



# TENBY SCHOOLS SETIA ECO GARDENS NEWSLETTER

A UNITED WORLD AT PEACE-THROUGH EDUCATION

Monday 26th January 2015

## Supporting students at home—the right way

Traditionally, homework has been viewed by both parents and teachers as the more you do, the better you get. However, increasingly now, educational research is suggesting that this isn't necessarily the case. While homework does positively impact on student attainment, the amount of homework does not correlate very strongly. Tasks that repeat work that has been completed in class (for example, practicing many times over a skill that has either been mastered in class, or not) does not generally benefit students— they either get it, or they don't, and reinforcement in either case is not particularly helpful. Tasks that allow students to enquire and explore can be more beneficial, so long as they are supported by the learning that is going on in the classroom; research in isolation with no links to learning that make it relevant can make it as pointless as 'repetitive reinforcement'. Studies into the impact parents make when supporting their children is also very revealing—the type of support very much impacts the outcome. With parents who sit down and 'do the homework' with the child, ensuring they have got the 'right answer' does not positively support the learning process. Often parents, students and teachers get caught up with what the right or wrong answer is, yet the process of getting to the answer is much more important. Interestingly, last week I was attending an IB workshop for Heads of Schools, and one of the items discussed was the idea that it is possible to achieve a top level 7 at IB Diploma in higher level Mathematics—something that less than 2% of all entrants achieve—without getting any right answers! Some may find this rather surprising, but the importance is on the process—if a student has shown they understand the process, have clearly explained and shown step by step how they got there, they can achieve the very highest levels without necessarily having the right answer. Support from parents or tutors at home often helps students to get the right answer, but more often than not, the processing is completed by the parent/tutor rather than the student. Supporting homework at home is most valuable when, rather than sitting down with the students and completing it, parents instead ask students to explain what they have done for their homework and why—looking for processing and evaluating skills, rather than that elusive right answer. Increasingly we are asking our teachers to shift their focus away from right or wrong, to an analysis of the processes involved, with comments on work saying what students have done well, and what they can do to improve, rather than a tick or a cross—the checking mechanism is much better completed by students in class as it allows them to check (rather than the teacher), in a supportive learning environment rather than by a teacher in isolation. Most students, when returned homework, will tend to focus on the ticks and crosses and the score, rather than the processes involved, so teachers similarly are encouraged not to score work with marks, ticks and crosses, but to give students diagnostic comments to help support their learning. Often parents find this the hardest concept to grasp. The question of "what did you get for your homework?" becomes redundant—"what did you learn from your homework?" is much more useful. I am often also explaining to parents that children finding work hard is a positive sign and that trial and error, and making mistakes, is a vital part of the learning process. Tutoring students invariably provides a level of support for a child that stops them from processing and learning and is something that we discourage as a school, except in the case of developing a specific learning need, which should have been identified through collaboration between school and home. This often requires a bit of a leap of faith when we are all looking for the perfect score, but helping support students by taking ten minutes out of your day to ask them to explain concepts learned rather than jumping for yet another expensive tutor will help support your child's independent learning habits. The biggest gift we can give any child on leaving school is the ability to learn independently and the will to want to—if they have both of these then the grades and successes will follow.

Giles Montier, Campus Principal

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### This Week at TSSEG:

#### CAT 4 TESTS FOR YEARS 4, 7 & 10

(EXCEPT NEW ENTRANTS TO SCHOOL).

PASS TESTS FOR NEW STUDENTS IN YEAR 10.

MOCK IGCSE EXAMS FOR MAY PAPERS (BM & CHINESE)

8.00-9.00AM:

PRINCIPAL'S COFFEE MORNING— ALL PARENTS WELCOME

8:00am -2:30pm  
YEAR 3 EDUCATIONAL VISIT TO SINGAPORE—  
ERTH'S DINOSAUR ZOO KIDS FEST 2015 IN SINGAPORE

TENBY SCHOOLS MUSIC FESTIVAL (IPOH)- CONTINUES UNTIL SUNDAY

7:30am -11:30am  
JSAC FOOTBALL FESTIVAL— Y7-9 (EXCELSIOR INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL)

TUESDAY 6TH FEB:  
THAIPUSAM HOLIDAY

FRIDAY 6TH FEB:

8-9AM PTA MEETING AND AGM (ALL PARENTS WELCOME)

2-4PM; PRIMARY ORIENTATION

AFTERNOON (FOR ALL PRIMARY PARENTS)

3.30-5.30PM; TISS INFORMAL PARENT-TEACHER MEETINGS

(FOR ALL SECONDARY PARENTS)

ALL WEEK

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

UPCOMING

# Tenby Schools Setia Eco Gardens Newsletter

WE WISH ALL OF  
OUR STUDENTS  
TAKING PART IN  
THE INAUGURAL  
TENBY MUSIC  
FESTIVAL IN IPOH  
THIS WEEKEND  
THE VERY BEST OF  
LUCK

## Principal's Coffee Morning and PTA meeting

This Thursday sees the first of this year's monthly coffee mornings. These are a chance to drop by and have a coffee and a chat. The Campus Principal and other school senior leaders will be on hand to answer any questions you may have and to listen to your feedback. There will also be a short presentation on some upcoming school initiatives that we are interested in getting your feedback on, so if you have a spare half hour, please drop by—we'd love to see you whether you are a new or returning parent.

Next Friday will also see the re-arranged PTA meeting and AGM. The PTA is run by our parents and is an excellent way of meeting other parents and supporting the way the school operates. The PTA helps to organize a number of events throughout the year and supports our students through different initiatives and programmes that it runs. It also represents the views of the parents in discussions with the school and raises general concerns and points for discussion at its monthly meetings. Please come along to next week's meeting to find out more—the PTA always needs volunteers to help get involved, particularly as class representatives, but even if you don't want to volunteer your time, it's a good way of making contact with other families and staying in touch with what's going on in school.

## Vacancy for Teaching Assistant

We are looking for a Teaching Assistant to support the work of our Primary classes in the delivery of our curriculum, which is based on the English National Curriculum and International Primary Curriculum (IPC).

Applicants need to enjoy working with children, and ideally should have experience in the primary age range. Aspiring international classroom teachers who are looking to develop their careers in International Education may also wish to apply. Tenby International School is committed to the safeguarding of all children. To apply, please email [ecogardens@tenby.edu.my](mailto:ecogardens@tenby.edu.my) with a CV and letter of application explaining why you believe you are suited to the post and your views on how you believe children should learn in school. If you would like to talk to the school informally about the position, please get in touch with our School Office.

## Pick-up and drop-off

We are trying to ensure that all pick-up and drop-off of students takes place from the pick-up and drop-off area. We have asked staff who run CCAs to ensure that students are returned to the pick-up area and handed over to the teacher on duty. We would therefore ask parents to collect all children from this pick-up area, rather than from the classrooms around school as this often leads to confusion regarding who has been picked up and who has not. This also applies to the end of lesson time—we would ask parents please to congregate around the pick-up area and not around the individual classrooms in order to minimize the disruption to learning and better coordinate who has been picked up and who has not. A gentle reminder also to our Early Years Parents—school finishes at 2.10pm. Students should be collected at this time (not 2.50pm), or placed in one of the supervision classes, which go on until 3.50pm and are charged at RM120 per day for a term's supervision.

## School bookshop update

Many thanks for your understanding regarding supplies from the bookshop. Please remember to complete an order form for out-of-stock books and we will contact you when the books are in school.