BLANGAH RISE PRIMARY SCHOOL

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18 March 2024

Dear Parents/Guardians,

The Apollo program, which ended in 1972, resulted in an elite club of just 12 people who have walked on the lunar surface. Besides learning more about the moon, many technologies that we now use in our daily lives might not have come about if scientists did not continue to explore space. For example, satellites, freeze-dried food, water purification, breathing masks, medical imaging devices, sunglasses, cordless power tools, memory foam, and many more others.

Now, more than 50 years later, another international race to the moon is on. In particular, NASA's Artemis II mission plans to return humans to the moon's orbit in 2024-2025, which will pave the way to land the first woman and next man on the Moon on Artemis III subsequently.

Obviously, the moon landing has helped to advance science and technology, but more importantly, it also taught us to dream. Not just to dream big, but also to have the tenacity to attempt the difficult. This led to the word "moonshot", which means a very challenging and innovative project or undertaking. How big or difficult our own dream is will differ from others; and certainly not all our dreams need to be big or difficult (otherwise, we will be exhausted!). But each one can be encouraged to have at least one personal moonshot while pursuing and managing your other simpler or more doable goals.

As the lesson of the moon landing taught us, some moonshots are actually possible and even if the goal wasn't achieved, the accompanying discoveries and benefits would have made the overall effort worthwhile. The thing about a moonshot is that you usually never anticipate the other attendant benefits you receive along the way. Similarly, a person may yet to or not achieve his/her personal moonshot, but he/she may acquire many useful skills from the effort.

The famous author J. K. Rowling had the ambition to be a writer from an early age and wrote a book at age 6. Her childhood experiences provided her with a lively imagination, and studying the Classics at University was later to become useful in her writing. When she wrote her first Harry Potter book, it was rejected by 12 major publishing houses before being accepted by a small publisher. The rest after that, as they say, is history.

Albert Einstein, widely regarded as one of the most brilliant minds in history, struggled with speech and language development as a child. Despite this, he was fascinated by science and mathematics from a young age and pursued his passion relentlessly. Two "wonders" deeply affected his early years – a compass and a book on geometry. He eventually developed the theory of relativity, which revolutionized our understanding of the universe.

Usain Bolt, the legendary sprinter who became the fastest man on Earth, had a childhood love for cricket and soccer, and a dream of becoming a professional player. But his cricket coach recognized his unique gift for speed and encouraged him to explore track and field instead. Usain went on to achieve unprecedented success at the Olympics.

With the removal of mid-year examinations, and more time and space to explore their learning, let's encourage our children to have a personal moonshot and begin the challenging journey of the making the necessary effort and sacrifices. They will probably not realize their moonshot goal any time soon, but they will be surprised by how useful their learning will be along the way.

1. Upcoming Events in Term 2

DATE	EVENT	REMARKS
18, 25 March 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 April 6, 13, 20 May	After School Enrichment Programme (ASEP): Aesthetics	2.30 pm to 4.30 pm For selected P3 to P6 students
19, 26 March 2, 30 April 7, 14 May	ASEP: Choir	3.30 pm to 5 pm For selected P2 to P6 students
19 March	Commemoration of World Water Day	
19 March 2, 30 April	Delta House Practice	3.15 pm to 4.45 pm For P3 to P6 students
19 to 27 March	P4 Robotics	During Math Lessons
21 March 4 April 2 May	Gillman House Practice	3.15 pm to 4.45 pm For P3 to P6 students
21 March	P4 Discovery Camp Session 2	2 pm to 3.15pm
21 March 4 April	Raffles Science Olympiad (selected P5 students)	2 pm to 3 pm (21 March) 2 pm to 3.30 pm (4 April)
22 March 5, 12, 19, 26 April 3, 10, 17 May	SwimSafer: 3 Topaz	During Curriculum Time
22 March 3 May	Student Leaders Training	2 pm to 4.30 pm 3 May – Online session
5, 12, 26 April	APEX – EL: Debate	2 pm to 3.15 pm
25 to 28 March 1 to 5 April	P4 ERLA	During Science Lessons
22 March	P4 Learning Journey to Geylang Serai Heritage Centre	During Curriculum Time
25 March	P4 APEX - Singapore Amazing Flying Machine Competition	1 pm to 430 pm
26, 28 March 2 April	P3 Broadcast Journalism	2 pm to 4 pm
26 March 2, 16, 23, 30 April	P4 Science Olympiad Training	2 pm to 3.30 pm
26 March 2, 16, 23, 30 April	P5 Math Olympiad Training	2 pm to 3.30 pm
26 March	Raffles Math Olympiad	2 pm to 3.15 pm For selected P4, P5 and P6 students
26, 28 March	P6 Motivation Camp	2 pm to 3.15 pm
26 March 23 April 14 May	Keppel House Practice	3.15 pm to 4.45 pm For P3 to P6 students
28 March 25 April 16 May	Redhill House Practice	3.15 pm to 4.45 pm For P3 to P6 students
29 March	***Public Holiday - Good Friday***	
1, 15 April 6 May	Junior Reporters Programme	2.30 pm to 4 pm For selected students

DATE	EVENT	REMARKS
2 to 5 April	P5 Young Photographers	During Curriculum Time Please refer to details which will be shared via Parents Gateway.
3 April	P4 Museum Based Learning	During Curriculum Time
4, 18, 25 April 2, 9 May	APEX: Math and Science	2 pm to 3.15 pm
5, 12, 26 April 3*, 10 May	APEX: EL – Writing	2 pm to 3.30 pm *3 May – students to work on asynchronous tasks from home.
5, 12, 26 April 3*, 10 May	APEX: EL – Scrabble	2 pm to 3.30 pm *3 May – students to work on asynchronous tasks from home.
9 April	Hari Raya Puasa Celebrations	**Early dismissal for Muslim students only – at 10.30am**
10 April	***Public Holiday – Hari Raya Puasa***	
15 to 26 April	P3 Robotics	During Math Lessons
16 April	Commemoration of Earth Day	
16 April	Visual Spatial Mathlympics	2 pm to 3.30 pm For selected P6 students only
17 to 19 April	P5 Cohort Camp	
18 April	Asia-Pacific Mathematical Olympiad for Primary Schools (APMOPS) - Math Competition	2 pm to 4.15 pm For selected P6 students only
24 April	P4 MTL Camp	During Curriculum Time
30 April	Careers Fair	During Curriculum Time
1 May	***Public Holiday – Labour Day***	
6 to 10 May	P6 Timed Practice 2	
9 May	P2 Learning Journey to Singapore Zoo	During Curriculum Time
17 May	**Parent-Teacher Child Conference**	**No school for P1 to P6 students.** ***Further information will be provided later*
21 May	Singapore Primary Science Olympiad (Selected P5 students)	***Timing to be confirmed later by organiser*
21 May	**Home-Based Learning for P2 to P6 students**	P2-P6 Students are to work on HBL tasks at home, unless they have been informed to report to school.
22 May	***Public Holiday – Vesak Day***	

2. Inquiry-based Learning (IBL)

The removal of the Mid-Year Examinations (MYE) creates more opportunities for students to engage in deep learning and critical thinking. The adoption of Inquiry-Based Learning (IBL) as a teaching approach aligns with this goal by providing our students with the autonomy to explore, question, and problem-solve across various subjects and levels.
We would like to encourage parents to support your child in IBL:

Access to Technology: Ensure your child has access to necessary technology at home, such as computers, tablets, or smartphones. Support them in using these tools for self-directed and collaborative learning, especially through platforms like the Student Learning Space (SLS).

Asking Open Questions: Encourage curiosity and critical thinking by asking open-ended questions that stimulate your child's thinking process. These questions can help deepen their understanding of concepts and spark further inquiry.

Encouraging Problem Finding and Solving: Develop a mindset of problem-solving at home by encouraging your child to identify real-world problems or challenges and brainstorm possible solutions. For example, assisting your child in utilizing any home kits provided or assembled for their learning activities. These kits can be valuable tools for conducting experiments, exploring concepts, and engaging in hands-on learning experiences. These help them develop essential skills for navigating complex situations.

By collaborating with parents and providing support in these areas, we can enhance the effectiveness of the IBL activities. Together, we can create a learning environment that encourages curiosity, fosters critical thinking, and empowers our students to apply their knowledge to real-world situations.

3. 1st Semester Home-Based Learning (HBL) – P2 to P6 students only

HBL is an opportunity to equip our students with digital literacy and technological skills. The experience with the Covid-19 pandemic over the past 4 years highlights the importance of being resilient and always being ready to continue learning even when there is a major disruption. Technology has been a powerful enabler for schools during the pandemic, and we would like our students to continue to be familiar with the processes of HBL. As P1 students may require more time to prepare for HBL, they will be involved in HBL in the 2nd semester.

In this semester, P2 to P6 students will be engaged in HBL via Student Learning Space (SLS) on **21 May 2024, Tuesday**. Subject teachers will be assigning online assignments and/or hardcopy assignments, or conducting synchronous learning via Zoom for specific levels and subjects. More details will be provided at later time via Parents Gateway. P1 students will continue lessons in school as usual on that day.

4. Learning for Life Programme (LLP)

Commemoration of World Water Day

The commemoration of World Water Day is observed annually on 22 March. This day holds significance as it marks a United Nations Observance initiated in 1993, dedicated to celebrating water and spotlighting the critical issue of the 2 billion individuals currently lacking access to safe water.

The theme for World Water Day 2024 is “Water for Peace,” designed to elevate our consciousness regarding the global water and sanitation crisis. This theme highlights the role that water plays in fostering stability and prosperity worldwide.

Singapore's World Water Day Theme for this year is "Simple Actions. Sustainable Future." This theme emphasizes the importance of small yet meaningful actions through water usage, consumption, and management to help contribute to a sustainable water future.

This year, BRPS marks Singapore World Water Day on 19 March with various activities. Staff will wear blue to support clean water initiatives. Student leaders will lead in the assembly talk and classroom activities will focus on virtues such as self-discipline, caring, and responsibility. These include watching educational videos, completing activity sheets and designing posters or postcards promoting water conservation and cleanliness. Recess activities include pledging to save water and screening of videos. Students also get to take part in ‘Guess the number of pledge cards’ competition via SLS. Some activities will be integrated into Science and STEM lessons, covering topics like prevention of mosquito breeding, rain harvesting and making of

water filtering system. Exhibits created by the Parent Support Group will be displayed at our 'Community Space' to further educate students on the importance of water resource.

Commemoration of Earth Day

Earth Day, celebrated annually on 22 April, serves as a global call to action to address environmental concerns and promote planet conservation. At BRPS, we observe Earth Day on 16 April, engaging in various activities aimed at promoting environmental education, conservation and sustainability.

The 2024 Earth Day Theme, "Planet vs. Plastics: 60% Reduction of Plastic Production by 2040", emphasizes the urgency of raising awareness about the health risks associated with plastics and advocating for responsible behaviors to phase out single-use plastics. We encourage reflection on our roles as environmental stewards and prompt discussions on practical steps to reduce our ecological footprint.

Related school events will include an assembly talk, classroom activities and recess engagements focused on upcycling, recycled art and sorting recyclable materials. Selected Primary 6 students will also be sharing their experiences and thoughts on the Solar Buddy project.

Through these activities, we hope to reinforce the collective responsibility to care for the planet as these activities provide students with opportunities to explore environmental issues and contribute to positive environmental change.

In addition, we will continue to participate in recycling drives organized by Sembwaste (Ezi Recycling) and Clean Up! @ Southwest, further demonstrating our commitment to environmental stewardship.

Green Initiatives: Collaboration with National University of Singapore (NUS) – Sustainability Resource Pack and Recycling Right Campaign

In lieu of the commemoration of Earth Day, the school is enhancing its collaboration with NUS. This term, BRPS will partner NUS in reaching out to students and the community about the importance of recycling right. The partnership aims to educate everyone the importance of recycling effectively from young. In this project, our student leaders will support the implementation of behavioural educational initiatives to encourage their peers to recycle right. The areas of work include redesigning the recycling hub and reaching out to partners in the neighbourhood about sustainability and recycling effectively. The team looks forward to sharing more with the community!

International Day for Biodiversity

22 May marks the International Day for Biological Diversity. In celebration of Singapore's rich natural heritage and to foster learning about our diverse flora and fauna, BRPS is proud to announce the launch of the 3rd series of our publication, 'The Green Dragonflies and Their Swampy Friends'. Titled 'Friends of Berlayer Creek: The Last Garden', is produced by a team of teachers and students with a keen interest in raising environmental awareness and story writing. Through this narrative, they aim to inspire young readers to actively participate in conserving the natural environment around them.

Our students will be sharing this story at library@harbourfront on 27 April. Do keep a lookout on our Facebook and Instagram for more details!

5. Applied Learning Programme (ALP)

We are excited to announce a diverse range of engaging STEM activities during the upcoming term. This is aimed at developing 21st-century competencies in our students.

<u>STEM Challenge (P3-P6)</u>
The program kicks off with the STEM Challenge, a collaborative effort between the Science Centre and the James Dyson Foundation. In the Science classes, students in this challenge

will design and build a self-propelled cotton reel tank, fostering both creativity and problem-solving skills.

Robotics (P3-P4)
P3 and P4 students will delve into the exciting world of robotics through in-house lessons. They will learn about various robotic parts, programming fundamentals, and teamwork using LEGO SPIKE Essential. The sessions culminate in a friendly competition, allowing them to showcase their newly acquired skills and celebrate their achievements.

Amazing Flying Machine Competition (P4 APEX)
Throughout Term 1, P4 APEX students have been preparing for the Amazing Flying Machine competition. Using their creativity and ingenuity as they design, fold, and test their paper airplanes to achieve the "longest, farthest, or most unique flight" for the competition this term. Our young learners will discover more about aerodynamics, putting their mathematics and science skills to the test as they fine-tune their flying machines.

Scientists-in-Schools Programme (P6 APEX)
Under A*Star Researcher Dr. Zhou Jun's expert guidance, P6 APEX students have been exploring the domain of artificial intelligence (AI). They explored the potential of AI in everyday life and embarked on a project to create an AI-powered application that automates student attendance taking using facial recognition. These students will be sharing their projects with the school this term. Imagine the possibilities – classrooms transformed by cutting-edge technology, fostering a culture of innovation and exploration!

STEM Club
STEM Club participated in the Social Robotics programme, jointly organized by IMDA Singapore, in Term 1 and will be completing the programme this term. This innovative programme exposes students to the world of social robots and artificial intelligence (AI). Utilizing the Alpha Mini humanoid robot and block-based coding, students explore the applications of social robots in fields such as education, healthcare, and research. The programme develops computational thinking skills, introduces cutting-edge AI concepts, and promotes social-emotional learning. Students will culminate their experience by designing a community outreach project that showcases the positive impact of social robots.

Partnership with Junior Achievement (JA) Singapore
BRPS has embarked on a collaborative partnership with Solar Buddy through JA Singapore to provide students with enriching learning experiences. Through interaction with industry professionals, students will explore emerging trends and gain valuable industry exposure. The partnership aims to cultivate environmental awareness and responsibility through engaging activities. As an initial collaboration, P6 students would be assembling solar LED lights during the P6 Motivation Camp for children in developing countries. This program aims to develop compassion, global citizenship, and aligns with the existing ALP initiative, where nearly 2,000 student-assembled solar lights are being distributed in Cambodia.

Collaboration with Parent Support Group (PSG) - STEM Champion
With the enthusiastic support of our PSG, we organised our very first STEM Champion challenge in Term 1. These sessions challenge students to think creatively and work together on various STEM-related tasks during their recesses. These engaging activities will return in Term 2. This is a fun and engaging way for students to apply their learning, problem-solve and develop collaborative skills.

6. CCA Mentoring Programmes

The CCA Mentoring Programme provides opportunities for our interested P5-P6 students to be mentored by exemplary secondary students in their respective CCAs. Each mentoring programme is differentiated and customized according to the CCAs. The Programme aims to inspire our students through a purposeful experience that facilitates an outward mindset, character building, and mentoring in the partnering secondary school. Through this CCA

Mentoring Programme, we hope to encourage more students to consider DSA as a viable pathway to their choice secondary school.

Our list of Partner Schools

1. Anglo Chinese School (Independent) – BRPS Badminton boys
2. Raffles Girls School (RGS) – BRPS Badminton girls
3. School of the Arts (SOTA) – BRPS Art & Design Club and MediaKids
4. School of Science & Technology (SST) – STEM Club

We will continue to explore partnerships with other secondary schools for other CCAs.

7. Wellness Mondays – Intergenerational Bonding Sessions

Active X Wellness Monday is a collective initiative to serve the senior citizens in Telok Blangah. Together with our community partners (Active Global Health and Community Care, NTUC Health, SportSG and Telok Blangah Community Club), we organise a monthly active ageing programme that promotes intergenerational bonding between senior citizens and students.

If you have senior citizens in your families who like to participate in this programme, please feel free to join us at Telok Blangah Community Centre for the sessions held at 8am – 8.50am on the following dates: 18 Mar, 15 Apr, 20 May, 24 Jun, 15 Jul, 19 Aug, 16 Sep, 28 Oct, 18 Nov, 16 Dec.

8. Parent-Teacher Child Conference (PTCC)

Please note that the school will be conducting our Parent-Teacher-Child Conference (PTCC) in school on **Friday, 17 May**. The objective of the PTCC is for your child/ward to share about his/her strengths, areas for growth as well as his/her learning experiences within school. At the same time, the Form Teachers will share about your child's/ward's learning progress and learning dispositions. You may also discuss with the Form Teachers ways in which you may partner the school to support your child/ward in his/her holistic development. More details will be provided for you by the respective Year Heads nearer the date.

9. Pursuit of A Dream

The school is publishing a picture book "Pursuit of A Dream" consisting of students' work. It is dedicated to all Olympians and Paralympians representing Singapore at the 2024 Paris Olympics & Paralympics. This coffee table book aims to visually portray moments focusing on themes of determination, camaraderie, and triumph found in the Olympics. It seeks to embody the Olympic and Paralympic values in action. Each artwork or photograph by our students aims to bring to life stories of friendship, resilience, and respect, showcasing courage and determination. The book serves as a source of inspiration, encouraging readers to pursue their dreams with passion and dedication.

10. International School Collaborations

For Term 2, we are happy to announce a series of exciting collaborations with multiple international schools. These include hosting a school delegation from Hong Kong, engaging in online collaboration and cultural exchange with schools in Nanjing. We are also looking into building Pen Pals relationships with students in Suzhou. These interactions offer our students a chance to enrich their global perspectives, cultivate communication skills, and establish lasting friendships with peers worldwide.

With a busy and exciting Term 2 ahead, we wish you and your family a very fruitful and meaningful time of learning.

Yours sincerely,

Francis Foo
Principal