



~ Welcome to the January edition of The First Steps newsletter ~

## Happy New Year!

Happy New Year and welcome back to The First Steps, albeit online! I hope you had an enjoyable holiday and your family are safe and well.

It has certainly been a strange start to the new year and not one that any of us would have wished for. Towards the end of Term 1 and through the first days of the Christmas holidays many of us were no doubt feeling optimistic about the future and life continuing to return to normal. Unfortunately, we have seen a return of COVID-19 cases across Thailand and children are again required to learn from home temporarily.

As a school we are working hard to ensure that we can continue to deliver the curriculum with as little disruption as possible. New pupils that have joined us this term are settling in well despite missing that initial face-to-face contact. I have been able to review videos and learning packs, as well as observe a number of live lessons. It is clear that our teachers are being very creative to ensure children remain engaged, and that the children themselves are actively involved in their learning.

I understand that parents are required to support their children's learning at home and I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support.

I am certainly looking forward to a time when children are permitted to return to school and The First Steps can once again be filled with life. School isn't quite the same with no children around! Until then I thank you again for your support and hope you stay safe and healthy.

## Christmas Performance

Looking back to the end of Term 1 we held a wonderful Christmas performance to celebrate the festive season.

Children from all classes took to the stage to sing and dance in front of parents and family members. There were Elves, Father Christmas, Angels, and even Christmas Trees!

I am always impressed by the confidence of children to go onto stage and perform. It is important that children are provided with opportunities to develop their confidence in a safe and secure environment, be it speaking to the class during show and tell, presenting their work, or performing to an audience on stage. A special mention must go to So, India, Taya, Thalia, Juwan and Niko who excelled as comperes throughout the performance, introducing each different class onto the stage.



Thank you to all the staff for their effort to put on such an excellent performance and to all the parents who came along to support the children. Parents should have received photographs from their teachers of the class performance via Seesaw and we will send out copies of the video once we have the final version from the production team.

The performance was followed by a picnic in the garden area and a visit from Father Christmas! It was lovely to see



parents socialising and in some cases meeting fellow parents from the same class for the first time. Thank you to Class Reps for organising food for the picnic

I look forward to more events in the future once we are permitted to allow children back onto the campus.

As always, if you have any comments, questions or concerns then please come and speak to me or email me at [head@thefirststeps.ac.th](mailto:head@thefirststeps.ac.th)

Sincerely,

*Mr. Alistair*



### A Message from The Director

Dear Parents,

With the holiday being cut short with news of school closing the Saturday after camp finished... it has been a very crazy 2 weeks.

Happily... we know that our Primary School land will be empty at the end of March. We should start construction in May/June after a 1-2 months demolition to remove the old buildings. Our Architect and construction design team are moving ahead to make sure we have a wonderful school open in August 2022.

At The First Steps we are working on moving the gym/multipurpose room to the second floor to allow 2 additional classrooms on the ground floor for our year 2 and year 3 classes next year. More on this shortly.

Once again, our online home learning has fielded praise against one of the much larger, more expensive schools nearby. I won't say which... but suffice to say, although no one likes online, The First Steps is doing a good job. Please try to enjoy this time with your children...we will take them back as soon as we can!

Warm Regards,

*Mr. Damon*

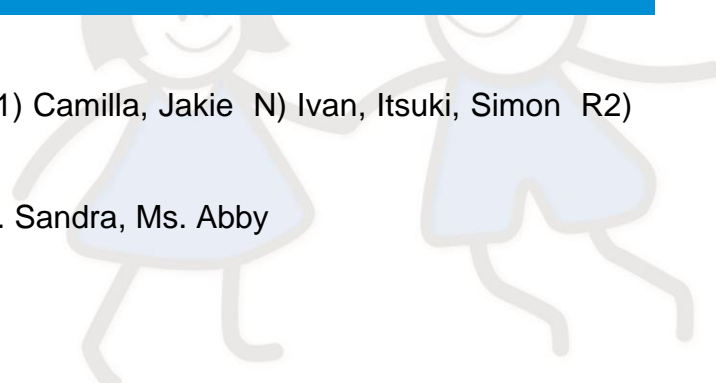


### Happy Birthday To You...

#### Born in December

**Children:** Y1) Tamika, Luca K2) Kanon, Mira K1) Camilla, Jakie N) Ivan, Itsuki, Simon R2) Oliver

**Staff:** P. Waan, P. Nong, Ms. Mint, Ms. Vicki, Ms. Sandra, Ms. Abby





## Future Academic Years

### Academic Year 2021/22

Although we are only part way through the current academic year, preparations are well underway for August 2021 and the development of FSB for opening in August 2022. Regular meetings are taking place with the project management team and we expect demolition and construction on the new site to commence in the coming months.

For Academic year 2021/22 we will continue to have classes from Rising 2s upwards and will also open a Year 3/4 class in order to accommodate the Year 2 aged children who are currently in Polar Bears Class.

A crucial part of preparation for any academic year is the recruitment of teachers. I have been delighted to have received over 200 applications from teachers who would like to join our school and over the past few weeks I have been interviewing short listed candidates. I look forward to sharing further details with parents in the near future once the teaching team has been finalised.

During Term 1 Mr. Damon and I met with parents of children who currently learn French and/or German at The First Steps to discuss language options in future years. Following these discussions and subsequent survey feedback it has been decided that language provision for children in Year 1 and above will be as shown below. Please note that French and German lessons with Ms Fiona and Mr. Alexander for children in Nursery, K1 and K2 will continue as normal.

### Academic Year 2021/22

Year 1: French and German - This will continue as normal with children provided the option of attending 2/3 days per week of French/German. Children not taking French or German will have the choice of learning Thai, Mandarin and Japanese for 6 x 30 minute lessons per week.

Year 2 upwards: Children will have the choice of French, German, Thai, Mandarin and Japanese. There will be 6 x 30 minute lessons per week.

### Academic Year 2022/23

Year 1 upwards: Children will have the choice of French, German, Thai, Mandarin and Japanese. There will be 6 x 30 minute lessons per week. Children learning French or German will be able to choose an additional 4 x 30 minute lessons per week (total 10 x 30 minute lessons per week).

If parents have any questions about language lessons, or the development of the Primary School, please don't hesitate to contact me at [head@thefirststeps.ac.th](mailto:head@thefirststeps.ac.th).

Sincerely,

*Mr. Alistair*

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The First Steps International Pre-School

