

THE BREEZE

No. 56

St. Michael's Association

June 2020

We hope you are all safe and well!



Greetings from the foothill of Mt. Rokko, whose mountain slopes are blooming in full colours of hydrangeas, city flower of Kobe. These flowers with deep roots keep the slopes from landslides in check, which is a useful property especially during the rainy season that we entered at the beginning of June this year.

The COVID-19 pandemic has wreaked havoc around the world, but things are gradually getting back to normal in Hyogo Prefecture. SMIS students are back in class from the beginning of June while maintaining physical distancing after a hiatus of roughly three months. The School Council & Board met in the School hall in mid-June while keeping social distancing.

The annual SMA reunion which brings the latest graduates and many old timers to the School had to be cancelled because of the pandemic. It is always held on the first Saturday in March. Next year's is scheduled on 6 March.

Last year we got to celebrate Miss Hirose's 100th birthday at a restaurant in the ANA Crowne Plaza Hotel, Shin Kobe, near her retirement home with as many as thirty well-wishers. This year we could not celebrate her 101st birthday due to the lockdown of her retirement home. She was, however, in good health and spirits when Tazu Makino got to visit her to convey a happy-birthday message after a partial uplift of the lockdown in June.

The writer got to meet Miss Hirose in 1949, when he visited SMIS with his mother to see what the school was like. At that moment, her class was enjoying running

around the playground with a windmill in their hand. One of the pupils had two and offered him one and beckoned him to join the group. He gladly did so and that is how he entered Miss Hirose's Year One class. No one remains a stranger for long at SMIS. Keep safe. ~ **Satoru Hamada: President of St. Michael's Association**~

St Michael's never stops evolving!



Learning During a Pandemic

2020 has become one of those years that everyone will talk about in the future. Where were you in COVID-19? For our current enrollment of SMIS learners, I hope that they will answer “St. Michael’s International School” with a large amount of pride.

But it was St. Michael's International School with a difference, as our curious, conscientious and enthusiastic young learners spent ten weeks learning from home via our newly created Distance Learning Programme, supported by their teachers and teaching assistants, not to mention their parents who were thrown into the role of support teacher with very little notice. Such is the speed of a pandemic!

It is important to note that although there are obvious differences between the delivery of face-to-face learning compared to a distance learning programme, the curriculum content remains equivalent. Distance learning activities were carefully planned to build on children's knowledge and to further develop a range of age-appropriate skills which all offer increased benefits for the child in terms of deepening their learning. The activities were also designed to target personal skills, offering opportunities for children to apply their communication, collaboration,

creativity and critical thinking skills. Importantly, with children working from home - often in isolation - we wanted to maintain a sense of community through a range of whole school projects designed to bring everyone together with a common purpose; to create a sense of us all being connected. These included activities such as a recycling project, the Koinobori project during Golden Week, a happiness project as well as a Virtual Easter Bonnet Parade. All this, in addition to the regular daily, classroom activities you would expect of a fully accredited international school.

It has been a stressful, unpredictable time for everyone, the pandemic has impacted us all and certainly we feel sympathy for the disruption caused to every one of our families at this time. But our ability to transfer learning to a virtual platform has been a tremendous bonus and I am proud of the developing skills of our talented and industrious staff who have experienced a tremendous learning curve as they worked hard to support our young learners and their families. Out of this period of uncertainty has come a robust Distance Learning Policy that can be implemented if and when circumstances cause St. Michael's International School to close its campus in the future. Be that for just one or two days due to a passing typhoon, or a much longer period due to a more dangerous disaster or pandemic. I am proud to say that whatever the circumstances, St. Michael's International School is well prepared!

Gill Tyrer : Head of School

Congratulations to the Class of 2020!!



Maya Aspinall, Helene Bigot, Aslan Boell-Dumas, Fahmid Haider, Riku Hamano, Tsuyoshi Kaneko, Louie Kimura, Karma Kuckreja, Kei Candice Nakashima, Oskar Ong, Vivek Rohera, Hana Segi, Riko Suzuki, Rishi Weerasekera and Easton Xiao

Graduation messages from the Head Boy and Head Girl:



As we stand here today, we bid farewell to our teachers, friends and staff members of St. Michael's International School on behalf of the graduating class of 2020. This year has certainly been eventful and a reminder to all of us that life is filled with challenges.

Learning with students from different cultures has enriched me and made me understand that everyone is different and special in their own way. Honesty is a value that I hold most important. Sometimes, it may be hard to be truthful but that is when the truth is needed the most. To all our juniors, I hope this value will represent a light in your hearts to always guide you towards your dreams. Your actions define who you are; do not ever forget that.

SMIS has given us many fun memories from school trips and Year 5 camp, to supporting charitable causes. I will miss the many great friends I made and also our teachers and staff. I will miss the times spent reading quietly in the library or relaxing on the hammock under the slide. I shall also miss the crazy games we played on the playground. These everyday things are the memories which I shall hold dear.

In the future, I hope to always be the one who helps others climb back up. To be the one who will always choose kindness and honesty beyond all silver or gold. In our school song, we sing that 'we, St. Michael's children, will give a helping hand to all who need assistance, in this or any land'. I will always be a student of St. Michael's and will always give a helping hand to those in need.

Today is the last day I wear this school uniform, but I will carry the values of St. Michael's with me every day. We shall meet again someday and, until then, I hope everyone stays healthy, is positive and overcomes any challenges we may face. Thank you.

~Head Boy, Oskar Ong~

I remember when I first came to this school. Being 3 years old, all alone, not knowing what to say or do, I was scared and worried. But St. Michael's was so warm and welcoming, I soon fit in, and became fluent in English in a couple of months. St. Michael's is like a second family to me. Some of the teachers have known me for

almost all of my life, and knowing that I can trust my teachers makes me feel glad and thankful.

This year, because of the coronavirus pandemic, some events were cancelled and our school building was closed. But Distance Learning was how we handled it. This was something I had never done before and I imagine that it was something new to many of our teachers too! Thankfully, both students and teachers handled it pretty well. The whole situation made me understand how St. Michael's has been such a big part of my life, and that having good friends and teachers is a very lucky thing.



Our school has taught us to demonstrate the seven values through all of our lives. It's also taught us many other things from how to make chocolate to how to write a balanced argument. We are very lucky and thankful to be here with our teachers and our families, each holding a special place in our hearts.

On behalf of our class, we would like to thank all of our amazing teachers and, of course, our wonderful parents for leading us on our way to graduation. You have helped to shape us into who we are today. Our time at St. Michael's is coming to an end, but our memories will stay with us forever. Thank you.

~Head Girl, Helene Bigot~

ELS Graduates!



Congratulations to Tomo Kaneko and Minako Chinen on graduating from the ELS in December 2019. **Tomo** is the very first student who graduated in the same year as her son Tsuyoshi! **Minako** is to pursue her career in teaching by enrolling herself in a university!

Join us on our SMA Facebook!



This is the QR code which will take you to the official St. Michael's Association Facebook group. Please scan and join us there. If you are not a member of our group yet, send a request to join when you get to the group page. One of our administrators will be happy to respond as soon as possible.

Moving on!

This year, we bid farewell to Natalia Langtree, who has taught in Year 5 and Year 3 during the four years she has been with us. We would like to wish her all the best and welcome her to the SMIS Alumni. ~Avani Doshi Shah~



Four years have passed since I joined St Michael's International school and what a wonderful pleasant experience it has been. From the beginning I felt welcomed into the SMIS family and it has been a pleasure to teach children who are curious, compassionate, and willing to learn about the world around them. It has also been great to work alongside teachers who are dedicated about making learning a valuable, fun experience for pupils, as well as parents who are fully invested and committed to their children's education, making teaching here the best. Thank you to everyone who has helped along the way.

Leaving is always hard, but it is time for me to move on. I very much look forward to remaining part of the St Michael's community as an alumna! And the world seems to be getting smaller, in terms of travel, so may we meet again.

~ Natalia Langtree ~

SMA Gathering



Former ELS Day School students enjoyed their annual gathering with Hiromi Kishi (Akasaki) in Sannomiya, November 2019.

Please send us a photo of your gathering, big or small, with St. Michael's family members! Let us know where it is and who you are! Wouldn't it be exciting to see SMIS global network getting larger and larger?

**London Gathering 2020 is cancelled
due to COVID-19!**

BUT

We will meet in July 2021!



London Gathering 2019!

London Gathering 2021!



Come and Join us!

Saturday 31st July

Meet at Tavistock Hotel at 1 pm

Tavistock Square, London

SMA Goods!

Small Tote Bags
@ 2000 yen each

Available Colours: Grey, Red and Black

SMA Goods

NOW ON SALE...

Limited numbers available so please come and get yours QUICK!

White Tote Bag
@ 1800 yen each

Clear Water Bottle
(500ml)
@ 1000 yen

Photo Gallery Inquiry No.5!

Thanks to your help, captions of our Photo Gallery have further increased. However, your input is still needed. Please let us know if you have any information about the following photos by emailing us.



Welcome home!

Visitors



Ami Bhavishi with her mother



Jessica Chua

Made with PosterMyWall.com

SUPPORTING ST. MICHAEL'S



Why not Share your Happiness and Support St. Michael's!

Births, marriages, graduation, new jobs and other special occasions all fill us full of joy and happiness. Sharing your good news multiplies its benefits for your happiness and longer-term life satisfaction, so the next time something good happens to you, don't keep it to yourself! Whenever you feel like sharing your happiness, you might want to share it with St. Michael's by making a donation.

Thanks to many of you, we have so far donated a total of ***one million yen*** to the school's 70th Capital Campaign. We also have Miss Lea scholarship to support students in need. Your ever-lasting love and support for the school will help St.

Michael's continue to provide an excellent education for many years to come!
(Please refer to school webpage if you are interested in our campaign.)

Here are happy messages shared with donations!

*So many great memories
at St. Michaels.*

*So many people I met
there are still a very
important part of my life
today.*

*Glad to be able to return
a little something.*

~~Chris Toda~

*Big, big, Luv,
I love this small
world and appreciate
St. Michael's!!*

*Merry Christmas and
Happy New Year!*

~Asuka Kibayashi~

*I wish to share my
happiness to celebrate the
birth of our granddaughter
Clara on 01/01/2020. Clara
is very "international" as
she is half German, a
quarter Japanese, an
eighth English and an
eighth Scottish.*

~Toshie Takata ~

To Miss Hirose

*Happy 101st Birthday
and
Many Happy
Returns of the Day!*

~Satoru Hamada~

St. Michael's Association

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