

SA NEWSLETTER

October 2013

From the Head of Academy

Two processes have dominated the first few weeks of the new academic year: the induction and settling-in of new staff and students to set the new academic year going; and the preparations for the Inauguration of the academy by His Highness the Aga Khan on September 20th.

The process of starting a new year with new students and staff is only partially accomplished by getting a working timetable and the right people to the right places at the right time. There is a much bigger challenge in achieving integration of new students and staff into the existing system so that they all feel part of it quickly and can enjoy their time at school as much as possible. It is also important that they pick up on the ethos of the academy as quickly as possible and come to share its values. With staff we run a long pre-school induction programme over about ten days; for students we run a much shorter one concentrated over only two. By and large the process has been successful. Certainly the new staff seem to have integrated very well, as have most of the students, but it is not surprising if a few, particularly those who are away from home for the first time, take a while to feel entirely comfortable. We also need to remember that only now have we achieved one of our mileposts of having students in every grade. That too means that this year is not quite like last, and so there is another year to go before we find ourselves fully settled as one year moves more or less without much change into another.

His Highness invited Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, N. Kiran Kumar Reddy, and the Union Minister for Human Resource Development, M.M. Pallum Raju, to grace the occasion of our official inauguration, and over four hundred distinguished visitors, staff and students witnessed the event. His Highness also made two private visits to the academy: one on the morning before the event to see the facilities in their more-or-less-finished form for the first time, and then again on the Saturday afternoon to give a series of interviews to the television and print media. Once the event was over the academy quickly settled down to a more usual rhythm.

We have had eight fairly hectic weeks and I hope everyone will take opportunity to recharge their batteries over the coming half-term break. I wish you all a relaxing and enjoyable time.



From the Principal's desk

Dear Parents,

It is my pleasure to note that the huge public interest and support shown to our academy has continued and resulted in an almost doubling of the Senior Academy strength to its total nearly 200 students. Given that we do not enroll into Grades 10 and 12, this means that every grade has two sections and in no time at all we will reach capacity.

A number of new staff have been appointed to the Senior Academy to cope with the increased roll- these include: Ms Kanchan Misra for Geography; Dr Sunita Gosh (Hindi); Mr Sudeep Gosh (English); Ms Ujjawala Bhatt (French); Dr Jillian Bamforth (English); Mr Roger Bamforth (English & Humanities); Mr Suresh Madhavan (Economics); Mr Sudipta Roy (Physics and Head of Science); Mr Damodar Agni (Laboratory Technician); Dr Sujana Veeramchaneni (Biology); Mr Rajiv Jha (Mathematics); and Mr Nigel Jackson (Music). We also have a TKN volunteer, Ms Nimisha Manji, teaching in the Music department. With such a large and professional group of faculty staff we are well positioned to ensure that the teaching and learning is of an excellent standard.

Just as the human resources of the academy continue to develop so too have our physical resources and facilities. We now have use of the Art-Music Block and both floors of the Science block. Students are using the squash courts, swimming pool and an outside basketball court as well as a volleyball court. 'The Commons' student life area is close to being finished and handed over as is the hockey field.

Our students continue to engage in a wide range of cultural and sporting ie extracurricular experiences and field trips. Examples include: a Heritage visit to the Qutb Shahi Tombs and Golconda Fort; a Grade 7 trip to the Zoological gardens; treks to Narasapur forest and to Shamirpet; girls Football and Boys





Cricket matches with Sreenidhi High School; a Boys Football tournament at Oakridge HS; hosting Indus for a boys football match here at the academy; a Boys Basketball tournament at Oakridge; cricket at the Aga Khan Hostel; A 3km charity run in Hyderabad for Gandhi Jayanti; participation in the 3 day Oakridge Model United Nations conference; a Community & Service visit to Kongura Kala village; and on the University-careers front a visiting exhibition at our academy by various Canadian Universities, a visit from the University of Waterloo (Canada) and a University tour guided by Ms Pragati.

Education is not just about the academic side, so these community and action experiences are vital in supporting the academy's holistic programme and I look forward to many more exciting future projects.



From the DP Coordinator

We have welcomed 35 Grade 11 students into DP1 this academic year. As a result of subject expansions, geography has been introduced. Grade 11 students have settled in fairly quickly and all have now finalised their subject choices.

Grade 12 students have finalised their Extended Essay and ToK essay topics. They are also busy with all their internal assessments and the university application process. There has been presentation from Canadian and US universities.

Students have participated in various CAS activities eg Trekking, MUN etc. The Model United Nations (MUN) is a very popular and highly regarded exercise throughout the world and this year DP students and a few MYP students have Harvard MUN, and CBIT MUN. A few students have also worked as directors for MUN conferences, this is highly regarded and in the educational community.

Assessments in various forms such as class tests, essays, presentations are happening regularly. Examinations are another form of assessment and we have scheduled midyear exams for Grade 11 students in December and Mock examinations for Grade 12 in January. These examinations are practice exams for the actual IB examinations which will come in May, and they are important for at least two reasons: obviously they alert students and teachers to deficiencies in understanding and allow practice performances; but also their results can sometimes be used by universities for generating 'placement offers', usually conditional upon a similar or better performance in the actual May examinations that current students will take in 2014. In summary we have had a busy term one and we are all (especially the students!) working hard toward achieving these short-term and medium-term targets that will enable us to realise our long term goals.



From the MYP Coordinator

The driving force behind the Middle Years Programme is the deep rooted IB philosophy of holistic education. We, at the Aga Khan Academy Hyderabad, are seeing the changes in our young MYP students. The year began with an elaborately planned induction programme. Our present Grade 10 students significantly contributed in helping the students to reflect on various aspects of the MYP Fundamental concepts – Holistic Education, Intercultural Awareness and Communication.

The Grade 10 students also organised the Teachers' Day Assembly on the Grade 10 of September to pay their respect to the teachers and commemorate the anniversary of the great philosopher and visionary, our former President, Dr Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan. The assembly included a variety of programmes such as the contribution of Dr Radhakrishnan, a quiz, a dance and singing for the teachers.

The Academy's emphasis on the promotion of Hindi as the official language of India found expression in the special assembly on 'Hindi Diwas' observed on September 14th. The historic significance of this date is the adoption of Hindi as the official language by the Constituent Assembly on September 14, 1949.

The AKA Strands' emphasis is on ethics and pluralism as essential guiding principles for leadership. The DP History students and the MYP students conducted a special assembly for Gandhi Jayanti. The focus of the assembly was on the influence and relevance of Gandhian Principles in the modern world. Students spoke on the influence that Gandhi had on leaders eg Martin Luther King JR and the American Civil Rights Movement, Lech Walesa of Solidarity Movement in Poland and Vaclav Havel of the Vevet Revolution in the former Czechoslovakia. The MYP students also sang Rabindranath Tagore's song 'Ekla Chalo Re'. There was a jugalbandi in tabla followed by a skit on Gandhi.



Community and Service is one of the principal focuses of the MYP context of learning and the Areas of Interaction. Our Grades 8 and 9 students conducted two programmes in relation to Community and Service. The Science Department took the MYP3 Students to the village of Kongara Kalan, approximately 8 kilometres from the Academy campus for an awareness rally and campaign. The main themes of the campaign included saving energy with vigilant use of electricity and Anti-Smoking and anti-alcoholism. Twenty students of our school and another twenty from the government school participated in this campaign which started from the government primary school of Kongara. There was a positive response from the students and teachers of both AKAH and the local school. The village panchayat was also interested in further collaboration in spreading awareness. The Humanities Department undertook a project on the grade 9 unit on deforestation. Their exploration of concerns related to deforestation was further taken forward by students planting saplings in the school premises and covenanting to take care of it. As part of their unit on History, Art and Religion, Grade 8 students participated in a heritage walk from Charminar to Chowmahalla Palace. The service aspect of this walk was garbage collecting and cleaning up of the heritage sites.

Swimming lessons to commence in MYP Physed periods from October 22nd.

Parents are advised that swimming will commence from October for Grades 7-10. Students need to bring their swim costume and towel on the appropriate rostered day. Swimming caps are a must for all students except boys with very short hair, because medium to long length hair damages the filtration system. Swimming goggles are recommended. If a student has an infectious condition (be it respiratory, gastro-enteric, skin infection or conjunctivitis etc.) we would request that parents (of day students) send a note to the PE teacher stating that they will not be swimming. The ability to swim is an important life skill and also lots of fun and I know that the students are greatly looking forward to this new activity.





Girls and Boys sessions will run on alternate weeks, commencing with the girls for October 22-25. The roster is shown below.

Week 1 (girls only). Week 2 (Oct 29) boys only

Day	Lesson	Grade	Boys/Girls
Tuesday	7-8	MYP 3	Girls
Wednesday	7-8	MYP 4	Girls
Thursday	4-5	MYP 2	Girls
Friday	7-8	MYP 5	Girls





ENGLISH

In August this year four new teachers - Dr Jill Bamforth, Mr Roger Bamforth, Mr Sudeep Gosh, and Ms Ujjwala Bhatt - joined the English department. They bring considerable experience of the IB Diploma and IB Middle Years Programmes to the Senior Academy. These new teachers have been welcomed by the existing members of the English Department - Ms Silvia Fernandes and Ms Gesu Sharma.

In this first half term Middle Years Programme students have all studied a literary text and begun to compile a portfolio of written assignments. The existing reading program has been widened with the objective of enhancing the reading skills and habits of the students. Achievement certificates will be awarded to students who read more than five books across multiple literary genres as well as to those with outstanding reading records.

Next term, in addition to a special writing focus in the Middle Years Programme, students will be issued with a new literary text and will study a contemporary issue.

In the Diploma Programme, grade 11 and 12 Language and Literature students are preparing for their individual oral commentaries, further oral activities and written tasks. The grade 11 Literature class is currently reading a play, Fugard's *Master Harold and the Boys*. Their oral presentations at the end of the year will be based on this text, along with Adiga's *White Tiger* and Dalrymple's *City of Djinnns*. Meanwhile, the grade 12 class is preparing for their individual oral commentaries, based on *Macbeth*, *Mistry* and the poetry of Wilfred Owen, Sylvia Plath and John Keats.

The SA students have been responsive to the courses, and a pleasure to teach. We very much look forward to their progress in the next term.

FRENCH

Bonjour and Bienvenue to the smallest but the most travelled department of the Academy.

The French department of the Aga Khan Academy travels everyday through newspaper articles on current affairs, songs, visual snippets from French speaking countries. The students are exposed to different life patterns, socio-cultural aspects of life and a different way of thinking. They are encouraged to find similarities between various cultures, give their opinions by comparing and contrasting the same with their own cultures. This class aims to have students speak and write more than the teacher. The journey has begun!

HINDI

The AKAH has completed yet another academic term. Every single day and class has been full of excitement and new challenges. Languages play an integral role in assisting exploration and nourishment of personal development and hence within the Hindi Department, multiple methodologies were employed to assist in exploring the richness of Hindi literature and language. Ideas and differing perceptions were discussed across MYP and DP classes. Key highlights include an MYP-3 K presentation on bullying, an MYP-5 presentation on mythological history behind Onam and its cultural significance alongside educative skits presented by students in commemoration of Hindi Day. Some key works within the department this term include a written piece on unity underlying subtle variations in the native languages across geography. Additionally, Dr Karuna Arya contributed a poem titled 'Aam Baat Hai' painting a picture of the day to day routine and life of day scholars and boarders. The term has ended with formative assessments within MYP classes and internal assessments within the IB DP. We look forward to the new term following Vijaydashami.







HUMANITIES

On Saturday, 28th September, Year 8 students went with four teachers and three DP1 students who are members of the photography club, to participate in a Heritage Walk. The walk started at the Charminar where our guide explained some of the architectural features of the Charminar and how it was built.

From there we walked through the Laad Bazaar. We were walking in the early morning to avoid crowds, and we had two members of the Tourist Police escorting us for safety.

We then visited the Mehboob Chowk where we collected rubbish in the small garden that surrounds the clock tower, and looked out at the beautiful Mehboob Chowk mosque with its many shops below.

Moving from the clock tower, we passed the Mehboob Chowk market which sells mostly chickens and exotic birds. It was distressing to see the cruel conditions in which the birds and other animals were kept.





From there we visited Iqbalud Daullah Devdi, and then went on to the Baradari Nawab Khursheed Jah Bahadur. It was sad to see these once grand palaces being gradually being destroyed by vandalism and neglect. We tried to help by clearing lots of rubbish from the steps to the Baradari palace, much to the astonishment of locals who were playing cricket in the grounds.

Finally we walked to Chowmahalla Palace, which was in a better state of repair than the other buildings we had seen, and was set in beautiful gardens. It was a lovely place to complete our walk and enjoy a delicious breakfast.

We all enjoyed the walk very much and learnt a lot about the history and architecture of Hyderabad. By walking between the sites, we were able to see more sights and get a much better feel for the old city than if we had been driven to each place.

MATHEMATICS

Mathematics this term has taken students into exploring the place of the subject within our daily lives. Grade 7 have been investigating art and architecture and the role of mathematics in this area with hands on approach including the creation of models and polyhedrons practically. Grade 8 have spent time looking into India's largest sporting event - the IPL. Considering the economical side of running this event and the costs/benefits and the overall impact this has on the country and its economy.

Grade 9 have recently begun exploring alpine slopes and the varying ski sites around the world - rating these by their difficulty as analysed using mathematical tools developed in class. This will lead onto an in-depth analysis of gradients and equations of lines for later in the year. The grade 10 classes have had an opportunity to develop their investigative skills with open ended tasks and even an exposure to the challenging topic of proof.



Some of our strongest mathematicians from across the Senior School will be representing the Academy in a Regional Mathematics Olympiad next term. This will be the first competition that the Academy's mathematicians have entered and will expose our students to problems distinctly designed to test out-of-the-box thinking.

MUSIC

This term, the Music Department at the Aga Khan Academy, Hyderabad has introduced new topics on Music alongside the usual Tabla lessons. Students have recognized the difference from previous terms as they set about exploring new avenues including that of composing music, playing various syllables, phrases and *Taal* on Tabla as well as singing and playing songs on Keyboard. They have also been encouraged to share their views on creating music and in the process have become more confident. They have jotted down their learning (on unit and on Tabla) and compositional ideas in their *Arts Process Journals*.

MYP 2 has developed their understanding about a number of '*elements of music*'. They have worked in groups and have applied their knowledge on elements in their compositions. They have used different instruments to compose music.

MYP 3 has worked on a statement of inquiry on '*across music cultures, melodies share similarities in their construction and function*'. They have been acquainted with Arabic music scale and an Indian raga (*Raag 'Bhairav'*) similar to the aforementioned scale. They have also become familiar with Chinese pentatonic scale and an Indian pentatonic raga named '*Bhupali*'. They have applied their learning through various compositions. Some students have combined Arabic music scale with Indian raga '*Bhairav*'. Others have composed music on Chinese pentatonic scale and Raga '*Bhupali*'. Thus they have developed their understanding about the statement of inquiry.

MYP 4 and 5 have worked on a statement of inquiry on *'the arts provide a platform for protest and social mobilization'*. They have been introduced to various freedom songs, anti-war songs, Band Aid, anthems, marches, etc. They have also developed their understanding of applying different elements in their compositions to increase effectiveness. In the end, they many groups composed a piece of music on a social issue of their choice while a few groups performed a role play.

In Tabla (instrumental) lessons, new students have learnt core skills and practiced the basic syllables and phrases. Students already familiar with the instrument have revised their prior knowledge on various syllables, phrases and Teentaal (basic Indian rhythm). They are now learning new syllables and phrases.

SCIENCE

The Department began for the new session 2013-2014 with several new staff, Physics-Mr. Sudipta Roy, Biology-Sujana Veeramachaneni and Chief Lab Technician-Mr. Damodar Agni.

The Department also received two new labs, SAL-1 and SAL-2. The department also received four LED's to use for displaying and presenting student works and to assist with experiments. The planning for Science Curriculum and the Unit Plan for first quarter was completed before the classes began.

Additionally, we have completed over forty labs in the last month and a half. We believe that Science is better learnt and understood through hands-on activity. We will also be hosting a Science Fair.





We are encouraging students to think critically and look for ways in which Science can help improve our society. A major highlight this term was the community service based activity.

In the next quarter we intend to conduct open quiz competitions.

MYP Visit to Kongara Kalan Village, RR District, Hyderabad

MYP3 Students visited the village of Kongara Kalan, approximately 8 kilometers from the Academy campus, for an awareness rally and campaign. The main themes of the campaign included efficient energy consumption and vigilant use of electricity, alongside an anti-smoking and anti-alcoholism campaign. The primary objective of this campaign was to assess the students' communication skills while a second objective was to raise self-awareness and inculcate a sense of social responsibility. The AoI addressed was *Environment* and the AK Strand was *Governance & Civil Society*.



In total 40 students, 20 Students from the AKA and another 20 from the government school, participated in this campaign. Starting at the government primary school of Kongara, students walked along the streets of the village distributing awareness pamphlets that they had designed, while shouting out the slogans in Telugu. Banners and pluck cards describing the themes were displayed through the entire walk. After returning to the government school, the Academy students presented two skits on the two themes. They emphasized individual responsibility to save energy and reduce substance abuse. Following this, a drawing competition was conducted by the Academy students for the grades 4 and 5 of that school and goodies were distributed. Students and teachers from both the educational organizations participated enthusiastically. It was interesting to see the village panchayat show equal interest in collaborating with the Academy for promoting awareness of key issues in their village. We hope to continue to work together so that both the communities grow simultaneously.

SPORTS

On the sports front, the AKAH Football team won the match against Indus International School with a score of 3-0 while losing in the first round of the interschool football tournament organized by Oakridge International School. The Academy's Basketball team participated in an interschool Basketball tournament organized by Oakridge International School winning the first round against Meridian School, Madhapur and losing in the second round against Oakridge International School. This term saw the revival of our Senior Boys football team, which included the addition of new players having recently joined the school. A friendly match against Indus International School hosted on the Aga Khan Academy campus saw our boys walk away with a 3-0 victory. They now prepare for this season's competitive tournaments.



Regular PE classes for grades 7-10 have focused on skills and strategy for football. Students have shown a significant improvement in their endurance and skills including that of passing, shooting, taking control of the ball as well as general utilization of the chest, thigh and foot. Students are able to play the full version of the game with knowledge of the rules.

The Senior Boys Cricket team has played its first ever matches this year, with an exhibition game against the Aga Khan Hostel, and a friendly match away with Srineedhi International School. The latter resulted in a highly charged game in which Aga Khan Academy won by 31 runs.

The Academy has also proudly developed its Senior Girls Football team, who played their inaugural match at Srineedhi International School. The tightly played game ended 2-1 with the Aga Khan Academy victors. The team now looks forward to competing against other teams in the Hyderabad area over the coming season.

On the residential sports front, swimming and squash have been introduced to students and staff this term.

VISUAL ARTS

Recently, His Highness the Aga Khan visited the Academy to celebrate its inauguration. The SA art block was abuzz with the challenge of putting up a fantastic display. Many hours of work by art students went into preparing for the event. The students went about creating big sculptures of clay and M seal that were appreciated by one and all. The collaborative art works were created from waste and helped educate people about how waste, usually deemed environmentally harmful, and could be turned into beautiful works of art.



The art works showcased represented works of students in grades 7-12. The students provided commentary on their artworks and art mediums in an effort to increase awareness and appreciation of art as a creative and expressive medium that can be studied in depth as a subject.

To become truly immortal, a work of art must escape all human limits: logic and common sense will only interfere. But once these barriers are broken, it will enter the realms of childhood visions and dreams.

- Giorgio de Chirico

It is this very spirit articulated by de Chirico that enabled our students to excel and more so, enthrall all those who saw their artworks during the Academy's inauguration.



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