



Friday October 11th 2024,

Dear parents,

Thank you for your wonderful support, your helpful feedback and guidance, and all your other positive contributions during the first half-term of this academic year. I have thoroughly enjoyed my first eight weeks at Straits International School Rawang and I am proud of the progress that our wonderful students, teachers and other professionals have achieved together since we started term one back in August. We pause now briefly for a half-term break, with school resuming again on Monday October 21st at the normal time of 07:45.

It is always going to be important for me to hear parental perspectives about our school. To this end, I would invite parents to complete [this short survey](#) so that we can ensure that we are fully informed with regards to your impression of the academic year so far. Our aim with surveys will always be to gain an as accurate as possible insight into what parents think about our school so that we can then adjust plans or make improvements wherever possible. We strive to be an outward-facing school which genuinely listens to all stakeholders and which tailors approaches in order to best serve our community.

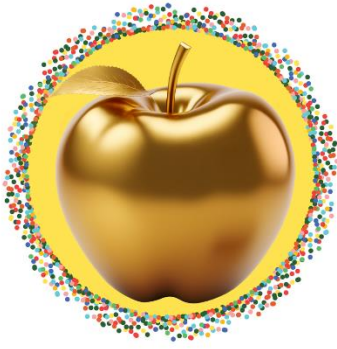
Surveys are not the only way in which parents can present their views to either teachers or senior leaders, of course. We have intentionally sought to provide constantly open channels of communication between home and school and parents should find it very easy to either speak to teachers in person each day or to liaise via whichever online format works best for them. After each round of parental surveys, we will feed back to our Straits International School Rawang community about what the general feelings are about our school and what specific points we are able to address in a positive manner.

I am also writing this week with a very specific and important update. At the end of this term – in December – Katherine Mustoe will take over as Head of Primary in our school. This follows the resignation of Nicola Monaghan earlier this year. Ms. Nicola, of course, has been a hugely popular presence in our school since 2018 and we will wish her well with her next steps. Ms. Katherine, who I am sure

most parents will already know well, is currently serving as Assistant Head Teacher of Primary and has previously shone in both Head of Primary and Vice-Principal roles in a large, reputable international school in China, so I am very much looking forward to the sterling contributions that she will be able to make in her new position here at Straits International School Rawang.

We have, as noted earlier in this letter and as I hope parents will agree, made some very good progress with certain aspects of our plan for this academic year already during the first half-term. One of the key targets I have asked teachers to attend to this year is the development of literacy skills and improvements in English proficiency levels amongst our student body. This, to be clear, is not to state that we are not already in a strong position (many of our students speak wonderful English, for instance) but rather an acknowledgement that we could do even more in this area. With this in mind, we are introducing a Reading Buddies scheme on Monday October 21st, details of which will be sent directly to those involved. This complements a focus on both subject-specific key vocabulary across the whole-school and exploring the concept of English as the language of learning, or main language of education, in classrooms. Today you will also be sent key-stage Reading Lists. This initiative is in place because we know that students reading for pleasure is often the key which unlocks academic potential in all subjects – and not just in English. The list of books has been put together by teachers and are suggestions for students to read for pleasure at home in their own time. Although there is no obligation for parents to buy all, or indeed any, of the books, we would highly recommend reading for pleasure becoming a staple of daily life and opportunities for reading being built into routines outside of school.

Finally this week, I want to make parents aware of a new initiative which we are launching in our school once we return from the half-term break. Copied below is an image of a Golden Apple postcard. These postcards are awarded to teachers from students whenever they feel that they have received any form of outstanding education from them. Students can award six postcards over the course of an academic year, which work out at one every half-term. The rationale behind this initiative is that happy and enthused teachers tend – in my experience – to also be highly effective in terms of the lessons they deliver. And – also in my experience – there is no greater feeling for a teacher than a student complimenting them on something that they have done, no matter how long they have been in the profession or for how many years they have taught in a school. Teachers, basically, need rewards too and I expect that our kind and wonderful students will very much buy into the idea of making them feel happy and supported in what they do.



Yours sincerely,

Steven Miles.

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