

REACH

Center of excellence for the education of children with hearing loss

April 2023



CANOSSIAN SCHOOL NEWSLETTER



OUR MOTTO

VIA, VERITAS, VITA (The Way, The Truth, The Life)

Our motto draws its inspiration from Jesus Christ. We take Him as our model and seek to follow in His footsteps.

Via (The Way)

We walk confidently and joyfully on the path of life, overcoming all difficulties with fortitude and prayer.

Veritas (The Truth)

We are sincere in word, deed and action.
We are open to truth and knowledge.

Vita (The Life)

We live for others, ready to share, serve and sacrifice for others.

Our Mission

Nurturing each in her/his own way by forming hearts, enlightening minds and empowering spirits to live in The Way, The Truth and The Life

Our Values

The core values that guide the educative process at Canossian School are based on the Canossian values of Charity, Humility, Forgiveness and Faith.



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From the Principal's Desk

Dear Parents / Guardians

Being hearing-impaired no barrier for pupils in Canossian School choir



SINGAPORE - On the surface, this primary school choir sounds like any other, a harmonious ensemble of voices. But a closer look at the devices worn around their ears reveals something truly special – every member of this choir has hearing loss.

Canossian School offers choir and percussion band as co-curricular activities (CCAs). These CCAs are geared towards teaching and engaging children diagnosed with hearing loss.

Ms Christina Michael, principal of Canossian School, said music-related activities benefit children with hearing loss in many ways. “For children with hearing loss who are learning how to listen and speak, music stimulates the brain and enhances their communication skills. Exposure to music can help them to understand sound concepts like timbre, tone quality and rhythmic timing and develop their speech patterns.”

Fifty-nine of the 63 pupils at Canossian School either sing in the choir or play an instrument in the percussion band.

Ms Irene Jansen, 55, has been the choir instructor for Canossian School since 2016. With nearly two decades of experience as a vocal coach, she has also put together other choir performances sung by differently abled individuals.

She said: “There are two kinds of applause. The audience can say ‘Okay, they did a good job, well done’. Or they applaud from the heart and see how much these children can achieve. It’s my responsibility as a teacher to let my students experience that applause.”

Even with the assistance of hearing aids, pupils with hearing loss may struggle to match pitch and sing in tune. While she may take two to three sessions to teach a normal choir, Ms Jansen said that it takes around five to six sessions for Canossian School’s choir to learn a song from scratch.

She added: “When we start, we take it slow. Every single note they sing has to be repeated until they’ve got it. Sometimes, I’ll slow down the song’s speed so that every note is heard clearly.

“It may take a longer time to teach, but the result is beautiful.”



Ms Irene Jansen, 55, has been the choir instructor for Canossian School since 2016. ST PHOTO: GIN TAY

Ms Jansen also records audio guides for her pupils to access online. Pupils can practise singing techniques at home and familiarise themselves with the melody before choir sessions every Friday.

She said: "Singing builds their confidence. At first, most of them are quiet. They don't want to talk or sing because they aren't used to hearing their own voice. But today, all my choir members are chatty and loud. They aren't afraid any more."

"We give them a voice now so they can speak up for themselves in the future."



Mr Richard Ter, 34, has been Canossian School's lead band instructor for 17 straight years. Instructing Canossian School's percussion band was Mr Ter's first foray into teaching music.

He said: "I treat this band the same as any other band. Everyone has their forte. The pupils here may have difficulty hearing, but it doesn't change the fact that they are talented."

Instead of raising his voice, Mr Ter prefers to use basic sign language to communicate with his pupils during their bi-weekly band sessions.

He added: "Their observation skills are actually better than most kids. This is important because when I conduct, the band must pay attention to me and read my expressions."



Mr Richard Ter, 34, has been Canossian School's lead band instructor for 17 consecutive years. ST PHOTO: GIN TAY

In 2020, Canossian School's percussion band performed at the Singapore Youth Festival Arts Presentation, performing alongside their peers from mainstream schools.

Mr Ter said: "Many band members join the band in secondary school after graduation. One of my old students, Anastasia, is a very talented drumset player and took up extra lessons outside of school. I think she still performs to this day."

The band has performed in many local events and taken part in music exchange programmes in Malaysia, Thailand, Hong Kong and Japan. Recently on March 18, both the choir and percussion band performed at MacPherson Community Club to commemorate World Hearing Day.





The students of Canossian School all live with the challenge of hearing loss. The Straits Times spent time with the school's choir and percussion band as they prepare for a special performance for World Hearing Day

On Dec 8, 2022, Canossian School's choir performed at the official opening of the Children's Museum Singapore. One of the young performers was Ishaan Hitesh Doshi, 11, who was diagnosed with hearing loss in his right ear.

He said: "My favourite part was when we sang and danced to Candyman. I love being in the choir because we all get to make music together."

Mr Hitesh Doshi, Ishaan's father, said: "We are always very proud to see him perform. We never imagined that Ishaan would join the choir, but learning music has taught him to calm down and articulate his words better."

Link of the full article from The Straits Times (29 March 2023)

<https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/being-hearing-impaired-no-barrier-for-pupils-in-canossian-school-choir>

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Term 2 has been a very busy time for us. We started off the term with our first foray into doing roadshows on raising public awareness of hearing loss as we commemorated World Hearing Day on 18 March at MacPherson Community Club. We were heartened by the support from our partners, parents and members of the public who attended the event.

In April we celebrate two religious festivals. Christians celebrate the end of six weeks of Lenten fasting and penitence in preparation for Easter, the greatest event in our faith. Easter marks the Resurrection of Jesus three days after his death by crucifixion. By sacrificing himself, Jesus Christ saved humanity from the shackles of sin. His eventual resurrection is a promise of a new life. It shows us that our faith in him is alive and powerful.

During the month of April, our Muslim families and colleagues have their month of fasting too. During the month of Ramadan, Muslims abstain from eating and drinking as well as other undesirable behaviours that nullify the fast. The end of fasting comes on Hari Raya Puasa which is likely to be on 22 April. It is beneficial for our students to understand and appreciate various religious practices, so they embrace the centrality of God in all our lives, regardless of race or religion.

Let me take the opportunity to wish all our Christian families a glorious Easter and all our Muslim families a joyous Hari Raya Puasa.

God Bless.

Christina Michael (Ms)
Principal

World Hearing Day 2023

WHO has designated **3 March** as World Hearing Day to commemorate hearing loss as a disability. This disability is often referred to as the 'silent' disability, not only because of the silence that is imposed on people with this disability. The reference is apt because a person with this disability often appears normal, like any hearing person, and it's impossible to know just from looking at them that they're struggling to hear. As a result, this disability often goes unnoticed and untreated. Unfortunately, there are parents who are in denial or believe that their children can outgrow this disability and learn to hear. There are those who avoid getting fitted with hearing devices as these are obvious signs of being different. These are deleterious situations.

Hearing loss can create many challenges. It causes difficulties in social interactions because of problems in communication. In children, their problems are exacerbated due to the cognitive decline that sets in with the altered states of the auditory centres of their brains. Children with undiagnosed hearing loss may present themselves as being inattentive, disruptive, disinterested or unable to learn. None of this is true. Their challenges can be set right with the appropriate educational intervention and environment.

This is why, to commemorate this day, the Canossian Village hosted a World Hearing Day event that featured performances by our Canossian School Band and Choir, sharing by our alumni and audiologist. It also featured booths set up by our vendors, Sonova and Cochlear Singapore who specialized in hearing health products and services. These vendors provided information and resources for individuals who are dealing with hearing loss or who want to know more about maintaining healthy hearing habits and, free hearing screenings. The event was a great success. It brought together a diverse group of individuals who were all united in their commitment to promoting hearing health and preventing hearing loss. One of the highlights was the free screening that was available to children and adults. Professional audiologist was on hand to conduct hearing screening. This was an important opportunity for people to check their hearing and to

learn more about the steps they can take to protect their ears from further damage. We look forward to celebrating World Hearing Day again next year, and to continuing our efforts to promote hearing health in our community and beyond.



Presently, an analyst for a FinTech company, our alumnus, Mr Peter Liem, receiving a token of appreciation after his sharing on how he overcame his learning difficulties despite his hearing loss with the support of his teachers and help he received from the school.



Participants playing a game that simulates hearing loss



To encourage healthy ear care, our partners from HearLife Hearing Care Centre offering hearing screening for adults



Our partners, Cochlear Singapore and Sonova Singapore, set up booths displaying their product offerings and sharing with members of the public their range of services



Spectacular opening performance by our school band and choir

Lifeskills@CS Programme

Primary 1 and Primary 2 students enjoyed taking part in a range of activities during Interest Week. While the upper primary students took part in various activities such as indoor soccer, baking and inline skating at CCPS, our Pri 1s and 2s were involved in learning daily living skills (DLS) planned by the DLS team.

Some of the activities learned included skills necessary for Home Living and Leisure. Students had a hand at making their own sandwiches and playing indoor games. Students had lots of fun and excitedly awaited each new activity in interest week.



Making healthy sandwiches



Learning to play indoor games – card games

Interest Week for Pri 3 to Pri 5 at CCPS

Students from Pri 3 – 5 joined their CCPS classmates in various activities planned during Interest Week. The theme of the programme was Discovering the Unique Me! The objectives are to allow students to explore their values, interests, personality and skills and to deepen their sense of purpose in life. The programme also equips students with the right values, skills and disposition of life-long learning to make informed choices after PSLE.



Kong Chun Fei (Pri 5) tries his skills at rollerblading



Callyn Chang (Pri 5) learning to play indoor soccer

What makes a good leader?



Sr Janet conducted a session on how the students can cultivate leadership values as they walk in the footsteps of St. Magdalene of Canossa. The session is part of a termly programme when our Sisters come in to teach our children about the lives of our Founding Saints. This session was in preparation of St Magdalene's Feast Day on 8 May.



Stories of the life of St. Magdalene were enacted by our student leaders and Primary 3 students to reinforce on the leadership values taught by Sr Janet.

Principles of A Canossian Leader

1. I am created in God's image and likeness and so is everyone else.
2. I know and do what is good and just even when no one is watching.
3. I will always be the best version of myself in everything I say and do.
5. I belong here and I want others to feel belonged too.
7. I advocate for all that is good and just.
9. I know I still must grow.

St. Magdalene of Canossa on Leadership

1. Respect for everyone
2. Honesty
3. Humility
5. Love for my family & community
7. Justice
9. Always ready to learn

Student Leaders



All smiles at the end of the day!

While many students were away during the March holidays, our student leaders attended the Student Leadership Training on the 13th of March 2023, held in and around CCPS. The prefects, CCA Leaders, Green Leaders, Peer Support Leaders and our Young Ambassador from Primary Three to Six had the opportunity to know other CCPS' student leaders during the camp through group activities and games. It was a great time of learning the 10 Canossian Principles with Sr Janet and putting those principles into good use throughout the camp's activities. Our student leaders learnt other lessons on leading with their hearts and being good influences. The camp provided skills for public speaking, and some simple handles on how to care for themselves physically and mentally. All of them had fun picking up new games, learning new cheers and getting to know CCPS' friends better.



Workshop sessions on 'Leading with the heart' and 'Being a good influence'



P6 Alaric, our Green Leader

Audiologists from Malaysia

Canossian School was delighted to host a group of 9 Audiologists from SoundLife Hearcare, a hearing centre with many branches in Malaysia on 23 March.

Our visitors viewed presentations which covered topics like the profile of our students, the Inclusion Model of Education in partnership with our sister school, Canossa Catholic Primary School and the unique audiological services Canossian School offers to support our students. They also had the opportunity to tour the school grounds, visiting the audiological testing room, ear mould lab and classrooms. They were invited to observe 2 lessons in our Primary 2 and Primary 4 classes where they witnessed differentiated teaching, the extensive use of visuals and the additional support provided to students, in comparison with mainstream schools.

At the end of the visit, our visitors shared that they found the visit informative, and they were impressed by the services and support rendered to our students, as well as the infrastructure of our audiological testing room and classrooms.



For your Information

Punggol Regional Library are conducting a few Accessible Programmes in **April**, suitable for persons with disabilities, their caregivers and professionals working in the disability sector! There are limited seats and availabilities will be based on a first come first serve basis, so do register as soon as possible.



Punggol Regional Library

Accessible Programmes

Programmes curated for persons with disabilities, their caregivers and professionals in the disability community

- 1 Book-A-Tour**

Join our library staff as they bring you on an exclusive one-to-one tour of the fully opened Punggol Regional Library!

45-minute private tour

3 slots in April
- 2 K9 Connections: Empowering lives with Assistance Dogs in Singapore**

Join us for a disability awareness session to learn about Assistance Dogs and Elke, The Seeing-Eye Dog and the transformative impact these amazing dogs have on the lives of persons with disabilities. This programme is suitable for participants of all ages.

Meet Elke, the Seeing-Eye Dog!

Sun, 16 April
11:00am to 12:00pm
- 3 Learning Key Word Sign Together**

Join the authors behind the 'Learning Key Word Sign (Singapore) Together' 3-part series books on how to use hand signs along with speech to support communication. This programme is suitable for participants of all ages.

Learn from the authors!

Sun, 23 April
12:30pm to 1:30pm

REGISTER NOW



go.gov.sg/nlbaccevent



Farewell to our colleagues

We would like to inform you that Ms. Jenny Tan and Mr. Aaron Quek, our Administration Manager and Audiologist, respectively, have recently left our school. We appreciate all the hard work and dedication they brought to their positions.

We would like to thank them for their contributions during their time here and wish them all the best in their future endeavours.

Our new Administration Manager and Audiologist will join us only in May, we will do everything we can to ensure that our students continue to receive the high-quality care they deserve.

Important Dates to Note

Dates	Events
Thursday, 6 April	Maundy Thursday, no support, dismissal at 1.30pm
Sunday, 9 April	Easter Sunday
Saturday, 15 April	Release of Canossian Charter
Monday, 24 April	Hari Raya Puasa School Holiday (in lieu of Public Holiday on Sat 22 Apr)
Monday, 1 May	Labour Day Holiday