

Learning at JIS – from Cath Wan, Deputy Principal/ PYP Coordinator

Today was the final day of our Virtual IB evaluation visit. In this article, we will examine what the visit means for JIS.

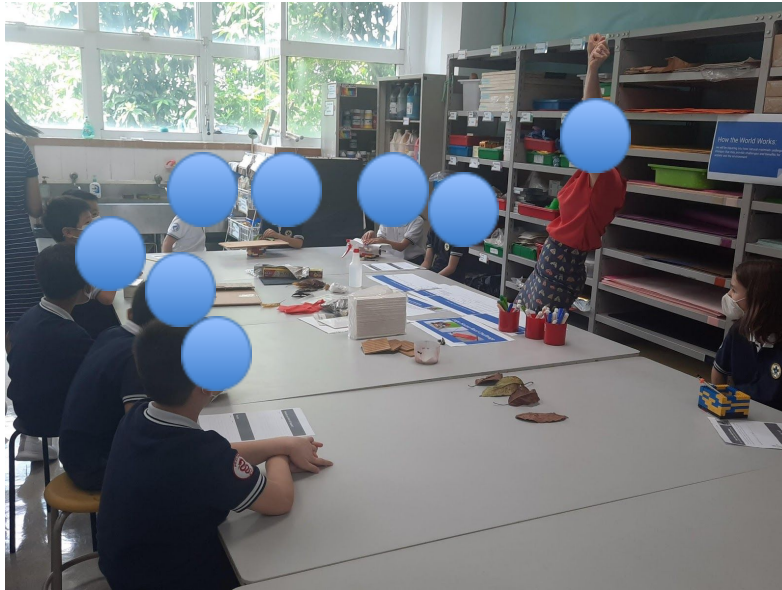
JIS may be a small school, but we are part of a worldwide organisation, the International Baccalaureate (IB). This organisation provides guidance and standards to which we must be accountable in order to maintain our IB affiliation. The IB evaluation cycle is designed to ensure that schools critically reflect on their practice on an ongoing basis.

We actually started this cycle 18 months ago, with a self-study. This rigorous process involved groups of teachers investigating our school and finding evidence in examples of teaching and learning, documentation and dialogue with our community using the IB standards as a guide. This process leads into our action plan, which ensures continual development of our school. The final study report and supporting evidence which we submitted ranged from areas such as our budgeting and resources; school policy; teacher qualifications; our curriculum; assessment and most importantly, teaching and learning.

The next part of the process involves a school visit from 2 experienced IB leaders, overseen by the IB World Schools Manager. In the current situation, this visit has happened virtually, but thanks to technology (and our recent learning curve in using it!), our visitors have 'visited' every classroom, toured the school, met with all staff and talked to students.



The discussions with the team are wonderfully challenging and energising at the same time. Just like our teachers make a point of using questioning to push students' thinking deeper and to encourage them to analyse aspects of their inquiry from multiple perspectives, so too, these professional discussions help us to dig deeper into our practice and keep it fresh, informed and energised.



Part of the IB Mission statement talks about encouraging students to be lifelong learners. An effective school is a learning community where everyone, adults and children alike, are lifelong learners. In a few months' time, we will receive an official report from the IB, highlighting areas of strength that they found (commendations) and recommendations for further development. Once we have received the report, I will share the findings with you.

On a final note, in addition to lots of thought provoking meetings and mountains of documentation, it has been a pleasure over the last few days to take the camera into all classes and look through a visitor's eyes at what and how the children are learning. The IB team, Mr. W and I have witnessed students being true inquirers - engaged in their learning, asking questions and showing that enthusiasm and eagerness to learn that is contagious in a learning community. I have to end with a quote from a P4 student, who was asked "what do you like about JIS". Her reply was: "At JIS, they teach you to think and you get to ask lots of questions." I couldn't agree more!

As always, if you have any questions about learning at JIS, feel free to contact me at XXXXX