

VAS is in a good position in this regard, as we offer both the MOET and international education programme. That means we stand in the middle of an international school and a State school. We can, therefore, provide students with the best of both worlds. We want to make sure we maintain the Vietnamese national identity and culture values in our students and at the same time, give them educational passports to go where they wish to go as confident global citizens.

Please elaborate on the policies at VAS that can help students feel confident wherever they go?

We offer two education pathways. The first is Cambridge academic programme in English combined with MOET programme. The second is Cambridge academic English combined with the MOET programme. Our duty is to help parents choose the right pathway that is relevant to their children's abilities.

We continue to improve the quality of our teaching team, both foreign and local, avoid overlaps and enhance the efficiency in teaching. We save 50% of hours for English and subjects taught in English.

We've just finished the second school year implementing Cambridge programme. We get more core staff in place and are gaining knowledge to deliver the programme better all the time. At the end of the day, we gear towards having a harmonious combination and connection between the Cambridge and MOET programmes.

I don't believe in perfection. Perfection only appears at some moments in time. So, we have the mindset that we keep improving and developing continuously. We benchmark ourselves, from senior managers to security guards. We must understand our core values and that our students and parents are the focus of our work so that we can gain further success.

How can VAS make parents feel comfortable with their choice for their children's education?

We work with parents in a partnership. We make close contacts among the school, teachers, students and parents. We help students participate in learning in an active way. Parents

SUMMER 2015 AT VAS

Vietnam Australia International School (VAS) is running its Summer Discovery 2015 programme entitled "Learning through Core Values." There are two options: (i) VAS Traditional Summer Programme and (ii) VAS English Summer Camp Programme. Both options are supplemented by exciting camping field trips and VAS Summer Fair 2015.

The Traditional Programme is six weeks long with 30% of time for the national curriculum, another 30% for the Cambridge curriculum and the remaining 40% for core values and life skills learning, extra-curricular activities and camping trips. The six-week long English Summer Camp Programme is facilitated fully in English language by professionally trained staff comprising university students, graduates, ESL teachers and specialists/celebrities. The Programme is activity-based and built on the concept of the American Summer Camp. Activities of the Programme are designed and developed around the themes of VAS students' core values, including Excellence, Confidence, Integrity, Respect, Passion, Teamwork and National Pride.

Both the VAS Traditional Summer Programme and VAS English Summer Camp Programme are complemented by common adventure and teambuilding camping trips. Students from grades 1-4 will have their one-day Adventure & Teambuilding Trip to Vuon Xoai, Dong Nai Province. Students from grades 5-6 will spend two days and one night in Vung Tau for their Adventure & Teambuilding Camp. Students from grades 7-10 will explore Madagui Adventure & Leadership Camp in Lam Dong Province. All these trips will follow a professionally-designed agenda and complement the ultimate goal of VAS's Summer Programmes in creating memorable learning-through-play experiences for its students.

need to answer two questions: what do we expect of them [children], and how can we create opportunities for children to use English frequently and learn? We want parents to cooperate with us in making sure students keep learning.

Moreover, we talk with parents three times a year. We listen to each of their comments so that we can address them quickly if appropriate. This is all about listening. We talk more often with parents about pros and cons and appropriate methods. It is all about continuous improvement. The best way to grow is through word of mouth by parents. Parents talk to each other about the quality of VAS. It is all about communication.

What are the key plans for VAS?

First, we plan to open two or three new campuses in HCMC and other localities nationwide in the next five years. Second, I want to make sure that our teaching programmes continue on the right track. Third, the staff at VAS gain a good level of English so everyone can communicate in English here. My wish is that every-

one goes to work with a smile. That means they are confident and happy in doing their jobs.

I want everyone at VAS, including students, to understand that there is no such thing as learning and trying things without making a mistake. If you make a mistake and you are willing to learn from it, that is learning and learning requires one to take some risk and we want everyone to feel confident and secure to allow this process to happen naturally.

I myself want our students to be able to connect to whatever they want to connect to. Education is not a destination. It is a journey. One day when they change their journey, I hope they do successfully as they do at VAS.

What are your initial thoughts about Vietnam's private education development?

There will be more development of private schools in Vietnam. This is driven by the economic growth of the country. VAS in particular wants to participate in the growth.

Reported by Trung Chau