PRINCIPAL’S REPORT 2011

Introduction.

Another academic year is almost coming to an end and it’s time to write my annual report for you. Once again as I reflect on all that has happened here during this busy and exciting year I am always surprised how much has been achieved.

Running a small not for profit international school is a privilege and one which I thoroughly enjoy. No two days are alike with many complex and varied issues to address. Working with human dynamics can be very challenging and demanding but also pleasurable and professionally fulfilling.

During recent years we have had a number of serious situations to address,
- political instability and conflict resulting in bandhs
- escalating prices
- fuel and water shortages
- maintaining high calibre staff
- alongside ensuring the students have the best learning opportunities made available as possible
- we have had many happy events to enjoy with some interesting visitors
- we have had some sadness and some disappointments to manage

The two main areas, which remain constant, are that
- we continue to overcome difficulties and celebrate success together by supporting one another as a Team throughout the school and the community
- we are sure of the full commitment of the staff, our children, the parent body and the Board of Governors, who work hard to support TBS throughout.

Each year, indeed almost every term, we know we are scheduled for a turnover of pupils, families and at times teachers, and this year is no exception. Now as we also send our A level students off to universities around the globe I hope that they will continue to flourish and do well as they begin a new route in the wide pathways of the adult world.

We know, as expatriates, we must always recognise change as a time for growth and a time to move on. To those families and members of staff who leave us this year, I hope that as you move to another place, environment and school or higher education institution you will be very happy and remember us just as we will always remember you.

During the year Staff Changes

We welcomed to the Team of Teachers Aides Srijana Deula, Nicole Journal, Alice Cormack, Gyan Aryal and Sangita Ghotane. Mr Harish Gautam who joined the Administration Team.

Staffing continues to be an issue, as it is difficult to predict the number of students in each class, even at this late date prior to the school closing. TBS is not unique in this as we face the same problems as all other international independent schools but of course as Governors of TBS we are very cautious at this time of economic crisis and cutbacks but always put the needs of the children as priority. This coming year due to a larger than usual waiting list we are looking at accommodating more students and trying to reduce some class sizes through having two form entry in some Primary years to absorb the bulges. Consequently we are carrying out a second recruitment drive in preparation for the next academic year

Mr Paul Seston joined us in October 2010 and we welcome him to our Team.
In January 2011 we recruited the following new UK trained teachers. They will take up their posts in August. They are:
- Joanne Bevan
- Alice Anne Gordon
We unfortunately have to say goodbye to some members of staff, who have left through the year or will leave TBS at the end of this academic year. We would like to thank them for their valuable contribution and are sure they will be remembered by all the children, parents and staff. They are:

- Gunjana Tandukar
- Alice Cormack
- Aisling Kinsella
- Heidi Rowlands
- Jennifer Scott
- Joanna Dunning
- Paula Murphy
- Annie Goldie
- Sarah Hill
- Moyra Spencer
- Ian Bothwell
- James Costain

We are very sorry to say farewell to Mr Costain who has led the Secondary Section so successfully and hope he will be happy in his new venture.

I would like to express my gratitude to all the staff at TBS for their excellent work and for their understanding of the difficulties that we have had to face over the years. All staff leaving will be missed by us all, and we wish all of them every success in their future endeavours. A very big Thank-You is due to them for their excellent service to TBS.

Community Links.

As always we have enjoyed a number of activities throughout the year, which have embraced the children, staff, and in both the community of Kathmandu and further afield.

This year we have taken a number of students to both FOBISSEA (Federation of British International Schools in South and East Asia) Primary and Secondary Games for the various age groups around Asia. I know through talking with some students across the school for them the Games was huge fun and will be a wonderful lifelong memory of being a pupil at TBS.

The PE department continue to arrange sporting fixtures for the students of TBS and we have enjoyed a number of games and matches throughout the year.

The Big Draw, promoted by the Campaign for Drawing based in the UK, which took place in September was great fun and reminded everyone that we can all draw.

In the autumn we held the ninth Awards Celebration for the Secondary Section with awards being presented by His Excellency the British Ambassador Mr John Tucknott.

The International Day was celebrated with our diverse students from many countries across the school wearing their National dress and parent’s generously donating food to share after the Friday Family assembly.

The annual Tug of Peace was held at the end of term two and was enjoyed by all students involved who pulled away for their Houses with Makalu wining the event.

In December the Early Years and Key Stage 1 children performed ‘The Landlord’s Cat’ and ‘Ralph the Reindeer’. We also had the students in the Secondary Section presenting ‘The Complete Works of William
Shakespeare- Abridged’ and in April the children in Key Stage 2 performed a lively version of ‘Aesop’s Funtastic Fables’. The productions were fun for the students to perform and were a great success. I sincerely thank the staff and students for providing entertainment for families and friends here in Kathmandu.

The Musical and performing opportunities continue to be a highlight for the students and the links with Kathmandu Jazz Conservatory, Kathmandu International Music Society, Kathmandu Chorale and Kathmandu Orchestra all enrich their performance skills and confidence. We were very proud of Krissy Allen a strong member of our school band who released her first solo CD this winter. Mr Sunny Tuladhar, Mr Abhishek Bacharaya and Mr Kiran Kaddgi all from our Music Department also released their first CD too. The school choir have also been busy performing at various events throughout the year and have made a recording of some of their songs. These recording opportunities are very much part of the performance aspect of the curriculum here at TBS.

The PTA Spring Fair was another fun packed day and brought the community in through the gates of TBS.

The School Council driven Valentine’s Day selling roses and cup-cakes, made by our new Head Girl, Kencho Ongdi and her sisters, to raise funds for the BIR hospital Burns Unit was a huge success. We continue to make links with the Burns Unit and hope to support the work by raising funds and making everyone aware of the severity of burns and what to do in the event of a fire. The Bunny Ears and Funky Hat dress up day was great fun at Easter. The themed discos we have held throughout the year steered by the Primary and Secondary School Councils have been well attended and appreciated by the student body. The fostering of links with other schools continues and our collaborative role with Sunrise Boarding School has grown and developed.

The Public Speaking Inter House competition is another enjoyable event with pupils across the school participating which is scheduled to take place near to the end of the summer term.

Creative Arts week is also a huge success and we look forward to the 2011 week near the end of this term.

The Primary children have enjoyed ‘themed days’ during the year and dressed accordingly. We would like to thank all parents for supporting these events.

We have also fully embraced the Eco project and were awarded the Bronze badge. Congratulations to everyone who made the accolade possible. We enjoyed our first ever Eco Fair and are keen to make it an annual event. We are hoping to gain the Silver Award at the end of this academic year. The Eco Teams are making a difference through the school and community through the collection of waste, supporting the recycling of materials, making us aware through assembly presentations and holding meetings to make long term plans. This is an excellent initiative and fostering the children’s understanding about this wonderful but fragile world in which we live is critical.

We are delighted to report that again this year all the fieldtrips took place, in spite of the political climate. These trips continue to be highlights for all pupils of TBS and always provide us with a wonderful opportunity to work together in a non-school environment.

The Cultural working party has worked hard this year to propose the interweaving of visits into the Cultural calendar which will hopefully highlight for our students some of the varied and historic places of interest here in Nepal.

**Charitable Projects**

We enjoyed participating in the joint schools Art event Hope for Pakistan to raise funds for the flood victims back in October. The money raised from the sale of tickets for the three productions was donated to the BIR Hospital Burns Unit, the Dhading Project and ASHINAGA which is a Japanese based organisation set up to help the orphans from the 11th March tsunami.

The weekly Tuck Shop, coordinated by Miss Rakhee Lama, has also helped a number of local projects which include supporting local orphanages, supporting the education costs of the disabled daughter of one of our Guards which the Primary School Council pledged to do is continuing.

The Primary and Secondary classes from Foundation to 13 each have a community project the details of which are listed below:

Alongsidesome of the Sixth Form have been going out on Fridays to work with disabled children at Adarsha Vidhyalaya School to do some art and craft activities.
Primary Charities:

Foundation - supported Khilang Village School, Khilang, Kaski District – Pokhara

Year 2 and Year 1 – have supported the HECAC Children’s homes based in Thamel. The boys have visited and spent a successful afternoon with Year 2 here at school

Year 3 – have supported the Disabled New Life Centre. Primary staff and children have hosted a Saturday morning event for the students in Term 2 and aim to run a second event in Term 4.

Year 4 - any monies raised have been donated to School PTA funds

Year 5 - The Disabled Service Association of Lalitpur in Karyavinayak Village, Bungamati

Year 6 - Borderlands (Dandakhateri School) Project

Secondary Charities:

Year 7
Animal Nepal donkey sanctuary

Year 8
Y8 charity this year is Just One, an NGO that helps street children by supporting them returning to education

Year 9
Surya Children Welfare Service Centre in Jawalekheil

Year 10 Missionaries of Charity based in Pashupatinath. It is a Catholic run mission and there are three strands to the organisation:
1. An orphanage;
2. A home for the mentally and physically disabled;
3. An old people's home.

However, rather than merely fundraising we wanted to help out on their site (thus fulfilling the community work for the TBS award) and arrange for some of the children to come here to use the sports facilities.

Year 11
The Umbrella Foundation provides a home, food, health care and education to orphaned, trafficked and abandoned children. Umbrella currently cares for over 300 children in eight different homes in Swyambunath, Kathmandu.

Year 12/13
The Dhading Project
Namlo Nepal

These projects have been supported by collections, sponsored events, performances, cake sales and stalls at the various PTA events through the year. In addition to collecting for these organisations, students have learnt more about the needs of those involved by visiting and helping out. Some of the orphans supported have come into school on a Saturday for a ‘Fun Day’ organised by the Primary pupils and a sports morning supported by the Secondary students.

Pastoral Care:

The sharing of information continues through a number of different ways:

- Regular parent teacher appointments are held across the school and we urge that parents do come in as much as possible as these opportunities to meet staff and share information is crucial if you are to fully support your child.
- The revival of Parent Teacher workshops proved successful
- The termly Topic Talks in the Primary Section
- The weekly Primary Family Assemblies
- The Secondary Section termly assessments sheets
- The termly curriculum information sent to parents in the Secondary Section
- Curriculum and Topic specific workshops
- KS3, IGCSE and A level information evenings
- The annual reports

Health and Safety is an area under constant review.
- We do ask that you keep the school notified of all changes of address and telephone numbers, which are vital information, should an emergency situation arise.
- We continue to practice and review Fire drills, Earthquake procedures and Bomb drills
- We are also looking at the procedures for the students of coping in the event of clothing catching fire to minimise burn injuries.

The fully established Primary and Secondary Section School Councils who meet regularly with me and Senior staff all help to clarify issues and make TBS a better place for us all.

The termly House events, where a trophy can be awarded to a House, have become very important for our children. The House system continues to foster healthy competition along with a strong sense of being part of a team.

The staff continue to be keen to invite speakers in to the weekly assemblies to share their expertise and experiences with the children and I would like to thank those of you who have contributed to this programme or introduced us to people who have so generously given their time to our students.

**The new site:**

The long drawn out process of finalising the land and working through the bureaucracy continues to impede progress. The Land Committee have purchased 75 ropanis at Chowbar. There are still small pockets of land which are being finalised either through swapping or purchasing before we can commence building. The school has worked through legal issues which have been complicated and time consuming. The New Site Committee of the Board along with the architects and school lawyer have been extremely busy trying to address various matters over this past year. This has been a very tedious process and, of course, we have had to ensure the school is secure in its present site whilst these issues are being finalised. I would like to thank the patience of those involved, along with the student body, staff and all parents who have understood the problems we have encountered. Indeed the reason I agreed to stay for a further three year contract is to assist with the move of TBS. The Board felt a change in a Principal when there were so many things to address alongside the day to day running of the school would be a huge task for someone new to undertake.

Lastly we would like to say how much we fully appreciate the support of the parent body and the work PTA here at TBS who continue to be enthusiastic, make links with the other schools and organise fun events for the families of TBS to participate and enjoy.

**Human Resources Committee**

During 2010/2011 the Human Resource Committee has carried on with its general work of recruiting new staff and dealing with staffing issues as they arise. It has also liaised closely with the Finance Committee to ensure that the school employs the best possible staff within the restrictions of the school budget and continues to offer teaching staff a package comparable to that given by other not for profit overseas international schools.

In addition this year:

- The staff working parties have continued to meet. One group has focused on reviewing the TBS Performance Management policy, the policy is the same for both Sections, but the implementation mechanisms are different between the Sections.

- TBS has a wide cohort of students and it is crucial that the school meets the full range of learning needs. In term four all staff have been involved in ‘spotlighting’ differentiation across the school. It is hoped the findings will further enhance the practice for all pupils at TBS.
• A focus on Comment Based Marking has been a generic issue along with Target Setting for all students. This has been monitored over the years and has been developed following on from the focus of last year’s working party who focused specifically on ‘gifted and talented’ students. We have built a programme of teachers delivering enhancement activities to encourage ‘higher order thinking’ amongst this cohort of students to ensure that all students in the school are sufficiently challenged.

• Based on the review of the 360 monitoring questionnaire last year, it was agreed that this year the 360 questionnaire for parents and staff would be sent out every other year in a staggered manner. This year the parent’s questionnaire is to be sent, while next year the 360 to staff, parents and Governors questionnaire will be sent.

• This year the SMT (Senior Management Team) have introduced a Termly whole teaching staff Open Agenda meeting where staff may raise issues and discuss in an open forum meeting with the SMT.

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee has ensured that agreed financial procedures have been met and that requisite Financial Reports have been submitted to the Board. The Annual Audit Report will be available at the beginning of the next Academic Year and will be available from the Bursar’s Office as soon as the 2010/11 audit is completed. The Annual Budget for 2011-12 has been prepared and submitted to the Board and a 10% fee increase for next year has been approved.

Specific work during 2009/10 has included:

• Assessment of the school accounting procedures with the support of Moneyworks to ensure that optimal use is made of available funds is on-going and we are within proposed targets and the overall budget

• Continuous revision of the five-year financial plan as an on-going process in view of the school’s future developments will be maintained.

• Regular liaison with the Human Resources Committee to assess all staff employment contracts in the light of the school’s resources is an on-going process as the two Committees work together.

• The architects have drawn up estimated costs and analysis of rates in October 2010 for the building works.

• We will invite college students to participate in a competition to draw up a Business Plan for TBS and the Construction Project.

Buildings and Maintenance Committee

As in the past years with the school’s move to a new site this committee has restricted its work to essential repairs and the regular maintenance of health and safety standards. We continue to ensure all Firefighting equipment is up to date and regularly serviced.

The logs have been removed by the landlord.
Repairs to the surface of the hardcourt were made during the summer holidays.

The Tuck shop exterior walls were repainted during the Easter holiday. Some interior walls were also painted. We will continue to keep the school buildings not only safe for students and staff, but pleasant to look at until we move to the new school.