

REACH

Center of excellence for the education of children with hearing loss

January 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 their own way by forming hearts, enlightening minds and empowering spirits to live in The Way, The Truth and The Life



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From the Principal's Desk

Dear Parents / Guardians

Welcome back to the start of a new academic year. I do hope that you have had a restful break with your families and that the joy of Christmas stays with you through the new year. First days at school are always exciting, mostly because of the promise they hold. The first day offers a clean slate on which we pencil in how we want the year to be for us.

As long as we are guided by the wisdom of our Foundress, St. Magdalene of Canossa, who believes that "The school is the harvest that costs but it yields the most fruits." Guided by this, our staff will continue to invest their love and dedication in nurturing all our students to their fullest potential.

This new year is special with life settling back to some form of normalcy with the 2-year battle against the pandemic behind us. The renewed vigilance on personal hygiene and social responsibility when unwell are precious habits we should continue to nurture.

With the return to regular modes of social interaction, we look forward to bringing back face-to-face dialogue sessions with parents. These sessions will begin with IEP meetings shortly after Chinese New Year. Other dialogue sessions and workshops for parents are planned and the schedule for the year will be released soon.

The school begins the year with some staffing changes. Both Ms Alice Tay and Mdm Elaine Lim to mainstream schools. While at the school, our school community has been enriched by their contributions. In turn, we hope they have been enriched both professionally and on a personal level with their stint in the school. We welcome back Mr Ko Kuan Woei and Mdm Pauline Tay who left the school for a short term for personal reasons.

God Bless.

Christina Michael (Ms)
Principal

Last year, 10 students completed their primary school education with us. All performed well and will begin their secondary education in a range of schools. We had two students who entered into secondary schools of their choice via the Direct School Admission and we hope they make their mark in these schools. We will continue to provide support to the schools that have received our students to ensure a smooth transition.

As Chinese New Year is upon us, we will have our celebrations on Friday 20 January. We end the school day with our Annual Chinese New Year mass with school dismissal at 1.30pm.

Eager to have our students settle into the natural rhythm of school life, we will begin with our afternoon support classes from Thursday 26 January and CCAs from Friday 27 January for **all** students.

As we embark on another adventure in learning with your children, we look forward to an even stronger home-school collaboration as we commit to working with each other in making your children the best versions of themselves.



Thanksgiving Day 2022

Thanksgiving Day 2022 returned with a vengeance after a 2-year hiatus due to the COVID19 pandemic. The school choir and band finally had the opportunity to perform before a 'live' audience and perform they did. Everyone was so grateful to have a Thanksgiving celebration similar to the ones held pre-pandemic days. All in all, it was indeed a memorable event for the school.



"United in common endeavour..."



Our Guest Speaker – Mr Peter Liem (CS alumni)



The Candy Man can and so can the CS choir...



A brilliant performance by the CS school band!

Christmas at the Village (18 Nov 2022)

Last year we were able to celebrate Christmas with a fun-filled carnival and loads of exciting games, glorious food once again. With the lifting of restrictions post-pandemic, staff, students and their families from all the sectors at the Village were able to partake in the day-long celebrations.

The day began with Holy Mass celebrated by Friar Derrick Yap, who shared the religious significance of the birth of the Infant Jesus. Following the mass, there was an auction of 4 paintings done by students from Canossa Catholic Primary School and us. Two of our students, Gerald Lim (Pri 6) and Audrey Zeng (Pri 3) jointly did a depiction of the Holy Spirit as a dove.



Our two artists, Gerald and Audrey, with their painting and the benefactor who purchased their painting

The festivities continued with performing groups from both schools, including a joint choir performance. Our school band held court with a variety of percussion pieces ranging from an electronic percussion numbers to body percussion numbers. Even our alumni band members returned to contribute their talent with a number of rousing performances.



What is a fair without organic market produce? Our gardening club set up a booth to sell fresh vegetables, mushrooms and the emblematic mistletoe plant.



Fresh vegetables on sale



A fair is only complete with lots of food, fun and games

Children's Museum

Canossion School's Choir was invited to perform at the official opening of the Children's Museum on 8 December 2022. It is a new museum in Singapore dedicated to children 12 years old and below. The Guest of honour was DPM Heng Swee Keat. The audience was captivated by the choir's melodious singing. The Band, together with the Choir put up a performance at the carnival festival on 10 December 2022. The children enjoyed the performance despite the number of rehearsals they had to attend. Well done Band and Choir members!



CS Choir with Guest-of-Honour, DPM Heng Swee Keat



Choir performed at the opening of the Children's Museum



Public performance by CS Band



A group photo was taken of the CS Band and Choir at the Children's Museum

For Your Information

Chinese New Year

The school will celebrate Chinese New Year on **20 Jan**. Students will report to school as usual from **7.00 am to 1.30 pm**.



Afternoon Support Classes & CCAs

- Afternoon classes will begin in Term 1 Week 4, 26 January.
- CCAs will begin in Term 1 Week 4, 27 January.
- Information will be provided to parents nearer the date.

School Operating Hours

The General Office will operate from 6.30am – 5.00pm on Monday to Thursday and 6.30am to 4.30pm on Friday. We will appreciate that your child is fetched timely after his/her after school activities.

School Terms for 2023

Semester 1	
Term 1	Tuesday 3 Jan ¹ to Friday 10 March
Term 2	Monday 20 March to Friday 26 May
Semester 2	
Term 3	Monday 26 June to Friday 1 September
Term 4	Monday 11 September to Friday 17 November

Scheduled School Holidays for 2023

Holiday	Date
Youth Day	Sunday 2 July <i>(The following Monday, 3 Jul 2022 will be a scheduled school holiday)</i>
Day after National Day	Thursday 10 August
Teachers' Day	Friday 1 September
Children's Day <i>(for primary schools and primary sections of full schools only)</i>	Friday 6 October

¹ Primary 1 and Kindergarten 1 will start school on Tuesday, 3 January 2023. Primary 2 to 6 and Kindergarten 2 will start school on Wednesday, 4 January 2023.



Public Holidays for 2023

Holiday	Date
New Year's Day	Sunday 1 January ²
Chinese New Year	Sunday 22 January ³
	Monday 23 January
Good Friday	Friday 7 April
Hari Raya Puasa	Saturday 22 April ⁴
Labour Day	Monday 1 May
Vesak Day	Friday 2 June
Hari Raya Haji	Thursday 29 June
National Day	Wednesday 9 August
Deepavali	Sunday 12 November ⁵
Christmas Day	Monday 25 December

² Monday, 2 Jan will be a public holiday.

³ Tuesday, 24 Jan will be a public holiday.

⁴ Monday, 24 Apr will be a school holiday and a designated day off-in-lieu, schools are closed including the General Office, Student Care Centre/Kindergarten Care (KCare) Centres.

⁵ Monday, 13 Nov will be a public holiday.

Getting ready for Special Education school? Parents share 8 tried-and-tested tips to prep your child for a good start

12 Dec 2022

Article is adapted from schoolbag.sg. Full article is available here:

<https://www.schoolbag.edu.sg/story/getting-ready-for-special-education-school-parents-share-8-tried-and-tested-tips-to-prep-your-child-for-a-good-start>

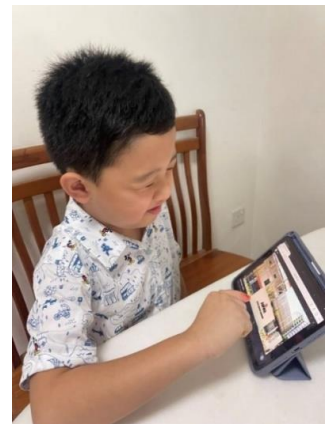
Transitions can be a challenge for any child, let alone those with special needs. There are new routines, new faces, new sounds and smells to get used to. You can ease your child into the first year of SPED school with these tips.

Tip #1: Use visuals and social stories to introduce new experiences

It is important to prep your child for the new experiences ahead. This could open up opportunities to discuss their feelings towards the impending changes. Parents could look for books of social scenarios, called social stories, that illustrate a social situation and help a child learn ways of behaving in that situation. Or they could share photos and videos of the child's school life ahead.

(Right) Before her son Jaeden started school at AWWA School @ Bedok, Ms Kristine Abegail Ng showed him photos and videos of what the school looks like and the school uniform he would be wearing.

Other parents may show pictures and social stories of typical school situations such as taking the bus or taking a snack break in class.



Tip #2: Speak with the school about your child and your concerns

After enrolment, parent Angela Yeo Xue Ting, mother of Xavier Leong Jia Jun, aged 7, had rich conversations with the Principal and staff of Canossian School (*right*). She shared about his strengths, interests and areas of difficulties. She noticed that spelling would be new to him and a potential area of challenge. His teacher taught her strategies to help.





The P1 orientation or the Parent Teacher Meeting at the start of the year is a good platform for parents to connect with teachers. A strong partnership between parents and teachers is critical for your child's smooth transition to a SPED school. Sharing information about your child helps the school to better understand their needs, and to put in place strategies or support to meet those needs.

For Xavier's parents, for example, conversations with the school made them realise the importance of enforcing the discipline of him wearing his hearing aids even when at home – this helps create the language-rich environment that children with hearing loss need to acquire language proficiency.

(Left) Xavier and his rewards chart, with stickers he earned for his persistence in completing tasks in school and at home.

Tip #3: Teach your child daily living skills

Primary school is a step of independence for many children, where they may be doing some things for themselves for the very first time.



Ahead of the new term, Madam Rabiah Bee started practising with her daughter Tiara Khalisha to feed herself and pack her schoolbag. Other daily living skills that a Primary 1 or Junior 1 student entering a SPED school may require include knowing how to use items such as their water bottle or lunchbox, and putting on their uniform and shoes.

(Left) Tiara learned to eat without help as part of gaining independence and getting ready for school.



Over at St. Andrew's Mission School (SAMS), Mr Kyaw Moe Hlaing, the father of nine-year-old Kaung Myat Kyaw, prepared his son for Primary 1 by teaching him how to put on his socks and shoes, replace his face cloth, and put on and take off his uniform, among other self-care and daily living skills.

(Left) Kaung got ready for Primary 1 by learning to put on shoes himself

Tip #4: Encourage good social behaviour



Sharing, turn-taking and having good manners are among the key skills that children need to have for healthy interactions with their new classmates and teachers. Parents can teach these skills by modelling and role-playing them with their child and their siblings.

(Left) Kaung learning to take turns while engaging in play with Mr Moe.

Tip #5: Build up their ability to focus and concentrate



Being able to focus and concentrate in a classroom setting is a valuable skill for any student – it facilitates learning in a group setting, and students will also enjoy school more.

Zavier's parents learned through his therapy sessions that he liked paper-cutting activities, and encouraged him to work on this to build up his ability to focus on the task before him; for Kaung, it was building with LEGO blocks.

(Left) Xavier likes paper-cutting activities, which help to build up his focus too.

(Right) Striving to complete his building structures helps Kaung increase his attention span.



Tip #6: Help to develop their ability to regulate their emotions and behaviour

Emotion regulation allows a child to control and adapt his or her behaviour in spite of a situation that triggers a negative feeling such as anxiety or anger. Helping children to learn about their emotion level and triggers allows adults to talk more easily about these situations with their children.

Social stories are especially useful in helping children learn strategies to deal with their emotions, in particular, for calming down and for handling frustration and anger.

For Kaung and his mother Ms Zin Zin, it was the use of a flipbook on feelings which helped Kaung to identify his emotions as well as acquire the vocabulary to express them.

(Right) Kaung using the "I Know What to Do When I'm Feeling" flipbook with his mother.



Tip #7: Managing new routines

For many pre-schoolers entering a SPED school, it takes time for them to get used to the new school hours. For one, students attending the afternoon sessions may have to get used to not having an afternoon nap.



For Asyiq Marzuqi Bin Abdullah, a 7-year-old student at MINDS – Fernvale Gardens School, having to board the school bus at 6.50am means getting up at 6am every morning. His mother, Mdm Syafiqah Binte Mohd Suhaimi, shared that she had to bring forward his bedtime in the evenings.

(Left) Asyiq goes to bed early so he is ready for an early school day.

Practising school routines at home even before the children start school can help them feel comfortable with new routines; it also helps parents to pre-empt potential challenges and manage them. Some examples of routines include eating from a lunch box, walking to the bus pick-up point, and following a visual timetable at home.

Tip #8: Celebrate little successes

The transition to SPED school is not always an easy or a smooth one – do encourage your child at each step, even the small ones. For Jaeden's parents, his first bus ride home was an especially remarkable milestone. Not only was Jaeden proud of himself for having ridden on his own, he looked forward to the next trip!



(Right) Jaeden alighting from the school bus after a day at school.

For Tiara, when she gets home from school, her brother, 15, and sister, 12, would shower her with affection while Madam Rabiah cooks chicken macaroni, her favourite dish, like a reward for attending school.

(Left) Tiara gets plenty of encouragement from her siblings for attending school.



Constantly affirm your child for their effort and celebrate every little success in their journey of starting school!