

LET'S TALK

Julia Gabriel
EDUCATION



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SPOTLIGHT ON...

Head of Centre,
Chiltern House Thomson

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ON THE COVER



EduDrama® is at the heart of everything we do at Julia Gabriel Education. This unique learning philosophy, developed by Julia Gabriel over 25 years ago, involves exploration and discovery within the most positive and enjoyable environment, inspired by educators who are passionate about language, literacy, communication, the arts and the young children and students in their care. Mark Gabriel, Director and Senior Teacher, has been a mentor, facilitator and friend to countless students for the past 15 years. In addition to his role within the company leadership, Mark teaches a variety of programmes for Julia Gabriel Centre, heads the Julia Gabriel School of Education (our adult training arm) and is an adjudicator and tournament organiser for both the Singapore Schools Debating Championships (sponsored by Julia Gabriel Centre) and the World Schools Debating Championships.

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Head of Centre,
Chiltern House Thomson**



EDITORIAL

We ended 2014 on a high note with two weeks of exciting holiday programmes at Julia Gabriel Centre (JGC), Chengzhu Mandarin Centre and Chiltern House Preschool. Holiday programmes are the perfect way to bridge the gap between the end of an academic term and a long school break because they create continuity of learning without all the pressure of school! This December we saw an increase in the number of children attending our holiday programmes at JGC and Chengzhu, including children experiencing our philosophy for the first time. Thank you to all our students, parents and staff for helping to make these holiday adventures such a success!

Of course, the end of Term 4 last year meant saying goodbye to the black and white house that had been home to Chiltern House Halifax Road for so many years. We closed the doors on our oldest preschool location for the final time with more than a few tears, but as the saying goes, 'when one door closes another door opens' — and so it was with our brand new Chiltern House Thomson. A new location and new look! We hope you like it. Head of Centre at Thomson, Charmaine Klyne, featured in 'Spotlight On...' (page 8), tells us what she thinks of her new 'office'!

We also bade farewell to our Kindergarten 2 students at Chiltern House, who thrilled us with their wonderful performances during the end of year celebrations held at the NUS Cultural Centre. Witnessing the creativity of each piece combined with the vitality and confidence of the students left me feeling equally confident of letting them go, knowing they were well prepared for the challenges ahead as they start their primary school journey. On page 6, Music Teacher and K2 Celebrations Stage Manager, Shane Gill, gives us a peek behind the scenes of the event.

Positive and joyful collaborations between staff, students and parents, are what helps make events such as the K2 Celebrations successful and meaningful learning experiences. We look forward to many more throughout the coming year.

I wish you all a happy, healthy and harmonious year ahead in 2015 and the Year of the Sheep.

Fiona

Fiona Walker, Chief Executive Officer

YOUNG PARENTS TODDLER SEMINAR, 2015

Julia Gabriel Education

Join Fiona Walker, Julia Gabriel Education CEO, and Huang Ying, Head of Chengzhu Mandarin Centre, when they present on the topic of bilingualism, as part of a panel of experts at this year's *Young Parents Toddler Seminar*.

Venue: Holiday Inn, Orchard City Centre, Level 2
Date: Saturday 28 February
Time: 1.00 - 4.00pm

For full details please visit
www.youngparents.com.sg/events

CHINESE CULTURAL EVENING

Chengzhu Mandarin Centre

Extend your Chinese New Year celebrations with a visit to Chengzhu Mandarin Centre to participate in a host of Chinese cultural activities such as bamboo dancing, dumpling making, ink painting and a traditional tea ceremony. Enjoy puppet shows, traditional Chinese music recitals, and dramatised folk tales, all performed by our talented team of Mandarin educators.

Venue: Chengzhu Mandarin Centre
#03-01 Rochester Mall
Date: Saturday 7 March
Time: 6.00 - 7.30pm

For more details please contact 6737 5348



JULIA GABRIEL EDUCATION RECOMMENDS....

BEWARE OF INFORMATION OVERLOAD!

The Guardian online recently carried an interesting article by neuroscientist Daniel J Levitin ('Why the modern world is bad for your brain', 18 January 2015), in which he describes how and why we are neurally addicted to checking email, Facebook and Twitter. He writes about the delusion of multi-tasking and how, rather than making us more efficient (we all like to think it does!), it can ultimately lead to us making very bad decisions!

Levitin also brilliantly, and somewhat sardonically, sums up our use of the smartphone:

"Our smartphones have become Swiss army knife-like appliances that include a dictionary, calculator, web browser, email, Game Boy, appointment calendar, voice recorder, guitar tuner, weather forecaster, GPS, texter, tweeter, Facebook updater, and flashlight. They're more powerful and do more things than the most advanced computer at IBM corporate headquarters 30 years ago. And we use them all the time, part of a 21st-century mania for cramming everything we do into every single spare moment of downtime."

For the complete article see: www.theguardian.com/science/2015/jan/18/modern-world-bad-for-brain-daniel-j-levitin-organized-mind-information-overload

Happy 25th JGC!

"On behalf of all Trinity College London examiners who have had the pleasure and privilege of assessing the work of students at the Julia Gabriel Centre Singapore — all best wishes and congratulations on achieving this important milestone. We look forward to continuing our professional relationship for the next quarter century".

John Gardyne, MA, BA (Hons), *Dip Theatre Studies*
Head of Drama and Performance, Trinity College London

SILVER IS THE NEW RED!

Best in Creative Speech and Drama voted by readers of Parents World magazine.



JULIA GABRIEL CENTRE



2015 marks 25 years of Julia Gabriel Centre (JGC), the original speech and drama centre in Singapore and the first to be recognised by the Ministry of Education. From just a handful of students attending one class in the original black and white house in Halifax Road (since demolished), Julia Gabriel Centre has grown exponentially both in terms of student numbers and the range of programmes, activities and opportunities now available to customers and staff.

JGC remains at the forefront of understanding and expertise in the fields of drama, speech and communication arts and early childhood education and is widely recognised as such. Our founder Julia Gabriel, CEO Fiona Walker and senior educators are frequently called upon to share their experience and knowledge at seminars, conferences, talks and presentations across the Asia Pacific Region or to contribute opinion pieces and tips to a wide range of leading print and online publications. We love to share what we have learned over the years and to encourage others to become lifelong learners too.

The centre's unique EduDrama philosophy continues to form the foundation of every programme and teaching methodology. As Julia explains, 'EduDrama combines children's drama with planned educational outcomes, to foster learning through interaction and active involvement and to engage children in using and extending their language, communication, knowledge and strengths.' (Gabriel, J. 2014. *EduDrama: A Guide to Speech and Drama using the unique Julia Gabriel Education teaching methodology*, Singapore, September 21.)

As educators, we take the approach that our role is best served as facilitator — after all, you are your child's first and most important teacher! Our wonderful team of educators, rich in their diversity of age, nationality, experience and outlook, all share a passion for children and education that enables them to guide and mentor

their students over and above that of the usual role of teacher, instead, becoming co-creator and friend.

We are thrilled that so many of our early JGC students remain in touch with us. We have followed the careers of past students and educators alike, watching as they grow, flourish and achieve success, just like any proud, doting parent!

Thank you to everyone who has been and continues to be a part of the JGC community over the past 25 years, and for allowing us to share in this exciting learning journey with you. We are so excited about the next 25!

EduDrama workshop at September 21

Founder and Director Julia Gabriel led fellow educators through an interactive workshop on Saturday 15th November 2014, in partnership with September 21 Enterprise, publisher of Julia's latest book *EduDrama: A Guide to Speech and Drama using the unique Julia Gabriel Education teaching methodology*. Julia shared her vast experience of drama and early childhood learning with an eager group of participants, who honed their knowledge and skills, while learning new strategies and techniques for engaging their students.



JGC December 2014 Holiday Programmes

It may not have snowed in Singapore for Christmas but that didn't stop children enjoying their very own winter wonderland when they attended the PlayNest and PlayClub holiday programmes at Julia Gabriel Centre (JGC) last December. Infants and toddlers, along with their parent or caregiver, met all kinds of cold weather loving creatures, including Salty the Snowman and Picasso the Penguin, as they immersed themselves in festive songs, music, drama, stories and art and craft activities. Meanwhile, children in Nursery 1 and above took on the guise of detective or secret agent in a range of adventures that involved searching for clues, solving problems and unearthing hidden secrets. And students in Primary 1 and above experienced a little bit of everything that JGC's core curricula offers in Speech and Drama and Readers and Writers 'camps'. These unique holiday programmes overflowed with exciting age-appropriate activities that involved creating original dramas, role-play and improvisation, enjoying fiction and non-fiction, creating personal narratives, self-publishing and performance to an invited audience.



Trinity College London Assessments

Trinity College London (TCL) assessments took place at Julia Gabriel Centre between 8th and 22nd November 2014, when students in Kindergarten 2 and above presented for the Young Performer's Certificate, the Speech Communication Arts Joint Assessment Scheme and individual examinations in Speech and Drama, Communication Skills, Performance Arts and Musical Theatre. TCL examiners Christopher Young and Carol Noakes were impressed with the overall standard of the students.

CHENGZHU MANDARIN CENTRE

Best in Creative and Mandarin Learning Programmes voted by readers of Parents World magazine



Book Fair

During weeks 10 and 11 of Term 4 2014, Chengzhu Mandarin Centre hosted You Yi Book Store during a two-week book fair. The book fair is a regular occurrence in the centre and a great way to encourage Mandarin language and literacy skills, to introduce students to the rich and wonderful world of traditional Chinese literature, including poetry and folk tales, and to promote a love of books generally. Be sure to check out The StoryHouse — the centre's beautiful children's library — for any new books in stock.

Little Pandas

We are getting excited about launching Little Pandas at Chiltern House Mountbatten! This fully Mandarin preschool programme includes Language, Mathematics, Science, Music, Speech and Drama, Art and Craft, Cookery, Cultural Arts, snack time, and free and guided play within the curriculum. Contact 6737 5348 for more details about vacancies and how to register.



CHILTERN HOUSE PRESCHOOL

2014 — THE YEAR WE TURNED 20 AND ATE CAKE!

K2 CELEBRATIONS: BEHIND THE CURTAIN



A great deal of hard work goes into making the Kindergarten 2 Celebration a success, with many people involved behind the scenes months before the actual event, as well as on the night itself.

Shane Gill, Chiltern House Music Teacher, and stage manager for all three celebration nights in 2014, shares here a little insight about what goes on 'behind the scenes' long before the curtain rises:

Towards the end of Term 4 of each academic year, something special happens at Chiltern House. The children and staff of the graduating classes bring to life a night of art and music — the Kindergarten 2 Celebration Night!

But before that comes the part that many do not see. Preparation for the event starts in Term 3, when specialist teachers brainstorm ideas for the different pieces to be performed. The teachers then bring these ideas to the classroom for the children to have their say in how to make them even better. The students then prepare props under the guidance of their teachers. With all the ideas in, the teachers and children work hand in hand, going through many hours of rehearsals in anticipation of the main event.

When the day finally comes around, excitement is in the air and the children demonstrate real focus and courage to pull off three performances each: Music, Speech and Drama and Mandarin Speech and Drama; owning the space with confidence and assurance that belies their young age. By the end of the night the beaming smiles on the faces of the children, teachers and even the parents, prove that all the hard work and effort has been well worth it.

Chiltern House Carnival 2014

The Chiltern House Preschool end-of-year carnivals, held across our centres on 14th November last year, raised a combined total of \$16,415.10 for the Children's Cancer Foundation. Wow! What a great way to round off our 20th birthday celebrations! Thank you to all our fantastic Chiltern House parents and students, as well as all our staff, for ensuring that the carnivals were a resounding success! Can we beat that total this year...?

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Ready! Steady! Go!

Sun, sand, sea, clues, creative thinking and a dose of healthy competition saw children and their families chasing around Sentosa as part of the Chiltern House Amazing Race, on 17th November 2014. Though only one family could come first, everyone was a winner, receiving a special trophy at the end of an exhausting but exhilarating race!



Chiltern House Thomson joins the fold

As one door closes another door opens and so it was with Chiltern House Halifax Road at the end of 2014. We said our goodbyes. There were tears. But we left excited about the future nonetheless. The metamorphosis of our first Chiltern House centre from a colonial-style black and white building into a brand new modern space, that reflects our recent new branding, cushioned the sadness felt at leaving Halifax Road behind. At the beginning of Term 1 2015, we threw open the doors of Chiltern House Thomson, welcoming back existing students and gently ushering in those joining Nursery 1. It's going to be an exciting learning journey for us all!

TIPS TO HELP YOUR CHILD SELF-MOTIVATE

“Nurturing intrinsic motivation, which is goal orientated rather than reward orientated, encourages a love of learning, natural curiosity and maximum effort to achieve.”



By Fiona Walker, Chief Executive Officer, Julia Gabriel Education

All children are born with an intrinsic motivation to learn. As they grow, however, they are faced with so many extrinsic influences: expectations from parents and teachers to perform well, a fear of failure or letting others down, fear of punishment, and lack of stimulation. This can lead them to lose their natural ability to self-motivate. In fact the messages that we give our children, at home and in school, can profoundly affect their attitude to learning. So much so that if we are not careful, they can develop into disaffected, disinterested and highly demotivated teenagers!

The majority of education systems measure success in terms of results and, by default, parents tend to do the same. Encouragement to succeed, do well or complete a task often involves the prospect of a reward if a child lives up to expectations and punishment if they do not. But studies indicate that punishment or persistently negative criticism demotivates learning while nurturing intrinsic motivation, which is goal orientated rather than reward orientated, encourages a love of learning, natural curiosity and maximum effort to achieve.

Here's how to encourage self-motivation in your child:

Establish strong self-belief from the start. Show your child you believe in them from the very beginning. Nurturing words and touches, a caring tone of voice, celebration of little successes and praise for effort helps form your child's attitude towards their own ability to achieve. Positive thinking directly affects their level of motivation.

Create the right environment. Growing up in a loving, supportive and affirming environment that respects individuality and fosters independence creates a strong sense of self-worth. We can enable this by creating a structure for our children, with clear boundaries and set routines that help them feel safe, secure and manage expectations. Similar to positive thinking, positive emotions about self and others increases a child's level of motivation.

What sort of learner is your child? All children are not all motivated in the same way. Just as with adults, children have different likes, dislikes and natural abilities so some children's natural motivation to learn may require more nurturing and

stimulation than others. Know and understand your child's instinctive learning style. Are they an auditory, visual or kinaesthetic learner? Observe if your child becomes bored easily. Intelligent children often become demotivated through lack of stimulation so ask yourself how much your child really loves what they are doing?

Exposure to a variety of experiences helps activate interest as your child discovers what excites them and what they are good at. Whether going on a nature trail along the beach or attending an enrichment programme they enjoy, stimulating activities that arouse natural curiosity help create a love of learning and will motivate your child's innate desire to discover.

Let your child decide. When a child feels interested and good about what they are doing, their confidence grows and with it their own desire to learn and achieve. Support your child as they discover their niche or passions. Their own willingness to succeed is a far deeper motivation for learning than acting out of a willingness to please parents or teachers.

Failure is good! Research shows that our inability to accept failure as a good thing demotivates our desire to try again, so encourage your child to accept failure as a positive learning experience. Talk to your child about what they have achieved rather than what they have not, offering praise and supportive comments where appropriate. Providing honest and realistic feedback about the outcome of an activity, performance or your child's behaviour is important but avoid negative judgements and criticisms about their ability that are likely to knock their confidence and self-esteem.

Set attainable goals that challenge your child but enable them to feel good about their achievements and prospects of further success. Nurture your child's sense of “I can” rather than “I can't” - they are more likely to want to try again and again and again.

Be an inspirational role model. There is no greater spark to self-motivation than looking up to someone we love and admire who inspires us to succeed. We all have our heroes but you are your child's first and closest teacher with the most power to ensure they grow up to be happy, well rounded and self-achieving adults.

SPOTLIGHT ON...

CHARMAINE KLYNE, HEAD OF CENTRE, CHILTERN HOUSE THOMSON

Charmaine Klyne, Head of Centre at Chiltern House Thomson, admits there is a tear or two among her staff when they reminisce about the old black and white building that accommodated Chiltern House Halifax Road for so many years. "I felt very sad to leave my 'home'! It was a warm, very friendly and even crazy place at times. It's where many of us grew."

On 30th December, Charmaine, along with members of her team, returned to Halifax to sing Auld Lang Syne. A sort of symbolic final farewell. "It was a very emotional moment", says Charmaine. Chiltern House Preschool has been Charmaine's home away from home for the past ten years, the last three as Head of Centre at Chiltern House Halifax Road, before its relocation to the SLF building on Thomson Road. This latest Chiltern House branch is dramatically different from all the others. It is the first to represent the preschool's rebranded appearance. "The look is very clean. It's certainly very new in every way!", Charmaine



declares. "It does take a little getting used to but we have to change with the times - and I've been promising my Chiltern House Halifax parents that we will have a bigger space. Our assembly hall used to get so cramped that that there was standing room only for parents — on tip-toes!"

"Now, we have ten classrooms, when previously we had only seven. This means we are able to open our pre-nursery in Term 2, which we are excited about. There are two activity



rooms for speech and drama, music, and assemblies. And we have a staff room. Something we never had before!" (Cue excitement from Charmaine.)

One thing that Charmaine assures everyone will never change is the unique Chiltern House culture; reflected in the school's approach to its entire community — staff, students and parents. As Head of Centre, Charmaine views collaboration with her team as key to ensuring a smooth operation and to maintaining quality. She describes her approach to leadership as relaxed and tactful, yet firm, preferring open communication and role-modelling expectations, as opposed to cracking the whip! "Communication is one of the most important elements to forming strong relationships and successful partnerships. I don't work alone! My team is mature and passionate about

what they do. There are always bound to be clashes from time to time but I never allow any negative differences to fester. We sit down, we work things out, we carry on! I enjoy working with and for my team!"

Teaching for Charmaine continues to be a lifelong learning experience that enables her to grow simultaneously with the students under her care. "I enjoy my work enormously", Charmaine says. "Yes, it is a very challenging job and I do have my ups and down. But looking at the children and seeing how we have helped them develop, makes it all worthwhile. I've also taken my 'teachings' back home and have started working with my grandchildren!"

Chiltern House Preschool's 'nurturing qualities of home' have come full circle!

