

## TEACHER TUESDAY: MRS BETH WALKER

In this week's Teacher Tuesday we meet Mrs Walker, who teaches Year 2 and is Head of Primary English.

### **How many years have you been teaching?**

This is my 7th year of teaching since qualifying as a Primary Teacher however I have actually been in and out of the classroom since I was 15 years old. Before qualifying, I carried out work experience in a Nursery setting, several Primary Schools and several Secondary schools as I always knew I wanted to become a teacher but I did not know what age-group I wanted to specialise in. Also, I knew lots of work experience would benefit my University application.



### **When did you join KIS?**

I joined KIS in August 2017 (so I am still quite new to the school and KK).

### **How would you describe the KIS community?**

The KIS community has been very welcoming and kind. The parents and children are always smiling. I can guarantee that my day will be welcomed with lots of warm and friendly 'good mornings' shared between staff, parents and children.

### **Why do you teach?**

I suppose I can pinpoint my desire to become a teacher on two ladies called Mrs Grey and Mrs Hammond. They were my Year Two and Year Three teachers and even now, when I see them I become star-struck. They were both truly inspiring ladies and I grew up wanting to be just like them. Teaching gives me the opportunity to inspire other little minds, be creative and get messy! What more would I want in adult life? I get the excuse to read children's books every day and discover new authors and picture books which I thoroughly enjoy. I get to help children become writers and I hope that one day I will help mold the new Roald Dahl or J.K Rowling of our generation. I get to be arty and teach new skills such as sewing and cooking and I get to help children understand that it is okay to find things tough! As long as you persevere and have a go it will become easier.

### **What is your favourite classroom resource and why?**

My Teaching Assistant Ms. Marilyn! Her endless happiness, commitment to the school, educational knowledge and care towards the children makes our classroom environment a much better place to grow and learn in. She also looks after me, tells me many things about my new home and bakes delicious cakes!

### **At KIS there is a lot of focus on encouraging students to read, why is that?**

If a child cannot read then they cannot access the curriculum fully or access life outside of school fully. All daily activities require reading whether it is being able to understand a sign on the road or the ingredients on a food packet. Also, if a child cannot read then they cannot escape into all of the fantastic different worlds and realities that have been created for them. They cannot experience becoming a pirate at sea or an astronaut talking to aliens on the moon. They will never know the wonders of the magical wizarding world of Hogwarts or the wintry forest that is at the back of the wardrobe called Narnia.

### **We recently celebrated Roald Dahl's birthday. Which is your favourite character from one of his books and why?**

Willy Wonka. He is charismatic, smart, creative, crazy and really quite strange but most of all he owns a chocolate factory. I LOVE chocolate.

### **If you weren't a teacher what job would you do and why?**

Does it have to be a real job? As I am reminiscing at how amazing and important reading is I feel like I

should be able to say that I would be a witch like Winnie the Witch causing mayhem casting silly spells or a Park Keeper talking to my animal friends Mr Fox and Mr Badger, rescuing silly hares out of wells.

If not, I suppose I would be a Vet. Caring for and rescuing animals is the other thing that I have always loved to do. I have been very lucky that my parents have always surrounded us with furry friends growing up and now Mr Walker lets me carry that love on by rescuing and caring for the stray animals in the countries that we travel and live in. Outside of school, I currently volunteer at the SPCA KK and find it a very rewarding and caring thing to do to relax after a busy week at KIS.

**You are known for your love of animals. How many animals have you rescued in your life and how many pets do you currently have?**

Since becoming an expat teacher, I have helped rescue 16 cats and kittens (I think it is 16 – it is hard to keep count!) and 2 dogs. I currently have 2 cats in my ‘full-time’ care in Kota Kinabalu (they were never meant to become ‘full-time’) called Kuma and Rusa. Kuma is actually a KIS cat and was found in the roof above the office! As a child though, I also helped rescue animals like rabbits, shrews and toads when my naughty cats brought them home to play with.

**What do you enjoy about living in KK?**

Exploring Borneo and the different types of areas that it offers like the mountain, the islands and the river. I really like waking up to monkeys playing in the trees every morning and I will never tire of the beautiful sunset.

## TEACHER TUESDAY: MS LAURA MARRIOTT

Find out more about our Foundation 2 Teacher, Ms Laura Marriott, in this week's Teacher Tuesday:

**How many years have you been teaching and where did you teach before coming to KIS?**

This is my sixth year as a Primary school teacher since qualifying in the UK and I taught for 4 years at school in Central London. Before that I taught for almost 6 years as an English as a Foreign Language teacher in Spain, Vietnam, Australia and the UK so all together I've been teaching for about 11 years.



**How would you describe the KIS community?**

It's a very welcoming and friendly community where we all respect and learn from each other. We're a small community but I really like that it means everyone can get involved and support each other whatever we're doing.

**What do you enjoy most about teaching?**

Seeing the students in my class take charge of their learning and really grow as independent learners. Teaching Foundation Stage is really special because I'm lucky enough to be with the students right as they begin their journey as learners and by the end of the year they have gone from not yet having the tools to be able to read and write to being able to do both those things. It's really exciting.

**What is your favourite classroom resource and why?**

Definitely my two Teaching Assistants, Ms Nelly and Ms Moana. There is no way I'd be able to do my job to the best of my ability without the support and commitment of these two ladies. I know that whatever I or the students need they are ready, willing and able to help us with it. The F2 classroom is a very busy place and without them it wouldn't run anywhere near as well.

**Why is there such a focus on learning through play in the Early Years Stage at KIS?**

It is well documented that young children learn best when educators follow their interests and plan activities and learning provision from that. Young children generally don't choose to sit down at tables and wait for adults to tell them what to do, so what we do is create an environment where they take the lead in what they are interested in, and we observe that play and sometimes join in. It's from there the teacher brings in the learning by talking to the children about what they are doing, how they are doing it and carefully choosing the questions and statements they make, so that they move the children forward in their learning but the play isn't interfered with at all. They learn so much more this way as they are still fully engaged in the play and learning.

**You are a coordinator of the Eco Warriors Committee, tell us more about who is in this group and what they do:**

The Eco Warriors are Primary and Secondary students from Year 2 upwards who are trying to ensure that the KIS school community does the very best that it can to be environmentally aware and responsible within the school grounds and beyond. We are hoping that we can help to educate not only other KIS students but also those around us in our local community. We started this year with our local beach clean-up and hopefully we'll have some other initiatives coming up soon.

**What did the recent Eco Warriors Beach Clean-Up teach our students?**

The idea behind the beach clean-up was to make our students aware of just how damaging pollution, particularly plastic pollution, can be to our coasts and seas. I hope it showed them that we are all responsible for trying to keep our environment green and clean and that we can all do something about it. If, every time we go to the beach, each person picks up 3 items of rubbish, then we are doing something to help.

**What is your favourite movie and why?**

I should probably say something cool and grown up but I think the film I've probably seen the most times is the 80s kids movie, The Goonies. I loved it growing up and still have a soft spot for it now. I

loved it because the kids all got to go on an adventure together with no adults and even though it was dangerous, they never gave up and got their happy ending.

**What is your favourite place to visit, in Sabah or beyond?**

This is a really difficult question. In Sabah, so far it would have to be Tabin Wildlife Reserve because it's beautiful and lush. I was lucky enough that I got to see gibbon and orangutan families playing in the trees in the wild, which was pretty special.

**What do you enjoy about living in KK?**

That we are so close to everything, mountains, jungle and beach that it's easy to get out and explore it. Also those Borneo sunsets are pretty amazing too.

## TEACHER TUESDAY: MR ANDY WITHERS

Recently appointed as the Assistant Head of Secondary, responsible for Pastoral Care, Mr Andy Withers is this week's Teacher Tuesday.

**How many years have you been in teaching and where have you taught?**

This is currently my fourth year teaching, although I also worked as a Special Educational Needs worker in Secondary Schools for three years before deciding to become a Secondary English Teacher. I have previously taught at a mixed Grammar School and then an all-girls Comprehensive School in the south of England in the United Kingdom, both of which were schools which I thoroughly enjoyed working at and gained an invaluable amount of experience from; whether it be in SEN, pastorally or in English.



**How would you describe the KIS community?**

Supportive! That would be my key word. Whether it be teachers supporting students, parents showing an active interest in their children's learning, students wanting to be there for their friends and classmates...the list goes on really. Any time of day, any concern, any occasion when there is a need to speak with somebody, I always feel able to do so, and I hope that is the case for anybody in our community. It is an incredibly friendly community to be a part of.

**What do you find most rewarding about being a teacher?**

There are a lot of potentially easy answers to give here: Seeing students make progress, seeing results reflect hard work and so on. But I think I will go with perhaps an even more basic, yet fundamental aspect of the job. I get to spend every working day alongside the next generation of young adults as they gain knowledge and learn skills which they will find useful for their entire lives. I am very lucky to be a part of this process. The ideas, energy and optimism I receive as part of this process subsequently makes me better at what I do. They are always learning, and so am I.

**You were recently appointed to the role of Assistant Head of Secondary, specialising in the pastoral care of students. What does this involve?**

Taking on this role is something I am extremely excited about, as I have been interested in this aspect of education for a long time. Stemming from my early days working in Special Educational Needs, I have always had an appreciation of how important it is to consider students at school as rounded and multi-faceted individuals. As teachers, we can sometimes only perceive the students in our care in an academic context. Of course this is a vitally important part of who they are; school is key; but sometimes it can be easy to forget about the fact that there may be factors outside the classroom which may be having an impact on their time in school, and on them as individuals. Sometimes this can be a positive achievement or interest, but conversely, this could also be a potential difficulty or source of anxiety too. The health, happiness and general wellbeing of the students at KIS has to be paramount. Part of our Mission Statement as a whole school community is to provide a 'caring and respectful environment', and my new role is focused on this in particular. So I monitor students both academically and pastorally and then try to pre-empt, spot patterns and sometimes just listen if students need to talk. In order for our students to learn effectively, we must ensure that they are in the best possible state of mind in order to do so. If that is not the case, then we look to support and aid them so they can be in that place in the future. It is something I am deeply passionate about.

**What are you looking forward to most this academic year?**

Last year I was lucky enough to help out with the Black Box Theatre Showcase organised by Mrs Yuen and Mr Bryant in Suria Sabah Shopping Mall. Getting to see the broad array of artistic talents on display at that show was a real eye-opener for me. We have an awful lot of creativity at this school, and

it is genuinely exciting to see it nurtured and developed through events such as this. I hope to see more of the Arts at KIS given centre-stage this academic year!

**As a Teacher of English, do you have a favourite book and why?**

I most certainly do! A close runner up is the play 'A View from the Bridge' by Arthur Miller, but my absolute favourite is the novel 'The Great Gatsby' by F. Scott Fitzgerald. A wonderful combination of questions posed about the individual, and about wider society by an author who lived fast and died young, but was able to recognise and view his own mistakes with a certain level of regretful detachment. It is thrilling and heartbreaking in equal measure. My tatty old copy is covered in notes I have made in it over the years. I love it and constantly recommend it to those who have not yet read it.

**You are known for your love of music, if you could meet a musician who would it be and why?**

For me, this is an easy question. Paul McCartney! He was in the biggest band of all time (The Beatles, not Wings!) He plays bass guitar (my instrument), and in my opinion is one of the finest pop songwriters and performers ever seen. I grew up owning and listening repeatedly to every Beatles album, and they had a huge influence on me as a teenager, and still do as an adult. And he also seems like a genuinely nice man too.

**What do you enjoy doing in KK when you're not working?**

I'm a keen walker and love getting out to the various Bukit's we have in KK and the surrounding areas. The heat makes it a challenging task sometimes, but nothing beats the view at the top of Bukit Padang or Bukit Gundul! However, something tells me there may be a better view on an even higher 'hill' somewhere near here....a mountain even....challenge accepted!



## TEACHER TUESDAY – MR IAN GROSS

The KIS community was delighted to welcome our new Principal and his family to the school last week. So who better to feature in the first Teacher Tuesday for the 2018-19 academic year?

### **How many years have you been in teaching and where have you taught?**

I became a teacher nearly 25 years ago and during that time I have been fortunate enough to teach in the UK, Czech Republic, Argentina, Thailand, Egypt, Bahrain and now Sabah, Malaysia.

### **Why did you want a career in education and what do you teach?**

I didn't always want to be a teacher, I gravitated towards it through friends at the time, and with a degree in Biological Science the obvious choice was to be a science teacher; which I thoroughly enjoyed.

### **Why did you apply to become Principal of KIS as opposed to other schools?**

I have been aware of KIS for many years now through FOBISIA and, having been in the Middle East for the past six years, we were looking to move back to Asia. The opportunity came along and I believe that things happen for a reason and here we are.

### **Describe your first impressions of KIS**

My first impressions of KIS would have been from back in February when I came over for interview and I very quickly picked up on the warm and friendly environment. I particularly noticed a caring student centered approach, which is important not only to me as an educator but also my family. My daughters would be joining the school and I needed to be sure they would be happy, well taught and taken care of at KIS and I came away feeling that they would be.

### **What are you looking forward to most this academic year?**

I am really looking forward to getting to know the KIS community. I am also looking forward to working with the school to support and lead its future development; to be the best it can be.

### **What are your short term and long term plans for the school?**

My short term plans are to learn about KIS and what it does well and to see where we can improve. Together with the Board of Management, we can then look at our long term goals to ensure sustainability with excellence for our current and future students.

### **Who is your hero?**

My wife Emma. She puts up with me and keeps me sane whilst looking after the family. I don't know how she does it but glad she does!

### **If you could be a character from a book who would you be?**

The librarian from the Discworld series by Terry Pratchett would be fun, whilst a darker side of me would enjoy being Dorian Gray from Oscar Wilde's famous book.

### **What are you looking forward to doing in KK when you're not working?**

I am really looking forward to getting my head under the water and blowing bubbles in the sea. I enjoy diving and find it a great way to relax. Both our daughters want to learn to dive too, and it will be great to dive as a family.



## TEACHER TUESDAY – MRS JULIE CONNAH

In this week's Teacher Tuesday we speak to Mrs Julie Connah, who teaches Secondary Mathematics and ICT:

**How many years have you been teaching?**

26 years

**When did you join KIS?**

January 2017

**Use three words to describe the KIS community:**

a Friendly Learning Community

**What is your favourite classroom resource and why?**

Technology – Excel, Graphing Software and Interactive Whiteboards. As a teacher of senior Mathematics, being able to use a wide range of software applications and packages on the big screen, so that students can see what is happening, provides an amazing jumping off point for student investigations. We live in a world where digital technology takes away much of the laborious manual tasks that slows down our curiosity. Using such technology allows us to quickly explore patterns and to ask the questions: "What is going on?" and "what will small changes do to what we see?"

**Tell us a little known fact about you:**

I am a (teacher training) Workshop Leader for the International Baccalaureate and a Senior Examiner for the IB Diploma Mathematics examinations. And during my teaching career I have worked in the UK, Thailand, Switzerland, China, India, Australia and Malaysia!

**What is the best thing about being a teacher?**

Working with young adults, helping them understand more about how this amazing world we live in works; helping them find their passions and explore what they may be interested in pursuing for their careers. Teaching is all about developing strong relationships that encourage and underpin good learning.

**What do you enjoy doing in KK when you're not working?**

I like getting out and enjoying the outdoors. KK, Sabah is just a beautiful part of the world!





## TEACHER TUESDAY – MS CHARMAINE KU

At KIS we are committed to developing the whole child and, therefore, the Creative and Performing Arts play an important part of the curriculum. In this week's Teacher Tuesday, we talk to Ms Charmaine Ku who teaches Music.

### **How many years have you been teaching?**

Nine years as a classroom teacher, and many more years as a Music Tutor.

### **When did you join KIS?**

July 2012.

### **Please describe the KIS community in three words:**

Warm, happy and fun.

### **Why do you teach?**

I love teaching. I love being around students as it helps me forget about how introvert I am! It has built my confidence in many ways just by seeing how confident all my students are.

### **What instrument do you enjoy teaching the most and why?**

I play both the Piano and Violin but I'd say I enjoy teaching the violin the most. When starting to learn the violin it isn't always the most pleasant sounding instrument, however, when my students are able to grasp the right posture and breathing technique (both of which are very important in getting the right sound from the violin), they then love to play it even more. Seeing this develop in a student gives me a good sense of accomplishment.

### **What are the benefits of studying Music?**

Music exercises our mind and also our motor coordination skills, besides it being something that we all love playing and listening to. Learning music and performing together in groups improves our social and communication skills too. I'm always impressed with the amount of teamwork I see when my Secondary students perform together in the school Rock Band and at key performances.

From the perspective of studying Music with a future profession in mind, it can be an adventure and an opportunity for exposure to new things! For example, musicians are regularly meeting new people, performing in new environments and learning new skills and generating new ideas. Composers always write and arrange new music, while reviewing and reflecting on past music from other composers. You will never get bored where there is music!

### **If you weren't a teacher what job would you do and why?**

This is a very difficult question. Maybe soap making or cooking? These are my hobbies, but teaching is still the best!

### **KK is famed for its food, what is your favourite local dish?**

I love native dishes a lot! Anything with tuhau is delicious! And nangka or tarap cooked in coconut milk! Yum!



## TEACHER TUESDAY: MS CESCA WOODLAND

This week we've been talking to Ms Cesca Woodland, who teaches PE at KIS:

### How many years have you been teaching?

I have been teaching for 5 years, although have been working in schools for nearly 8 years.

### When did you join KIS?

I joined in August 2016.

### How would you describe the KIS community?

The KIS community is close knit, friendly and supportive. Ever since moving here I have felt part of a family; which is incredibly important when you're living away from home. Often outside of school you will bump into students and their parents who always welcome you with a smile on their face and it makes me feel like a celebrity when I hear "Miss Woodland" as I shop for my groceries!

### What is your favourite sport to teach and why?

I enjoy teaching Hockey, which is my own sport but it can often be the hardest sport for me to teach, as skills that are natural to me I have to remember are not to others. So therefore my favourite sport is Gymnastics. Although it is not often a popular unit when taught in lessons it is actually the sport where you are able to see the most progress from students. Recently I taught Year 7 Gymnastics and all the students developed more confidence in themselves, as well as being able to face their fears.

### You recently took a team of Primary students to compete in a sports competition in Phuket, what do you think the students gained from this experience?

Is there a word limit for this question?! The 17 students who attended the Primary FOBISIA games have had the opportunity to learn new life skills and experience something life changing. I am extremely jealous that I never had the opportunity when I was their age. During the build up to the competition and throughout the competition the students grew closer as a team and were able to support each other through the highs and lows. The students played against other international schools where they showed fantastic sportsmanship and even worked alongside other schools, joining together to make teams. But the most important thing the students gained was resilience; there were times when things didn't go their way but they got back up and carried on. I am extremely proud of all the students and hope they gained something valuable from this experience.

### What is your favourite PE resource and why?

It is hard to pick a favourite resource, especially in PE as you can need quite a few resources in lessons. But if I had to pick one it would be cones. I teach a lot of EYFS and KS1 classes where you need to set out certain areas for students to stay in, cones can become very useful! Also one of my favourite warm up games is Dishes and Domes, which solely uses cones.

### How would you describe your teaching style?

I would have to say my teaching style is enthusiastic and engaging. I want my students to enjoy my lessons and ultimately have fun, whilst learning new skills. I always aspire to be a role model for students and want students to feel safe and comfortable in my lessons.

### Tell us a little known fact about you:

I volunteered as a hockey ball girl at the London 2012 Olympics (even appearing on the TV!) and my old hockey coach is an Olympic Gold Medalist.



**If you could meet a Sports hero, who would you meet and why?**

I have been in awe of Jonny Wilkinson since I was 15 years old; for people that don't know him he is an English rugby player who retired in 2014. He is, to date, one of England's most successful fly halves, a hardworking, focused and resilient individual. He suffers from OCD, which often made his training extremely long and tiring as he wanted to get everything perfect. I would love to ask him about his training and dedication to sport. I wish I could have been as focused as him when younger – who knows I could have represented my country!

**KK has many outdoor activities to enjoy, what is at the top of your list?**

I have always loved visiting the National Park, I enjoy hiking, exploring the terrain and it is cooler! During the Easter holidays I was lucky enough to be able to climb Mount Kinabalu. It was one of the most amazing experiences of my life so far. It was extremely hard especially on my knees and achilles (which were sore from previous injuries) but the sunrise at the summit more than made up for the pain. I would recommend it to anyone else living here.

## TEACHER TUESDAY – MR STEPHEN SHAND

In this week's Teacher Tuesday we meet Mr Stephen Shand, who is in his second year of teaching Year 4 at the school:

### How many years have you been teaching?

I have been teaching for 12 years as a qualified teacher, and also taught English as an Additional Language for 4 years previously.

### Why do you teach?

I always wanted to be Batman. As a child I admired his 'job' and what he got to do each day- solving different problems, facing new challenges and working within a team to help change the world. Growing up, I realised that I would need to pursue an actual career. So I abandoned my superhero dreams and set out to find the closest thing. I trained to become a police officer, completed my undergraduate studies in Criminology, served in the Canadian military and even worked as a youth counsellor in a prison. Then I travelled to Korea, where I spent a year working as an EAL teacher. I was immediately drawn to the teaching profession. It's like doing Batman's work, but even better.



### When did you join KIS?

I started in August 2016.

### Where else in the world have you taught?

USA, Canada, Korea, Taiwan and West Malaysia

### How would you describe the students at KIS?

Working with the students is the best part of teaching at KIS. The Primary children are fun, friendly and full of personality. Each one brings their own unique energy to the learning environment. I might be a little biased but, having taught at a number of schools before coming to KIS, I can say that the students here truly are a pleasure to teach.

### Is there a topic, trip or activity that you've particularly enjoyed since you've been at KIS?

Not one in particular, as there's been so many: I really liked The Roman Dress-Up Feast at the Little Italy restaurant. The Year 4 Residential in Kiulu was also an amazing experience- everybody really came together and supported each other through the different challenges. It was also delightful watching children build their arcade games with recycled materials. The Clouded Leopard Charity Arcade raised almost RM700 for the Lok Kawi Wildlife Centre.

### What is your favourite classroom resource and why?

It's got to be our computer. I still remember the day that 'technology' first arrived in my primary school classroom. It was 1983 and we got a class computer. The machine was massive, had a huge keyboard and could only hold 20 kb in its internal memory. There was no internet and it had just one math game. This year the classroom computer in 4S has played a vital role in many of our lessons. The computer controls our interactive smartboard, keeps track of house points, grants access to the internet and is also the doorway to the 4S Class Blog- our virtual learning environment.

### How can parents best support their children in their studies?

Become involved in your child's learning and display a keen interest in their progress. Try to praise their resilient efforts often, as they are also great achievements. Communicate regularly with teachers and attend every parent teacher conference, even if there are no pressing concerns. Taking the time to have that 10 minute chat very clearly demonstrates your interest and support. Read regularly *with* your child, read regularly *to* your child and read regularly *in* their presence.

Tell us a little known fact about you:

In high school I worked part time as a chicken catcher. It's an actual job.

**What do you like most about living in Sabah?**

The sunsets, the people and the food.

## TEACHER TUESDAY – MR NATHAN WALKER

In this week's Teacher Tuesday we speak to Mr Walker, Teacher of PE and Year 9 Form Tutor:

### How many years have you been teaching?

I am currently in my 5th year of teaching, I qualified as a PE teacher just before the London 2012 Olympic Games. I have previously taught in the United Kingdom and Doha, Qatar.

### When did you join KIS?

I joined KIS in August 2017.

### What attracted you to joining KIS?

The fact that KIS is a developing and community-centred school situated in a beautiful part of the world. Before coming to KIS I had never been to South East Asia before and this certainly added to the attraction.



### What is your favourite sport to teach and why?

Although I have coached Football & Cricket previously at a national level, I tend to find that I enjoy teaching other sports more. I love teaching sports that allow me to continue to learn, such as new and diverse sports like Tchoukball and Spikeball. However, if I was to pick a favourite it would probably be Rugby (both full contact and touch Rugby). Why? It's a game that requires a whole host of skills; agility, speed, power, balance, anticipation, coordination, the list is endless. It is high speed, high impact and requires lots of discipline. That's why it's my favourite sport to teach and watch.

### What is your favourite PE resource and why?

I suppose a cliché answer would be the students and it is true, they are fantastic. They are full of energy and a willingness to learn and they all bring different experiences and skill sets. However, I wouldn't be able to live life as a PE teacher without the PE Teaching Essentials; Cones, Bibs, Whistle and Watch.

NB: I should probably also mention 'The Pen' that my GCSE PE class bought me. It is funny because they thought that I did not own one. I take it everywhere with me.

### How would you describe your teaching style?

This is a tough question, I suppose my philosophy is based on the importance of teacher-student relationships. It's crucial to create positive relationships with every student that you teach. I try to stay positive and enthusiastic and look to build a mutual respect with every child. I would like to think that students find my lessons fun, engaging and challenging with clear and high expectations. We learn most from people we respect and from those we have positive relationships with, so I suppose this is the cornerstone of my teaching philosophy. With regards to style, I guess that links to the teaching strategies I use. I like to use fresh ideas, new sports and activities and approaches that differ from the traditional.

### What are the benefits of studying PE at IGCSE?

For me, IGCSE PE is a fascinating subject. Lessons consist of sports performances and classroom based work. It is a subject that requires physical performance as well as knowledge of theory. The students are assessed in four sports that gives them a practical grade and at the end of Y11 they take the IGCSE written exam. The theory combines elements of Science, History, Geography, Business and Maths but all related to Sport. Students study the skeleton and muscles, the heart and lungs, biomechanics of movement, health and diet, drugs in sport, sponsorship and funding, organised events and methods of training. Just to list a few topics! It is becoming a highly reputable IGCSE around the world and carries the same weight as any other GCSE. IGCSE PE is an excellent subject for any student interested in a career in Sport, Physiotherapy, Coaching, Teaching and Leadership. I know I am biased, but it's my favourite IGCSE.

As well as teaching PE at KIS you are also a Form Tutor for Year 9, what does being a Form Tutor involve?



I thoroughly enjoy being a form tutor, it is a great opportunity to build relationships with students and it is very rewarding to support a tutor group through their lives in school. I believe a good form tutor gets to know each and every student in their tutor group. This is crucial when it comes to supporting them in their studies and decisions. I like to instill positive moral and ethical values and hope that my students can be inspired by me and by themselves. We often keep up-to-date with news from around the world and we regularly participate in fun challenges and games. This year we have also completed personal projects, class presentations and community service, with events such as our Lemonade Stall and Staff Car Wash. I get a lot of enjoyment from providing authentic experiences away from the curriculum because it helps to develop a more positive, rounded student that is ready to become a successful global citizen.

**Tell us a little known fact about you:**

I have previously taught KS3 Geography, History and ICT, as well as KS4 Business and Biology. I enjoyed the challenge, but I am certainly happy now that I am back teaching the subject I love.

**If you could meet a Sports hero, who would you meet and why?**

Now this is the toughest question yet!! I am a huge fan of Roger Federer (tennis), Chris Gayle (cricket) and Toni Kroos (football). However, if I have to pick one... I'd probably go for Pep Guardiola. I could sit for hours and talk football, pick his brains and listen to his stories. He has had a huge influence on my football coaching, particularly his approach to fluid transitions, overloading areas and his player-manager interactions. He is an inspiration to me.

**KK has many outdoor activities to enjoy, what is at the top of your list?**

Kota Kinabalu and Sabah have some fantastic beach resorts as well as some beautiful rivers. It's nice to jump in the truck and head out to see the sights; the mountain, the jungle, the rivers and the beaches. My wife (Mrs. Walker) also enjoys going out and eating al fresco. KK definitely has amazing food and one of the best sunsets I have ever seen.

## TEACHER TUESDAY – MS EMILY COLLEY

As our eldest students prepare to commence their Study Leave, in advance of their A Level exams starting in May, we speak to Ms Emily Colley who teaches A Level English in this week's Teacher Tuesday about the benefits of studying English at A Level:

**How many years have you been teaching?**

I have been teaching for almost five years.

**When did you join KIS?**

I joined KIS in August 2016.

**Please describe the KIS community in three words:**

Friendly, caring and supportive.

**Why do you teach?**

I think the best part about teaching is seeing the impact you can have on a student's life, not just in terms of how well they do in the classroom, but also helping them develop into well rounded individuals. Of course, I also have a genuine passion for my subject and I feel incredibly lucky to be able to spend my days discussing great works of literature, whilst seeing some truly talented young writers emerge within my own classroom.

**What is your favourite classroom resource and why?**

To be completely honest I feel like my students are the most powerful resource I have in my classroom. A lot of our time in English is spent reflecting on social and humanitarian issues raised by the texts and poems we study. I am constantly inspired by my students' mature, sensitive and occasionally controversial responses to complex issues. The honest and open discussions that we are able to have during lessons often leads to more nuanced and considered opinions and explanations in their writing and I am so grateful to have such a broad range of students who are so eager and willing to share their views.

**How does A Level English benefit students in their future career paths?**

Having an A Level in English is a huge asset for a variety of different career paths. It gives the students the confidence to be able to assert their own ideas, as well as teaching them the importance of being able to justify their arguments. This is a key skill for many professions and having the ability to analyse evidence and draw reasoned conclusions is something that many employers value. In addition to this, thanks to the range of texts and genres on our syllabus, we are equipping our students with a broader view of the world at large and enabling them to develop a deeper appreciation and understanding of the historical and social contexts behind the texts we study.

**Describe a key memory from your time teaching at KIS:**

I have many fond memories from my time teaching at KIS but my first day here is one that I will always remember. Although I enjoyed teaching in England, I hadn't realised how much time and effort went into simply controlling the students and getting them to focus on what you were trying to teach them. My first two classes at KIS, with my Year 9 and 10 students, were a revelation; not only were they impeccably behaved but they were actually eager to learn! I remember watching them in awe as they enthusiastically got on with the tasks that I set them and I couldn't stop smiling. Something that is truly special about teaching here is that over eighteen months later I still get that feeling during many of my lessons and I will always be glad that I made the choice to come here.

**If you weren't a teacher what job would you do and why?**



This may be a clichéd response for an English teacher but I would love to become an author myself one day. It may be a pipe dream but teaching literature and helping my students develop their own creative writing skills is certainly good practice, if I am ever lucky enough to have the time and opportunity to write my own book.

**What do you enjoy about living in KK?**

I think we are very fortunate living in KK given the amount of natural beauty that surrounds us. I don't think there are many places where you can take in a view of the sun rising over the mountains, fishing boats making their way over to tropical islands and water buffalo ambling their way across the road, all on your drive to work in the mornings.

## TEACHER TUESDAY – MR STUART BURROWS

This week we talk to Mr Stuart Burrows, one of our Year 4 Classroom Teachers:

**How many years have you been teaching?**

Fourteen, although I took a break some years ago to work as a volunteer on an educational development project in Malawi.

**Why do you teach?**

I know of no better way to improve the world than by educating the next generation.

**When did you join KIS?**

I joined in August, 2017.

**Where else in the world have you taught?**

England, Egypt, China, Thailand and the UAE, but Malaysia is my favourite.

**How would you describe the students at KIS?**

My class are a thoughtful bunch, open to new ideas, supportive of each other and with the energy to keep going right until the final bell on a Friday. I feel fortunate to get to share my days with them.

**Is there a topic, trip or activity that you've particularly enjoyed since you've been at KIS?**

It's always fun to make Oobleck (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oobleck>) On the one hand, you get to explore kinetic theory and the behaviour of particles within non-Newtonian fluids. On the other, you get to play with sticky goo and make a big mess.

**What is your favourite classroom resource and why?**

I wouldn't be without my visualiser. It's a document camera that projects whatever's on my desk straight onto the large whiteboard. It not only allows children to share the products of their hard work with the rest of the class, but to actually demonstrate different processes—how to form a cursive letter 'f' or how to use a protractor for instance—for their classmates.

**How can parents best support their children in their studies?**

Surround children with books, embrace every opportunity to explore books, and go wherever your thinking takes you. My wife and I baked Gruffalo crumble with our daughter a couple of years ago after reading Julia Donaldson's classic, and we were recently inspired to drop some Mentos into a bottle of Diet Coke after I read a book to my two-year old son that mentioned a geyser.

**Tell us a little known fact about you:**

I learnt to swim at the age of 31.

**What are you enjoying the most about living in Sabah?**

The roti. Definitely, the roti.



## TEACHER TUESDAY – MS RACHEL MCNUTT

This week we've been talking to Ms Rachel McNutt, our Head of Humanities and a Teacher of Geography. Outside of the classroom, McNutt co-ordinates the popular International Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme, which is a certification regarded highly by universities and employers alike.



Ms

**How many years have you been teaching?**

have been teaching since 1997, so this makes this school year my 21st year in the profession.

I

**When did you join KIS?**

joined in August 2015. This is my third year teaching here at KIS.

I

**Use three words to describe KIS**

Caring / friendly / community

**Why do you teach?**

I enjoy helping young people to develop into well rounded, caring and informed young adults. I find it rewarding as a Geography teacher when a student in my class suddenly understands why something is like it is; whether that's why there are earthquakes occurring in a country they have lived in, to why they experience different temperatures in regions across the world.

**What is your favourite classroom resource and why?**

Mini whiteboards with their dry wipe marker pens. They can be used in so many activities, and I have found that students are more likely to contribute to a Question and Answer session if they write and hold up an answer for me to read, rather than having to say the answer. They are also great for summarizing work at the end of lessons and drawing doodles or cartoon images on them, which can be filmed and turned into a short animation on iPads.

**You co-ordinate the International Duke of Edinburgh programme at KIS, what benefits do students gain from this certification?**

They gain confidence from taking part in a range of activities and enhance their skills so that they are able to organize themselves and commit their time to completing the 4 sections. The Award enables young people to develop practical skills, behaviours and attitudes that are valued by employers globally.

**What is the biggest challenge in the Duke of Edinburgh programme?**

Here in Borneo I would say the biggest challenge for our participants is the climate and the terrain when completing the training and then the assessment for the Adventurous Journey.

With it being so hot and humid, and mountainous, it makes taking part in 6 to 8 hours of planned activities challenging. We, however, offer participant groups the opportunity to complete an Exploration rather than only an Expedition. This means that the groups can spend a proportion of their time each day of the Journey undertaking a group based project.

**Can you describe a memorable experience from a Duke of Edinburgh expedition that you have participated in?**

Yes – When a group of 5 Silver level participants completed their Adventurous Journey and then confidently gave their follow up presentation to a group of their peers and adult. They showed that they had come together to work as a very effective team, understanding each members' strengths and developing their skills along the way.

**What do you enjoy about living in Sabah?**

I really enjoy being able to go scuba diving on some amazing reef areas off the coast, from the

weekend dives in TARP to longer trips to dive off Mantanani island and more excitingly Mabul and Sipadan.

**As a Geographer, travel is important to you, where do you plan to visit next and why?**

Easter 2018 will see me head to the Philippines and to Luzon Island for a week. As an A level Physical Geography teacher I have taught students for many years about the volcanic eruption in 1991 of Mt Pinatubo and all of the hazards which occurred. I will be visiting the volcano and taking a trek up to the crater edge. While I'm on Luzon Island I will also go to Taal volcano, explore Manila and do some scuba diving.

Christmas 2018 I'm booked to fly to New Zealand and explore the geographical scenery of an amazingly diverse country. Flying over glaciers, visiting active geothermal hot Springs and seeing the impacts in Christchurch of the 2011 earthquake. It's a geographer's paradise destination!



## TEACHER TUESDAY – MS JOWENE CHIA

With Chinese New Year approaching at the end of this week, we spoke to one of our Mandarin teachers – Ms Jowene Chia – in Teacher Tuesday:

**How many years have you been teaching?**

3 years and counting.

**When did you join KIS?**

August 2016, when Mandarin was first introduced at KIS as a core curriculum subject.

**Use three words to describe your first impressions of KIS**

Unity. Diversity. Creativity.

**Why do you teach?**

To see young people not just taught but be educated in a way that is more than just academic; that develops wholistic and wholesome individuals.

**What is your favourite classroom resource and why?**

Compared to my personal education and upbringing, I think the students and teachers both benefit greatly from the flexibility of the classroom set up. We can adapt the layout of the furniture in the room to be the most appropriate for the age group or lesson that we are teaching. I find this makes for a more conducive and more effective teaching experience.

**The Mandarin Department held a very informative Chinese New Year assembly yesterday, what was your favourite part?**

To see participation of the students during the dance-along CNY Whoopee song, which was led by 12 Year 5 & Year 6 students who had learnt the song and dance moves.

**Mandarin can be a tricky language to learn, what advice would you give to our students to help them in their Mandarin studies?**

Practice makes perfect. Stay passionate, be purposeful and understand the “why” before the “what”. Look further into the future benefits of being Chinese-literate – the future is yours! After all, nearly 1 in every 3 of the population are Chinese.

**How do you stream students in their Mandarin lessons?**

Mandarin is currently a core curriculum subject from Foundation 2 to Year 7. At the start of this academic year we introduced a new structure to better cater for the abilities and potential of our students and to improve the subject’s alignment with the Mandarin IGCSE programme. All students are now placed in either the Mandarin as a Second Language or Mandarin as a Foreign Language class. From August 2018, Mandarin will roll out to include Year 8 and these students will be working towards the option of taking IGCSE Mandarin in four years’ time. Mandarin at KIS is not only taught with passion and excitement, but also with a crucial understanding of its value for our students in the future.

**Tell us a little known fact about you?**

I cannot eat onion and garlic. It is not a choice; I received my allergies from mom.

**What do you like doing in KK when you’re not working?**

I organise events, play music (and sometimes act as the Music Director in church), play badminton weekly, while also finding opportunities to connect with people from different walks of life.



## TEACHER TUESDAY – MRS FRANCES COLBECK

Following last week's successful Book Week, in our Teacher Tuesday post we speak to Mrs Frances Colbeck. As Teacher Librarian, Mrs Colbeck was one of the main organisers of Book Week. Find out more about her work in the Library and why the school puts such value on reading:

**How many years have you been teaching?**

13 (I just had to work this out on a piece of paper!)

**When did you join KIS?**

Summer 2015

**How would you describe the KIS community?**

What I like about KIS is that although everybody is always working very hard, we are all driven by the same goals, and that means when we ask for help, it's always available- whether it's a student helping me to carry a set of textbooks, or a colleague offering some ideas to solving a problem, or a parent supporting an event.

**What is the most rewarding part of being a teacher?**

Hopefully, results day, when all the hard work is rewarded with excellent IGCSE and A Level results. Then you know that even the tough days when we were all tired, or tasks seemed impossibly hard, or the homework too difficult; it all gets paid back when you look at the slip of paper and know your students received the well-earned, hard-won grades they deserved.

**How do you plan to integrate technology into your teaching of library skills?**

Next term we will be creating a whole school scheme of work on information literacy, with ideas for integrating this into the curriculum. Now we live in an age where access to information has never been so easy, or so freely available, and the internet has changed the way we research completely. This means it is more important than ever that we teach students how to read and verify the reliability of all these information sources, to help them sort fact from fiction, so they can build an accurate picture of the world around them. Naturally, technology plays a vital part in this, and to this end we aim to utilise the new ipads in Primary, and the new laptops in Secondary to help teach these skills .

**Last week we celebrated Book Week, what was your favourite part of the week and why?**

It's difficult to choose! On the one hand, it's such a luxury to get to just sit and read, with no distractions, but there's also the more active events like the character parade and pajama day- I think it's wonderful to see how much time and effort goes into each costume- I spent the whole of Friday being amazed by the variety of outfits and creativity on show.

**Why does the school place so much importance on the love of reading?**

I think it's the access to other worlds or realities that reading grants us that is so important: I will never be able to travel back in time to 531 AD to speak to Lao Tze, or chat with Empress Matilda in the 12th Century- but I can read their words, and understand their motives and emotions. Similarly, I love to travel, but I don't have to move an inch to be transported by a book to faraway places- or even better, places that only exist in books! Even if people don't like to read fiction, reading is the most fundamental way of accessing information, whether it's in a book, or an online article, and if we want to understand the world around us, reading is a key to help us unlock that understanding.

**If you could be a character from folklore or a fairy tale who would you be and why?**

I think it would be more fun to be a villain or a monster than a princess- I have always felt that the Big Bad Wolf was particularly misunderstood...

**Tell us a little known fact about you:**

Up until the age of 17, I thought I would be a professional 'cellist.



## TEACHER TUESDAY – MRS SHELLEY DYER

This week's Teacher Tuesday is Mrs Shelley Dyer, who teaches Year 1.

**How many years have you been teaching?**  
15 years.

**When did you join KIS?**  
I'm a newbie – I arrived in August 2017.

**Using three words please describe your first impressions of KIS.**  
Welcoming, friendly and small .

**Why do you teach?**

I always knew I wanted to teach and it really is all about the students. I loved my own school years and I hope that I am one of those teachers that my own students will remember. Where else do you have 15-plus happy faces greet you/hug you daily and are happy, even excited to see you at 'work' everyday? Lucky me!

**What is your favourite memory from your first term at KIS?**

Probably our Year 1 trip to Gaya Island. I loved how the children were so excited to touch the creatures in the touch tank and make connections in their learning to the real world. They were also so earnest about saving the ocean and planting their coral!

**What is your favourite classroom resource and why?**

Questions! I love asking my students Why or How Do You Know? Questions are the most versatile resource – easy to take anywhere, can be in any language, easily adapted, free; but most importantly, get students thinking and talking more about their learning!

**Who is your hero?**

I don't really have any hero's as such, but I do greatly admire and respect a number of people. Madiba, (Nelson Mandela) is probably the most significant person, especially being South African myself. As an adult and teacher I have come to respect and admire his lifelong commitment to his own education through many obstacles; and particularly his belief in the power of education as a weapon of change.

**This week is Book Week at KIS. If you could be a character from a fairy tale who would you be?**

Ok, I'll go for one of the classic fairytales, and say Belle. She's strong-minded, intelligent, compassionate, independent and incredibly loyal. I like that she was not saved by Prince Charming as such, but rather she saved the Beast. I like stories with a little twist.

**To celebrate the end of Book Week our Primary students will enjoy a Mad Hatter's Tea Party. If you could bring one person to a Tea Party who would it be and why?**

Well, the idea will be to have fun, fun, fun, so I think Ellen DeGeneres would ensure that everyone had a full dose of fun and laughter! Can you imagine – she'd have us all dancing and laughing and I am sure she'd bring a few surprises herself too.

**What are you enjoying the most about life in KK? Just one thing?**

Well roti has become part of my weekly diet, and I just love the morning views of Mount Kinabalu and now that I am adjusting to the Borneo humidity and heat (almost!!!) I am really able to enjoy the relaxed atmosphere of Borneo Life. Sabah time is quite easy to adjust to!



## TEACHER TUESDAY – MRS LOUISE DAVIS

As a number of our Secondary Students prepare to attend the Model United Nations (MUN) Conference this weekend, readers of this week's Teacher Tuesday will learn more about the benefits of participating in MUN during our interview with Mrs Louise Davis, Year 8K Form Tutor, Teacher of Humanities and Coordinator of the MUN ECA.

### **How many years have you been teaching?**

I have been teaching for 18 years, but I also taught English for two years before I qualified as a teacher.

### **When did you join KIS?**

I joined KIS in August 2017, at the beginning of this academic year.

### **What attracted you to KIS?**

I liked the fact that it was a small school, where students could attend for their whole school life and so would know each other and their teachers very well. I knew that the whole school community would be supportive of one another and it would be like a second home.

### **Term 1 recently finished, what was the highlight of your first term at KIS?**

The students. Meeting the students and working with them. Students are the heart of a school.

### **What is your favorite classroom resource and why?**

I have to say the atlas. It is a factual resource as it contains lots of useful information but there is also a fantasy element as one can dream of travelling to all the places found there.

### **You are currently running an Extra Curricular Activity called Model United Nations (MUN), what is that?**

MUN is a simulation of the United Nations and is designed for students at school and university-level. In our first term simulation, we chose a topic, Measures to Limit Military Spending, and students represented a UN country. They did lots of research and wrote about what that country's position is on this issue. Then, the students came together to write a resolution as to how the (M)UN would limit military spending. Finally, they will debate that resolution.

### **Why would you encourage students to participate in MUN?**

MUN helps students gain an appreciation of the UN's work and expands their knowledge of the world and what is going on. Students learn to listen, read for detail and speak in public. MUN also allows students to develop leadership skills. Once our team returns from this weekend's MUN conference, it will be able to organise the second phase of our ECA. MUN is not for everyone though. It involves a substantial time commitment as a lot of research has to be done in one's own time.

### **What has been a particularly memorable experience in your teaching career?**

I have been involved in service activities for a long time and took a group of Sixth Form students to southern China to build houses with Habitat for Humanity.

### **Tell us a little known fact about you:**

I love to knit.

### **If you weren't a teacher what job would you do and why?**

I would probably still be a civil servant, which is what I was before I became a teacher. I had a job where I worked sometimes in the office and sometimes outside. It was challenging and I had to rely on my own judgement a lot, but it was also very exciting.

### **What are you looking forward to exploring in Sabah?**

Sabah, the whole of Sabah. I have already been to the Kinabatangan River but didn't see my favourite animal, the elephant, so I will have to go back.



## TEACHER TUESDAY – MR DOUGAL FLETCHER

Following a short break over the holidays, Teacher Tuesday returns this week with Mr Dougal Fletcher, Year 6 Class Teacher and Head of Creative & Performing Arts for Primary

### **How many years have you been teaching?**

I have been teaching for more years than I would like to remember. I started my career as a Secondary teacher, then moved to Primary and from there, started my international career.

### **When did you join KIS?**

I joined KIS at the beginning of this academic year.

### **What attracted you to KIS?**

For me, and my family, KIS ticked a lot of the boxes we were looking for in a school. It has a very family orientated feel to it and is not too big. The interviews that I had for the position just confirmed that we wanted to come here.



### **Term 1 recently finished, what was the highlight of your first term at KIS?**

There were so many highlights of Term 1. The two biggest highlights were the 'Living Museum' that our Year 6 students presented and, of course, the Christmas Production.

### **What is your favorite classroom resource and why?**

My favourite classroom resource, and the one that I could not do without, is Ms. Ann, my Teaching Assistant. Her boundless positive energy, organisational skills, work ethic and sense of humour make the class a much more effective learning space.

### **You recently directed the Primary production, featuring every child from First Steps to Year 6, how do students benefit from being part of such an event?**

Any production students are involved in helps in so many ways. Drama is perhaps one of the most important, yet most underrated of subjects. By standing on stage and performing, children develop self-confidence and they learn to work as a team. It also helps them to develop self-discipline and, above all, their communication skills.

### **How do you prepare your Year 6 students for their progression into Secondary School?**

The whole year is spent preparing the children for their move to Secondary. We make sure that the students consistently develop their independent learning and organizational skills. Towards the end of the year we also have a very effective transition program to ease them into Secondary before they start there full time.

### **Tell us a little known fact about you:**

Although I am an Australian citizen, I spent the first 3 weeks of my life in New Zealand.

### **If you weren't a teacher what job would you do and why?**

If I wasn't a teacher I would love to be a performer, singing and acting on stage. I love the buzz and the adrenaline that comes from being on stage.

### **How was your first Kota Kinabalu Christmas?**

My first KK Christmas was a very relaxed affair. We spent time with good friends and had the opportunity to explore a little more of the city we have come to call home.



## TEACHER TUESDAY: MRS NICKY RUSSELL

Mrs Nicky Russell is the Head of Primary at KIS and in this week's Teacher Tuesday we find out more how she recruits her teaching team, and which famous person she had lunch with as a young student!

**How many years have you been teaching?**

I have been teaching for 19 years.

**When did you join KIS?**

I joined KIS in August 2006 as the class teacher for a mixed Year 3 & 4 class.

**Use three words to describe KIS**

Fun, family, friendly

**What year groups have you taught in Primary during your time at KIS?**

When I joined KIS the school was so small that we had mixed year groups. There were only 5 classes in the whole of Primary. Since then I have taught all of the year groups from Foundation 1 through to Year 5, including a composite KS2 class that we ran before we went to two form entry. Since becoming Head of Primary I have also covered teaching in Year 6.

**As Head of Primary what is your most valuable resource and why?**

It has to be our teachers. They are all highly qualified and experienced, as well as being flexible in their teaching styles. Whenever I go into one of their classes the lessons that I have the privilege of seeing are always interactive, fun and stimulating for the children, encouraging them to develop a hunger for learning, which will help them develop a lifelong love of learning.

**What do you look for when recruiting teaching staff?**

I look for people who are passionate about teaching, who want to help students to develop their full potential. I also look for adaptability and people who work well as part of a team.

**If a time machine could take you anywhere for one day, when/where would you go?**

I would want to go forward in time by about 30 years to see what type of jobs our students are doing. We need to prepare our current students for jobs that have not been invented yet and give them the skills that they will need to be able to research and explore new concepts and ideas with creativity. Having a crystal ball or a time machine to leap forward in time would really help with this.

**If you could be a character from a children's book who would you be?**

I would like to be the Little Miss characters by Roger Hargreaves. They cover lots of different types of people, Little Miss Happy, Little Miss Clever, Little Miss Funny, Little Miss Busy, Little Miss Careful, Little Miss Daredevil... the list is endless.

**What is the best thing about being a teacher?**

If I can be cheeky, I would like to make this into two questions:

What is the best thing about being a teacher at KIS? – Being part of a huge family that comes from all around the world. After being here for so long, I really feel like I have an extended family. It is also lovely coming to school with both my boys every day and seeing them happy in their learning environment.

What is the best thing about being a teacher in general? – Loving my job and, no matter how much I plan for a day ahead, never quite knowing what will happen during a day. Will I be asked to cover a





class? What students will come to see me to show me some excellent work? What conversations will I have as I walk across the playground with a student? Which new students or parents will I meet?

**Tell us a little known fact about you:**

When I was 14 I had lunch with Princess Diana. I had won a "Child Of Achievement Award" for my work with disabled children and she presented it to me during a Gala Lunch at London's Guildhall.

**Eleven years in Sabah is a long time. Is there anywhere that you haven't been to yet that you'd like to visit?**

Yes, I came to Sabah with a young child and had another baby after being here for two years, so I didn't do much travelling during my first few years here. I would still love to go to the Kinabatangan one day. Seeing the Pygmy Elephants in the wild is a dream of mine.