



The Buss Brief

Issue 27 May 2021



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Principal's Message

Dear Friends of the School,

I'm writing this newsletter introduction in a very inspired and positive frame of mind and having just experienced the NLCS ethos "first hand".

As a mathematician who has lately dabbled and experimented with sociology and philosophy, the world of academic art has never been a close associate of mine. My own art education was a quite painful experience, perhaps from the moment that an art teacher told 11-year-old-me that my pencil drawing of a leaf was "rubbish", and at a stroke turning me off the subject for life.

I hope, then, that you can imagine how inspired I feel having just visited our school's Art Society - a society created and led by a group of students for no other reason than they are passionate about Art as an academic discipline.

In the society meeting I saw Solaia from Grade 9, skillfully and passionately (by our own academic monitoring rubrics, her performance would have been labelled as "outstanding") lead a discussion about the life and works of Louise Bourgeois. They explored some of her works in relation to the context in which they were created, including the artist's own relationships with issues such as domesticity, feminism and the family unit. To those of you with more experience in Art than I, this may well come across as me being simple-minded or ignorant, but I've genuinely never considered the attribution of meaning to Art in quite the same way as I was just invited to. In front of me, a group of students flitted between sociological, political, and psychological perspectives, and the scope and nature of the subject grew before me.

So much of the NLCS ethos is reflected in this small vignette of a typical lunchtime activity. Passions being explored, understandings being deepened, perspectives being broadened and, just perhaps, new interests and passions being inspired. It matters not that the student/teacher roles are reversed, in fact that just serves to emphasise that what matters more than anything is the culture of our school, the very essence and nature of our ethos, allows, supports and encourages this to happen.

I long for the time when we can invite parents into school to feel this culture for yourselves. There is no greater privilege as an educator or parent than being inspired by your students or children. The educational ethos of our school benefits us all. I'm off to check the society timetable for next week, to see where my next dose of inspiration will come from.

Paul Friend
Principal





Seeing is believing

Grade 2 Visit Ancient Rome



Grade 2 were transported back in time to Ancient Rome during their virtual reality experience. They genuinely could not believe their eyes when they stood outside of the colosseum and saw the throngs of people pushing past on their way to a gladiator duel. Creeping down quiet back streets, many commented on the two men playing chess and this generated a plethora of questions about the origin and heritage of so many of the games that we play and enjoy today. Some eagle-eyed students also managed to find a musical interlude, where a cellist and his dog captivated them as he played outside the steps of a temple. Lastly, as they rushed through the bustle and business of the markets, students spotted delicious fruits and vegetables and even spied a chef preparing some rather appetizing salmon. This was a wonderful and enriching opportunity for our students and helped secure their understanding of daily life in Ancient Rome and enhance our learning for this term.





Rainforest Experience

Grade 3 Visit Bornean Rainforest

Grade 3 have been learning about 'How the World Works', focussing on deforestation of the rainforests. We are surrounded by wonderful opportunities for rainforest visits in our locality, but as Covid keeps us safely inside our school we decided to bring the rainforest to us. On Monday we embarked on a virtual reality tour of the Bornean rainforest through a special VR experience. The children were able to journey over the top of the forest, looking down from the canopy over the majestic trees and mighty rivers. They met macaques and proboscis monkeys up close, immersing themselves into the monkey communities. And most poignantly they were able to see trees being felled before their eyes, deforestation turning the jungle into a plain, and palm oil plantations springing up in their place. After a few initial shocks as the virtual reality monkeys felt pretty real, we all enjoyed the experience and were delighted with how it connected us to the learning we have been doing for the past 7 weeks.



A Thirst for Knowledge

Across the school, a constant buzz can be heard amongst both adults and pupils alike. It reverberates off the walls and hangs in the air, an obvious and intrinsic catalyst for so many of the actions and reactions that take place in the busy work week. It is the function of facts, and the act of questioning. In our assemblies, at lunchtimes, during those balmy playtimes, as adults we are constantly astounded at the sheer level of understanding and the want-to-know that our students routinely demonstrate. This in itself has informed and underpinned how we facilitate the learning during our unit of inquiry sessions, and after a consistent approach we are beginning to see the students making clear, concise connections to experience and applying these independently. This method is not unusual to those familiar with an early years education, where students are taught key skills and concepts in short-burst sessions and then given the opportunity to authenticate their experiences through play, talk and application, but it is clear that this process can be incredibly rewarding for students as they move through the school. In Grade 2, we have begun an exploration into the inter-connectedness of human-made systems and communities and built this understanding around the creation of organisations to respond to human need. With such an open and engaging concept, we wanted to ensure our students had a deeper

understanding of the history of government and the impact of class on communities so made clear-taught links to the beginning of the Roman Empire. This frontloading of information took the form of virtual reality immersive experiences and explosive debates around gender equality in the Roman Republic and if there could ever be such a thing as a 'good emperor', as well as diary entries as plebeians, analysis of busts, presentations and comic book retellings. By varying outcomes and allowing ownership and autonomy in the choices students make here, we have found that the students are more invested in their learning. They are also more ready to challenge, and so much has been discussed this term about the authenticity of perspective and the male gaze of history. Crucially, as we now round the hill of our front-loaded knowledge and skills based sessions, the students are provided with avenues to channel their interest and generate not only their own lines of questions and inquiry but also develop responses to the learning, based on their own experiences and interests. Furthermore, building on the intertextuality established through other central ideas. From this approach, we are seeing a generation of open-minded risk takers emerge who are impassioned, emblazoned and demanding questions and answers from history.



Book Donation

by *Dignity Mama*



Project **Dignity**
Dignity Learn
Dignity Kitchen™
Dignity Mama
Dignity Outreach

World Book Day took place on 4th March and during the lead up to it, the English Literature and Service Societies collaborated to run the 'Donate a Story' drive. This initiative encouraged all members of NLCS (Singapore) to donate pre-loved books to support the local organisation: Dignity Mama. The response was overwhelmingly positive. An incredible 798 books were donated by senior school staff and students, clearly evidencing how the NLCS (Singapore) community is full of passionate readers!

Dignity Mama is a Singaporean organisation that supports and enables young adults with learning challenges to gain basic entrepreneurial skills and lead independent lives. Their mission is to restore dignity to those who are differently-abled. These young adults are employed by Dignity Mama, and help to run various book stalls that are located in hospital centres around Singapore. On 21st April, members of both societies visited Dignity Mama at their stall located in the National University Hospital to drop off the books donated by the NLCS (Singapore) community.

It was tremendously inspiring to see the meticulous care and gratitude that the members of staff felt towards every book and how they prepared them to be put up on display. Some of us had the chance to interview the founder of this charity — Mrs Chan — whose own daughter is one of the young adults benefitting from the project.

We hope that NLCS (Singapore) can continue to support Dignity Mama in the future. Mrs Chan requested that we can show support not only by donating books but also by promoting their book stalls on social media, and by encouraging more people to browse and buy. Why not make your next book purchase a more conscious one and visit one of the Dignity Mama book stalls near you?

By Laurie Mountjoy (Head of EAL) & Tyshea Holden (Head of English)
 Contributions from Inez Wang (Service Society) | Ines Khan (English Literature Society)



Polo



Students Embrace New Challenge and Experiences...

At NLCS (Singapore), we would like our students to experience a range of enrichment opportunities and at times move beyond their comfort zone to try something new. With this in mind, we've been really pleased to offer our students a Polo CCA each week in collaboration with Singapore Polo Club.

Since February, both junior and senior students have been learning to play Polo as part of a 16-week course at the Polo Club. The ATOMS programme (as it is called) is run by the club's top professional coaches trained to work with young people of all ages. Throughout the course, not only are our intrepid students learning to play Polo but for some this has been the first time on a horse, so they are in fact learning to ride at the same time! Over the weeks, students have also been learning to care for the horses, and prepare them for riding and play.

At the end of the course, we hope some students will continue with this unique sport and we might even have our own NLCS (Singapore) Polo team in the future. With a range of global Polo exchanges the club runs with other similar clubs around the world, there are potential opportunities for students to experience this sport further afield in the future.

This CCA has proved to be hugely popular and we're hoping to offer another Polo CCA course towards the end of term in response to the enthusiasm of our students.



Gardening Club

Mighty Oaks From Little Acorns Grow...

Since January, the First school Gardening Club has been busy developing gardens in our outdoor spaces. In April, an additional club based in the Lower school began, which meant we were able to expand and start a garden on the third floor terrace area. Ms Peacock and Ms Chikola are well supported by expert gardener Ms Lin who knows exactly what needs to be done to make things grow in Singapore.

In the garden, we have okra, bean and bitter melon plants growing amongst others. It was fun to gather our own seeds by scooping them out of the tomatoes and planting them. Now, our seedlings are nearly ready to be repotted and placed outside. We have been learning about sustainability and worked together to create a compost bin. The students keep a regular check on our plants and care for them by watering and making sure they're protected. The young gardeners have learnt that we need to think carefully about the best conditions for our plants. We all take great pride in the success of our garden and are keen to reap the rewards. From small beginning, great things can grow!













SS Student Council



“We cherish student voices and believe that they should all be heard by the school. Through our senior school student council, we are able to understand concerns from all year groups and reflect them to the school. Students’ opinions are valuable and together we can make the school a better learning environment as a whole” - NLCSSg Big 5.

The Big 5 had the unenviable task of making the final decisions as to who would take on the important and valued roles of Student Council members. “We deliberated and thought for a long time, working with members of the senior team, taking into consideration both students’ perspectives as well as teachers’ perspectives when finding the perfect candidates. We were stunned with all the enthusiasm and passion from all year groups to be a part of the student council, and we value all who applied.”

After much deliberation, our Student Council members are...

-  **Joel Foo (Grade 6)**
-  **Rafael D’Souza (Grade 6)**
-  **Eva Khoo (Grade 7)**
-  **Hayah Ahad (Grade 7)**
-  **Rohan Janaki Deepaku Mar (Grade 8)**
-  **Ruben Bruhl-Gati (Grade 8)**
-  **Solaia Suherman (Grade 9)**
-  **Jack Sykes (Grade 9)**

A huge “well done” to everyone who applied and participated in the interview stages. And of course a massive “congratulations” to our first ever Student Council Members!

The Student Council have ploughed straight into business, bringing their peers’ queries, concerns and observations to the attention of the leadership team. Everything from vertical tutoring to the school uniform is being raised and discussed. The Student Council is certainly providing an excellent vehicle for student voice and opportunities for student leadership.

The Senior School is grateful for the hard work of the Big 5 and Student Council in all that they are already doing to represent and support the student body. We’re excited to see how the student voice is embedded further into school life and the Big 5 will be sure to keep the school community updated and informed!

Ms. Swain
Assistant Principal (Teaching and Learning)



Whole School Reminders...



Parent Satisfaction Survey

The Parent Satisfaction Survey will close at the end of Sunday 9th May. If you have not already done so, we would be grateful if you could take a few moments to complete it. Parent experience, opinion and feedback is an essential part of our planning and development.



School Letters

All letters sent out to parents are stored in the 'Parent Hub' section of the Parent Portal. [Click here to view any letters](#) that were recently distributed.



Absence

Please be reminded that all student absences should be reported directly to the attendance office attendance@nlcssingapore.sg including absences from CCA activities.



Enhanced Safe Management Measures

Please be reminded of the staggered dismissal times for Junior School effective from Monday 10th May. [Full details can be found here](#) and more full COVID-19 information can be found on the parent portal.

Social Media

Don't forget to follow all our recent news by following us on social media:

 [nlcs.sing](https://www.instagram.com/nlcs.sing)

 [nlcssg](https://www.facebook.com/nlcssg)

 [NLCS_Singapore](https://twitter.com/NLCS_Singapore)

 [NLCS_Singapore](https://www.linkedin.com/company/NLCS_Singapore)