

# Peter & Jane: *A Program Showcase*

by Michael Kalinowski

Located in Petaling Java, Malaysia, the primary purpose of this program is to lay a strong foundation for a lifelong love of learning in each child. According to principal Patricia Teh, the activities are funded by parent fees and serve children two to six years of age.

A nursery program for children two to four years of age uses Montessori didactic apparatus and teaching materials acquired from all over the world. Here, the children develop: practical living skills; sensory motor skills; early language, numeracy, and science skills; child safety awareness; moral values; musical skills with Musikgarten, USA; appreciation of creativity and aesthetics; and physical education skills.

In the K1 (5 years) and K2 (6 years) Programs, the classrooms prepare children for the eventual formal environment in primary school. These programs, though teacher-directed remain child-centered.

In the K1 Program, children begin their formal mastery of the 3 Rs. Here they continue with the use of *Montessori apparatus and methods*, supplemented by other appropriate teaching materials to reinforce mathematical and language concepts. In the K2 Program, at six years of age the children may opt to complete their preschool education either in English or Mandarin. The Mandarin Elective Classes at Peter & Jane Kindergarten are among the first in Malaysia to participate in the ground breaking *Zhong Hua Zi Jing (China)* approach to



Mandarin literacy. The focus of the program is 4,000 characters, but at Peter & Jane they are concentrating on 2,000 characters. This reduction is due to their belief that the foundation laid should be thorough — which means repetition, revision, and enrichment.

Computer literacy is introduced to the children through a well-researched and developed program — *FUTUREKIDS (USA)*. The children get to know and apply skills like: desktop publishing, database, spreadsheet, and much more. The program requires a strong English language base; therefore, the children at Peter & Jane are only introduced to it at K2.

The first thing anyone might notice about Peter & Jane is its bright and airy ambiance, surrounded by green and peaceful surroundings, and how well-equipped it is for indoor play and outdoor play. Teaching resources are readily available and accessible. Cheerful and busy staff greet visitors as they go about their work for the day. What comes across distinctly at Peter & Jane is the singularity of its identity — a curriculum outcome where the whole has been made of parts from well-known preschool methodologies, tweaked and customized to the total development of the children preparing them for continuous education in life.

At Peter & Jane they:

- Provide a happy, caring, and supportive environment
- Ensure that the child imbibes the right values
- Treat the child with dignity
- Encourage the child to explore his/her potential
- Respect the child as an individual

- Just treatment to all children
- Allow the child to make choices
- Nurture independence and confidence
- Excellence in education

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The Program Showcases were developed by Michael Kalinowski as a component of the World Forum on Early Care and Education.

They are intended to highlight the work of particularly interesting, unique, and/or exceptional early childhood programs around the world.

Selected programs will appear in future issues of *Exchange*, and are also available on [www.ChildCareExchange.com](http://www.ChildCareExchange.com).