



QIFA PRIMARY SCHOOL

50 WEST COAST AVENUE SINGAPORE 128104

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Principal's Letter – Term 2, March 2017

Dear Parent/Guardian

Welcome to Term 2 at QPS

My staff and I are happy to see the children again after the one-week break. The school has come alive with their happy chatter, and we are all set to continue our efforts to nurture the pupils in character and wisdom.

***Every Student, an Engaged Learner**

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

A Qifa Star

The school's efforts to provide our charges with a holistic and value-added education has been recognised by the Ministry of Education as our 2016 P6 pupil, Owena Eng, was shortlisted for the prestigious *Lee Kuan Yew All-Round Excellence Award for Primary Schools 2017*. Owena is currently studying at Nanyang Girls' High School.

Owena is not a typical high-performing pupil some of whom can be described as self-centred and overly competitive. She is the exact opposite. Her peers sing her praises. They recognise that she is patient and always respectful towards them. Despite her good grades, Owena makes time to listen to her classmates and render her help when required. She does not impose her views on others. Her ability to relate well with others is also why she was paired with a boy with special needs in the class. Owena made the effort to seek her partner's thoughts and opinions. Once during pair work, the boy left Owena to present alone. Not once did you hear Owena use the word "I". Instead it was always "we". Owena has the innate ability to connect with others and to win their hearts.

Despite participating in many different activities and competitions, academic and non-academic, Owena has always given nothing but her best. This stems from the fact that she is passionate about learning and appreciative of opportunities. Fearing that we were heaping too much on her, the school gave her the option to pull out of some competitions so that she could have more personal time. However, Owena chose to soldier on instead as she recognised that her withdrawal would be a blow to her team. My teachers and I are wowed by her dogged resilience.

It was also in this same debates competition that Owena's character shone through. A classmate on the team approached Owena asking to replace her. Owena empathised with her classmate and saw how fortunate she was to be constantly selected to represent the school



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therefore she agreed to speak to the teachers to choose that classmate instead of her. Owena's selfless act resulted in a very teachable moment for her friend. Her friend eventually expressed to the team that Owena was the best person for the team. All this came to light not because Owena made it known to the teachers. Instead it was the classmate in question who had revealed it in one of her journal entries on a person in class she would most like to be which allowed the teachers to see how selfless Owena is.

While many children aspire to be professionals who earn a lot, Owena's aspiration is a simple one: to be happy. She works hard not to be successful but in recognition of the fact that it is something that she cannot take for granted. She loves what she does, and spreads the love for knowledge acquisition around. She acknowledges that she is blessed to have ample opportunities to shine and is grateful for that, paying it forward to help those around her.

The school is tremendously proud of this little girl. Singapore's future looks bright with a gem like her amongst us. In the school's opinion, Owena is truly worthy of this prestigious award, and a shining example for the rest of the school population.

Qifa's Academic and Non-Academic Achievements

The school was conferred the Green Schools @South West **Gold Award** for the 4th consecutive year, and consequently we received the Sustained Achievement Award by the South West Community Development Council (CDC) and the National Environment Agency (NEA). This was in recognition of our environmentally-friendly initiatives.

We are delighted to receive the **2017 Reading Excellence Crowd Favourite Award** yesterday from the National Library Board. Thank you to all our stakeholders for your enthusiastic voting.

Chua Yee Ting from 4 Diligence received the **2017 Abbott Young Scientist Award** which is offered to deserving youths to increase their interest and knowledge in a variety of science and mathematical topics.

Bi Jiabi from 5 Exemplary came in third in the Global Village Children and Youths Bilingual Speech Competition. In the Confucius Institute-NTU Book Review Competition, Chen Siyu from 6 Diligence and Jiang Xindi from 3 Exemplary received the 2nd Prize for their respective category while Zhong Chuhan from 6 Diligence and Lee Wen Cai from 2 Benevolent came in third in their respective category.

All four of the school's Boys and Girls Junior and Senior Volleyball school teams are currently competing in the *National Inter-Primary Schools Volleyball Championships 2017*. Once again, they were victorious in the West Zone Inter-Primary Schools Volleyball Championships as the



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Senior Boys emerged as the Champions while **the Junior Boys, Senior and Junior Girls** teams took the second place.

***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 that at the *Appointment and Appreciation Ceremony for Principals* on 29 Dec 2016, the principals were reminded that "through your hands passes the future of the nation". It applies to every one of us in the education service. Under our charge are many lives we leave our marks on, every day and every year. Each one of them different, each one important. Therefore we all need to play our part to foster a school environment that is conducive to learning and growth, change and improvement, effort and excellence.

There is a place for order and discipline so that learning can take place, and the child can grow in self-discipline and integrity. At the same time, we need to ensure that there is ample room for creativity and exploration so that the child may grow in self-confidence, and acquire the values and skills for life. Striking the right balance is an important call on our judgement.

In this new academic year, it is timely to review our teaching practices and interactions with the pupils. At the Staff Retreat last November, the trainer Thaddeus Lawrence challenged us with a question: "How much are we doing in small things that seemingly do not matter?" We expend time and effort on drill and practice but we often overlook how important it is for us to help the children to develop grit, resilience and inventiveness. Thaddeus suggested that the best thing we can do as educators is to build a bridge for our charges by sharing our personal experiences and failures.

We want to be purposeful and mindful about how we signal and role-model for the children entrepreneurial dare, resilience and joy of learning. When we share with the children that we have failed or made mistakes in the past, we assure them that failing forward is an option. Only then can we develop entrepreneurial dare. When we share with them how we overcome challenges, we are teaching them that resilience and the willingness to 'stick-with-it' contribute to success in life. When we share our hobbies, passions and interests with our children, when they take baby steps in learning and we cheer them on, we ignite joy of learning in them.



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***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 February 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, 1st April from 9.00 to 11.30 a.m.

The school's Semestral Assessment (SA) 1 will start at the end of April with Oral Examinations while the written papers will take place between 2nd to 11th May. The examinations schedule will be distributed to your child by the 4th week of the term. We seek your help to support and monitor your child/ward's preparations for SA1. There will be a Meet-the-Parents Session after SA1 on the last day of school, 26th May, for the teachers to provide you with some updates on your child/ward's learning and other aspects of his/her development.

In closing

On behalf of my staff, I would like to wish everyone good health and a fruitful term ahead. Let's continue to partner each other to develop joy of learning and build resilience in the children.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely

May Wong-Tan (Mrs)
Principal