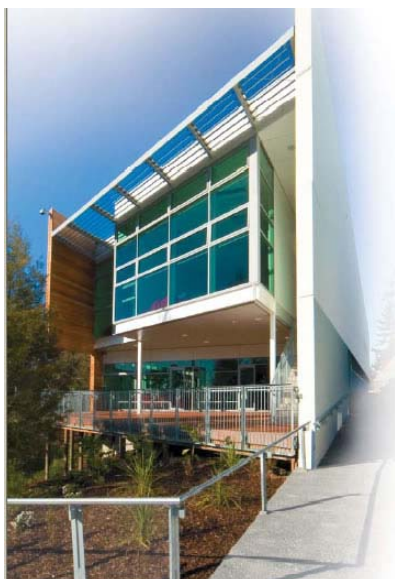


Kristin School Case Study



Kristin is an independent co-educational school and comprises Junior (K-Y6), Middle (Y7-Y10) and Senior (Y11-Y13) schools. The school roll is currently 1680 students from Years K to 13 (Kindergarten to Year 13). The school is set on a 20 hectare site of park-like grounds in Albany on Auckland's North Shore. A feature of the school is its outstanding facilities and the many opportunities offered to students within a safe and stimulating learning environment.

For the Chinese Language Foundation what is particularly special about Kristin is their innovative Chinese (Mandarin) language programme. All students from Kindergarten to Year 6 participate in this Chinese language programme, and Middle and Senior students are encouraged to continue learning Chinese as an option. Alongside the language programme, students are offered learning experiences to further explore the Chinese culture.

This case study takes a look at what Kristin School is doing in their language programme and what the students have to say about it. We also hear from Maureen Gottard (Head of Faculty Languages) about how the programme evolved.

Click on the links below in each section to find out more.

	<p>Junior School (Kindergarten to Year 6) In the Junior programme students are introduced to the Mandarin language and Chinese culture. Through songs, poems, role plays and games, the programme provides a positive, fun and interactive way for students to learn.</p> <p><u>See page 2 herein</u></p>
	<p>Middle School (Year 7 – 10) Middle School students can choose to continue their study of Mandarin and build on what they've learnt in the Junior school. They also explore a variety of Chinese cultural topics that are integrated into the curriculum. Chinese speech competitions, camps and culture groups are also offered to students.</p> <p><u>See page 3 herein</u></p>
	<p>Senior School (Year 11 – 13) The senior programme offers students the opportunity to study Mandarin as an NCEA subject in Y11 and the IB Diploma programme in Y12 & Y13. Students learn to interact and communicate clearly and effectively in a range of authentic situations.</p> <p><u>See page 5 herein</u></p>
	<p>Interview with Maureen Gottard Maureen is Kristin's Head of Faculty of Languages. She talks about the how the programme was set up, the community involvement, the challenges and the positives!</p> <p><u>See page 6 herein</u></p>

Junior School

Chinese is taught to all students in the Junior School, from Kindergarten to Year 6. The language programme introduces students to a second language in a fun-filled, practical and communicative way. Activities are chosen to promote knowledge of the language and the society and culture of China.

From Kindergarten to Year 2, the emphasis is initially on oral work. Role-plays, games, songs, poems and rhymes help students to develop confidence in speaking Mandarin and develop fluency and an authentic Chinese accent.



In Years 3 and 4 the skills of reading and writing are introduced. In years 5 and 6 all four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing are developed further to include an introduction of grammatical concepts.

Through the language programme, children develop intercultural awareness and an understanding and respect for other countries and cultures. Here's what some of the students have to say;

"I like the fact that I am learning lots of different things with every lesson that goes by, and I like singing Chinese songs".

"I enjoy taking Chinese because I like singing the songs and writing Chinese characters. I like trying to pronounce words and working with a partner if we have to do a conversation. I like doing word sheets and puzzles. I like writing Pinyin and writing the date".

"I like learning Chinese because it is fun to learn and you have an advantage for speaking another language. I can't wait to go to Beijing next year".

"I like figuring out quizzes. I enjoy answering questions in Chinese and doing mini-plays".

"My favourite part about learning Chinese is writing characters and having competitions".

"I like singing Chinese songs and playing games".



There are also opportunities for students to join Chinese cultural groups where they can learn and perform Chinese song and dance.

These groups have lots of opportunities to perform for the whole school and also in outside events such as the Auckland Chinese Speech competition.

In Year 6 students have the opportunity to visit Beijing for a week in the September holidays.

Middle School

Students choose from a selection of languages at Y7 and study their chosen language until Y10. Mandarin is offered at Year 7 as a continuing programme to students who have studied it in the Junior School. It is also offered as a beginners' programme for those new to the school and to the language.

The language is studied through a communicative approach developing the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Students in Years 9 & 10 are provided with intensive oral practice with a native speaker.



Students learn about the Chinese culture through a number of integrated units covered within the curriculum. The units include:

- Healthy life style; environment in China and what can be done;
- Problems of youngsters nowadays; why study Chinese;
- Food, culture and language; Chinese idioms and stories; Chinese folk arts and how it came about; Chinese history;
- The mythical stories behind Himalayas; Chinese surnames; Chinese myths & legends; foreigners' view of China;
- Ladies first; travelling in China; American cup;
- Story about Li Bai; Chinese social life and entertainment; Chinese wedding customs; Chinese presents; School systems;
- Cities and Villages; Chinese advertisements; Chinese houses;
- How does Chinese children spend their money;
- Famous Chinese singers, actors/actresses and movie directors;
- Chinese achievements/famous people (past/present);
- Calligraphy; Panda; Beijing Opera



Students quickly begin to realise the opportunities and benefits that learning another language provides them with, not only in New Zealand but globally. Here's what students have to say;

"I decided to study Chinese because I am half Chinese and I really want to learn to speak, read and write Chinese. I have been to China a few times and really liked it and I'd like to go there for university or to work there".

"I decided to study Chinese because I will probably go on to be a business woman and work in the commercial world. Chinese is useful for this because China is the business capital of the world and I believe that if I know the language, or at least the basics, that will give me a head start and be extremely helpful. I also chose this subject because I have been studying Chinese for many years, since Kindergarten and I didn't want to waste the opportunity to carry on with this language. I might want to learn another language later on".

"The reason that I have chosen to study Chinese is because I feel that it is a beautiful language that is being spoken by a growing population and it will be very useful for me in the future. Another reason why I have chosen to learn Chinese is because of its significant culture and I have a passion for learning this language".

"I have decided to study Chinese as it is a widely spoken language, I learnt some of it in the Junior School and I enjoyed it a lot. It is a useful language".

“There are many countries that are expanding globally and China is one of them. Many companies are looking for employees that have had experience in China or can speak Chinese. I think that it is important to learn Chinese at an early age because China could be one of the leading countries in the world. Learning Chinese could be crucial”.

“I chose to study Chinese because of the opportunities it would open up for me in doing business in China or with Chinese people in the future. I am also interested in Chinese culture and I wanted a challenge so learning Chinese was the perfect opportunity for me”.

A highlight for many students is the regular language trip to China to visit their sister school in Beijing, stay with a Chinese family, visit cultural sites and practise their Mandarin! As well as this, there is an annual exchange programme offered to three students in Year 10 to visit Beijing staying with a Chinese family – a fantastic opportunity to further develop their language skills in an immersion situation.

Chinese speech competitions, Chinese language camps and culture groups also provide students with lots to do in their extra curricular time.



Senior School

Students who have studied Chinese in the Middle School can study NCEA Level 1 Chinese in Year 11 and the IB Diploma programme in Years 12 and 13 as an option. These courses focus on language acquisition and development of the four language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Intensive oral practice with a native speaker is a core feature of the programme. Students develop an ability to interact and communicate clearly and effectively in a range of authentic situations. This allows them to reach a high degree of competency in each language skill.

For these students, learning Chinese has sparked a real interest in Chinese culture for them. For many, learning Chinese is helping them to shape and consider their career pathways and the future opportunities available to them.



Here's what the students had to say:

"I study Chinese because China is quickly becoming a world superpower and in the future when everyone wants to do business with China, anyone who does not speak Chinese will be at a serious disadvantage".

"Chinese culture has interested me from an early age. When it came to choosing a language to learn, Chinese was the obvious choice. After travelling to China, my passion for learning Chinese only strengthened. I now eagerly await my return to the Orient next year".

"I am studying Chinese because Chinese is one of the world's most spoken languages and in this part of the world, it is very useful for trade with China and communication with people. Also I have studied it since I was quite young and it was important to develop my communication skills".

"With the fifth of the world's population speaking Chinese, I have found that my Chinese could be useful in almost any place I go, including Hong Kong, China and even in New Zealand. Learning Chinese as my third language has been an important tool in my life".

"Initially, I studied Chinese because everyone had to in the Junior school. Now, it's because studying Chinese is fun, interesting and challenging. It has opened up new opportunities for me. I have been on an exchange trip to China and I can work in China in the future. I also can communicate more with my Chinese friends".



Senior School students also have the opportunity to visit China and their sister school in Beijing where they stay with Chinese families and visit cultural sites. Shanghai, Hangzhou, Fuyang and Shao Xing are also visited.

An annual exchange programme is also offered to two students in Year 12 to visit Beijing for six weeks. Students stay at their sister school in Beijing over the NZ Summer school holidays.

Chinese speech competitions, Chinese language Camps and Culture Groups also provide students lots to do in their extra curricular time.

Interview with Maureen Gottard



Tell us a bit about the thinking behind the Chinese programme? Why did your school decide to offer Chinese?

Chinese was introduced into the Junior School by a former Principal about 10 years ago. We were teaching language programmes from Y7 to Y13 (Chinese was not included) and as we were teaching the International Baccalaureate Diploma programme which has a compulsory requirement to learn a second language, it was felt we could prepare our students better if a second language was introduced in the earlier. The choice of Chinese was made by the Principal who felt that this would be a very useful language for our students given the economic growth of China and our position in New Zealand.

How long has the Chinese programme been in place, and has it changed much since its inception?

About 10 years and has been developed over time. Chinese is the compulsory second language (we do the IB Primary Years Programme (PYP)) and students can choose to continue with Chinese in the Middle School and Senior School or choose another language at Y7 and Y12.

What were the challenges of setting up this Chinese programme? And how did you go about getting buy in from all groups (Staff, students, parents) when it first started?

Chinese was presented as the chosen language and a Chinese teacher was employed to teach it. At the time, some parents did not agree with the choice but as the years have passed and China has grown in stature in the world, parents understand the value of their child learning Chinese. When Chinese reached Y6 and we were preparing to continue the programme in the Middle School, we did need more teachers and the choice was limited. Today, there are more teachers available, thankfully.

And how is the Chinese programme received now by students, parents and staff?

Very positively. Chinese is now the second largest language in the Middle School and the third largest in the Senior School .

What do you see as the key benefits for children starting to learn Chinese from such an early age?

A fundamental concept of the IB programmes is intercultural awareness – to develop students' attitudes, knowledge and skills as they learn about their own and others' social, national and ethnic cultures and to have a global awareness/perspective. In the PYP one of the goals of exposing children to languages other than their mother tongue is to provide an insight into and an appreciation of other cultures.

How has the school involved the community/parents in this programme of learning?

Our Junior School have a trip to Beijing in Y6, Middle and Senior Schools have student exchanges to our sister-school in Beijing. There are also regular school trips to China for all students. We have Junior and Middle School cultural groups who perform within and outside the school.



What would you describe as the key factors to the success of the schools Mandarin programme?

The school's commitment to the programme is key - this enables good teaching and learning and profiles the value of a second language programme. The added extras of language trips, exchanges, cultural groups etc give students the opportunity to pursue their language learning in a wider context.

There's a lot of extra-curricular activities and exchange trips offered in the school? What would you attribute the success of this to?

Committed and passionate teachers who want to make the language experience as authentic, memorable and enjoyable as possible.

What advice would you give to any school who's thinking of incorporating a similar programme into their curriculum?

To be fully committed to the language/s chosen and provide the best resources possible - teachers, resources, opportunities for students to experience the culture . There needs to be a shared vision amongst all stake-holders in the school community to ensure success.

