



Jockey Club Sarah Roe School  
賽馬會善樂學校



## What's new at JCSRS 2009?

*from Kit Chan  
Vice Principal*

# Newsletter December-09

The first term is always a busy but exciting one after the long summer holiday. It's nice to see the children learning and playing in the school again after such a lengthy break.

This year there are many changes happening in school. As you are well aware, our school hours have changed to 9:00am - 3:00pm. The extra half hour every day does not only afford additional teaching time (which every student benefits from) but also allows time for students to get onto buses in orderly groups. We now have a total of six buses picking up children from all over Hong Kong.

Some other major changes include:

### Structural

The school corridors have been painted yellow with lots of children's work on display to give a more welcoming, colourful feel and to also celebrate students' achievements. Children are enjoying discussing their displayed work with staff and peers alike.

We are using the spare classroom as a Senior Student Centre to provide a more appropriate environment for older students who follow the new Asdan Programme

Class C has been revamped to provide the most appropriate equipment (switches, mattresses, a touch screen etc.) offering the best educational opportunities for our mobility impaired students. The multi-sensory room and the sensory motor room are the two most popular places for students who clearly value the sensory element in their regular curriculum.

Christopher tries out the swing in the sensory motor room



Hyuga, Shanzay and Rehaan learn the comfy way!



## Curriculum

I am confident that you have seen the benefits of grouping children based on ability in the primary classes. While continuing to adopt the Primary Years Programme (PYP) framework, teachers have put lots more emphasis on the sensory curriculum, relating subject knowledge to daily applications which are practical and specific to our students.



Seona uses her sense of smell in the 'Senses' Unit of Inquiry

Adopting the Asdan Programme for post 14 year-olds has also created more exciting opportunities for our youngsters who are regularly involved in practical activities like gardening, shopping and using money skills.

This approach has forged a closer link with KGV Learning Support Class students who participate in joint activities as they follow the same programme at a different level.

We look forward to our students receiving the very first world wide recognised accreditation from the UK when they submit their detailed work portfolios.



Jon using his money skills in the real world

## IPPs

This term we also remodelled last year's IEPs - now called IPPs - Individual Pupil Programmes. The plans focus on literacy, numeracy, PSHE and behaviour. Teachers and therapists were delighted to meet parents to discuss targets earlier in the term and we look forward to the next round of meetings towards the end of February to report on each child's progress.



## Staff and Students

We have some exciting additions to our team of enthusiastic and committed staff. Denise McLaughlin, our new Vice Principal joined us in August. You may have seen her Scottish dancing talents at the Ceilidh night.

To name others, Carol and Rachel are now permanent teachers. Great to have them on board!! Nicola is the new Occupational Therapist, who will focus on primary classes. Alice Lam rejoins us to take up the nurse's position and we will have a new Speech and Language Therapist in January.

We also have a new group of Educational Assistants and a muscular life guard supporting our students this year. We extend Hannah, Kai Cho, Chris, Janet, Chris Leung, Trevor, Wai, Tony, Gerald and Almond our warmest welcome.

You may have noticed an increasing number of male EAs supporting the growing number of male teenagers at JCSRS. Among them are some parent-funded EAs so I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the parents for their generosity.



Sadly, Kevin left us in mid December but we wish him every success in his new job.

The school is now full. We are expecting one new student to join in January to bring the total number to 61. The teachers, therapists and EAs are all working very hard together to support each and every educational need. We are so pleased to see all our new students settling in so quickly including Seona, Harvey, Sophia, Maurice in Laura's class; Sanjana and Jonathan Kwok in Rachel's class; Shanzay and Genevieve in Mimi's class and Christopher in Heidi's class.

## Professional Development

To train up all the new staff at JCSRS, combined with our aim of keeping everyone's skill set as fresh as possible, we have already organised three professional development programmes for staff this term.

An ESF centrally organised day was held where we were updated with the latest mainstream approaches. Additionally, we enjoyed the very physical TEAM Teach sessions for managing challenging behaviour and the Touch Trust which is a music/movement programme particularly suited to students in our school.

All three events were well received and thoroughly enjoyed by our staff because they were accessible and practical. A big thanks to all parents who ventured all the way to the HK Institute of Education in Tai Po for the Saturday Touch Trust seminar! I was truly touched!!

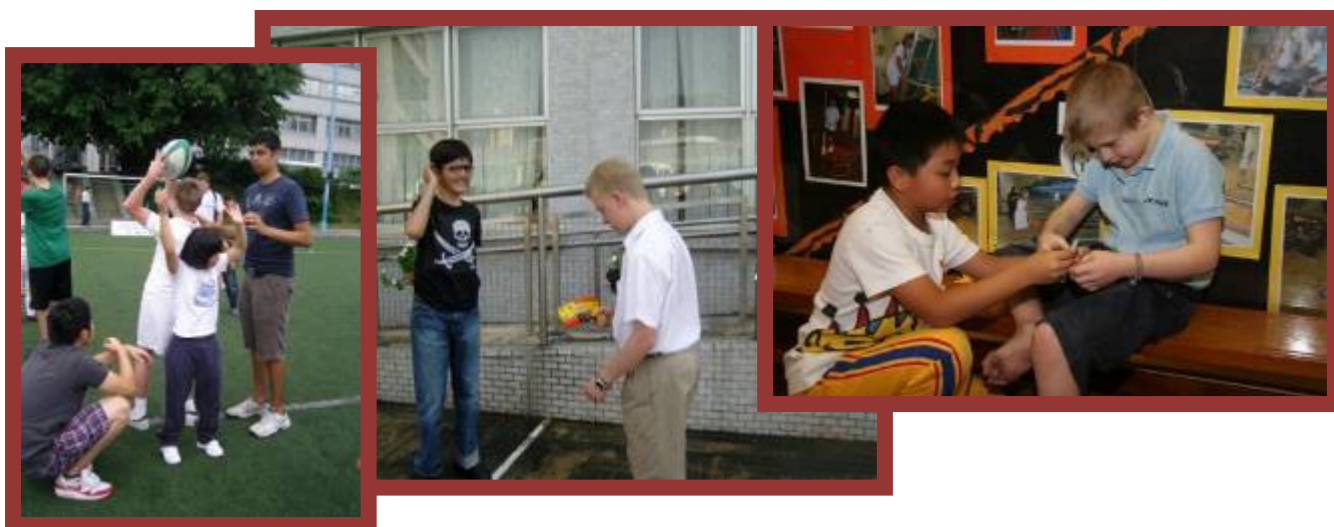
Our next CPD offering will be Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) in April next year but since lots of staff were trained last year, there is no need to close the school for this particular session.



## Integration

Based on last year's successful model, we continue to bolster primary integration links with PYP schools Japanese International School and Kingston International School.

Secondary students have also joined KGV learning support class students for a range of events including touch rugby, the Pirate day, a Salvation Army talk on recycling and on the 17<sup>th</sup>, the Christmas party. Ken and Simon have started their catering and office work experience and other students have begun individual integration at KGV and Kowloon Junior School.



We welcome secondary school students to participate in community service with us. This year's helpers have hailed from KGV, West Island School, South Island School and for the first time, Renaissance College. Without fail they put lots of effort into preparing activities. There have been wonderful moments when the secondary school students commented on how much they learnt from our students and staff!

We continue to benefit from lots of volunteers on a regular basis who work with our students and support teachers by preparing teaching materials. If you know anybody who is interested in such a meaningful job, please encourage them to contact me at [kchan@jcsrs.esf.edu.hk](mailto:kchan@jcsrs.esf.edu.hk)

On behalf of the entire JCSRS staff, we thank you for working together with us to make this year another fantastic year so far. We wish you and your family a wonderful Christmas time!

On the 9<sup>th</sup> of November the Hong Kong Rugby Football Union came to train our students at touch rugby. Everyone had a great time!!!



**T**ake the ball  
**O**uch give it all  
**U**nder the sun  
**C**hase and run  
**H**appy and fun



**R**ugby we like to play  
**U**nder the sun we saw Kay  
**G**ood time of the day  
**B**ig boys in school  
**Y**es you will like it too!



By Ken Chung  
Class E



## Simulation workshop – how does it feel?

The team of therapists delivered an unusual training session to EAs and teachers this month. The interactive workshop saw staff attempting to navigate the world with simulated impairments. Each therapy discipline had two stations:

Nicky (our new occupational therapist) simulated motor planning difficulties by having

staff trace a star in a mirror. They also simulated fine motor difficulties by feeling objects and threading beads with large ski gloves on. They also had to write their names with their feet!



Our physiotherapist, Bianca, simulated visual impairments whilst catching and throwing a ball to show how different objects and colours are easier for students to work with. She also simulated difficulties with muscle control by asking staff to complete a short obstacle course with their legs tied together.



Speech and language therapist, Karen, asked people to communicate simple messages using signing, pictures and objects to those who had simulated language and visual difficulties using special glasses and confusing messages played through an iPod. She also encouraged staff to feel what it was like to be fed and simulated some eating and swallowing difficulties.



Overall, the feedback was that the workshop was fun and informative and gave everyone a glimpse into life with a sensory, physical or language impairment.

## Primary Years Programme

Since the last newsletter in April 2009, there have been some interesting changes around PYP in the school. Due to the new structure of the management team, I am now taking responsibility for the roles of Vice Principal of Primary and that of PYP Co-ordinator.



We are all working very hard as a team to prepare for our Pre-authorisation visit in March 2010 from the International Baccalaureate Organisation who will evaluate our progress in implementing PYP so far and give us advice for the future.

This will be a very exciting time for our staff and students as we are the first international special educational needs school worldwide to take on this programme and adapt it to the needs of our students. We will be a pioneering school in terms of PYP in relation to Special Educational Needs!

During the mid-term break in October the Senior Management Team attended a three-day PYP workshop in Shanghai to help us better prepare and support the school through the up-coming Pre-authorisation visit. We all found this to be an extremely positive visit and well worthwhile.

In November we were visited by two ladies from The Touch Trust Programme which provided the staff with training to deliver a creative, touch-based art of movement and dance programme for students affected by autism, challenging behaviour and profound and multiple disabilities. Staff have quickly



taken on board the ethos of the programme and we have already seen monumental changes in some pupils' ability to connect with their surroundings. Staff are now considering the wide range of possibilities that exist to incorporate areas of PYP into sensory Touch Trust sessions.

**Denise McLaughlin, Vice Principal**

## Class D Assembly

Class D performed an assembly entitled "My Family" two weeks ago. In the assembly, students dressed up as different family members. Can you tell who from the photos? We also performed a family dance and practised some Makaton signings for different family members. We signed "I love my family" beautifully in the assembly. We shared our lovely family photos and danced with the whole school to the song "We are family".

We are all super stars!!



## Touch Trust and Class C

Touch Trust is a charity that offers creative, touch-based movement education and dance programmes for the benefit of individuals with autism, profound and multiple disabilities and challenging behaviour.

It was wonderful to get a glimpse of the Touch Trust Programme. On 12<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> October 2009, Dilys Price, the founder of Touch Trust Programme and Charlotte Aubrey, ran training days for JCSRS staff.

Class C and some other JCSRS students were lucky enough to get Dilys first hand and amazing things happened. On the fourth day of the programme, I saw Abigail following instructions and putting up her hands three times. She had never done this in the past. Also after the session on Thursday, Lucas, who was learning to walk around school, walked all the way from our classroom to the office and then back to our classroom.

I am new to Touch Trust, but I did see the power and effects of it. Our PMLD students would definitely benefit from more Touch Trust programmes. Furthermore, it is a creative programme so we can incorporate it into PYP units of inquiry. We all look forward for learning more from Dilys and Charlotte.



## Occupational Therapy Update

Nicky Grey, our new Occupational Therapist joined us in November. She is from South Africa, and has been working in the UK for the past few years. Her last job was as a paediatric OT in Richmond, London.

Nicky will be working full time, and predominantly working with students in Classes A, B, C, and D.

The other part-time OT post has not yet been filled, and will be re advertised soon. In the meantime, Karen Hutson will be working with students from classes E, F and G.

The refurbished Multi Sensory Room is now fully functional and in constant use for 1:1 and small group sessions. The track hoist means it is completely accessible to all students. The design has incorporated more cause and effect equipment like the interactive fibre optic carpet which changes colour when the hand buttons are activated.

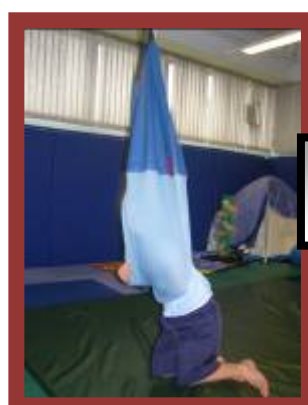


Multi Sensory Room



Interactive fibre optic carpet

Over the summer, the OT and PT offices were relocated to make a joint therapy assessment room. The old OT room has now become a Sensory Motor Room. Students are timetabled individually and in small groups throughout the day. It has been great to watch the students getting the sensory input they need in a safe environment.



Students in the Motor Sensory Room

## Charity Ceilidh

I don't really need to write much about the JCSRS charity Christmas ceilidh held on Friday December 11<sup>th</sup> because the pictures speak for themselves.

We had a rocky start, though. First of all we couldn't pronounce it. Then we worried about the dancing and whether we'd all look ridiculous. Then the men started asking if they really had to wear skirts (without undies) and on the night there were some confused expressions near the buffet table next to the haggis... ? ? ?

However, the night organised by Denise McLaughlin was a roaring success and everyone had a great time even if they didn't quite master the Scottish dancing steps. Thanks for all your hard work Denise.



Happy Holidays Everyone

