

JANUARY 2022

# EPSOM *Monthly*



# Foreword



Dear Readers,

Welcome to Epsom Magazine!

We are really excited to have so many exciting initiatives happening currently - especially the launch of our Mouratoglou Tennis Programme at Epsom (MTPE) - a collaboration between Patrick Mouratoglou and Epsom International School in Malaysia.

If any of you know anything about tennis then you will have heard of Patrick Mouratoglou whose academy in Nice, France is renowned for training the world's greatest tennis players - the most widely known being Serena Williams. He has trained young rising stars including Stefanos Tsitsipas, Coco Gauff, Holger Rune and Alexei Popyrin.

Our Tennis Programme is the Mouratoglou Academy's flagship Tennis and School programme in Asia. It will blend tennis youth player development and academia – equipping students of all ability levels with the knowledge, skills, competence and confidence to perform not only in their academics but also sport. The Programme will provide talented young athletes with a rigorous and intensive training schedule in order to work towards a professional tennis career.

As you all know, education is so much more than exams! Sport is integral to the holistic approach that we take at Epsom International School - it develops grit, determination, resilience and character. Through tennis and the wide range of activities on offer, even including this magazine, we hope that many more students will develop the skills and attributes required to be successful in their chosen career.

Best wishes and Happy Reading!

*Matthew Brown*

Headmaster

Epsom International School

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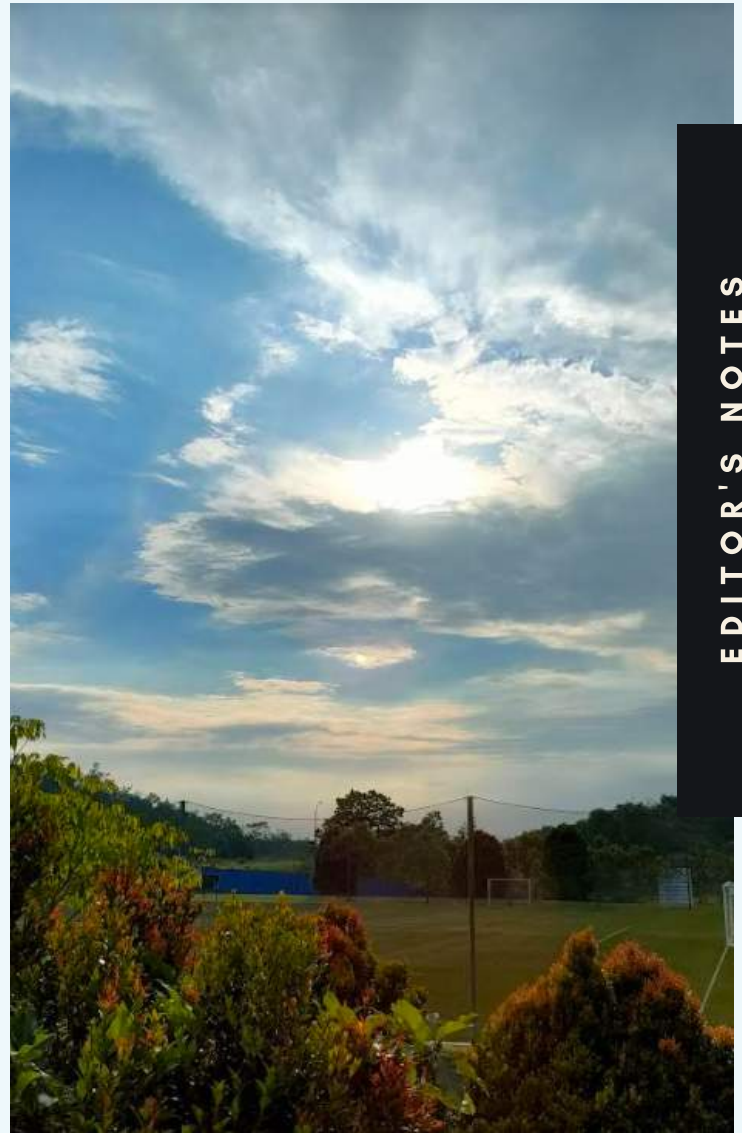
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# PASSION

Do you have anything that you are passionate about?

Well, for me, I have a great enthusiasm for journalism ! I love to record all memorable moments with words and photos. Even though talent and intelligence are important, I believe that strong passion is the key element that drives success. Having enthusiasm and enjoy whatever you are doing is super fulfilling.

Steve Jobs once said, "The only way to do great work is to LOVE what you do." Passion leads to your purpose in life. Have a think about what interests you and strive towards it.

**Cadence Ong Jing Han**  
**Chief Editor**



HNIT THIT KU MINGALAR PA

새해 복 많이 받으세요 С НОВЫМ ГОДОМ

புத்தாண்டு வாழ்த்துக்கள்

HAPPY NEW YEAR

新年快乐

SELAMAT TAHUN BAHARU CINA

FROHES NEUES JAHR FELIZ AÑO NUEVO

明けましておめでとうございます

BONNE ANNÉE KAL'Ĥ XRONI'Ā



# New Year Resolutions Wall

Prep School Students

(Kimura, Ted, Yuriika, James, Mear, Cedric, Angela Li)

今年我想  
APPLE  
的耳機,  
APPLE  
的手機  
和平板  
和一個電視。

1つ目に、今年は英語の本を読み、そして意味を理解できるようにがんばりたいと思います。

2つ目は、数学の文章問題を読みとけるようにがんばります。

3つ目は、感情を上手にコントロール。

My new year resolution is to read more books, get better at football and becomes better at maths.

朱4の今年のめくはうは朱4の兄とのけんかをすこで少なくすることです。毎日けんかをし、朱4は楽しくない人があはせん。朱4の一日の気分が全部だった一つのこととてだいなしになります。本当に少しだけでもこの気分をあらわれないようにしたいとお兄ちゃんけんかしたひ毎回こう思っています。これが朱4の今年のめくはうです。

올해는 내가 작 년 보 다 책 을 더 읽 고,  
수 여 을 더 잘 하 고 싶 고.

1. Tidur awal pada pukul Sembilan malam

2. Belajar bermain alat muzik yang baharu

3. Saya akan cuba belajar kerrahiran baharu.

4. Saya akan cuba membantu orang di dalam kesazahan



· 我想要学到更多新的技能。

· 我想要把我的英文说的更好

· 我想要在弹奏钢琴上取得更大的进步。

Improve

我想要学会踢足球，做一个好的守门员。

我想要变得更加勇敢。

一、我希望我可以在吃东西时逼一下我自己，因为我太挑食了(讨厌吃肉)，而那对我的身体和身高都有很大的影响。

二、我希望我可以提高我的素描水平，因为我想这方面的细节上加强。

三、我希望我可以加快我做数学题的速度，以我现在的速度，我认为还没有做到又快又好。



# CNY Celebration in Epsom

Cadence Ong Jing Han & Goh Xin Ling

## CALLIGRAPHY

On 22th January, there was a **calligraphy workshop** took place at the GC. Mr. Brown was excited to learn Chinese calligraphy!

Two days after the workshop, during lunchtime, the Mandarin department organised another **calligraphy hands-on activity** outside the dining hall.

**Calligraphy competition** was also held and prizes were given away to winners from both native and non-native Chinese categories.

**Spring couplets** were being pasted all around the school to spice the CNY atmosphere up.



## CNY SOCIAL

Kai and Derick organised a CNY social night on 26th January.

On that night, most of the students were dressed in Cheongsam and Samfu. **Yeesang** was pre-ordered and the students were shouting "Heng ah Ong ah Huat ah" while toosing yeesang.

Besides, **Chinese Karaoke** was held and CNY songs were sung. There was also a **CNY quiz session**. At the same time, the **movie "Mermaid"** was showing on screen at the GC.

Lastly, **Mandarin oranges** were distributed to the students. Everyone had an enjoyable night that day.





## CNY ASSEMBLY

Chatter and shuffling that once echoed through the theatre quietened as the lights dimmed, signalling the start of the gracious assembly. A sudden entrance of the Dragon Dance from the left allowed for cheers from the audience to erupt, with prep school pupils beneath said dragon orchestrating the swish movements of it. The Chinese New Year Assembly is a yearly recurring event with astounding talents performing each year; this year however was extra special as the school had been sponsored by the “**Kong Zi Institute UM**”, of which the school showed its appreciation in the gift exchange later on. The Kong Zi Institute UM also known as Confucius Institute helps with the HSK Program that is offered in school and aims to provide an understanding of China and the Chinese language.

This year's Chinese New Year Assembly was hosted by the ever delightful Derick, Linda and Lynn. They introduced each act (in three different languages!!!) and gave context accordingly, starting their role off introducing the assembly and welcoming Mr. Brown on stage to speak on zodiacs and encourage us to reflect. The vast abilities of the prep school were presented for fellow students and parents to see after, as they gasp at younger years' adorable dance moves and awe at the delivery of Chinese wishes. This series of performances started with Years 3 and 4 reciting a famous poem called “**The Morning of Spring**” [春晓], followed by “**New Year's visits**” [拜年], a dance by the Year 1 and 2 pupils and Wishing Words of the Lunar New Year and another poem recital “**Little Snowman of the Spring Festival**” [小雪人] by the Years 5 and 6. As the prep school scurried off stage proud, we were then graced by the presence of a **Chinese Zither** on stage along with a musician by the name of Tan Sooe who enthralled us with a lovely song. The Chinese Zither for those unfamiliar is a Chinese plucked Zither, more colloquially known as the “Guzheng”. This Chinese Zither act was also the first performance of which was from the KongZi Institute UM.



After the applause was given, a coloured spotlight illuminated the stage as the anticipating crowd welcomed familiar faces, with Linda and Tiffany from Year 12 performing wonderful, elegant **Chinese dances**. The flowing nature of the dress sleeves trailing behind their arms, creating entrancing shapes. After this wonderful display our ears were further treated by musicians performing a **traditional instrumental show** “Beaming with joy” by Mr. Lee on the erhu, Wonwoo on the flute, Yi Lai on the pipa, Kaith on the cello and Molly on the tambourine; following that a performance by Everest and Ali from Year 10 appeared, singing a **modern Chinese song**. Now you might not know what the pipa and the erhu is and if so don’t fret; the pipa is a traditional Chinese musical instrument, belonging to the plucked category of instruments, and the erhu is a two-stringed bowed musical instrument.



Before we knew it, it was time for the last performance of the night, and this performance might have been one many were looking forward to as an **award winning Bian Lian** (Chinese face-changing) **performer** was invited to perform. There were high expectations which were definitely met as the enthusiastic performer enticed the audience, cheers and applause ringing from the crowd as we reached and hoped to be the chosen one, our hands reaching out to get... a fist bump. (of which I did get, not to brag :)

Overall, it was an amazing afternoon as I was enthralled by all the performances. I would like to repeat my thanks on behalf to all the performers and people involved for making this Chinese New Year Assembly absolutely astounding.



# The Legend of 'Nian'

Chua Zhi Yu

Once upon a time, there was a monster in China known as **nian** with fangs and horns. Most of the time, **nian** hid itself in the dark sea. Nonetheless, it would climb onshore every Chinese New Year's Eve to hunt people and livestock. To prevent getting killed by **nian**, the villagers would escape to the remote mountain.



It was New Year's Eve again. People were busy helping the old and the young to take refuge in the mountains when a beggar came to the village. In a scene of chaos, no one cared about the beggar.

An old lady from the east of the village approached him with some food and persuaded him to hide in the mountain to avoid **nian**. However, the beggar was not convinced. Instead, he requested to stay overnight at her house and promised to chase **nian** away in reward. The old lady was confused and continued persuading him. The beggar

smiled without replying a word. She had no choice but to leave home and escape to the mountain alone.

At midnight, **nian** broke into the village and it realised that the atmosphere in the village was different from previous years. This year, there was a house in the east brightly lit with candles with the doors pasted with red papers.

**Nian** glared at all the strange things. Caught by rage and irritation, it swooped to the front door with a mad scream. This was when a loud cracking sound burst in the courtyard which has



caused **nian** to tremble all over and dare not move forward. At this time, the door of the old lady's house opened wide and the beggar appeared in a red gown, roaring with laughter. **Nian** turned pale in shock and fled in fright.

The next day was the first day of Chinese New Year. People were surprised to find out that the village was safe and sound. The old lady thought of the beggar and immediately told the villagers about his promise. The villagers quickly rushed to the old lady's house - red papers were everywhere, a pile of unburnt bamboo was still "popping" and a few red candles in the house were still glowing... The villagers came to realise that these were what chased **nian** away. It turned out that **nian** was afraid of bright light, red colour and loud cracking sound.

In order to celebrate that the monster was defeated, the excited villagers changed into new clothes and hats, visiting their neighbours to share their happiness. The news spread quickly to the surrounding villages and everyone now knew how to chase **nian** away. From then on, on every New Year's Eve, people would paste spring couplets and set off firecrackers to keep the evil spirits away.

Most of the traditions are inherited till today. According to the legend of **nian**, celebrating Chinese New Year is also known as "Guo Nian", which means surviving **nian**'s attack. Red becomes the lucky colour and could be seen everywhere during Chinese New Year.



<https://www.esplanade.com/offstage/arts/story-of-nian>



# Fun Facts About CNY

Bernie Tan Wai Ling



## CNY Don'ts \_\_\_\_\_

- Washing hair during CNY will wash away good luck and fortune
- Breaking plates will bring bad luck
- Lending or borrowing money will lead to be in debt
- Black or white clothes are prevented as they are unlucky colors

## Each Year Start With a New Zodiac Sign

- Each year is represented by different animals
- Each animal has its own unique characteristics and it is believed that if you are born in a particular year then you will have some of the characteristics of that animal.
- Goes in order like this: Rat, Ox, Tiger, Rabbit, Dragon, Snake, Horse, Goat, Monkey, Rooster, Dog and Pig.

## Chinese New Year falls on different days each year

- Usually late January and Early February
- The date is worked out by the full moon

## Reunion dinner is a ritual.

- Dine in a restaurant or having simple meal at home on Chinese New Year's Eves
- Celebrate the past year while spend quality time with family
- Families usually eats at round tables as circle symbolizes unity

## CNY decorations are mostly in red.

- Red symbolizes happiness, good wealth and prosperity
- Putting up red decorations and dressed in red are believed to chase away the bad lucks and evil spirits like Nian

## Chinese New Year last for 15 days

- But public holidays are given for a few days only
- The last day of CNY is known as lantern festival or Gap Goh Mei.
- Gap Goh Mei can be considered as Chinese Valentine's Day. In the older days, unmarried ladies would write their name and contact details on mandarin oranges and toss them into the river on Chap Goh Mei. Unmarried men would then scoop the mandarin oranges up and contact them, allowing these single ladies to marry good husbands.

## Receiving Red Envelopes (Angpow)

- Children are given red packets with money inside
- Only married couples are allowed to distribute red envelopes
- Children usually greet elderly before receiving angpows.
- Some greetings include:
  - Gong Xi Fa Cai: "Wish you wealth and prosperity"
  - Cai Yuan Gun Gun: "May wealth come pouring in"
  - Xin Xiang Shi Cheng: "May all your wishes come true"
  - Shen Ti Jian Kang: "Wish you good health"

CNY

FACTS



**"Cheers to a new year,  
another chance for us  
to get it right."**

– Oprah Winfrey



# New School, New Experience

Ong Hui Dawn

The first days of school are always a little stressful. Unfamiliar faces with judgy eyes, confusing campus layouts, and the stressful workload that teachers hand out, it all takes a while to get used to. Except unlike everyone else, I joined in the second term, meaning my first day was extremely nerve-racking. However, when I first arrived at Epsom, I found that it was actually quite the opposite, thankfully!

I found it fairly easy to make new friends, with the cordial and welcoming atmosphere that the students have managed to create within the campus. People came up to me to introduce themselves and we struck up conversations with ease. I quickly realised that there were many interesting characters in Epsom. For example, some students excel in sports, some are musically inclined, and some are incredibly passionate about the subjects that they are taking. Even with our differences, I felt like I was received with open arms and I quickly became close with a few of the students!



When I was first doing my research for college during November 2021, what really caught my eye was the campus of Epsom and I am glad to say that it did not disappoint. Of course, the classes and labs were very well equipped, but I have to say my favourite spot in school is still the comfortable bean bags placed inside the Grayling Centre. Not to mention the countless beautiful sunsets and night skies I've witnessed due to the excellent location of the college. I was amazed to see the sky filled with twinkling stars at night!

I chose Epsom because I believe that it will bring me lots of opportunities that will take me further in life. Now, I am surrounded by hard-working and ambitious people that motivate me to do the same. I am sure that I will be able to achieve all my goals and I am planning to make the most out of my college experience. I can't wait to see what 2022 brings for all of us!





# Considering Fast Track ? Look Here !

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Aloysius Ng Kar Foon



As a student with an underprivileged financial background, the ASEAN Bright Sparks Scholarship from ECM Libra is my saving grace. Maybe you would ask, why A-Level? Why not STPM or matriculation? Well, I would like to pursue my tertiary education in Singapore and A-Level will definitely be the best stepping stone for me as the qualification is well-known and accepted internationally. The fast track A-Level programme which takes only 15 months to complete saves me a lot of time - imagine I can earn a **worldwide-recognised certification in less than 2 years !**

Another good thing about this programme is that you will be in a **small class with less than 15 students** which I believe would enhance students' learning experience as teachers could focus on each student better. Not to mention the **facilities** in the school such as gym room, sports hall, swimming pool and dance studio that provide us a great place to unwind after one whole tired schooling day. Besides, all the students here, especially my fast track friends and housemates, **treat me as their family**, which really cures my homesickness.

On the cons side, you will have to be really **hardworking and self-disciplined** at all times as you are required to complete the entire AS syllabus within months in order to enter the October cycle AS exams. In fact, I have lost my summer break to attend extra lessons and force myself to study day and night to catch up with the syllabus. However, everything was worth it. I am glad that my hard work paid off and I scored well in my AS exams.

So my advice is, if you are a **resilient and highly-motivated** person, ECI M A-Level Fast Track programme is the best pathway for you to challenge yourself and develop your potential.



“

Small group setting enables teachers to better focus on each student and allows me to befriend my classmates more easily.

Wong Zi Ming

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Fast track programme **saves time** for SPM students who are affected by delayed SPM due to COVID-19. As a fast tracker, I have a **packed schedule** and for the first few months, I even had extra classes during CCA time and over the summer break. It is undeniable that completing A-Level within 15 months and having to sit for AS exams after studying for months are quite challenging. However, with **highly-motivated classmates and caring teachers who prioritise students' mental health**, we are able to beat the odds and pass our AS exams with flying colours. Besides, the **small group setting** enables teachers to better focus on each student and allows me to befriend my classmates more easily. There is a strong bond formed between me and my friends despite all of us having different cultural backgrounds. I value every moment spent with my fast track friends and I believe that our friendship will be a lifelong friendship.



# It sounds crazy but it's doable :)

If I were given a second chance, I would still choose the fast track programme.

The first reason being it really **saves me a lot of time**. As SPM was delayed due to COVID-19 outbreak, if I choose normal track, I can only complete my A-Level by September 2023. With this 15-month programme, I can graduate one year earlier than it should be to pursue my dream of undertaking my undergraduate studies overseas !

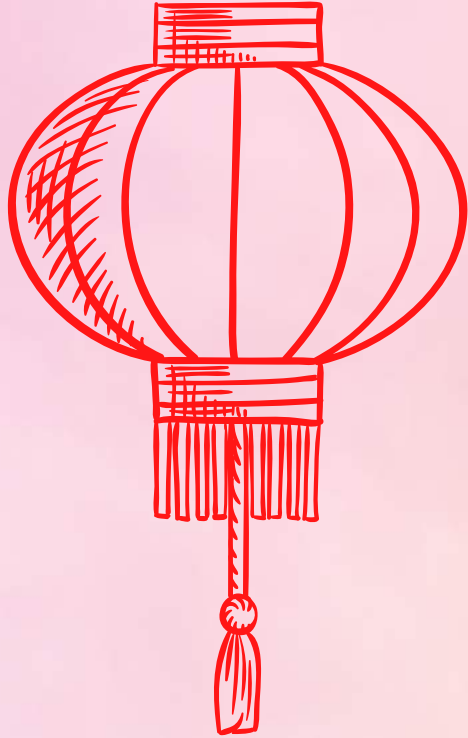
Even though it is super **challenging** to complete the entire AS syllabus within months, with self-discipline, hard work, group study with friends and teachers' guidance, we have proved by our recent AS exam results that nothing is impossible !

When the going gets tough, the tough get going. Through the process, you will learn how to **balance** your academics, extra curricular activities and leadership role in the school. At the end of the day, you will definitely be surprised that your **time management skills** have been enhanced and you will become a better you !

Anyway, everything has its pros and cons. I would say that the Fast Track A-Level Programme is only suitable for you if you **relish challenges** and are able to **work under pressure**. If you are an extraordinarily motivated person and enjoy a fast-paced study environment - welcome to the fast track family :)







**CHIEF EDITOR**

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