



THE BRITISH SCHOOL
OF BEIJING, SANLITUN
A NORD ANGLIA EDUCATION SCHOOL

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NEWSLETTER

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EXPLORING THE SHANG DYNASTY: YEAR 5 KICKS OFF A NEW TOPIC

By Steve O'Leary, Year 5 Leader, Kookaburras Class Teacher

This week, Year 5 students embarked on an exciting journey into the past as they began their new topic: "The Shang Dynasty and Ancient China." The Shang Dynasty, known for its rich culture and advancements in technology, provides a fascinating glimpse into one of the world's oldest civilisations.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Baby Group events start

- Monday 13 January

Family Reading Time

- Mondays, 3.30pm - 4.30pm
@ Primary School Library

Term 2 ASAs Start

- Tuesday 14 and
Wednesday 15 January

Juilliard Drama Curriculum Specialist - Nick Mahmat visiting

- Wednesday 15 January

Chinese New Year Temple Fair

- Sunday 19 January,
11am - 2pm @ San Building

To kick off their exploration, the children engaged in an interactive session where they examined a variety of books and resources related to Ancient China. This hands-on approach allowed them to immerse themselves in the subject matter and sparked curiosity about the era.

Using a Project Zero thinking routine called “I Think, I See, I Wonder,” students expressed their initial thoughts and observations. This strategy encouraged them to articulate what they believed they knew about the Shang Dynasty, what they could see in the resources they explored, and what questions were ignited by their findings. This reflective practice not only promoted critical thinking but also helped to foster a collaborative learning environment.



Additionally, students utilised their prior knowledge to fill in the first two columns of a KWL chart, a tool that helps track what they Know, what they Want to learn, and eventually, what they have Learned. The KWL chart serves as a roadmap for their inquiry, guiding their research and discussions throughout the topic.

As they delve deeper into the Shang Dynasty, the children will explore various aspects such as its history, culture, and contributions to modern civilisation. We look forward to seeing their discoveries and insights as they continue this enlightening journey through Ancient China!



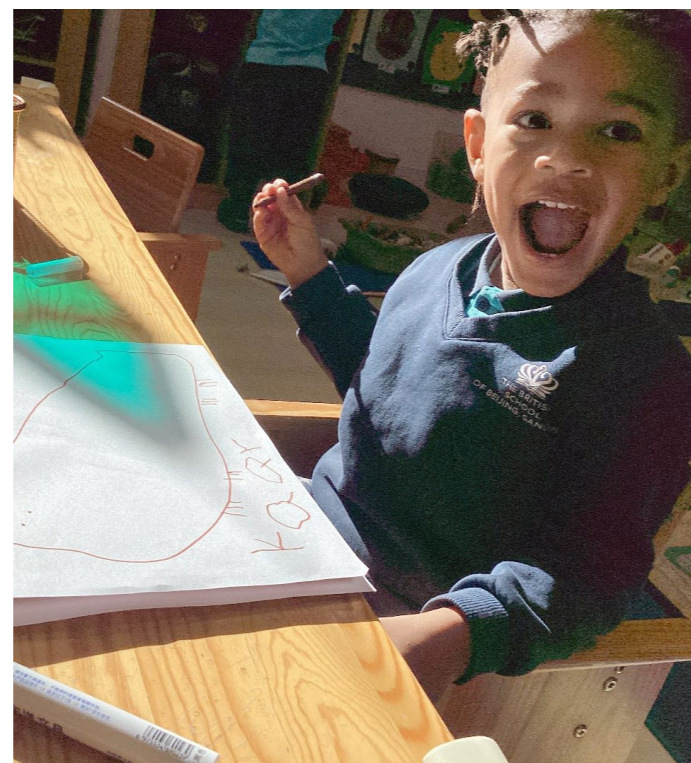
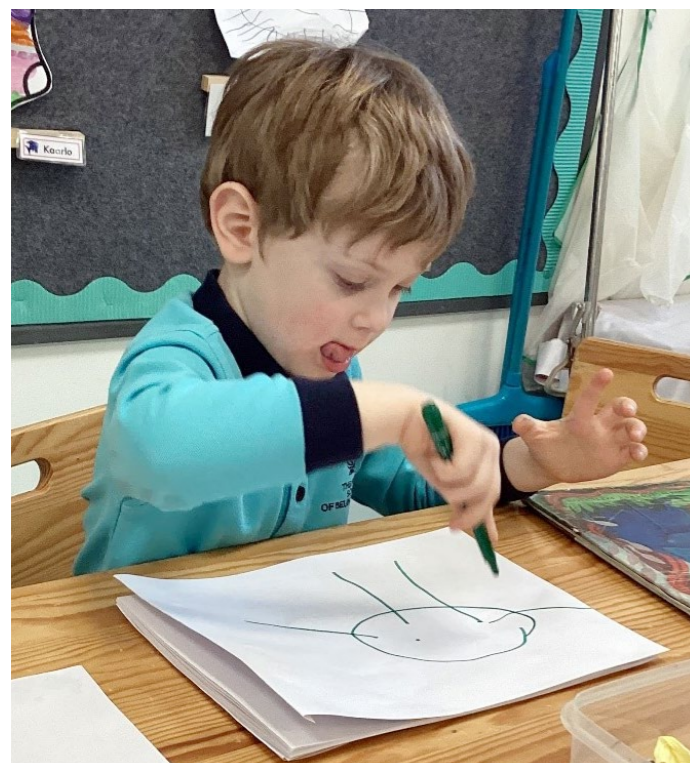
DIVING INTO THE WORLD OF PRINT

By Sharie-Niah Defoe, Nursery Angel Fish Class Teacher

In Nursery, the children have been diving into the world of print, they begin to grasp the five key concepts that lay the groundwork for their literacy development. They learn that print has meaning, understanding that letters and words represent ideas, stories, and emotions. Children also discover that English text is read from left to right and from top to bottom, and they quickly realise that reading backwards or out of order would make the text sound strange. Having the opportunity to correct their teachers as they read strangely making funny sounds and nonsense words.

The children have been creative creating their own book covers, thoughtfully drawing pictures that represent a story they have read or created themselves. Elaborating their choices, which helps them connect visual imagery with narratives.

As it is the winter season they have been exploring small world themes around winter, such as snow and snowmen, they engage with the season's wonders through play, building snowmen with miniature figures or creating snowy landscapes, which sparks imagination and deepens their understanding of the world. These activities combine literacy with creativity, offering children a playful yet meaningful way to connect with both print and the world around them.



THE NORTHERN LIGHTS!

By Demi Dale, Year 1 Lions Class Teacher

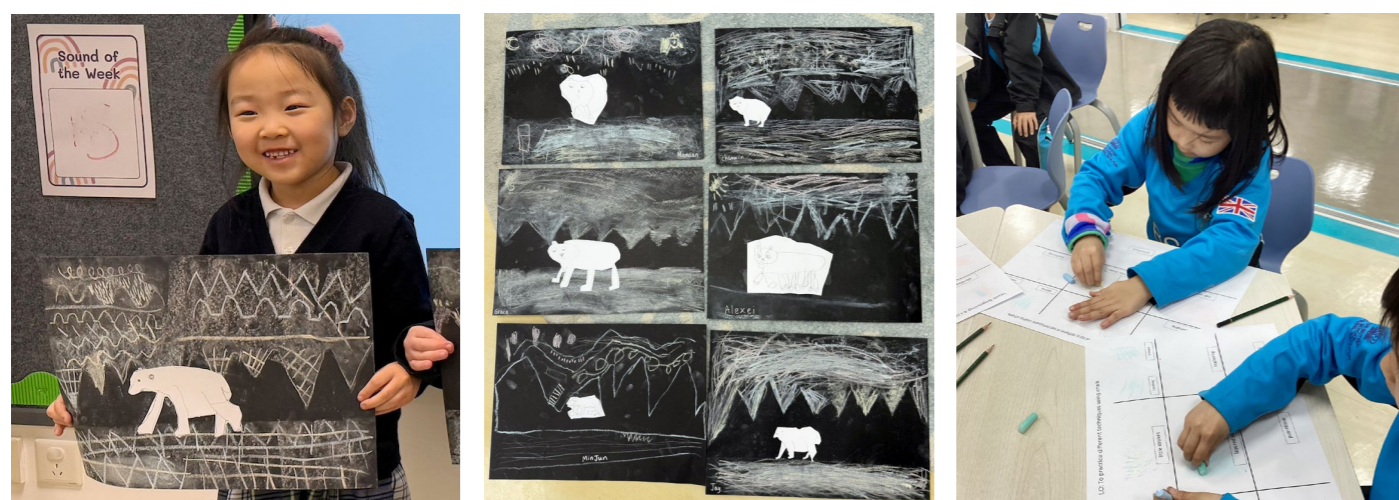


This week in Year 1's topic lessons, the children explored the magical beauty of the Northern Lights. The sessions focused on developing their creativity and honing their art skills through the use of different chalk techniques.

The children learned how to blend colours to recreate the bright shades, using sweeping motions and layering to capture the movement and light of the natural phenomenon.

They worked with great care and enthusiasm, experimenting with smudging and shading to bring their visions to life on black paper, which provided the perfect backdrop for their stunning creations.

In addition to creating their Northern Lights pictures, the children also practised their drawing skills by creating polar bears to accompany their chalk artwork. Guided by simple shapes and step-by-step instructions, they carefully drew and added features to their polar bears, emphasising detail and proportion. This activity tied beautifully into our first theme of this term which we will be looking at for the next few weeks. By the end of the week, each child had completed a vibrant and unique Northern Lights picture, complemented by their charming polar bear illustrations - a perfect celebration of creativity and imagination.



Polar Bear drawings:



TERM 1 ASA CELEBRATION ASSEMBLY

By Paul Major, Head of PE

Before the holiday break, we had the privilege of hosting a memorable awards ceremony to celebrate the outstanding achievements of our students in sporty After-School Activities (ASAs).

This special event allowed us to recognise the dedication, effort, and talent demonstrated by our students throughout the term.



Awards were presented in various categories, including [Top Goal Scorers](#), [Most Valuable Players \(MVPs\)](#), [Most Improved Players](#), as well as [League Champions](#) and [Cup Champions](#). Each award not only recognised individual excellence but also highlighted the importance of teamwork, perseverance, and sportsmanship. Every student showcased remarkable skill and passion for their respective sports.

It was a great occasion, emphasising the hard work and commitment of our students, and fostering a strong sense of pride and achievement within our school community.



BUILDING BETTER THINKERS: EXPLORE NORD ANGLIA'S METACOGNITION RESEARCH

In 2023, 27 [Nord Anglia Education](#) schools embarked on a bold new research project to help their students try to understand themselves and their thinking better.

It's an idea that sounds simple, and like something schools naturally do every day. But coaching our brains to think better, or building [metacognitive skills](#), goes beyond teaching Maths, Physics or English. It requires self-awareness, a level of confidence to question one's approach and strategy in tackling a task or idea, and a willingness to change course when things are not working out.

You might also recognise the importance of these skills in workplaces and in the world. Consider the colleague who is excellent at writing a pitch or computing complex formulas—with good content knowledge—but who commits early to an approach and refuses to take feedback, adapt, and change course.

These 'thinking-about-thinking' skills—as they are sometimes referred to—are critical when things go wrong and persisting with difficult and uncomfortable tasks.

The project's 'why' moment:

That's why Nord Anglia Education teamed up with researchers at [Boston College](#) a year ago to develop an evidence-based programme to help students understand what metacognition is and also develop ways to intentionally weave these thinking skills into its teaching and learning. Just as Nord Anglia's students must learn to think critically about a historical text or a character in a novel or a question in Biology, metacognitive skills need to be taught—not as an add-on but throughout the curriculum.

To do this important weaving, Nord Anglia uses its 'Learner Ambitions', which are a set of skills and mindsets the international schools group identified a number of years ago as key attributes it wanted its students to develop. These attributes include: compassion, creativity, commitment, critical thinking, curiosity, and collaboration.





Metacognition. Research shows it can 'supercharge' learning.

Most likely you learned a lot of Maths, Science, vocabulary, and writing skills when you were in school. But were you taught to reflect on your learning or to consider if the approach you were taking was a wise one? Did you think about the strategy you used to study or did you just underline the text and take notes on important things?

These thinking and reflection skills are called metacognition and research shows they can supercharge learning.

Steve Fleming, a Professor of Cognitive Neuroscience at [University College London](https://www.ucl.ac.uk) and an advisor on Nord Anglia's metacognition project, likes to use the example of revising for an exam. When a child asks, 'Do I know this topic well?' they're making a cognitive judgement about their knowledge and memory that has consequences for what they do next. If they know themselves and know what they know, they can:

- Move on, because they understand it.
- Ask a teacher or parent because they are confused.
- Go back to their revision notes because they understood the first part but not the second.

It's clear how metacognitive awareness is critical in an exam. But it's equally important when a student is collaborating on a team. Am I contributing to the goals of the project? Am I working well with others? Am I listening to others and offering constructive feedback? It's essential for creativity and coming up with novel and useful ideas. It's useful for building persistence or the ability to stay committed to something. Am I giving up before I really get this? Why? What can I do to stick with it?

Metacognition. The three components.

Metacognition involves three key processes:

1. Self-awareness

Are you paying attention? Daydreaming? Are you confused or overwhelmed?

"This is knowing yourself as a learner, setting goals and knowing the strategies that will improve your thinking," says Dr Kate Erricker, Group Head of Education Research at Nord Anglia Education.

2. Self-awareness



Can you change up strategies? If you started writing an essay that makes no sense, can you pivot and find a new way, maybe making an outline rather than quickly writing whatever comes to mind? Can you persist when the work gets tough and not pretend that you get it just to move on?

"Regulation is about knowing what to do in our learning and when to do it," says Erricker.

3. Transfer

Do you get an idea enough to think about it in a new context? If you understand fractions, can you apply that to converting cups to millilitres when cooking?

Metacognition has profound implications for learning. "It is the awareness of your strengths and challenges, and the ability to articulate and pursue your goals, understanding your own motivation," Erricker explains. "It is how you control and take responsibility for your learning, and the ability to take the problem-solving skills you use in class and apply them in the real world."

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Nord Anglia's 'Learner Ambitions' and 'Thinking Routines'.

If we want more compassionate, creative, committed, and critical thinkers, what are the best ways to build those skills and, importantly, to record their growth? How do we make sure every student is working towards becoming more curious thinkers who collaborate well? How will we know we are making progress towards developing the ambitions we know to be important?

With Nord Anglia's research partners, the team identified the skills and attributes underpinning each Learner Ambition. They identified thinking routines to support students in practicing and reflecting on those skills and attributes. Critically, they developed the technology to document evidence of them—Nord Anglia's Learner Portfolio—where teachers and students can document instances and examples of curiosity and compassion. With this, teachers can know if students are developing these critical life skills and pinpoint the learning experiences that make this happen.

Here's how it unfolds in classrooms: For the first six weeks of a term, a classroom will focus on one Learner Ambition, such as curiosity. Teachers introduce kids to the concept of curiosity and ask them some baseline questions like: How curious are you? What strategies do you have to be curious?

They then introduce the students to a Thinking Routine that goes with curiosity, which the students can apply in all of their lessons over the next six weeks. For example, one is called "**See, Think, Wonder**". When a student sees something, the teacher will ask about what they observe or notice; ask what thoughts arise; prompt them to consider what they wonder? The teachers will ask what questions students have (questioning being a key metacognitive skill).

The students set goals around becoming more curious, and then use the Thinking Routine across classes, including Maths, Science, English, Drama, and PE. Students and teachers then capture these moments of curiosity in their [Learner Portfolio](#), an online student reflection platform created by Nord Anglia where they can add videos or photos. Students tag the evidence to the skill (curiosity) with a reflection (“I was curious when I asked a lot of questions about photosynthesis”).

At the end of the six weeks, teachers ask students the same questions they got at the start of the six-week cycle, helping them to reflect on how they’ve become more curious.

“The bit that’s important is that students are offered an opportunity to reflect on when they have tried to be curious or committed or compassionate, and then what they learned from that experience,” Nord Anglia’s Erricker says. “That’s really the metacognitive part.”



Importantly, the work is not graded. Students will not get a “B” in compassion. They simply learn more about what it takes to be compassionate, with ample opportunities to practice it, reflect on it and document it to better measure progress and growth.

It’s looking promising. The first round of metacognition research is in.

Teachers in the 27 Nord Anglia schools piloting the metacognition project received training and tools for thinking strategies around the Learner Ambitions in September 2023. They were encouraged to play with the tools and think about how they would weave them into their curriculum. In January 2024, they rolled them out to students.

At that time, Nord Anglia’s research partners at Boston College conducted their first round of data collection, critical “baseline” research from which they will be able to chart growth over time. Teachers and students were asked key questions including how well they understood metacognition as a concept and how helpful they found it to be. As the programme is rolled out more fully, Nord Anglia and Boston College will watch how these figures change.

The baseline study was done in two waves: students and teachers. Students were surveyed from 21 February until 22 April 2024. The sample included 2,429 students in Years 3 to 9 represented from 17 countries with schools including [Nord Anglia International School Hong Kong](#), [Colegio Menor Quito](#), and [North Broward Preparatory School](#).

Here’s what students said:

- 55% of student respondents agreed or strongly agreed that metacognition “helps me be successful outside of school”, while 14% disagreed or strongly disagreed.
- 58% of student respondents agreed or strongly agreed that metacognition “improves my thinking”, while 14% disagreed or strongly disagreed.

When asked about changes over the past few months, students on average felt their creativity, collaboration, commitment, curiosity, compassion and critical thinking got better or got much better. For example:

- 78% of student respondents said their creativity “got better” or “got much better”.
- 73% of student respondents said their collaboration “got better” or “got much better”.
- 73% of student respondents said their curiosity “got better” or “got much better”.



“Metacognition helps me to regulate myself and focus on what is important at the moment. It is a way to understand myself more deeply.”

Students also reported noticing more about themselves. A whopping 84% got better or much better at knowing what they are good at and 75% got better or much better at being independent. Grades and self-regulation also improved: 55% reported getting better or much better at self-regulation and 61% said their grades improved.

A clear picture:

Like many schools, Nord Anglia schools work tirelessly to design and impart curricula in rigorous and engaging ways. They examine how subjects are sequenced and layered so that students can best understand and retain information learners need to thrive. But the world is changing fast and students need to go beyond curriculum and be able to showcase their curiosity, creativity, collaboration, critical thinking, compassion, and commitment.

Too often in education the development of these skills is left to chance. By identifying the component pieces of these skills, figuring out how to teach them, giving kids opportunities to practice them, and measuring the growth of them, Nord Anglia students will have a clear picture of how they learn best.

Earlier this year, [Dr James Mannion](#), a former teacher and co-author of *Fear is the Mind Killer*, told [INSIGHTS](#) that metacognition “is the most important idea in education by miles, although there is some confusion about what defines it.”

“I think of it as the escape hatch; it is the way you escape from your current programming and habits; notice the patterns you are in and take a different course of action.” In other words, it is the ability to develop agile learners.

This is life skills gold.

FAMILY READING TIME

Following a wonderful suggestion from a current parent, we are delighted to confirm that children, accompanied by their parent or guardian are invited to enjoy time in the **Primary Library** together on a Monday after school.

Starts Monday 13 January - 3.30pm

Reading is such an important learning tool for our children and we hope our families will enjoy selecting books and reading together in our comfortable, spacious and colourful Library.

FAMILY READING TIME



Every Monday


3.30pm - 4.30pm

Primary School Library

Our popular **Baby Groups** will be back next week. Registration is now open - visit our [website](http://www.bsbsanlitun.com) for more information and to sign up.


Please share the link with your friends if they have babies and would like to join us for Stay and Play in our soft play area, Dancing in our Dance Studio or Book Club in our Library!

BABY BOOK CLUB

 Mondays, 9am - 9.30am
 Library, Li Building




BABY GROUP

 Wednesdays, 9am - 10.30am
 Soft Play Area, Li Building



BABY DANCE CLASS

 Fridays, 9am - 9.30am
 Dance Studio, Li Building



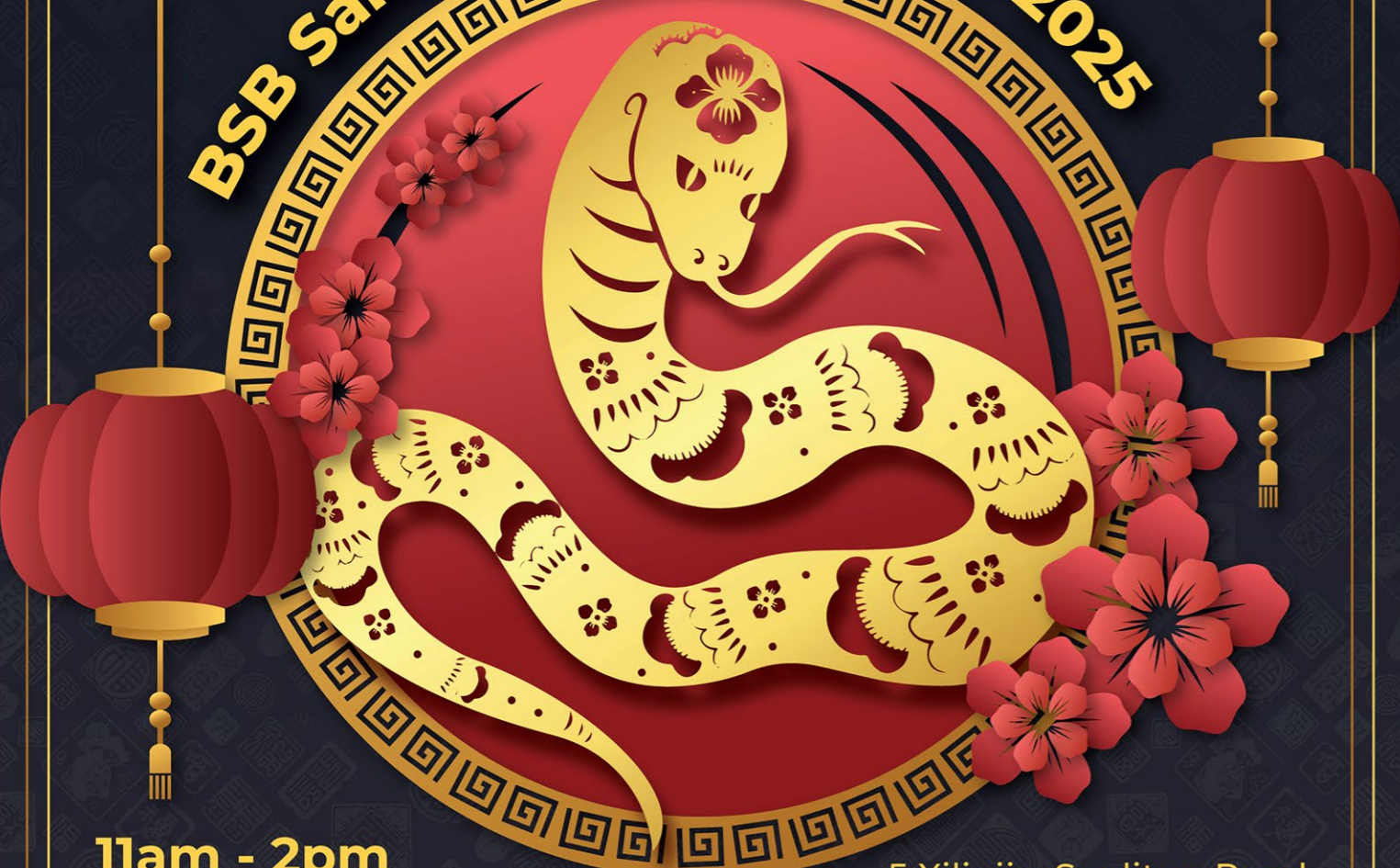
REGISTER TODAY!



Where Tiny Steps Lead to Big Adventures:
Read, Explore, Dance!

 5 Xiliujie,
 Sanlitun Road.

BSB Sanlitun's Temple Fair 2025



11am - 2pm
Sunday 19th January

5 Xiliujie, Sanlitun Road.
三里屯路西六街5号, 北京英国学校

Come and celebrate
THE YEAR OF THE SNAKE at BSB Sanlitun!

12:00 - Lion Dance (Playground).
12:45 - Face Changing Performance (Main Hall).
13:30 - Dragon Dance (Playground).
Chinese art and crafts for children.
External vendors selling a range of items.
Treats for all and delicious food to buy.



 THE BRITISH SCHOOL
OF BEIJING, SANLITUN
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Community event, open to all!
Why not come in traditional Chinese Clothes?



ClubFootball Junior Coaching at BSB Sanlitun



★ Taught by full-time UEFA-qualified
ClubFootball coaches **from the UK**

★ For **Reception upwards**, and
boys & girls of all playing-levels.

★ From **Skills Courses** for
beginners, to **League Teams**
for experienced players.

★ **Winter indoor courses**
start Jan 10th & 11th.
Scan to book a place,
or for a **free tryout!**



Scan for course info
and to book





The Conservatory of International Style and Cultural Arts 北京天爱艺术培训



Italy Cecchetti Ballet 意大利切凯蒂芭蕾

Royal Academy of Dance 英国皇家芭蕾舞

ISTD Modern Dance 英国皇家现代舞

ISTD Contemporary Dance 英国皇家当代舞

Repertoire 剧目表演

Tap Dance 踢踏舞

Adult Ballet & Modern Dance 成人芭蕾和现代舞

CISCA Ballet Class in BSB Sanlitun

Monday 周一 4:00-5:00pm (Age 4 and above 4岁以上)

Enquiry and Registration 咨询和报名

188 8883 0282 / 188 8883 2623



You also can add
Miss Soleil's wechat to
enquiry and registration
可以添加杨老师微信
咨询和报名

Course Highlights

Learning to dance may benefit children in all areas of life, physically, mentally, and creatively.

- 1、Physically, the children train to improve their posture, muscular strength, flexibility, and coordination.
- 2、Mentally, they are through experience getting opportunities to gain confidence, improve Their concentration, and practice skills in expressivity and communication.
- 3、Creatively, they are encouraged to extend their understanding of shape, form, rhythm, and musicality.

课程亮点

学习跳舞可以使儿童在生活的各个方面受益，包括身体、精神和创造性。

- 1、在身体上，孩子们训练以改善他们的姿势、肌肉力量、灵活性和协调性。
- 2、在精神上，他们通过经验获得机会来获得信心，提高他们的注意力，并练习表达和沟通技巧。
- 3、在创造性上，鼓励他们扩展对形状、形式、节奏和音乐性的理解。

CISCA Beijing Dance Studio 北京天爱艺术校区

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