and environmental programmes. The staff spearheads projects; plan, implement and evaluate programme to ensure relevance and that it meets the needs of the community at large. Conscious effort is made to manage its other resources e.g. funds, facilities for community and environmental programmes.

8. INITIATIVE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Recognising that we all have a part to play in realising the Millenium Development Goal 7 to ensure environmental sustainability, we set out to review our curriculum and key educational activities to support it.

As the strength of any sustainable programme in school lies in its ability to integrate the many aspects of our school life e.g. curriculum, manpower, finances etc. to forge innovative and enduring solutions, so would our initiative to support environmental sustainability be.

We believe that the world now has the financial resources and know-how to increase economic productivity and prosperity while protecting our natural endowments for future generations.

In the MDG 2007 report Mr Ban Ki-Moon, Secretary General of the UN noted that the MDGs are still achievable if we act now. He noted that so far their collective records has been mixed with success still possible in most parts of the world but much remains to be done and that there is a clear need for political leaders to take urgent and concerted action or many millions of people will not realise the basic promises of the MDGs in their lives.

So what will it take to ensure that we stop pillaging our environment and start protecting it? We can do our part in our own small way.

In ACS (Independent) we were able to integrate many of these issues and concerns into various activities in our Overseas Education Programme as well as our local community involvement programme.

Guided by these MDG targets and indicators we did what we could in the areas of:

1. Reforestation
2. Understanding the importance of cleaner and more efficient energy sources e.g. geothermal power as well as hydro-electric power
3. Providing safe drinking water and to improve water source
4. Improving sanitation in some villages
5. Helping to improve the lives of slum dwellers

As part of its Community Involvement Programme, the school committed itself to regular work at the MacRitchie Reservoir Park in partnership with N Parks and NEA for its rainforest restoration programme. It is a well-known fact that deforestation continues at an alarming rate especially in

biologically diverse environments like the tropical rainforest, due primarily to developments in developing countries. More needs to be done but perhaps at the political level.

It is interesting to note in the MDG 2007 report that 'tree plantations increase while old-growth forest eco-systems continue to be lost'. Some are planted for harvesting; primarily of timber and fiber while others for to protect the earth, mainly for the conservation of soil and water. ACS (Independent) was involved in the building of check dams in Chiang Mai for this purpose.

This project was in cooperation with Rotary International. It is a physically demanding project because it involves manual work along uneven surfaces. The project also created channels of water for communities to utilize on a sustainable basis, as well as provided a natural buffer against forest-fires during the dry season. This is highly relevant in the context of northern Thailand because in the months of November through April, there is little or no rain. It is through this activity that participants will see first-hand the importance of water as a resource, as a life-giving element, and as a source of livelihood.

As with the many of our other projects this project involves working hand in hand with locals, with the common aim of enhancing the quality of life of the local people. Good teamwork skills are required to undertake this project, since its nature is to require many hands working towards the same outcome. The students were involved from transporting equipment to the actual building of the check dams. Local Rotarians, student volunteers, villagers, and units of the Royal Thai Army were also involved.

In the area of maintaining biological diversity to surface area, ACS (Independent) also undertook a Mangrove Rehabilitation and Interpretive Boardwalk Project in Ha Long Bay, Vietnam in collaboration with EcoBoat and its partner agency, the Ha Long Bay Management Board.

Mangroves are recognized as being of huge importance to biodiversity protection, sustainable fisheries management, and importantly for Ha Long Bay World Heritage Site, the trapping of sediment. Sedimentation of the World Heritage Site has seriously threatened the sustainability of fisheries and coral reef habitats, and has increased the flow of pollutants into the Bay. This has been due to removal of mangroves throughout the bay. Much of the mangroves were cleared in the 1950s for urban development, and more recently in the 1990s for (now redundant) shrimp ponds and tourism development. The removal of mangroves in the World Heritage Site has now been recognized as a mistake, with corrective measures required.

The project focused on educating and working with the local community as part of the EcoBoat's education activities, involving local, national and international students. Activities were both educational and practical, focused around a "boardwalk" or platform in an area degraded of mangroves cover. The boardwalk will be used for education as well as a base for physical replanting work. The boardwalk will be accessible by boat and contain interpretive materials (including interpretive panels) that will be developed with local schools over time and the EcoBoat. Interpretive panels will also be used by a variety of educational visitors to the site to help educate the importance of conservation and mangrove biodiversity protection.

The three key outputs of this project are:

1. Construction of a boardwalk, comprising educational panels and planting platform. The platform will be constructed of environmentally friendly "plaswood" ("wood" made from recycled plastic) or equivalent material. A "degraded" area has been chosen so as not to damage biodiversity in currently forested areas. Design of the boardwalk was provided by staff from the EcoBoat.
2. Replanting of 5 hectares of mangroves in key locations to trap sediment and pollution.

3. Development of interpretive panels over a series of “workshops” between local school groups and EcoBoat students. These panels will help educate other students and visitors to the mangrove site on conservation and mangrove rehabilitation.

All work, including boardwalk construction, mangrove planting and interpretive panels will be developed over a period of two years by EcoBoat students and local students collaboratively. The site has been guaranteed as free from future development by the Management Board of Ha Long Bay and will be used to educate future school groups on the importance of conservation and mangrove biodiversity.

As deforestation continues to reduce the natural forest cover on earth due to developments e.g. in tourism, it is important to support indigenous groups as they preserve their environment and culture.

Chubean is the most complete indigenous village in Taiwan with 3000 years of history. As the tribe’s location is far away in the mountainous area, transportation is inconvenient, and the area is still considered less developed. Despite this fact, the villagers are determined to use their traditional techniques like bamboo skills and knitting and thus retain their culture.

Although Chubean has still some way to become a well known tourist destination, the waterfalls, forest trails and little creeks etc, makes it very suitable for tourists to take a walk in and experience the life of the indigenous tribe.

Our students made signboards for the ten scenic places in Chubean and translated the Chinese version to English. They also helped to establish an English blog thus promoting eco-tourism; encouraging

responsible travel to these natural areas, conserving the environment and improving the well-being of the local people.

Trees also play a part in poverty alleviation. ACS (I) has worked with Bless China International since 2001 in the rural areas around Kunming in planting about 1500 fruit trees every year. Many of the trees have matured and borne fruits. These fruits provide food as well income.

In Desaru, the Year 2 students worked with the locals to plant medicinal trees. These trees are for medicinal purposes which prove to be of benefits to the local population.

The concept of the importance of forests, prevention of surface run-off and soil erosion, destruction of habitats of flora & fauna and on a macro scale, damage to the atmosphere and change to world's climate can be easily addressed through such activities.

Working with Bless China International in various parts of Yunnan, we believe very much in the thoughts conveyed in this quote from Lao Tze, 700BC:

Go with the people

Live with them.

Learn from them.

Love them.

Start with what they know.

Build with what they have.

But of the best leaders

When the job is done,

the task accomplished,

The people will say,

‘We have done this ourselves’.

Lao Tze, 700BC

As global energy consumption continues to expand we also note the progress in the development and use of cleaner energy technologies e.g. hydro-electric power and geothermal energy. As continuing reliance on fossil fuels is likely for some time yet, it is important to help our students understand the importance of cleaner and more efficient energy sources.

All of our OEP destinations provide for these opportunities whether in Thailand or the People’s Republic of China.

BBC News on Thursday, 16 November, 2000, had the headline: ‘Dams damage environment’ and reported that a major investigation into the impact of dams concluded that they cause ecological damage, exacerbate flooding, and many deliver less than half the amount of water expected.

It also mentioned a report by the World Commission on Dams (WCD) alleging that “few dams have ever been looked at to see if the benefits outweigh the costs“. These costs include social upheaval, increased flooding, damage to farmland and the extinction of freshwater fish species among others problems to the environment.

Even the UN Environment Programme [UNEP] noted that while the dams and development project has its roots in the aspiration to secure sustainable solutions to meet the water and energy needs of mankind and they have, in the past, made important contributions to human development, their social and environmental impact have also been significant.

The OEP provides our students to be engaged with the experts in this on-site field-study opportunity. But more importantly, students were exposed to the controversial issues related to dams. Staff also provided the content for follow-up discussions.

In providing safe drinking water and to improve water source we worked on a Mountainous Water System Project in Damneansaduak Village, T.Huaysak Muang, Chiang Rai.

There are 51 families in Damneansaduak village; mostly from the Akha tribe. The village is about 12 kilometers from Chiang Rai.

In February of 2006 the District Administrative Organization prepared the budget for building a water system to include the purchase of water tanks and water pipes. However, the water is insufficient for consumption as the water always dries up. The villagers had to resort to buying water.

A solution to the problem was to look for new water sources which do not dry up throughout the year. As the creeks in the forest of the Damneansaduak community are about 5 kilometers, the project involved the setting up of about 5 kilometers of water pipes. Trees were also planted to preserve the source stream and to prevent erosion and run-off.

The budget of this project was 40,000 baht and it was shared with students from Ashbury College, Ottawa, Canada.

Our project to improve sanitation was in Fengban Training Centre, Fuzhou Province, Peoples' Republic of China. It was a project in partnership with the Methodist Missions and the local community. Money was raised for the construction of 2 blocks of toilets with flushing systems and

running water to wash hands after use. Effort was also made to create posters to communicate good toilet habits e.g. flush after use. Murals completed the job by making it more cheery.

The health, economic and social repercussions of open defecation, poor hygiene and lack of safe drinking water are well documented. Together they contribute to about 88% of deaths due to diarrhoeal diseases in children below 5 years of age. With half the developing world without basic sanitation, meeting the MDG target will require extraordinary efforts.

With the target to improve the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers by 2020, the rapid expansion of cities is making slum improvements even more daunting. The MDG Report 2007 noted that in 2005, one out of three urban dwellers was living in slum conditions, that is, lacking at least one of the basic conditions for decent house, adequate sanitation, improved water supply, durable housing or adequate living space.

Helping to improve the lives of slum dwellers ACS (I) worked with Habitat for Humanity in Batam Build as well as with the slum children and families in Khon Kaen, North Thailand.

The OEP was introduced to promote academic as well as affective education. It was intended to promote a holistic approach to learning. In the process, we hope that the student would be able to see things “beyond himself or herself”.

In the preparation and execution of our lessons for the OEP, the school would ensure that environmental issues specific to the various destinations would be address as close as possible. Besides having lessons to educate our students, the school also strongly encourages our students to be physically involved in environmental sustainability.

Other environmental issues in our OEP include conservation of wildlife. Our students visiting Chengdu, China were exposed to the need for conservation of the wildlife, in particular, the Pandas.

In Bali, the students visited the conservation centre for leather-back turtle and were introduced to the various measures that Bali had taken to ensure the survival of the turtles. At the same time, the students also visited the mangrove 'green belt' in Bali and they were informed of the need for the conservation of mangrove forest in relation to increased tourism there. The students also help to clear up the rubbish in that area as well.

Pollution

The Year 2 students who visited Desaru and Port Dickson were involved in beach cleaning. They were taught on the need to keep the beaches clean. Issues like the impact of beach tourist resorts on the coastal areas were addressed. Students brain-stormed and presented creative and innovative solutions to create a more sustainable development for coastal tourism.

Recycling of materials

For students visiting Chiang Mai, Thailand, they helped to bring over can tabs that were collected in school. An average total of 150kg can tabs were collected every year. These can tabs were sent to the Prosthetic Foundation, Chiang Mai to be melted to make prosthetic limbs for the handicapped.

Dr Therdchai and his volunteer staff travel to some 40 provinces throughout Thailand, annually, providing free services to rural villagers. Many patients never dreamed they would walk on their own legs, having been crippled since birth. We play our part in providing the can tabs that are used for the making of the limbs.

9. THE OVERSEAS EDUCATION PROGRAMME

The Overseas Education Programme (OEP) was started with the view of creating greater diversity and opportunities for our students to be engaged in a variety of educational activities.

To begin with, this was done in the light of the number of initiatives that have been proposed by the Ministry of Education namely the Thinking School, Learning Nation (TSLN) which led on to the emphasis on Teach Less, Learn More (TLLM) policy. In particular, the OEP was started in anticipation of what TLLM entails.

In essence, the school will be encouraged to reduce the teaching of formal curriculum which would result in the reduction of curriculum content. In addition, a more important point is that the school is encouraged to embark on activities for out-of-classroom teaching which allows for more interactions, hands-on activities, independent thinking and multi-discipline content. For example, we were able to incorporate various subjects like Languages, Geography, History, Physics, Biology, and Mathematics into our various OEP visits in the ASEAN regions and beyond, e.g. People's Republic of China.

Despite all the advances in computer simulations where we can go on virtual field trip, there is nothing better than the real thing!

How big is your classroom? We are crossing borders for lessons outside the classroom.

In nurturing the Officer and leader, the OEP provides many opportunities for team-building and leadership through organising the group for daily activities, for charity bazaar as well as for CIP.

Each OEP has a CIP component as we would like to respond to the community needs which we focus mainly on work with children, abused girls, orphans, handicapped children, providing them with walking frames, raising funds for orthopaedic as well as cleft lip operations; providing de-working medication for children in farming communities, planning for learning activities with the children etc. We also work on rural poverty alleviation by providing for educational and sports equipment, planting trees which will bear good fruits for economic returns of the community in need; building fish pond for their source of proteins as well improvement of facilities e.g. classrooms, building toilets for better sanitation.

In nurturing the gentleman and global citizen we focus on 5 areas:

Personal Achievement: to meet challenges, to be aware of personal limitations, to progress in new roles, to learn from experience, to help to solve community problems;

Personal Skills: to thinking creatively, research community needs, plan and organise, manage resources, identify success and failure;

Personal Qualities: to inculcate perseverance, self-confidence, humility, responsibility, punctuality, commitment, reliability, initiative;

Interpersonal Qualities: to inculcate adaptability, collaboration, empathy, respect, a sense of justice and fair play

Awareness of Global Issues: to inculcate an ethical appreciation of humanitarian and environmental issues to guide choices of action from a local, national and international perspective;

The school hopes that the experiential learning through field studies will enable the students to see the impacts that human have on the environment. It also aims to educate the students on the importance of respecting others' culture as well as the environment.

In experiential learning through field studies the students also study the local history of the overseas locations visited. Studies were also made of the significant geographical features as well as the biodiversity of the area. Environmental issues like impacts of development, conservation, sustainability, pollution, alternative energies and the eco-system were incorporated into the various destinations' OEP worksheets and lessons to educate the students on environmental sustainability. The local arts and crafts were also explored.

Team building and adventure challenges in an overseas location provide the ultimate challenge for the student as he is exposed to new activities in a different environment. Through these, the student develops a greater awareness of himself, concern for others, and the ability to work cooperatively with other people.

Cross-cultural interaction becomes a challenge in reality when one is exposed to a different language, food, dress, recreation, religion and people with their own cultures. The student becomes aware of the diversity in human societies and learns to appreciate the attitudes and values other than one's own. This also helps the student to compare and to recognise their own cultural background and perspectives.

10. BACKGROUND OF THE OEP

The OEP started due to the limitations of our earlier local adventure camp. The limitations surfaced mainly due to the lack of diversity in the programme. The school launched out to explore other possible areas in the ASEAN region. This is done with consideration of cost factor and the familiarity in terms of the teachers' knowledge and expertise. Another reason for the choice of regional countries is the richness in the culture which these destinations provide.

We started our first OEP in Chiang Mai, Thailand, in 2000, with our Year 3 cohorts consisting of about 450 students. Subsequently, capitalizing on the success of Chiang Mai, the school decided to expand further to other areas like Vietnam, Indonesia (Bali), Malaysia (Sarawak), and China (Kunming, Chengdu, Lijiang, Shanghai).

The OEP was also extended to Year 2 students in 2001 with trips to Desaru, Johore, and in the following year to Tekam and Taman Negara in Pahang, Malaysia. Subsequently Port Dickson, Kuala Lumpur, Muar and Malacca were included into the programme.

11. ORGANISATIONAL CHANGES

With the whole-school approach in many of the key educational programmes and activities, several organisational changes had to be implemented to support it.

Class size is between 25-35 students with 1 Class Teacher and 1-2 Pastoral Care Tutors. This student-teacher ratio ensures effective supervision of activities. Staff are also trained in nurturing the high-ability students providing enhancements in not only depth and breadth of the curriculum but also in modifications to the process, product and environment for teaching and learning. The shared experiences of the OEP are invaluable not only for academic purposes but also for the affective development of our students.

Curriculum time is set aside for students and staff to be at the OEP and this is worked into the Schemes of Work.

In terms of finances, staff costs are budgeted for and students in need are provided with assistance so that all students are able to participate in the OEP. Staff are also trained to plan, implement and

evaluate the OEP as they play leading roles in the outdoor classroom, not only as facilitators in the field but also when they are back in the class. Many also are in-charge of various destinations, overseeing the administration of the OEP in terms of logistics as well as coordinating the learning opportunities with their colleagues from various disciplines pending the location of the OEP destination.

Deans and Directors are all familiar with the OEP and provide the organizational as well as academic input to ensure that learning opportunities are maximised at each OEP destination. Worksheets to help keep focus while on-site are developed by staff who are passionate about the subject. Back in the classroom, teachers reinforce the learning that has taken during the OEP as all staff are aware of the general programmes and learning activities in each OEP.

Recce trips provide staff with opportunity to develop professionally in designing lessons outside the classroom as worksheets are developed.

Staff are also briefed before each trip to ensure that the learning points intended will be follow-up during the trip when each evening the de-brief and reflections time allow for discussions on observations made in the field as well as for clarifications and explanations.

The school is open to collaborations with various organisations, local and overseas to provide for the best learning opportunities. To date, the school has worked with some organisations since we started in 2000. At the same time the school looks out for new partnerships for new opportunities.

To sustain the community involvement projects overseas, all in the school community are involved in the fund raising efforts e.g. the annual Charity Bazaar where students sell items purchased during

their Overseas Educational Programme in China, Vietnam and Malaysia. The charity bazaar is a lesson on entrepreneurship for a good cause.

You will be amazed that in just one afternoon at our January Charity Bazaar, more than \$12,000 can be raised.

12. OTHER KEY EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES SUPPORTING ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Besides the OEP other key educational activities as listed on the slide also play a part in the school's initiative to support environmental sustainability e.g. Colloquia and symposium. Interdisciplinary colloquia are events in which experts in different fields and teachers of various disciplines come together to discuss the similarities and differences of their subjects with each other and with the student participants. Based on a theme, for instance Fundamentals, Interactions or Man and His World, these colloquia attempt to draw together the different disciplines so that students are able to see the linkages between the different subjects that they study in the classroom and not to see each subject in isolation. It provides for great stimuli for fruitful debate and discussion throughout the year.

The interdisciplinary symposium carried out annually is a whole week thematic enrichment experience for the boys. During this symposium, students are exposed to activities that will help them unravel and explore the theme to its fullest. The activities include key note addresses by a distinguished speaker, panel discussions by university dons and professors, field studies, learning journeys reflections and students' presentations. The overarching theme of our annual symposium is Go Global ▪ Your World ▪ One Day while the sub-themes include Water Issues, Sustainable Development, Conflict and the MDG. Using the Model United Nations Conference as a platform for discussion, students took on challenging roles as ambassadors and delegates of different countries

coming together to negotiate on the various issues from the perspective of the various countries they have been assigned to represent. Through the symposium, students learnt to transfer and apply what they have learnt in the classroom to the real world.

We hope you have found the presentation meaningful. It represents, in a small way, the contribution of the school to fulfilling the MDG by engaging staff and students on various dimensions of environmental sustainability.

References:

<http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/mdg2007.pdf>

http://www.environmentaldefense.org/documents/1247_ESK.pdf