



Newsletter

Udon Thani International School

24th November 2016 | ISSUE 7

LOY KRATHONG DAY




Loi Krathong is one of the most important days in the Thai calendar and UDIS celebrated this special day with performances and krathong making.

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

- 30 November - PTA meeting #3
- 2 December (Assembly) - Father's day
- 5 December - HM The King's Birthday (Holiday)
- 16 December (half day) - Christmas festival, End of Term (Students to please wear Christmas colours for the holidays (Red, Green or White))

Loy Krathong Day photos on page 11

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Message from the Head of School

Dear Parents

We are coming up to the end of Term 1 so we are getting very busy as we prepare for end of year reports, conferences and our Christmas Festival. In particular, we have a PTA meeting on Wednesday from 2:50pm which I would like to invite all parents to come along too as we will be discussing our curriculum and expected outcomes for students. The idea is to help parents understand more about our curriculum which they can use to be better informed about end of term reports.



On Friday 18 November, we also held our first board meeting of 2016/2017. The school board oversees the operations of the school and is committed to ensuring quality education at UDIS. The board consists of the owner's, licensee, school representatives (parents, teacher and Head of School) and community representatives.

At the most recent meeting, the school report from the 2015/2016 academic year was presented to the board and the board made suggestions for improvements in 2016/2017. The board also approved new loans and the construction of new buildings for the school. The board also discussed the guiding statements of the school and approved the most recent revisions. Lastly, the board identified the development work needed for the current academic year and how the work would be completed. The board identified the need for new board members particularly those with expertise in international schools, or ASEAN experience. So if anyone in our community knows anyone who could be a good board member for the school, please contact me.

There will be two further board meetings this academic year and I will keep you updated about what is discussed in these meetings after they happen.

Please also have a look at the results of the communication survey in this issue. The school looked into how we could improve communication and our findings are presented later in this newsletter.

Best regards

Dr Lindsay Stuart

Head of School

Inquiry corner

By Mr Michael Delcavo, Deputy Principal/Curriculum Coordinator

As a curriculum committee, we recently got together to discuss our assessment policy at the school. This is used to help guide our teaching by looking closely at what students are able to achieve.

An important part of our policy involves our core beliefs about learning which are:

- 1.) We believe that humans want to learn, and that learning is an essential, innate, ongoing, and lifelong process.
- 2.) We believe that learning is a process of making meaning of the world.
- 3.) We believe that learners are unique and they are responsible for their own learning.
- 4.) We believe that learning depends on being able to connect prior knowledge, perceptions or patterns of experience to new experiences, new information, and contexts.
- 5.) We believe that learning is profoundly influenced by social relationships.
- 6.) We believe that learning is significantly affected by emotions.
- 7.) We believe that self-perception directly affects motivation and learning.
- 8.) We believe that learning is more effective when information is embedded in purposeful and meaningful experiences and interactions.
- 9.) We believe that learning is contextual.
- 10.) We believe that learning is enhanced when learners are aware of how thinking and learning occur (meta-cognition), which gives learners increased control over their learning.
- 11.) We believe that learning is demonstrated when learners can apply their understandings in new situations in flexible and thought-provoking ways.
- 12.) We believe that learning is complex and nonlinear.

It is important we are on the same page with assessment at the school and what it looks like. If you have questions or concerns about this policy please let me know.

Early Years Update

Preschool class update - Community Helpers

By Ms Olga Sviridova , Preschool Teacher

Each week, we have looked at a different aspect of our Unit of Inquiry. We started with 'People who Help at Home' and this was followed by 'People who Help at School'. For this aspect, we visited the school gardener, nurse, cooks and the librarian. Over the following weeks, we also examined 'People who Help in the Community' which included firemen, policemen, doctors, dentists, hairdressers and salespersons. In class, we made different play corners where these roles were acted out by the children, using instruments and clothes from the role-play box. We also went on a recent class trip to Kidzooona where students participated in different types of work. The most popular was 'The Supermarket' with realistic products to buy and sell, 'The Food Court' where the students acted out making sandwiches and cakes and selling them to the teachers and 'The Hospital' with a variety of medical tools.

'What do you want to be when you grow up?'/ 'What do you like to play from our role-play box most of all?'

Junior, Majin, Ida, Akin - a doctor;

Thun Thun - a cook;

Thames - a policeman;

Euro - at first, Euro was not sure about the answer, but then he pointed at the fireman costume.



Early Years Update

Preschool class update - Natural and man made materials

By Mr Bill Bloodgood , K2 Teacher

As we explore how our world works, we are looking at both natural and man made ways in which materials change when they interact. We started with some potted plants the students made all of which have now sprouted at the time of this writing. We also used some flour, salt water, oil and a little food coloring to make our own play dough. Our play dough was made into three different colours, pink, green and blue, but now after a week we only have one colour to play with. How did that happen?



Year 1 class update - Mix N Match

By Ms Karyn Scrimgeour, Year 1 Teacher

In Year 1 we are learning about different traditions and celebrations. We started by looking at various holidays which honour the dead including Halloween, Day of the Dead, The Hungry Ghost Festival and the Thai Ornamental Rice, as well as some of the traditions of these celebrations. We also took the opportunity as a class to pay our respects to the much loved King of Thailand and mourn his passing.

In our unit, we travelled to India and looked at the celebrations of Diwali and Holi, learning the stories behind the celebrations, as well as creating some traditional arts and crafts. As Diwali is the festival of lights we decided to learn more about the traditions of using lanterns, fireworks and lights in celebrations and are looking at the festivals which use these in different ways, such as Bonfire Night in the UK.

With the festive season fast approaching there will be a lot more celebrating and craft making to come, some of which you will have a chance to buy at the Festive Bizarre. You will also get the opportunity to see what the students have learned and I hope you will ask them lots of questions.

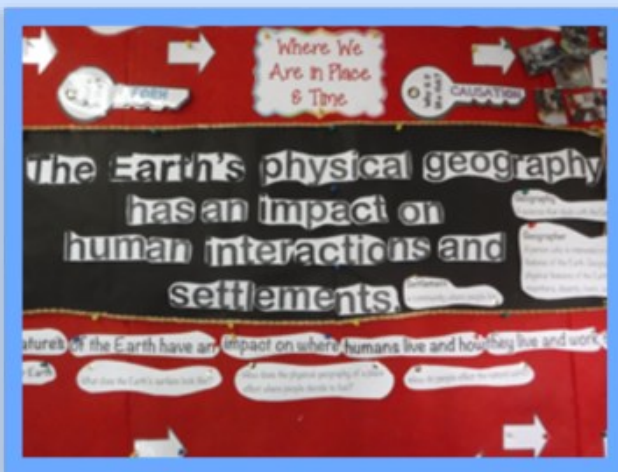


Year 4 class update—Our Diverse Class is Ready to Learn!

By Ms Rebecca Kehn, Y4 Teacher

The Year 4 class has been busy learning all about our Earth. They have begun their inquiry into the central idea: The Earth's physical geography has an impact on human interactions and settlements. They have been tuning into their new central idea and lines of inquiry by participating in provocations and activities. They have had fun working in groups to create survival plans for different locations, and they have spent time unpacking, visualising and working to understand the central idea. This week they will be finding out more by working on identifying landforms and bodies of water. As well as inquiring into different biomes.

The students have also recently hosted an assembly on being knowledgeable and the learner profile. They worked hard to prepare a great assembly including a lesson on the seven continents of the world. They also performed a song and dance for the other primary years students. Students have also been hard at work preparing for our Christmas celebrations, where they will be singing the Christmas carol, Feliz Navidad. Of course, we've also been busy with mathematics and English. Finally, parent teacher conferences will be held on Tuesday and Wednesday, December 13th and 14th. We look forward to speaking with each of you regarding your child's progress.



MODERN LANGUAGES - THAI DEPARTMENT

LOY KRATHONG DAY 2016

“WATER OF LIFE”

Loy Krathong is one of the most important days in the Thai calendar. It occurs on the full moon day of the twelfth lunar month, the 'high water' season when water overflows the banks of rivers and canals. On Loy Krathong day this great abundance of water is celebrated by floating delicately created 'krathongs' on any and every stretch of water in the Kingdom. Many people also believe that as their krathong floats away, the water washes away their sins of the past year.

For our celebrations at UDIS, students made krathongs, out of natural materials, thus reinforcing the important message of not damaging the environment. All students throughout the school worked together to make their own krathongs to float with their families later in the day. Loy Krathong Day created a very special atmosphere from the excellent collaborations of children, teachers and parents.



English as an additional language (EAL)

EAL students have been building their vocabulary, comprehension and fluency skills. Also, they have been learning about finding the main idea and summarising and reviewing the parts of speech, especially nouns, verbs, prepositions, and pronouns. EAL is all about building fluency and confidence in students when using the English language in a safe and fun learning environment.



Health and Safety

By Mr Michael Delcavo, Health and safety coordinator

This time of year we can see a lot of illness being spread. It normally happens as the temperatures start to drop and bodies need to adjust. Moving from warm to cold areas and back often can cause stress for the body and make it susceptible to illness.

Currently some people are having flu vaccinations for this year. Bangkok hospital will be coming to the school on Wednesday December 7 to provide vaccinations for all those who are interested. The price is 500 baht per shot.

Mosquitoes are always a concern during this time of year. You may want to purchase products that kill mosquitoes. Standing water around the house can lead to many mosquitoes being bred. Draining the water often can help or putting fish into the water to eat the mosquito larvae can be beneficial.

If your child does fall ill, please make the school aware and keep your child home while they have a temperature.

Let's stay as healthy as we can during this holiday season.



House Update

This year, we have introduced a House system at the school comprising five house teams. Students have been placed into these teams and able to gain points from classroom activities and school events. The current house scores are:

House team	Current points
<i>Red House Confucius</i>	89
<i>Blue House Martin Luther King</i>	103
<i>Black House Princess Diana</i>	142
<i>Green House Nelson Mandela</i>	125
<i>Yellow House Mother Teresa</i>	130



Loy Krathong Day 2016 "Water of life"



Community Partnership Programme (CPP)

Our Community Partnership Programme (CPP) has organisations in Udon Thani across many different areas. This newsletter, we would like to welcome two new members; Eng inc and Asia Books Udon Thani:

Eng inc will offer special promotion to all UDIS members from November 2016 with a discount of 30-50% of the registration fee of any course if members show the UDIS ID card to them.



We also welcome Asia Books Central Udonthani to our school's community partnership programme (CPP). Asia Books Central Udonthani will offer special promotion to all UDIS members from November 2016 with a discount of 10% if members show the UDIS ID card to them.



If you would like to join our CPP programme, please contact our Marketing Coordinator, Miss PJ.

Communication survey

At the end of the last academic year, we conducted a communications survey to get feedback from parents on how the school could better communicate. The purpose was to assess the school's communication methods as this was identified as an area of concern from parents. We sought to gain feedback to provide more information that could help us address problems with communication.

We had 14 parent responses and the findings are summarised here:

General findings

- ◆ Email, face to face and line were the most popular ways to communicate with the school
- ◆ Parents felt pretty well informed about the school.
- ◆ Parents favoured email, Line and the newsletter to find information about the school.
- ◆ Parents were most interested in being informed about curriculum, instructional plans, meetings, ECA programmes and school development.
- ◆ Parents were least likely to want to be informed about parent involvement opportunities and rationale for decisions made by management.
- ◆ The majority of parents favoured communication in either English or both English and Thai
- ◆ Parents felt less informed about their child's class than they did about the school, but by only a small margin.
- ◆ Parents most wanted to know about how their child was doing in class, their child's behaviour and about class events.
- ◆ Parents were least interested in descriptions of daily instruction, parent opportunities to join the class and recent grading.
- ◆ 86% of parents felt there were places to express their concerns.
- ◆ 79% of parents felt that concerns were taken seriously.
- ◆ Parents favour daily to weekly information from the class and weekly to monthly information from the school.

Early Years (EY) Parents

- ◆ EY parents felt less informed than PY parents about the school.

Primary Years (PY) Parents

- ◆ PY parents wanted more face to face contact with teachers to get information from the school. PY parents also favoured the use of the newsletter.
- ◆ PY parents favoured more use of the communication books than EY parents.
- ◆ PY parents were more interested in teaching methods, school events and lunch.
- ◆ PY parents were more interested in homework information than EY parents.
- ◆ Only 60% of PY parents felt there were places to express their concerns versus 100% of EY parents.

Thai Parents

- ◆ Thai parents were more likely to use Facebook and Line to get information about the school.
- ◆ Thai parents favoured the use of the communication book more than foreign parents.
- ◆ Thai parents were more interested in how well their child was doing, their child's behaviour and descriptions of daily instruction than foreign parents were.
- ◆ All foreign parents felt there were places to express concerns while only 67% of Thai parents felt the same way.
- ◆ All foreign parents felt there were places to express their concerns versus 67% of Thai parents.
- ◆ Thai parents generally favoured more frequent communication than foreign parents.

Foreign Parents

- ◆ Generally favour less frequent communication than Thai parents.

If there is any feedback from these findings, please let us know at suggestions@udis.ac.th. We have already begun to take action to try and better tailor our communications for parents.



Message from Admin

Administration - Message from the office

Term 2 invoices due date Friday 2 December, 2016

Community Partnership Programme (CPP)

UDIS operates a Community Partnership Programme (CPP) with local businesses in the Udon Thani area who wish to support the school and its staff and students. Under the CPP, these businesses have offered discounts and benefits to staff and students who present their UDIS ID card.

Find out more on our website
(<http://www.udoninternational.com/en/general-information/cpp/>)

or contact the School Office for more information.

Contact us

Office hours: 8.00am - 4.30pm

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Y2/3 teacher: emmi@udis.ac.th

Y4 teacher: rebecca@udis.ac.th

Y5/6 teacher: susan@udis.ac.th

School Secretary: wannapa@udis.ac.th

Email suggestion box: suggestions@udis.ac.th