1 March 2016

Newsletter to Parents – The March Edition

Dear Parent/Guardian,

In recent years, the Singapore education system is moving towards one that is more flexible and diverse. The Ministry of Education (MOE) has created a variegated education landscape with diverse pathways to provide our students with a myriad of learning opportunities so as to best cater to their different interests, strengths, and learning needs. With greater choice to meet their different interests and ways of learning, MOE hopes that students can reach their fullest educational potential.

The school is holding a series of talks on 11 Mar (Fri) at 7pm to keep parents and students up to date with the latest changes in the education system. The information shared at these talks will help you and your child make better decisions concerning subject combination and education after secondary school. The talks include:

- Sec 2E Streaming and Subject Awareness
- Sec 2NA Streaming and Subject Awareness
- Sec 2NT Subject Awareness
- Sec 3E/4E/5N Junior College and Polytechnic Education
- Sec 3NA/4NA Direct Entry Scheme to Polytechnic Programme (DPP) and Polytechnic Foundation Programme (PFP)

In Xinmin, we believe in working closely with parents to create better educational outcomes for our students. Therefore, we strongly encourage you and your child to attend these talks on 11 Mar (Fri). School leaders, key personnel and our partners from the institutions of higher learning will be present to answer your queries and provide advice. Please refer to the letter dated 19 Feb (Fri) for more information on these talks and submit the online registration form which can be found on our school website by 4 Mar (Fri). Light refreshments will be served at 6:30pm before the talks begin.

UPCOMING EVENTS

1. Cross Country on 11 Mar

The school’s annual Cross Country will be held on 11 Mar (Fri) from 7.30am to 12 noon along the Buangkok Park Connector. Students are to report to Sengkang Hockey Stadium – Hockey Pitch (57, Anchorvale Road) in their PE attire by 7.30am and they will be dismissed from the stadium at 12 noon if there are no delays due to the weather. Attendance is compulsory for all students.
2. **1st Parent-Teacher Meeting (PTM) on 23 Mar (Wed)**

The first Parent-Teacher Meeting (PTM) this year will be held on 23 Mar (Wed) for parents of all Sec 1 to 5 students. 15-minute slots from 1:45 to 4:30pm, and 5:30 to 7:45pm will be available for booking online from 8:00am on 1 Mar (Tue) to 5:00pm on 11 Mar (Fri).

Attached please find the user guide on how to book an appointment (Annex A). Please visit [http://coe.xinminss.moe.edu.sg/ptm](http://coe.xinminss.moe.edu.sg/ptm) to book a slot that fits your schedule. You will need to enter your child’s NRIC number as the ID and password.

Parents are encouraged to use this opportunity to meet their child’s Form Teacher to discuss their child’s progress in school. We urge all parents to be punctual and to keep to the allocated timeslot as there will be many parents that Form Teachers have to meet that day. Please also understand that meetings with Subject Teachers will not be scheduled, but should you have questions for your child’s specific Subject Teacher(s), Form Teachers will try their best to address your concerns or you can email the Subject Teacher(s) concerned.

3. **Mother Tongue Languages (MTL) Festival from 23 Mar (Wed) to 1 Apr (Fri)**

The MTL Festival is a two-week event from 23 Mar (Wed) to 1 Apr (Fri) that encourages the love of Mother Tongue Languages through various programmes, enrichment activities and learning journeys. It also creates an immersive environment for the learning of these languages outside academic lessons through hands-on and practical activities. These activities aim to raise students’ awareness of the value and practicality of conversing in their mother tongue languages in real-world contexts and, at the same time, enable them to appreciate their cultural significance.

4. **International Friendship Day on 8 Apr (Fri)**

Xinmin will commemorate International Friendship Day (IFD) on 8 Apr (Fri). The theme this year is “ASEAN”. We encourage you to share with your child your personal experiences with people of other nationalities. These stories can offer insights that enhance your child’s global awareness and his/her appreciation of common values like respect and responsibility that different nations share.

On 28 March (Mon), students will receive an IFD Special Edition of the Straits Times student newspaper IN to keep them informed about the key messages of IFD. There will also be feature articles to give students up-to-date information about IFD. We encourage you to discuss with your child the key issues so that they may develop balanced perspectives.

Other highlights of the celebration include a skit put up by local and international students on the purpose and origins of ASEAN, as well as current issues faced by the countries. Students will also learn more about the ten ASEAN countries’ languages, symbolism of the countries’ flags, and understand the values and attitudes that influence the way of life in ASEAN countries through sharing by ASEAN students during CCE lessons. Students will also learn about the situations that can arise from living in a cosmopolitan country, and learn the importance of behaving responsibly to promote inclusivity.
5. **Aesthetics Events in March and April**

   a. **X’thetics Carnival on 21 Mar (Mon)**

      Students will welcome the first day of Term 2 with our second instalment of X’thetics Carnival. Building on the success of last year's edition of X’thetics Carnival, this year's carnival aims to expose students to, and immerse them in, more diverse artistic experiences that augments our Art, Music and Drama instructional programmes. It also aims to inspire them to better appreciate the arts through an array of activities from visual art to drama, dance, music and film. On Monday, 21 Mar (Mon) students will participate in an elective of their choice. They will make use of the skills and knowledge acquired from the elective to produce/put together a work or an item that will be presented during the showcase segment. Every cohort will also take part in a cohort module, which promises to be interactive and will be conducted by esteemed practitioners in the arts industry.

   b. **Drama Night on 24 Mar (Thu)**

      Xinmin’s English Drama Club has won various national awards including the Singapore Youth Festival Arts Presentation Distinction Award in 2013 and Accomplishment Award in 2015. 24th of March marks the day our students will showcase their skills in acting, directing, stage management, light design, event planning and creation of stage props and costumes. You will get to watch four original drama pieces that have been conceptualised and written by our own students. As part of the school's outreach efforts, we will also be inviting primary school students to attend this event.

   c. **Xinthesis from 31 Mar (Thu) to 2 Apr (Sat)**

      Xinthesis is an event that is filled with exciting performances by the Chinese Dance, Guzheng, Malay Dance, *Dikir Barat*, and Chinese Opera. Xinthesis will start off on 31 Mar (Thu) with a showcase presented by the Chinese and Malay Dance Troupes, and *Dikir Barat* student-musicians. Let their beautiful dancing, melodious music, vibrant movements, and skilful playing of instruments mesmerise you and your loved ones. The evening will also feature performances by our alumni members who are returning to perform with the current students.

      The Guzheng Ensemble will take centre stage on 1 Apr (Fri). Guest performances by Paya Lebar Methodist Girls' School (Secondary) (PLMGS) Guzheng Ensemble will also be put up at the event. Similar to our Guzheng Ensemble, the PLMGS Guzheng Ensemble is also awarded the Certificate of Distinction during the 2015 SYF Arts Presentation.

      The Chinese Opera troupe will bring Xinthesis to a close on 2 Apr (Sat). Being a familiar art form to many of the residents in Hougang, the school will be inviting senior citizens to join the event on 2 Apr. We hope to bring the arts closer to the community.

   d. **Melizo on 8 Apr (Fri)**

      The Xinmin Chorale is distinguished for its talented and enthusiastic young singers. They were conferred the prestigious Certificate of Distinction at the Singapore Youth Festival Arts Presentation. On top of the many awards and accolades they have clinched, Xinmin Chorale has been invited to perform for various Ministries and private organisations for their celebrations and functions, such as Youth Celebrate! the inaugural opening ceremony of the Singapore Sports Hub. They have also been invited to perform for the Opening Concert for Singapore Youth Festival 2016 Celebrations at the Esplanade this July. Do join the Chorale for a musical journey and bask in the magical euphony of voices.
e. Xinfony on 9 Apr (Sat)

The Xinmin Symphonic Band is an award-winning band that performs a diverse range of musical pieces from simple ensemble pieces to highly acclaimed and technically demanding band works transcribed from famous musicals, operas and orchestral work. It has done the school proud with its public performances in the Esplanade Concert Hall where it performed in the highly acclaimed Limelight series. They have also been invited to perform on the Istana grounds this Labour Day. Come to Xinfony and be entertained by the melodious pieces and catchy numbers. It will be a phenomenal evening of multi-genre music on 9 Apr (Sat).

Tickets for the performances mentioned above will be made available to students by the end of Mar. Please contact Mr Josh Wong (SH/Arts Education) at wong_han_xian@moe.edu.sg or 62889382 for more information.

ACADEMIC MATTERS

1. Term 1 Common Tests

The Term 1 Common Tests (CA1) were conducted in Weeks 8 and 9 of Term 1, and your child should receive his/her results by the first week of Term 2. For information related to the weighting and computation of CA1 in the overall assessment for the year for Sec 1 to 3 students, please refer to February’s newsletter given out on 4 Feb. For Sec 4 and 5 students taking their national examinations at the end of the year, CA1, SA1, and SA2 results will be reported in the form of progress reports and result slips. However, SA2 (the Preliminary Examinations) will be computed as 100% of their final results. Nevertheless, these graduating students may still be exposed to various modes of assessments such as e-Learning assignments and projects, but they will not be formally assessed on them.

You may also refer to the following link on our school website (www.xinminsec.edu.sg/xinminss) for the information:

“Admissions” → “Assessment” → “Assessment Structure”

2. ICT Applications for the Teaching and Learning of English Language

a. The EL portals – EN[a]BLER and we-Learn

The EL portals – EN[a]BLER for the Express and Normal Academic streams, and we-Learn for the Normal Technical stream – were launched by MOE to develop 21st century competencies of communication and collaboration, allowing students to learn authentically via visual and auditory modes. In order to tap on this application to enhance students’ learning of English, our teachers have developed a grammar and vocabulary package for students to learn online at their own pace.

With effect from Term 2, Sec 1 to 3 Express and Normal Academic students are expected to log in to the EL portals (www.elportals.sg) to complete a short e-learning assignment weekly. Their scores from the bite-sized e-assignments will constitute their e-learning mark for the whole year (5%). Sec 1 to 3 Normal Technical students will also be required to do short e-learning assignments on the EL portal with guidance from their teachers.
b. XMS EL Department website

The XMS English Department website (http://xmselldepartment.wordpress.com) was launched in 2015 for better communication with parents and students on our department programmes and activities. We would like to invite parents and students to browse the website for learning resources such as the recommended reading list for students and the repository of the creative writing pieces by our students, as well as information on assessment.

We thank all parents for your continued support of the school and our programmes. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you need further clarifications. We can be reached via email at xinmin_ss@moe.edu.sg or you can call us at 6288 9382.

Yours faithfully

Mrs Ong Hong Peng
Principal
PTM User Guide for Parents

1. How do I book a timeslot with the teacher?
   - Go to http://coe.xinminss.moe.edu.sg/ptmbook/
   - Key in your username and password to log in. (Both username and password are your child’s NRIC number)
   - Select the level, class and timeslot you wish to book.

   For example, if you wish to meet the Form Teacher from 1345h to 1400h and your child is in Class 101.
   A. Select "Secondary 1"
   B. Select “Class 101” and the timeslot “1345-1400”

   - For classes with 2 Form Teachers, each timeslot has two slots available for booking.

2. How do I remove an appointment?
   Click on the timeslot you have booked earlier to remove it.

3. How do I change my appointment?
   You will have to remove your existing booking and book another time slot.

4. How many bookings can I make?
   You are allowed to make only 1 appointment at any time.