



# 启发小学

## QIFA PRIMARY SCHOOL

50, WEST COAST AVENUE. SINGAPORE 128104

### Principal's Letter – Term 2, March 2016

Dear Parent/Guardian

#### ***Welcome to Term 2 at QPS***

We welcomed the children back in Term 2 with a 'facelift' to the aquariums and enhanced the façade of the water feature at our school foyer. We are also in the midst of converting a space in the school into an Art Gallery to showcase the children's masterpieces. This is part of our ongoing efforts to improve the physical tone of environment for all stakeholders.

#### **\*Every Student, an Engaged Learner**

##### ***Strategic Thrust 1 - Providing a Holistic and Value-added Education***

We ended Term 1 with a two-day-one-night Primary 6 Camp as the Primary 5 Camp last year had to be postponed due to the prolonged haze situation. However, having their camp in school instead of at the usual Labrador Campsite has its charms as the Primary 6 pupils leave the school at the end of the year with even fonder memories of their overnight stay and camp, in addition to the kaleidoscope of other experiences in school. The campfire was the highlight of the programme and the pupils were in high spirits as the different groups presented their cheers.

One key feature of the camp was to place the children from various classes into different groups. In doing so, we hoped to nudge the children to step out of their comfort zones and confront new challenges such as doing abseiling, rock wall climbing, and even making new friends.

We asked the children to reflect on their camp experiences and one of the pupils from 6 Exemplary, Sumaiya, shared that "having the camp in school made me love Qifa even more and also helped me to know the people around me better". She related in her journal that the camp helped her to overcome her fear of heights as she discovered the joy of abseiling. More importantly the various camp activities also served to reinforce school values such as resilience and integrity in our pupils as they navigated challenges and obstacles outside a conventional classroom setting.



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Sumaiya also interacted with her team mates from other classes and made new friends. It was heartening to read from her reflections that she was inspired by a particular teammate who showed a strong sense of determination and team spirit during the camp. The only 'complaint' she had about the camp was that the children were overfed ;)

The Primary 5 pupils will have their turn as they look forward to spending three days and two nights at Labrador Campsite starting from 25 April 2016.

### ***Qifa's Academic and Non-Academic Achievements***

I have some good tidings to share. Two of our pupils from 4 Exemplary: Fu Wen Qi and Png Chee Kai emerged as second and third respectively in the Global Village Children and Youths Bilingual Speech Competition. The Brownies came in **Third** in the Thinking Day International Costumes Parade recently.

Qifa was one of the Top 10 iZ Schools for the 2015 iZ HERO Challenge, and we were also shortlisted for the upcoming 2016 Cyber Wellness Student Ambassador Conference where our pupils will be manning a booth to showcase the school's CyberWellness Programme and making a presentation on the programme.

Our school was conferred the Green Schools @South West **Gold Award** for the 3<sup>rd</sup> consecutive year by the South West Community Development Council (CDC) and the National Environment Agency (NEA). This was in recognition of our environmentally-friendly initiatives. During the prize presentation this morning, I used the platform to exhort the Qifa pupils to cultivate the good habit of not littering and to play their part to keep the school environment litter-free.

Our Volleyball school team players demonstrated the school values: *resilience* and *self-discipline*, as they battled their way in the West Zone Inter-Primary Schools Volleyball Championships to emerge as **Champions** for the **Senior and Junior Boys, and Senior Girls** teams and **Runners Up** for the **Junior Girls** team. All four teams have progressed to the National Inter-Primary Schools Volleyball Championships.

In addition, a pupil from 3 Exemplary, Siddharth Jagadeesh, did the school proud as he competed in the *Singapore National Age Group Chess Championships* and emerged as the **National Champion in Chess for Under 8 Category**. This is in addition to the **National Schools Junior Chess Champion** title which he won recently.



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We wish our Table-tennis and Wushu teams well as they represent the school to compete in their respective competitions this month. Our performing arts groups will also be involved in the upcoming Singapore Youth Festival (SYF) Angklung, Choir, Dance and Guzheng competitions from end March to April 2016. While we hope that the commitment and efforts of our pupils, coaches and teachers will be affirmed through good results, we value the journey even more as our pupils develop self-discipline and gain self-confidence through the whole process of rehearsing, training and preparing for the competitions:

“It is good to have an end to journey toward; but it is the journey that matters, in the end” (*Ernest Hemingway*).

### ***Overseas Immersion Programmes***

As in previous years, our school believes in creating opportunities for experiential learning for our pupils and in the value of internationalisation in developing in our pupils the 21<sup>st</sup> century competencies of global awareness and cross-cultural skills and sensitivities. Therefore we have planned a few overseas immersion programmes for our Primary 4 and 5 pupils this year.

Primary 4 pupils will go on a two-day overseas immersion programme to Malacca in July. Highlights of the educational trip include visits to a rubber plantation, a traditional kampong house, the Baba Nyonya Heritage Museum and an organic fruits farm.

For the Primary 5 pupils, two overseas trips have been planned for the month of May. There will be an overseas trip led by HODs Mathematics and English Language to Dabu, China from 25 to 30 May 2016 for Chinese pupils to better acquaint themselves with Qifa's Hakka heritage. We hope that they will gain a deeper understanding of Chinese culture and history as well as interact with the pupils of a local school. We are also planning a trip from 25 to 29 May 2016, led by HODs Science and Character and Citizenship Education (CCE), open to all Primary 5 pupils to Bangkok, Thailand to visit our partner school there.

More details on the above overseas trips will be provided at a later date. I hope that you will encourage your child/ren in Primary 4 and/or 5 to participate in these immersion trips which seek to inculcate important lifeskills and develop social and emotional competencies such as self-discipline, self and social awareness as well as self and relationship management in the children.



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### \*Every Teacher, a Caring Educator

#### *Strategic Thrust 2 – Providing Care and Support for Staff*

Every term I write notes to my teachers, and last term I shared with them the Japanese concept of 'reason for being' termed **Ikigai**. The word **Ikigai** is usually used to indicate the source of value in one's life or the things that make one's life worthwhile. Even if a person feels that the present circumstance is challenging but if they have a goal in mind, they feel **Ikigai**.

The story goes that:

*In a small village outside of Osaka, a woman in a coma was dying. She suddenly had a feeling that she was taken up to heaven and stood before the Voice of her ancestors.*

*"Who are you?" the Voice said to her.*

*"I am the wife of the mayor," she replied. "I did not ask whose wife you are but who you are."*

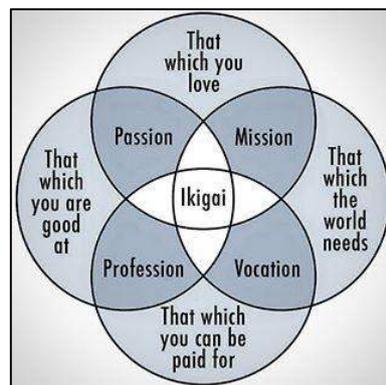
*"I am the mother of four children." "I did not ask whose mother you are, but who you are." "I am a school teacher." "I did not ask what your profession is but who you are."*

*And so it went. No matter what she replied, she did not seem to give a satisfactory answer to the question, "Who are you?"*

*"I am a Shinto." "I did not ask what your religion is but who you are."*

*"I am the one who wakes up each day to care for my family, and nurture the young minds of the children at my school."*

*With that, she passed the examination, and was sent back to earth. The next morning she woke at sunrise, feeling a deep sense of meaning and purpose. She tended to her children's lunches, and planned fun lessons for her pupils in school that day. The woman had discovered her **Ikigai**.*





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The story speaks to me as it reminded me what my *Ikigai* is, and I hope that just like the woman in the story, my teachers and I find that sense of purpose in our roles as educators. My dream this year is that the pupils and teachers in Qifa will set the school abuzz with deep and joyful learning.

I also urged the staff to reach out to the pupils under their charge, help them to learn, smile and belong; to ask their pupils tough and interesting questions and try new things. I trust that they will take ownership of their own learning in the same way that they want their pupils to own theirs.

### **\*Every Parent, a Supportive Partner**

#### ***Strategic Thrust 3 – Building Effective and Sustained Partnerships***

##### ***Home-School Partnership***

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to all the parents who turned up for our networking sessions in January this year. The turnout was encouraging, and we are heartened by your commitment to partner us in your child/ren's education. There will be a Sharing Session for the parents of Primary 6 Classes on PSLE Preparations on Saturday, 2 April from 9.30 to 11 a.m.

Our school's Semestral Assessment (SA) 1 will start at the end of April with Oral Examinations while the written papers will take place between 5 to 13<sup>th</sup> May. The examinations schedule will be distributed to your child by the 4<sup>th</sup> week of the term. We seek your help to support and monitor your child/ward's preparations for SA1. This year, we will hold two Meet-the-Parents Sessions after the mid-year and end-of-year examinations respectively. The first Meet-the-Parents Session for all levels will be held on 24 May after Semestral Assessment (SA) 1.

I would like to share this article related to parenting from Huff Post Parents Canada with you. Do check out the link below:

[http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/blair-king/child-education\\_b\\_9461976.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/blair-king/child-education_b_9461976.html)



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Our parent volunteers play a vital role in supporting the school's delivery of a holistic education for our charges in Qifa. We really appreciate your support and active involvement in many of our school programmes including KidsRead, Book-a-licious, canteen duty, serving as chaperons in our many learning journeys and so on. Your contributions have greatly enriched the learning and development of our children, and made a real difference to Qifa. I would like to encourage more of you to join us as volunteers to find out how you can also play a part to enrich the learning and development of the children.

### **\*Every School, a Good School**

#### ***Strategic Thrust 4 – Creating Quality Systems***

As highlighted in an earlier letter, the school has adopted the SNAC application for daily attendance taking. You are reminded to inform the school of your child/ward's absence by 10.30 a.m. Besides attendance taking, we will also be using the SNAC application to keep you informed of various level and school activities and events, and for you to indicate your e-consent for some of these activities and events. Please refer to the letter for more information on SNAC installation and use.

#### ***In closing***

On behalf of my staff, I would like to wish everyone good health and a fruitful term ahead.

# HAPPINESS IS



**...the laughter  
of children.**

Yours sincerely

May Wong-Tan (Mrs)  
Principal