Rejoicing in Music

The International Children’s Choir Festival

The Diocesan Festival Choir, comprising 43 girls from Primary 4 and 5 in the 2015-16 school year, participated in the International Children’s Choir Festival held in Canterbury and London 23 July – 30 July 2016. This was a non-competitive music educational tour in which the girls attended choral workshops, combined rehearsals and presented their own a cappella performance in the Canterbury Cathedral. The girls also gained valuable experience in joining other young choristers from other parts of the world to sing in a mass choir of 170 singers. The mass choir presented 2 concerts, one in Canterbury Cathedral and the other in Southwark Cathedral. This music educational tour also included visits to historical sites in the UK to broaden their cultural experience.

Exchange Programme with Raffles Girls’ Primary School

DGJS warmly welcomed Raffles Girls’ Primary School (RGPS) on their visit to our school on 22nd November 2016 for a school exchange. Twenty-six Primary 4 and 5 students and some teachers from RGPS joined a school tour led by our Junior Prefects who served as ambassadors.

Students from RGPS took part in a lively musical exchange involving fun rehearsals and a memorable performance with members of the DGJS Symphony Orchestra and Senior Percussion Band. Our Primary 4 to 6 girls were the lucky members of the audience and had the chance to enjoy the wonderful performance.
Primary One Father-daughter Breakfast Meeting

On the morning of 23rd June 2016, close to 140 pairs of Primary One girls and their fathers strolled hand in hand, not towards the Chi Wo Street gate but into a Chinese restaurant near the school. They were participants of the first-ever Primary One Father-daughter Breakfast Meeting, which was jointly organised by the School and the PTA. This event, held only a week after Father’s Day, was hosted exclusively for fathers of last year’s Primary One girls, in order to recognise their every effort to be involved in their daughters’ school life.

Not only did the fathers get the chance to communicate with the headmistress, subject panel chairpersons and teachers in an informal setting, they also had the opportunity to mingle with other fathers and their girls over a relaxing dim sum breakfast. Moreover, the gentlemen were enlightened by Dr Hugo Chan’s speech, as he shared his valuable insights on raising happy daughters. Dr. Chan is the Chairman of Hong Kong Character City Movement, an organisation that promotes character education. He is also one of the founders of DadsNetwork which promotes active fathering in Hong Kong.

The highlight of the morning was when girls from Primary 1A, 1B, 1C and 1D took turns to perform. For this purpose, Mrs Chiang, the music teacher, had in fact rewritten lyrics to the tunes of some well-known hymns. It was quite a stunning scene seeing so many fathers crowding round the stage, getting ready their cameras and smartphones. Everyone was enchanted by the angelic voices as the girls sang songs to honour their fathers. After the heartwarming performance, the fathers lovingly presented appreciation cards to their daughters in return.

Miss Ma and Mrs L. Fung’s Retirement

The DGJS Prize-Giving Ceremony was held in July 2016. Before presenting prizes and trophies to the recipients, parents and teachers joined all the students in thanking the retiring teachers, Miss Ma and Mrs L. Fung, with an enthusiastic round of applause.

Miss Ma opened her speech by sharing with the audience the many headmistresses she worked with, which was greeted with another round of applause. She expressed her thanks to God and her colleagues for their support and care. Students also benefitted from her words of wisdom as she talked about gratitude and life.

Mrs L. Fung received a Brownies trophy from Mrs Yau, her former student. The trophy was the first one that a school club she was in charge of won for the school. Mrs Fung encouraged students to follow their hearts and work hard to realise their dreams. Her humourous yet insightful speech was greatly enjoyed by the audience.

The School would like to thank Miss Ma and Mrs L. Fung once again for their hard work and dedication throughout the past years. We wish them both a happy retirement and look forward to seeing them again when they visit the school.
**From Vision to Reality**

A quote once said “Leadership is the capacity to translate vision into reality.” Throughout her 18 years at Diocesan Girls’ Junior School, Mrs Emily Dai has transformed many visions into reality.

One of the major challenges was the rebuilding of the new Jordan Road campus. In 2008, Mrs Dai worked selflessly to prepare the hotel school in Tseung Kwan O so that staff and students would feel that it was a home away from home. The return to our spectacular campus in September 2011 marked the hard work of Mrs Dai’s vision of creating a beautiful campus in which the students could grow up happily in.

Under her leadership, she created the Collaborative Learning Groups in Chinese, Mathematics and English to promote small group learning. She also introduced new extra-curricular activities such as the Gifted Young Scientists Workshop, Junior Classics Drama Club (formerly Shakespeare 4All Drama Club), and overseas educational tours which have all been very popular with the students. The study of Chinese classics such as the reading of Di Zi Gui and San Zi Jing was introduced by Mrs Dai to nurture our students with important Chinese moral values. The Daily Giving Joyful Service Scheme is yet another milestone that Mrs Dai established to instill in the students the virtues of service to others and giving back to the school community. Mrs Dai also created the “Headmistress Award Scheme” to honour students who have shown exemplary behaviour and achievements in school.

In her many years of dedicated service to the School, Mrs Dai has always maintained a cooperative and positive linkage between the school and the Parent-Teacher Association. More recently, Mrs Dai pioneered a series of informative Breakfast Meetings for Primary One to Five teachers and parents, and the heartwarming Father-daughter Breakfast event in June 2016, all of which fostered a stronger bond between the School, teachers and students.

**Bidding Farewell**

A number of farewell events were organised by the staff, students and the PTA to show our gratitude and appreciation towards Mrs Dai, our beloved headmistress, who retired in December 2016.

From left to right: An endearing rendition of “Wishing You A Sunrise” by the Primary 1 girls; a Primary 6 girl reciting a poem she wrote in honour of Mrs. Dai; one by one, the Junior Prefects present handmade roses to show their love to Mrs. Dai; posing for a group photo at the Farewell Tea Gathering.

**CHRISTMAS CONCERT**

The annual Christmas Concert on 19th December opened with a grand performance by the school’s string and symphony orchestras and was followed by eclectic poetry and prose pieces in Cantonese, Putonghua and English by winners of this year’s Hong Kong Schools Speech Festival. The Diocesan Festival Choir’s angelic voices and the rendition of the harmonic speaking pieces were a feast for the ears. The Wind Bands’ Christmas songs were upbeat and festive.

The highlight of the event was undoubtedly the farewell segment dedicated to Mrs Dai. Primary One students began by singing “Wishing You A Sunrise”, expressing their good wishes to Mrs Dai in her retirement. Students also presented Mrs Dai with a gift made by every single student in the school. It was a memory book that contained writings and drawings from the students about their most cherished memories and moments with their Headmistress. The audience was all able to admire the beautiful pages in the memory book in a short video. From her warm smile on their Primary One interview day that melted away their nervousness, to her words of encouragement and strength before important competitions, students from each grade level also stood on stage and reminisced their fondest encounters with their Headmistress.

As the concert drew to an end, the melodic voices of the Primary Two to Primary Six girls resonated across the Hall as they bid a musical farewell to Mrs Dai with the song “A Blessing”. It was a moving celebration and many tears of sadness and joy were shed as we recalled together the fond memories of our time shared with Mrs Dai throughout the years.
Farewell Ceremony

On 21st December, the last day of term, the School listened intently to Mrs Dai’s recollection of her childhood and adolescent years. She shared with us fondly her encounters with Dr. Symons, who was then Headmistress and gave Mrs Dai her English name “Emily”, and Mrs Rebecca Yip, who was her scripture teacher and predecessor. After the walk down memory lane, Mrs. Dai concluded her speech by asking the girls to consider what they can give back to the School with their education, talents and expertise.

“As we join our hands that the world may know we are one in the bond of love.” As the School sang with one heart and voice, student representatives from Primary One to Six received the baton from Mrs Emily Dai’s hands, and passed it on to the incumbent headmistress Mrs Annie Lee, signifying a legacy that will continue for generations to come. Mrs. Dai will be greatly missed by the entire school community and her invaluable contributions to the School shall continue to live on.

Farewell Tea Gathering

After the concert, up to two thousand past and current parents and girls enjoyed a cozy tea gathering with Mrs Dai in the Junior School Hall and DGJS Courtyard. In her speech, Mrs Dai looked back on her formative years as a student and how her life blossomed at DGJS like the java apple tree which stood at the gate of the old campus. The PTA presented a number of thoughtfully beautifully handmade souvenirs, one of which consisted of eighteen clay figurines of DGJS girls symbolising the number of years Mrs Dai led the School as Headmistress.