



October 2024

## ACS (INTERNATIONAL) NEWSLETTER

## IN THIS ISSUE

### Dear Students, Parents and Friends,

I hope that this newsletter finds our community well. This week our students finished their internal exams, so I am sure that they are happy and relieved. Of course, our Year 4 and 6 students continue on with their IGCSE and IBDP exams, and so have to wait a couple of weeks more until they can relax. I would like to thank the PSP and all parents who have helped to support our students over this exam period, particularly those who helped and contributed to the Study Nights on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Thank you very much to all parents who responded to the Mobile Phone Policy survey. In total there were 629 responses, which represents about two thirds of our parents. Responses were received from across all year levels in the school with responses showed a wide range of views phones in school, including those advocating for a total ban and those who believe that they are a necessary tool for modern education and life.

The data highlights that 99% of students have their own phone, with 98% bringing it to school daily. Most parents allow this for safety and communication purposes, along with the phone being used for other services such as ordering and paying for goods. The survey revealed mixed opinions on phone use during school hours, with 68% believing that phones are necessary at school, 18% indicating that they are not necessary but are useful, and 14% considering phones totally unnecessary at school.

In relation to the school's current approach and policy towards phone use, 67% were supportive of the current approach, 24% wanted stricter controls and 9% wanted a more relaxed approach. There were a number of respondents who commented that stricter controls while at school would be beneficial in order to minimise distractions and foster social interaction. Some parents raised concerns in relation to phone addiction. 81% of respondents supported confiscation for misuse of phones during school for a period of time up to the end of the day.

The SLT has discussed the findings with the Heads of Faculty and Heads of Houses, and read the latest research on the subject. The summary of these discussions is that while mobile phones have valid and practical benefits, in 2025 the school will tighten up its current policy, particularly during lessons. More details of the changes to policy will be released for the commencement of the 2025 academic year.

We look forward to the end of year camps for the Junior and Middle Division over the coming weeks, which give our students an opportunity to be active, have fun and socialise with their peers at the end of a long year. Please keep these camps in your prayers, along with our Year 4 and 6 exam students.

**Gavin Kinch**  
Principal

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## Achievements at SJBO

ACS (International) proudly congratulates the achievements of the students at the 2024 Singapore Junior Biology Olympiad (SJBO), a national competition which provides upper secondary students with a platform to further challenge their biology skills, building on their strong foundational knowledge, as reflected in Singapore's PISA results. The SJBO also offers early exposure to the International Biology Olympiad, where Singapore has consistently ranked in the top three over the past six years. SJBO emphasises critical thinking in biology, aiming to cultivate a holistic passion for learning and applying biology in students' lives.

Our students excelled across various categories, and are listed below.

### **Silver**

Cheng Tin Wing (4 TTK)  
Joann Maria Jacob (4 TCT)  
Maximus Hartanto (4 GHK)

### **Bronze**

Clayton Oliver Wibowo (3 GHK)  
Jin Zixuan (4 TTK)  
Lin Ziting (4 CKS)  
Rin Mayasaka (4 GHK)  
Sung Geonwoo (4 LSG)  
Tian Ruomeng (4 GHK)  
Wu Youchen (4 TCT)

### **Honourable Mention**

Chung Dayon (4 TTK)  
Teo Kai Xuan Hector (4 TTK)

Congratulations to all our participants for their hard work, dedication and achievements!

## Reflection for the John Locke Essay Competition

I am deeply grateful to receive the Commendation award in the John Locke Essay Competition. This experience has been both rewarding and transformative, as I achieved the result I hoped for while expanding my understanding of various human knowledge. It was also my first time participating in a global essay competition in my 10 years as a student, and the outcome was a delightful surprise.

Preparing for the competition was particularly intense and challenging, especially as I was a middle division student competing in the senior group. The John Locke Essay Competition addresses real-world economic problems through the lens of economic theory, requiring participants to have a deep understanding of economics and the ability to link concepts to current events.

As an IGCSE student, I initially struggled due to my limited economics background and lack of essay competition experience. But I pushed myself to put in my best effort. I believed it was a valuable opportunity to challenge myself and prepare for the rigorous IB course that lies ahead. Pushing beyond my comfort zone has always been important to me as it helps unlock my potential. Although my examination schedule prevented me from attending the gala dinner in London, I don't see it as a loss. For me, the true reward lies in the lessons learned and the growth experienced throughout the journey.

*Song Yuhan (4 LSG)*



## Viola Isn't Like Us

### – A Film Experience

The film titled “Viola isn't like us” directed and written by June Cheong, revolves around the narrative of the main character, 15-year-old Viola, who is navigating change throughout her new school life. The film discusses relatable topics such as bullying, friendship and self-acceptance as a teen girl. Two prominent characters that contribute to Viola's experience include Jenny and Eve, who come from privileged and wealthy backgrounds. They are individuals who show aggression against Viola for being less privileged from their perspective.

Between the three main characters, I played the role of Eve, a 15-year-old girl who, with her best friend Jenny, gets fulfilment when gossiping and making fun of Viola. Throughout the film, I aspired to create a deeper character for Eve as I did not want her to just be a cliché mean girl who makes other's lives miserable because that's just what she does.

When I first got the script, I noticed the chemistry between Eve, Jenny and Viola had drastic emotional changes, highs, and lows throughout the film. Even during auditions, reading out Eve's script just felt like I had such a clear idea of a character she could have potential to be portrayed as. I spoke to the director, an incredibly talented individual, during rehearsals once. We spoke about type of girl I wanted Eve to be, and I was very clear on my aspirations of her. Eve was portrayed as a mean girl, but morally people of any character have backstories, reasons that not necessarily have to be justifications for their actions but explanations. The vulnerability in Eve struck when she accepted the help of someone she had acted negatively to since the beginning. Having harsh words thrown at you and a gossip-infused atmosphere is almost inevitable especially as a young girl.

Overall, I strove to create an empowering character for all girls and women out there despite Eve's character summary of a mean girl. Eve was someone I knew had to be mean but being downright nasty was too far from realistic. This then led me to realising Eve's lines and actions didn't have to stem from being a horrible person, she grew up privileged and maybe never had reminders to be humble or understand how to react when someone's physically different from herself. She was not a bad person, just young and immature. I also see this as a reminder not to separate oneself from others because of physical or personal differences, but to be open minded about others and what they go through. This film created a space for myself and the incredible friends and relations I made during it to strive and make the directors storyboard come to life.

*Tham Seung Kei Cadence (2 LSG)*



## TCT House Charity Event

Tan Chin Tuan (TCT) House worked with Methodist Welfare Services (MWS) on several charity events this year. Some of the students shared their experiences. This year, TCT House worked with MWS to improve the lives of the elderly at their care centre. Through regular Zoom meetings and events, we bonded between the students and elderly residents, developing friendship and companionship. Students learnt to converse in another language and also built relationships. These many interactive events held by TCT led to our successful visit with the old folks to Bird Paradise.

On 17 August, TCT students, Year 5 leaders together with Ms Cheryl Seah, Ms Celina Yang and Ms Eleanor Dent went to Bird Paradise to meet and spend time with the elderly from the MWS old folks home. We saw many different species of birds including our favourite penguins that stayed at the cove, the flamingos at the waterfall and also watched a show at on Wings and Wings of the World, which was presented at the park's Sky Amphitheatre. During our trip to the Bird Paradise, some of our conversation topics included talking about the scenery and what the elderly thought about it, their hobbies and what they enjoy doing, and many more. Although we had some difficulties with language barriers, we communicated well with one another, and everyone had an enjoyable day.

This experience has allowed us to realise the importance of giving back to the community, and that even the smallest things such as simple conversations can make someone's day. It enabled us to realise that we should all strive to do good in hopes of making others even the slightest bit happier.

*Chloe Tay (6 TCT)*

*Sumiyo Ishikai (5 TCT)*



# Debate & Public Speaking CCA

At the Dialogic Academy Debate Championship 2024 held on 10 and 11 August, our team of Jayden Budiman (4 SVM), Nishya Subash Prabu (4 LSG), Jacob Budiman (3 SVM), and Clayton Wibowo (3 GHK) emerged as champions. Jayden's exceptional performance earned him the title of Overall Best Speaker, while Clayton secured the 4<sup>th</sup> Best Speaker position.



**DIALOGIC ACADEMY**

## Certificate of Achievement

Proudly presented to

**Clayton Wibowo**  
(Team: ACS11)

For finishing as the first placed team and ranking as the fourth best speaker at the Dialogic Academy Debate Championships 2024

  
Seah Pei Song  
Founder, Dialogic Academy

10 - 11 August 2024  
Date

**DIALOGIC ACADEMY**

## Certificate of Achievement

Proudly presented to

**Jacob Budiman**  
(Team: ACS11)

For finishing as the first placed team at the Dialogic Academy Debate Championships 2024.

  
Seah Pei Song  
Founder, Dialogic Academy

10 - 11 August 2024  
Date

**DIALOGIC ACADEMY**

## Certificate of Achievement

Proudly presented to

**Jayden Christian Budiman**  
(Team: ACS11)

For finishing as the first placed team and ranking as the Overall Best Speaker at the Dialogic Academy Debate Championship 2024.

  
Seah Pei Song  
Founder, Dialogic Academy

10 - 11 August 2024  
Date

**DIALOGIC ACADEMY**

## Certificate of Achievement

Proudly presented to

**Siya Ketan Khair**  
(Team: ACS11)

For finishing as the first placed team at the Dialogic Academy Debate Championships 2024.

  
Seah Pei Song  
Founder, Dialogic Academy

10 - 11 August 2024  
Date

**DIALOGIC ACADEMY**

## Certificate of Achievement

Proudly presented to

**Nishya Subash Prabu**  
(Team: ACS11)

For finishing as the first placed team at the Dialogic Academy Debate Championships 2024.

  
Seah Pei Song  
Founder, Dialogic Academy

10 - 11 August 2024  
Date

## HIGHER EDUCATION NEWS

In this month's newsletter, the Higher Education & Careers Department wanted to share key takeaways from a few recent university sessions the counsellors attended.

**Savannah College of Art and Design, US (SCAD)** offers a wide range of creative degrees, from UI/UX to animation and content creation. The SCAD campus is extensive, even featuring its own horse stables for students pursuing equestrian studies

**Imperial College, St. Andrews, and University of Cambridge** highlighted the importance of independent thought—no parroting or herd mentality. Admissions teams look for students who can be intellectually vulnerable, disrupt the norm, and demonstrate a deep commitment to building academic knowledge. At Cambridge, admissions tests assess a student's academic ability and potential to specialise in their degree within a short 3-4 year timeframe. Medicine applicants should be ready for situational questions like how to make a toaster more energy efficient if it uses so much energy. Students have to answer such questions verbally.

During Oxbridge interviews, students should expect to engage in discussions with two or three interviewers, apply existing knowledge to new problems, and be ready to discuss the vocational aspects of their course. These interviews test not just academic ability, but also a student's passion and single-mindedness for their chosen field.

**University of Calgary** is known for its focus on innovation and offers a variety of undergraduate and graduate programs across disciplines such as engineering, health sciences, and business. Calgary's vibrant campus life and its location near the Rocky Mountains provide students with a unique balance of academics and outdoor experiences. For students interested in studying in Canada, Calgary is a great option, combining academic excellence with an active lifestyle.

From **NTU**, the introduction of the ASEAN Fees Scheme was announced, offering greater financial support for regional students. Over 50% of admissions were made through the Aptitude-Based Admission route, recognizing talent beyond just grades.

Finally, discussions with **US universities such as Brown, Penn, and Columbia** emphasised the importance of holistic admissions. Schools are looking for more than just high grades—they seek students who reflect on their experiences, contribute to their communities, and align with the school's values. Each candidate's context matters more than any fixed formula, and holistic admissions build a balanced class.

At **NUS**, the Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Science degrees cater to different strengths and interests. Both programmes encourage students to play to their curiosity, with the option to learn another language. Pharmacy graduates are trained as clinicians with a focus on patient care, while Pharmaceutical Science graduates are more research-driven, becoming scientists. Pharmacists have strong career prospects in pharma, biopharma, and health regulatory roles, and some even pursue Medicine at Duke-NUS. In Singapore, there are currently more job openings than pharmacists, highlighting the growing need for more professionals in this field. Both Medicine and Pharmacy are clinical careers, but they differ in focus. Pharmacists are drug experts, with deeper knowledge in this area, making it a good fit for those with a strong interest in science. Medicine, being broader and diagnostic in nature, is more suitable for those interested in patient care and examination. Pharmacists are not involved in patient examination but play a crucial role in drug expertise and healthcare management.



**PSP NEWS**

## Year 6 Casual Coffee Meet

We cannot let the year 2024 end without a coffee meet for our Year 6 graduating parents! Held on 1 October 2024 at Baker & Cook Chip Bee Gardens, we looked back at the good times we had in school. Our parents bonded over Parent School Partners (PSP) workshops arranged throughout the years. We especially remembered chocolate making at Mr Bucket at Dempsey and Zumba sessions by PSP parent Erica Shen.

We will miss our ACS (International) community dearly, and recount how our teens had the best time in school! They found a good group of friends and enjoyed school events such as ACS Got Talent, International Day, Teachers' Day, Leavers' Week and many more. As one parent said, her teen used to come home from school excitedly sharing stories about special events. It is more than just studying at ACS (International). We found a school with a heart, a place for nurturing lasting friendships, sharing laughter and strengthening one another through consistent effort, positive support, and encouragement! Special thanks to our principal, Mr Gavin Kinch and Vice Principal Senior Division, Mrs Tan Siew Hoon, for taking the time to chat and encouraging our Year 6 mothers to keep going and stay positive for the next chapter of our teens journey!

*Yours truly,  
Year 6 Mums*



## Year 6 Graduation Rehearsal

As our children walk confidently on stage to receive their End-Of-the-Year Reports and shake hands with our beaming Principal, who will offer messages of congratulations and well done, we realise how far our children have come. From entering ACS (International) fresh out of Primary 6, quiet but with curious sparks in their eyes and school bags disproportionately bigger to their small body frames, they have grown not only physically but also emotionally and mentally. Our hearts burst with pride and quiet joy seeing them stand confident, relaxed in their surroundings, happy in the company of classmates, friends, and teachers. It is another sign that we made the right choice in making ACS (International) our children's second home.

During the Year 6 Graduation Rehearsal on 2 October, it was a privilege to see our children carefully arrange their graduation caps on their meticulously styled hair, don their gowns and pose confidently for their individual graduation photos. Close friendships were evident in the way they helped and waited for each other to take some fun photos!

To our Year 6 graduates, thank you for relentlessly pursuing your aspirations! Keep dreaming and doing your best! We are all rooting for you!

*Year 6 Mums*

### Quotes & Wishes from ACS (International) Parents

My wish for you is to continue to nurture what you like and are good at, to persevere when hard times come, and to remember your family and friends always support you!

*Parent Evelyn Chan*

Last day of school today for the Year 6's. Such a bittersweet moment! Glad to be done with school but sad to leave their friends. Six years have flown by and they've all grown so much. I'm happy that my daughter has made some very good friends in these 6 years, and it's really nice to see that she enjoyed her time in this school. Six years of wonderful memories that I'm sure she will never forget.

*Parent Grace Goh*

We see your hard work and determination. We are so proud of you! Just keep going and know that we all wish the best for you. We'll keep striving and celebrating! Enjoy life's sweet moments and continue to build good memories.

*Parent Cherry B Siow*





| October        | Event                           |
|----------------|---------------------------------|
| 28 Oct – 1 Nov | THIMUN                          |
| 29             | Year 4 and 6 Study Night        |
| 29 & 30        | Year 5 Language B Paper 1 and 2 |
| 31             | Deepavali                       |
| November       | Event                           |
| 1              | Year 3 IG Geography Trip        |
| 5 – 8 Nov      | EOY Camps                       |
| 5              | Year 4 and 6 Study Night        |
| 7              | Year 4 and 6 Study Night        |
| 8              | Year 5 Special Programme        |
| 12             | Year 6 Graduation               |
| 14             | Speech Day                      |
| 18 – 31 Dec    | School Holidays                 |



ACS (International)  
Presents

CLASS OF

# 2024

## GRADUATION CEREMONY

INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE DIPLOMA PROGRAMME

**12 NOV 2024**  
TUESDAY

**4:30 PM**  
SEATED BY 4:15PM

**UNIVERSITY CULTURAL CENTRE, HO BEE AUDITORIUM,  
NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SINGAPORE**

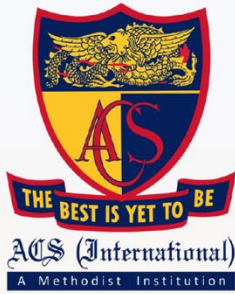
GUEST OF HONOUR

**DILHAN PILLAY SANDRASEGARA**

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR & CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, TEMASEK HOLDINGS (PRIVATE) LIMITED



RSVP by scanning the QR code or clicking on this [link](#) by 4 November 2024.  
For enquiry, please contact Ms Jessie Yeung: [jessie.yeung@acsinternational.edu.sg](mailto:jessie.yeung@acsinternational.edu.sg)



**ACS (International)** Singapore is a distinctive international secondary school open to all Singaporeans & other nationalities, offering an all-round English-based education for students aged 12 to 18 years leading to the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) and the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP).

#### Senior Leadership Team



*Mr Gavin Kinch*  
**Principal**



*Mrs Tan Stew Hoon*  
**Vice-Principal**



*Mr Christopher Hayward*  
**Vice-Principal**



*Dr Kristopher Achter*  
**Vice-Principal**



# ACS (International) Admissions Seminars for 2025

## Post PSLE IGCSE Seminars

|                  |      |
|------------------|------|
| 20 November 2024 | 4pm  |
| 21 November 2024 | 10am |
|                  | 2pm  |
| 22 November 2024 | 10am |
|                  | 2pm  |

RSVP [admissions@acsinternational.edu.sg](mailto:admissions@acsinternational.edu.sg)

Seminars will be held on Campus with school tours where possible.

**Attendance by reservations only**

Venue: Oldham Chapel, ACS (International)  
61 Jalan Hitam Manis, Singapore 278475

For earlier appointments, please contact Joseph Ng or Serene Lim  
at +65 6472 1477 or [admissions@acsinternational.edu.sg](mailto:admissions@acsinternational.edu.sg)