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Building a Bilingual Foundation for Global Learners

The journalist Hodding Carter once said that there are two lasting bequests we can give our children; one is roots and the other wings.

Being a parent in the 21st century is far more challenging than what it used to be for our parents. In a 'test frenzy' environment where second language learning is becoming increasingly important, our children are growing up in schools offering programmes that are different from what we went to in our schools. International schools have become prevalent more recently with the growth of a global workforce where families move between several countries situated in many different social and cultural contexts. These schools offer continuity in learning and a wonderful multi-cultural community of teachers and students that enriches learning in so many different dimensions.

Often our children speak more than one language at home and pick up a third one in school. How then do we give our children roots that strengthen their sense of identity and self-worth, appreciation of one's own culture and that of others? How do we offer an environment where they can flourish and pursue their dreams, where they can feel, touch, taste, experiment, discover, fail, create and learn from their experiences. Where they can express themselves, experience the unexpected, create new dimensions and evangelise 'big ideas'.

At EtonHouse, we have always focused on offering a challenging, meaningful and multi-dimensional learning environment where children question, wonder, research, experiment and explore the wonderful multi-dimensional world we live in. Where we value children's thoughts, their ideas and hypothesis, where we 'listen' to children with all our senses, where children enjoy their childhood and develop into confident and competent global learners. An important aspect of an EtonHouse education is a strong bilingual foundation. Ongoing neurological research in the way that a 2nd language is learned, has supported understanding that 'the earlier the better' and 'regular language exposure' are the ideal immersion models by which children will most easily gain mastery of a 2nd language. These models guide the 2nd language experiences that EtonHouse has in place for its children.

The EtonHouse integrated bilingual programme is based on research on how

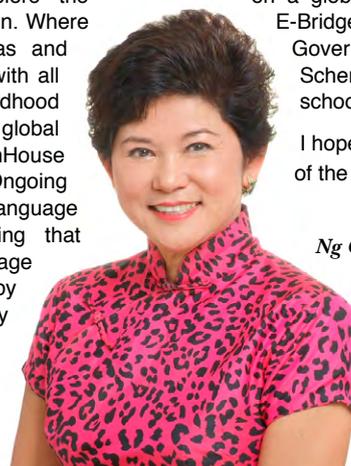
language skills are acquired. Through spontaneous and everyday experiences in a dual language environment, children begin to appreciate the relevance of learning a second language in school. Language learning is also supported by cultural immersion where children begin to learn the roots and the cultural ethos associated with a language, thus making language learning more meaningful.

EtonHouse offers a range of second language programmes in response to the expectations of parents, the cultural context and the future schooling choices of our children. The Pre-SAP programme for advanced learners, the first bilingual programme in Singapore for primary school students, the integrated dual language Mandarin environment are a reinforcement of our commitment to providing a strong second language foundation for our children. We are also very fortunate that Singapore's founding father Mr. Lee Kuan Yew a strong proponent of bilingual education supported our Mandarin programme in the opening of the second Hampton pre-school in his constituency.

The articles that follow in this newsletter explore the multicultural environment of our schools worldwide while focusing on the provision of a genuine bilingual learning environment by children, their classroom and language teachers embedded in language/cultural awareness organically built into all these programmes.

This newsletter also highlights the new milestones in our community, such as the success of our alumni on a global scale, the opening of the E-Bridge schools under the Singapore Government's Anchor Operator Scheme and the opening of new schools in different countries.

I hope you enjoy the second edition of the EtonHouse Group newsletter.



Ng Gim Choo
Group Managing Director
EtonHouse International
Education Group

Inaugural Registration Exercise for E-Bridge Pre-Schools



The inaugural registration exercise for E-Bridge Pre-Schools that EtonHouse has launched as part of the Singapore Government's Anchor Operator Scheme was successfully held over the last 2 Saturdays of May 2014.

More than 500 families turned up to register for 300 vacancies available in the 3 E-Bridge centres, with many even queuing overnight to secure a space at the pre-school for their child. Often referred to as 'kiasuism' in Singapore, we see it as a testament of the love and unity in

families to do everything they can for their children to succeed. Parents are looking forward to the new E-Bridge centres that will be opening in the third quarter of 2014 with much enthusiasm and anticipation and expressed their hope to see more EtonHouse and E-Bridge pre-schools in their neighbourhoods.

This overwhelming support is very encouraging and humbling; a reflection of the trust and confidence that parents have in EtonHouse and E-Bridge.

Asia's Largest Pre-School - Opening of the Brand New EtonHouse @ Thomson

The very first Open House for our brand new Thomson campus, held on 7th and 14th June 2014, was a huge success. Visitors were delighted and impressed with the innovative and meaningful learning environment that offers a beautiful blend of indoor and outdoor spaces. Children had the opportunity to engage with a wide range of materials and learning resources.

Spanning 200,000 sq ft, EtonHouse Thomson is Singapore's largest pre-school and will set new standards in early years environment design. Designed by specialists in early childhood and inspired by the Reggio Emilia pre-school settings, the innovative and high quality environment include features like dedicated children's gardens, swimming pool, alfresco dining areas, and Ateliers for Art, Light and Food. The extensive outdoor environment is planned to engage children in experiences that are in a natural setting with platforms for reading or dramatic play situated in the midst of lush greenery.

The school is an IB (International Baccalaureate) World School and offers the IB Primary Years Programme (PYP) for children from 18 months to 6 years of age.

Email thomson@etonhouse.edu.sg or call 6252 3322 for more information.



'You are Invited to the Reggio Emilia Study Trip with REACH, 17-26 October 2014'



REACH (Reggio Emilia in Asia for Children) in collaboration with Reggio Children is organising an International Study Group that will take place in Reggio Emilia, Northern Italy at the Loris Malaguzzi International centre. Led and guided by pedagogists who have expert knowledge and

extensive experience in the Reggio Emilia Approach to early childhood education, the Group will see first-hand why the renowned Reggio Emilia approach has been hailed as the world's best practice in Early Childhood Education. Participants' learning and experience will be enhanced through pre-trip readings and post-trip discussions and sharing sessions which are designed to build understanding of the philosophy, principles and practices of the renowned Approach. This will be a unique and remarkable professional development opportunity

for all educators, and is for anyone with a passion for supporting the learning and development of young children.

For more information and to register, log on to: <http://www.reach.edu.sg/en/professional-learning/international-study-trip>



EtonHouse Alumni

We are pleased to receive this letter from Dr Rajib Ghosh, father of Adwik who graduated from EtonHouse Broadrick and is now based in New Zealand. Adwik has topped his cohort in college and received the Academic Excellence Award. He was also awarded Best Student of Term and Best Spanish Student of Term and is excelling in Hindi School and ICAS Computer. We wish Adwik the very best in his future endeavours.



Dear Ms Newling

Greetings from your hometown!

I should have written earlier but please do share this good news with teachers who have taught Adwik including Ms Atima Joshi.

Adwik started off at Scots College in January 2013 in Year 4 and topped his cohort and received the Academic Excellence award.

... (I would also like to) share the news with Ms Jo from former 764 Mountbatten. (She) will be happy to know that he also was awarded Best Student of Term as well as Best Spanish Student of Term for his Term 1 in Year 5 only recently.

A big thank you to Ms Vibha since Adwik also did very well at Wellington Hindi School (which he attends on Sunday mornings) and ICAS Computer (where he was awarded a Distinction) last year....

To all at EtonHouse Singapore, thank you for the strong IB foundation that allowed him to excel in arguably the best school in a new continent.

Warm regards

Rajib Ghosh

Father of Adwik Ritoraj Ghosh



Bilingual Foundation - The Start of a Successful Learning Journey

EtonHouse @ Newton

by Asmita Sharma, K1 Class Teacher

In the 21st century, proficiency in one language is generally not enough for future success. As the world becomes increasingly interconnected, diversified and multilingual, more and more children find themselves in an environment where a number of languages are used.

With more internationally mobile families and an increasing number of multi-cultural marriages, the majority of children that come to our school speak a language other than English. During the early years, children need maximum support in their native language. This support is particularly important since it allows children to communicate



Children enjoy Mandarin time – Experiences linked to the Units of Inquiry

with parents and other members of their family who do not speak English. It also lays the foundation in retaining their ethnic identity, culture, heritage and values.

In our school we aim to provide children with a holistic approach to education that is relevant and meaningful. Languages offered include

English, Mandarin and Japanese. All languages are taught by experienced mother-tongue language speakers. The programmes use the units of inquiry and play, as the vehicle for language

exploration and development. Parents are also actively encouraged to share their mother tongue by reading stories, sharing greetings and exploring cultural celebrations in the school community.

Bilingualism and multilingualism helps children experience the world from different language perspectives. This extended way of thinking, facilitates the approach to cognitive problems and higher levels of abstract thinking.



One language sets you in a corridor for life. Two languages open every door along the way - Frank Smith

Celebrating Japanese Children's Day

Inquire, Think, Learn – An Integrated Curriculum at EtonHouse Vanda

EtonHouse @ Vanda

by Ng Shu Ping, Principal



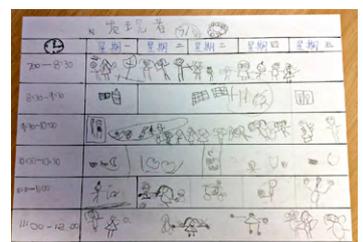
home and school for a young pre-schooler also enhances their ability in acquiring both languages competently (Kuhl, 2011, cited in Framework for MTL, 2013).

At EtonHouse Vanda, we believe children's learning occurs and is enhanced through their interactions with people, time, space and resources. We value and actively promote play and conversation as a highly complex mode of learning for young children. The provision of a full-time English and

Mandarin teacher in every classroom is aimed at maximising such learning potential. Our class teachers work closely together and are intentional in ensuring that learning experiences are rich and offer meaningful engagement to children.

A key element of 21st century competencies is communication skills. Through authentic learning experiences, children acquire and develop bilingual language skills in a purposeful manner, as an avenue for communicating meaning to others.

According to recent brain-based and mother tongue language research findings, there are cognitive benefits for the young child in learning two languages. These benefits range from increased focus, concentration and critical thinking skills to the ability to multi-task (Bialystok et. al., 2012, cited in Framework for MTL, 2013). The early exposure to a bilingual environment in both



Language Immersion - Acquiring Languages in Pre-school

EtonHouse @ Mountbatten 223

by Josephyne Ho and Joy Tay, Principal and Vice-Principal

The international trend of more and more children being raised in a bilingual environment, reinforces the importance of offering an authentic bilingual environment in school. The key significance of bilingualism is having the ability to converse with a larger array of individuals, as well as having access to two bodies of literature and culture in the lifelong learning journey. It is especially important for children in language-minority communities to develop and maintain their interest and foundation



in their ancestral language so as to build ethnic identification and pride, as well as cultural continuity.

The preschool setting is advantageous for the learning process of the second language

because children attend preschool for many hours a day, and are exposed to the language long enough to receive the language immersion. The objective of a high-quality bilingual program is

to support the children's acquisition and usage of the different languages in their daily conversations with confidence within and beyond the preschool.

In Mountbatten 223, we believe that language is best 'acquired' than 'learnt'. Research suggests that one of the best ways for second language acquisition is to provide children with language

instruction in an immersive environment with rich experiences that incorporate daily interactions, communications, play, music and stories.



Learning Mandarin the Natural Way

EtonHouse @ Outram

by Chia Bee Yong, Principal and Zhang Chun Juan, Senior Mandarin Teacher

The K1 children were playing in the playground when they noticed the leaves falling from the tree after a long dry spell. They noticed the different types of leaves that had fallen (the colour, the texture: some were softer than others) and the movement of the leaves as they fell. From the

They discussed about the movement of the wind and also explored the different types of wind and their effects on human beings. They went on to draw the leaves and what they thought wind would "look" like on paper. The children also discussed about tornadoes (龙卷风), its effects and how it could be represented in their drawing.



Marc drew a leaf he had picked from the playground and also the "wind" that had blown the leaf from the tree. He drew the 'curls' to depict the 'wind'. He said, "The wind blew the leaf down. This is a yellow leaf."



Such spontaneous and meaningful learning in a dual language environment helps to sustain children's interest in learning Mandarin. The Mandarin teacher supported the children's learning through discussions and exploration of their project of inquiry. The teachers understand that learning is not simply about acquiring knowledge but as Jerome Bruner puts it, it is about assisting "the young in the ways of going beyond the immediate into the realms of the possible".



Naomi drew the tornado on the left and said, "The tornado blew the house away and the people are very sad."



The K1 children noticing the leaves falling from the tree at the playground

fallen leaves, it led them to inquire about "wind" as they realized that the wind had blown the leaves onto the playground.



Language Through Play

EtonHouse @ 718 Mountbatten

by Susannah McGuire, Principal



In order to support our parents in understanding our play-based, inquiry approach to teaching and learning at EtonHouse we decided to invite them in for some hands-on experience. This gave parents the opportunity to better understand the connections to our curriculum that we make as teachers.



We explained the importance of our learning environments and the intentions behind the resources we make available to children daily in our learning environments. An example offered

by one of our Mandarin teachers demonstrated how language acquisition and development is supported through our play-based approach to teaching and learning. Wuxia used the example of role-play to explore Mandarin language and culture. She explored possibilities of using play dough in the role-play area to make Chinese dumplings with the children, making authentic connections to Chinese New Year. Wuxia introduced Mandarin words connected to the experience that she felt would be suitable to introduce to children at various stages of language development. As the parents played and created dumplings, they began to understand the possibilities for teaching and learning languages when children are given the opportunity to engage with languages in a comfortable environment, where interactions are natural and connected to their interests.

Bilingualism 双语教育

Hampton Pre-School @ Bishan

by Chan Ying Hui & 马慧宁老师, Teachers of K1 Rainbow

Early childhood education is an important window of opportunity for establishing positive attitudes and a basic foundation in language learning. At Hampton Pre-School (Bishan), the teachers adopt a bilingual approach to teaching and learning. We create an environment rich in language where children engage in their inquiries and communicate positively in both languages. We expose children to a variety of language-related experiences that develop their ability to listen with understanding and to communicate with others. Through the above, the children develop language skills holistically in both English and Mandarin.



the spate of dry spell and the resulting haze in the region and how it has affected Singapore. The children were encouraged to share their thoughts, feelings and concerns on these environmental issues. The discussion brought us further to identify other environmental issues our Earth is facing such as global warming and different forms

of pollution. The children designed and created posters which were put up around the pre-school in order to raise environmental awareness. Through small group discussions, the children were engaged in planning and design processes. They posed questions and conveyed their messages in both languages.

我们学校运用双语进行同步教学，试图为幼儿创设一个真实的、富于沟通的语言环境，让孩子们将所学的词汇、句子，自然地表达出来。教师引导幼儿以自己的兴趣进行探索，让孩子们在丰富的语言环境中主动地学习、成长。

In line with Earth Month, we began our inquiry with the K1 Rainbow children on environmental issues affecting us today. We brought their attention to

五月是友善月，我们和孩子分享“友善”的意义，引导幼儿运用双语进行讨论-“友善”表现在哪些方面？在幼儿园、家里、公共场所，我们要怎样做？该怎样对待我们的家人、老师、朋友？教师将幼儿的讨论结果记录下来，和孩子们一起总结出“友善”所代表的不同含义及“友善”的话语。教师鼓励幼儿将讨论的结果以双语结合的形式制作成宣传板。



Sprinkle Kindness: What does kindness mean to us?

Authentic Language Immersion - Building Context with Mandarin at Claymore

EtonHouse @ Claymore

by Lisamarie Hughes, Principal

We view language acquisition and meaningful context as a partnership that cannot be separated in order to attain a rich language immersion environment. Language needs to be experienced as a way of being, thus offering children the opportunity to explore what this means in the 'real world' as they become global citizens of the 21st Century.



At Claymore, we embrace bilingual language immersion, offering daily interactions via Mandarin and English. There are many benefits of enjoying dual language throughout the day. As children learn and explore using both English and Mandarin, they build context and meaning in

order to communicate their thoughts, feelings and ideas. As we warmly embrace a Mandarin speaking teacher as part of the class teaching team, children encounter Mandarin throughout the programme and make authentic connections through their inquiries rather than learning

Mandarin as a separate 'subject'.

We focus on making learning visible using Mandarin and English via print, images and electronic media. This allows children to revisit their learning and adds to the language immersion experience.

As we note how babies acquire language from

birth, the listening aspect along with organic language opportunities continues to be important. This informs our approach to learning language in the 21st Century. By having a teacher who works alongside children, sharing in their learning journey and using another language at the same time, children are able to build links between oral language and meaning making authentically. This allows them to internalise and apply this as a 'way of being' in multiple contexts in the future.



Immersed in a Truly Bilingual Environment

EtonHouse @ Zhuhai

by May Cen, Teacher



Over the years, Zhuhai has become more international and our children are growing up into culturally aware, global citizens of the future. Children not only use Chinese to learn about Chinese culture, but also learn about other cultures through English. An appreciation of cultural diversity is an important element of a 21st century education. For example our Chinese teachers offer children many opportunities to explore the Chinese culture, whilst the English teachers support children's understanding of other



cultures through the celebration of international festivals.

At EtonHouse Zhuhai, we aim towards providing a truly authentic bilingual curriculum and environment. Whether the children are in the classroom or in the outdoor environment or having their meals together or any other time of the day, they always have access to a dual language environment. Additionally, our educators encourage children to communicate in both



languages in and outside of the classroom, which in turn encourages the creation and application of practical language, which further strengthens children's thinking and social development. Over the past few years, the bilingual curriculum project has achieved practical results; our children can not only communicate fluently in Chinese, but also communicate effectively with the English speaking staff.

A Bilingual Foundation in the Early Years

EtonHouse @ Times Square, Chengdu

by Carol Hutchinson Principal

INTERNATIONALLY MINDED LEARNERS

We speak more than one language
We are learning in two languages
Our friends come from different parts of the world
We love learning about their customs and beliefs
We make new friends and are kind and helpful
We work and play cooperatively together
We look after our environment
We tell the truth and show a sense of fairness

As educators in an international school, we play a vital role in the development of children's language foundation. Language acquisition is an everyday experience but is also a magical feat of childhood. This is especially so in the early years where nearly all children within three to five years become fully competent in at least one language and we accept this as totally normal. What is even more remarkable, are children who simultaneously acquire proficiency in two or more

languages during the pre-school years. Within the same time frame as it takes monolingual children to learn one language, bilingual children learn two languages and become adept at using them in socially diverse ways.

The pre-school years are the foundation for thinking, language, vision, attitude and aptitude. Children who have regular and rich exposure to both languages in their interactions with parents and educators exhibit the same milestones in language development as monolingual children. It is important that parents of bilingual children provide a

systematic exposure to both languages at all times. Bilingual acquisition is a common and a normal childhood experience; all children are capable of learning more than one language in early childhood.



Skills For The 21st Century

EtonHouse @ Hong Kong

by Allison Banbury, Principal EtonHouse Tai Tam



Communication and the ability to network are essential skills for success in the 21st century. The EtonHouse Inquire Think Learn curriculum framework embraces this through its focus on The Child as a Communicator and the Child in a Social Cultural Context.

Two of the major languages used by the citizens of the 21st Century are English and Mandarin. EtonHouse Tai Tam acknowledges the significance of this for our children by delivering an integrated English and Mandarin programme.

This programme stays true to our Reggio Emilia inspired pedagogy. Both languages are taught through play and inquiry, enabling

children to make contextual connections with what they hear, see and say. The teachers capitalise on children's interests and understandings, using known vocabulary as a foundation on which to build new, and presenting this in a way that is meaningful to the children. We work with children from playgroup to K1 to build their confidence and skills to interact with one another and develop relationships that are meaningful. We provide a range of experiences through which children come to be writers, readers, communicators in speech and through technology and can express themselves through English and Mandarin and also through the 100 languages of children.

Multi-lingual Learning

EtonHouse @ Japan

by Angela Fitzpatrick, Principal

EtonHouse Tokyo is a trilingual, multicultural pre-school, offering education in three languages (English, Mandarin, and Japanese), through both fluent and native speaking teachers in various areas of the school.

Children here are encouraged to embrace, share and extend on knowledge of familiar and unfamiliar languages on a daily basis.

Our educators believe that it is important for all children to value, enjoy and discover their own and other's identities, making these discoveries through expressive language, music, drama, literacy, objects, symbols and celebrations. This year we have planned an International Cultural Experience Week where teachers and families can celebrate traditions and



customs.

As educators we ensure that children learn new languages alongside their interests and strengths. The school programme is flexible to ensure that all children are enjoying language experiences at their own level and speed, in a creative hands on manner.

We believe that as technology advances, international movement will become more frequent and our children will have the opportunity to work in numerous countries in their lifetime,



therefore the ability to understand multiple languages will be an important personal asset in the future, as will the ability to be able to learn more as needed.

Meaningful Multilingual Experiences

EtonHouse @ Cambodia

by Kaithri, Principal

At EtonHouse International School Phnom Penh (EHIS), we promote linguistic diversity and multilingual education that is increasingly becoming an important aspect of Cambodia's education system, with the focus being mainly in learning languages such as Khmer, Mandarin, French etc.

Recently officers from the Cambodian Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MOEYS) visited EHIS and praised our efforts for embracing multilingualism and to provide for a meaningful learning environment, pointing out aspects such as the documentation panel, extended learning spaces, library space with collection of books of various languages and language room.



At EHIS, we make every effort to support our children to extend their knowledge of home language – Khmer. Children internalize languages more readily if they engage in meaningful activities that require using the language.

Our teacher assistants support us with this, as they communicate in Khmer with the children during routine, transitions, encouraging participation while singing songs or sharing stories during class sharing sessions, identifying and verbalizing objects in the environment and extending on children's ideas and thoughts during role play experiences. For classes

of Nursery Two onwards, we also incorporate enrichment classes for Khmer language as part of the after school program.

Our children are also introduced to Mandarin as part of their third language learning. We incorporate poetry, role-play, stories and songs as part of their learning experiences.

The team of educators at EHIS has also initiated learning basic words in both Mandarin and Khmer to connect with the children during teachable moments. We will continue to cater to develop

the child's love and interest in the language from young, empowering them more flexibility in thinking, and greater sensitivity to language.



Not Forgetting the Mother Tongue

EtonHouse @ Malaysia

by Claire Elizabeth Blake, Principal

Schools and learning communities throughout the world are becoming increasingly multilingual as more people are becoming internationally 'mobile'. A growing body of research shows that sustained efforts to create environments that include activities, artefacts and practices that constantly and explicitly valorize the first languages of learners in multicultural settings outside as well as inside are the key to learner and programme success.

EtonHouse Malaysia realises the potential of schools running a bilingual programme and as such we offer Mandarin as the second language of choice. However, we also realise how equally important it is to maintain and extend the mother tongue – be it in Norwegian, Japanese or Spanish.



Therefore, we have been running an Extra Curricular Activity pilot programme for mother tongue language promotion – that is integral to the International Baccalaureate. Language is integral to identity, which in turn determines how a person will act. A mother tongue and any other languages used in constructing meaning are intimately connected to a person's relationship with the world and how they come to feel about it. Social and emotional conditions for learning that value all languages and cultures, and affirm the identity of each learner, promote self-esteem and develop intercultural awareness.

Multilingual Global Learners

EtonHouse @ India

There are some myths attached to bilingualism and children, one being that children get confused when taught more than one language. But research says otherwise. New technologies such as neuroimaging show immense neuronal

and cognitive advantages in bilingual children as compared to monolingual children.

"One language sets you in a corridor for life. Two languages open every door along the way" - Frank Smith. This adage cannot be truer at our schools in India. At Serra, Aundh, Pune, children have been introduced to the German language along with English and Hindi. During the German class children are familiarized with basic German greetings, rhymes and stories. Children have taken an instant liking to the language, and their faces light up when the German teacher walks in and wishes them a 'guten morgen'.



While at Vivero, Indiranagar, Bengaluru, a chorus of "xie xie" can be heard in the classrooms. Children are well versed with numbers and

a few greetings in Mandarin. Sight words have helped children grasp the language faster and videos have helped perfect the pronunciation. Children are seen humming Mandarin rhymes with as much ease as they would be singing in English.