

## 40 Schools in East and South-East Asia learning with the IPC

There are now 40 schools throughout East and South-East Asia learning with the IPC. This includes schools in Singapore, Indonesia, China, South Korea, Japan and Vietnam. Several of these schools are sharing learning experiences and best practice. Here we share the latest news, advice and feedback from just some of them.



Students from SJI International putting forces to the test as part of the IPC Olympics unit.

# Introducing the IPC to the British International School, Jakarta

The International Primary Curriculum was introduced at the British International School, Jakarta in September 2009. Here we ask Assistant Head of Primary, Tim Lambert why the school made the change and how things are progressing:

### IPC: Why did the school make the change in curriculum?

**Tim Lambert:** Two years ago when our new Head joined the school, he asked the staff what our issues were and one overriding issue amongst every single member of staff was the curriculum. Following QCA was not engaging the children at all. So we looked at various alternatives including PYP and adapting QCA. But the International Primary Curriculum seemed to us to be the best answer. It combined enquiry-based learning with a curriculum designed to engage children and to help them develop a love of learning. In addition – and crucially – it provided a thorough

background and teaching framework for the staff.

### IPC: How did you introduce the new curriculum?

**TL:** We invested in some training from IPC which was definitely worth it. A trainer came out to the school along with a practising Headteacher. This was very helpful indeed. Talking to someone who was actually teaching the IPC really got the staff believing in it. Teachers have been miss-sold so many times in the past and to have someone talking to them who had taken the IPC on, embedded it within their own school, was living it every day and was still totally enthusiastic about it made a huge difference to us.

### IPC: What are the immediate changes you have seen in your children as a result of introducing the IPC?

**TL:** They are a lot more engaged in

their learning. My own son is a good example. He was enjoying coming to school before, but now he is excited about school and his learning. He talks about it a lot at home and often wants to find out more. For all our children, it's because the IPC is a curriculum that relates to them which is so different to QCA where they simply couldn't connect with much of what they were learning. In addition, the IPC maps out clearly for the children what they're going to learn so that they know what and why they are learning; nothing is hidden; they can see a purpose to everything they're doing.

### IPC: Were there any benefits to the staff – how did they cope with the change?

**TL:** We made a total transition. The QCA Schemes of Work were thrown out and IPC was brought in allowing us to embrace the whole thing. This followed...

**Continued overleaf**

...a whole year of research and a six-month working party. Some staff were sceptical and felt this was a bit fast but the IPC provides a very good basis for teachers to build on and after a term everybody has brought into it; there's a really good feeling amongst all the staff.

## IPC: Is it important to you that the IPC is cross-referenced to the English National Curriculum?

**TL:** Yes, it's absolutely fundamental. We are a British school and we teach the British National Curriculum. The IPC is absolutely not QCA but it definitely meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and the cross-referencing helps us to show this. If the IPC weren't cross-referenced to the National Curriculum we would struggle to convince our governors and parents that we are doing what we as a school say we are. The IPC links so well that we know we are still providing the National Curriculum. But the IPC is so much more than just a curriculum; it gets children excited in learning, it provides a very strong international dimension, it relates to the learning needs of every child.

## IPC: How important is the international focus of the IPC to you as a school?

**TL:** We have 40 nationalities of children in the school and about 20% are Indonesian, from wealthy backgrounds. The international aspect of the IPC impacts all our children whether they are expat or local children because they approach everything they learn from an international and a local perspective. We live in a global village and being able to understand the cultures of others is crucially important for everyone. Many of our local children will be future leaders of Indonesian society and for them, learning through local and international study will have a major impact on their long-term perspective. For example, our Year 3 children recently did the IPC Community unit. This involved them studying in depth the local village. For many of our children, they do not interact in the village and never see the way most of the village society lives. It helps them to learn the very different environments that are within their own community.

## Making Progress with the IPC

Working with an IPC trainer was a crucial step forward for Discovery Bay International School in Hong Kong towards their implementation of the IPC.

Tracey Edwards is the IPC leader at Discovery Bay. She says a real buzz about the IPC came as a result of whole staff training, six months before launching it to the school. "In retrospect, this training was absolutely essential for getting us all on board with the IPC", says Tracey. "At one point we thought the manual from IPC was clear enough for us to know what we were doing on our own. But there are always questions you need answered. We wanted to be totally prepared for the launch and we realised that to be able to achieve that, we needed someone with experience to help us."

So an IPC trainer came to Discovery Bay and worked through the initial units with each year group. "It was the best thing we could have done. We went through the whole IPC learning process, from Entry Point to Knowledge Harvest and all the way through the unit to the Exit Point. This helped us to clearly understand the process our children would take in their learning with every unit. We found out how to help our children take ownership of their learning. We found out how to stand back and facilitate; guiding the learning where necessary. It really helped us to get the

fundamentals of the IPC all sorted out before we started and it helped so much working with someone with experience at teaching with the IPC."

As a result, the staff at Discovery Bay are supporting each other more than ever before. "We're sharing teaching ideas and successes more now", says Tracy. "There's much more discussion between teachers and within year groups. We really like the structure and the support that the IPC teaching frameworks give but our training also gave us the confidence to personalise it for our school and our children."

Now communicating with three schools in Malaysia also using the IPC is giving Discovery Bay the chance to share experiences and ideas with other schools too. "In Hong Kong you can feel very isolated as a school; everyone works very independently. So having the chance to work with other IPC schools is exciting for us", says Tracey. "We're hoping to be able to make a visit to see the IPC in action in different settings and to swap thinking with other teachers and leaders."

Tracey's advice to other schools new to the IPC: "Get some training with someone who has experience at working with the IPC. That was a huge bonus for us. And get your training sorted out well before you start; don't leave it until the last minute. That will mean that you give everyone plenty of time to prepare, to think about their own units and to plan how to resource them."



Primary 1 students at Beacon Academy in Jakarta researched masks as part of their IPC unit Celebrations. The children then recreated their mask designs on their friends using face paints.

# Learning focused conferences

## IPC Regional Conference in Singapore

Come and join us at the IPC Conference in Singapore, March 8th to 9th. This conference is designed to provide very practical advice focusing on three crucial areas for all teachers – Resourcing, Recording and Researching and will be relevant for Early Years as well as primary age teachers. This conference will create the chance for a sharing of issues, experiences and ideas with other IPC teachers, facilitated and supported by IPC advisors.

The conference will be hosted by SJI International School in Singapore. Since it was established in 2008 – growing from a handful of pupils to now 400 students – the primary children at SJI have been learning with the IPC. Here Louise Grant, Principal of Elementary at SJI International, explains the impact this has had on the school and what is planned for the forthcoming conference:

“Many people ask why we chose IPC rather than PYP for SJI. Having worked with PYP for four years and got to know

that programme really well, I could see a lot of shared philosophy between the two curricula, particularly about the whole child, the development of character and the internationalism. However, what I felt set the IPC apart and was its real strength were the learning goals, the structure and the teacher planning.

“Two years on, I’m more convinced than ever. The depth of the IPC has become more evident the more that we’ve used it. It has been written and updated by curriculum experts and for us that’s a massive benefit. As teachers, we can’t possibly keep up with all the latest research into brain friendly learning and the latest thinking on learning styles. IPC clearly does and it’s all built in to the teacher planning. My teachers love not having to write the curriculum; it’s saving them so many hours and not all teachers are good curriculum writers. Instead of having to invent everything from scratch, they have the time and the freedom to be creative. We all love that the IPC is flexible. It actively encourages you to make it your own. We never get the impression that there’s only one way. IPC lets us do what we think is right for our school. It’s phenomenal in that way. We are all IPC converts, without exception.

“Admittedly, the IPC was a brave choice when we introduced it. At the time the only other school using the IPC was the Dutch School so we were the first English-medium school to take on the IPC in the region. As for moving on to the IB Diploma, the IPC prepares our children so well for that. There is such an emphasis on investigation and research skills and the IPC fosters a real confidence in the children to take action on their own in order to progress with their learning.

“Hosting the IPC regional conference is a big chance for us to show off the school and show how learning has come alive for our children. Across the school we do the IPC Learning to Learn unit at the beginning of each school year and the children will be presenting some of their learning from this unit during the opening of the conference. It will be very exciting to have so many other IPC schools here at SJI.”

For more information on all the IPC and Fieldwork Education conferences in Asia go to [www.internationalprimarycurriculum.com](http://www.internationalprimarycurriculum.com)



Children from Discovery Bay International School, Hong Kong take part in an enforced migration during their Entry Point of the IPC Migration unit.

## Introducing Steven Mark



Steven Mark is Director of the IPC and supports all the schools in East and South-East Asia. He has many years of experience teaching and leading the IPC and working in international schools. Steven is able to help you with all areas of IPC implementation and is also happy to talk to any schools considering the IPC. You can reach Steven directly at +44(0)20 7531 9696 or email [steven@greatlearning.com](mailto:steven@greatlearning.com)

# News from around the world

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## Top School Credits IPC with Success

Outstanding school of the year in the 2009 League Tables of English Primary Schools was Hampstead Norreys Primary School in West Berkshire. Headteacher Alex Butler credits the school's adoption of the International Primary Curriculum for the achievement:

"I came to Hampstead Norreys in 2006 expecting these children in rural Berkshire to be engaged, on-task, active learners. But I was wrong. The children were not focused, behaviour was questionable and, although there were some good teachers, the teaching itself was very didactic.

"I spent six months looking at different options and felt the approach of the IPC was right for us. I wanted us to be aspirational. I wanted a strong focus on learning and liked the focus on a variety of learning styles and the development of life skills within the IPC. The school is in a rural area and there is no cultural mix here so the international aspect of the IPC was very important too. In addition, the staff were desperate to get more connected learning and the IPC core themes were exactly what we were looking for.

"The biggest change since introducing the IPC has been in the way the children learn. Their learning now is so practical and so active with lots of sharing of learning between the children and between different classes. All this has resulted in total engagement. The learning has come alive for the children and that translates at home to more research, more reading around the theme, and more conversations related to their learning within the family.

"Some people have said the IPC is an off-the-shelf option but that's not true; there's huge depth to the learning process, a real understanding of what ignites children's interest, true expertise of community and international-mindedness, a very careful balance of knowledge and skills in every unit, and

some really creative ideas for teaching and for learning with a flexibility to make it your own.

"Because of doing something quite innovative such as the IPC, everyone is watching you! Our success in the League Tables and also in our Ofsted inspection has proved to our Local Authority and to other schools that the IPC really is making a difference for us. It's particularly down to the engagement and to the focus on learning. It's exactly what we were looking for."

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## New English National Curriculum published

The new English National Primary Curriculum was published this February (2010) ready for implementation in September 2011. A direct link to the new primary curriculum is available at <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/newprimarycurriculum>

There are many similarities between the new National Curriculum and the IPC which means that for the 680 schools in England and over 100 British International Schools already delivering the IPC, much of what is being expected from the new Primary Curriculum for England is already being delivered. "We are delighted to see a move towards a more flexible, less prescriptive and yet challenging and rigorous National Curriculum," says Steven Mark, Director of the International Primary Curriculum. "We support the need to keep the integrity of individual subjects while helping children to see the links between subjects through a more cross-curricular approach. We believe that learning through the IPC achieves this in a carefully planned and progressive way that involves collaborative learning, incorporates a wide range of learning styles, and carefully combines knowledge, skills and understanding within all subjects enabling children to become confident and independent learners. In addition – and beyond the goals of the new National Curriculum – the IPC focuses on developing international-

mindedness. We believe that, given the world our children are growing up in is an interdependent one, the development of international-mindedness should now be a vital part of every child's learning, whoever they are and wherever they may be living in the world."

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## New IPC Document for English National Curriculum

A new Cross Reference document identifying the links between the IPC and the new English National Curriculum is currently being produced. The new Cross Reference document is due to be complete this summer (2010). Further information will be available on the IPC website.

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## New standards for New Zealand

New Zealand is setting in place new national standards for reading and writing. A new policy will measure Year One to Year Eight pupils' literacy levels against a set of national benchmarks. In addition, a continued focus on improving learning in the classroom is generating a growing interest for the IPC amongst New Zealand primary schools.

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## Teacher training programmes set to improve in Australia

Australian educators are demanding improved teacher training programmes after a recent report identified weaknesses in implementation strategies. Of note was the need to improve teaching skills on how to impart knowledge, how to work with small groups and with children who need extension, and how to teach literacy and numeracy.