

## Speech by Mr Mark Rosevear, Principal

It is never easy to speak to an audience which has a range span of 50 years! It makes you realise how clever the creators of Cars, Monsters, Inc. or Toy Story are, because they keep both Adults and children entertained and interested. The ability to change the level depending on the understanding of the group, is, of course, one of the great skills of teaching. And at The British Schools, it is even more difficult because we teach in the child's second language.

I have been so impressed with the levels of English in the Junior School. Whenever I have spoken to children, they have all understood me, replied, and carried on a conversation. Speaking and understanding English is one of the main objectives we have, so it is good to see it working. Being personally involved in the PYP Exhibition, or playing chess with students, being invited to classes, watching plays or sport or simply talking to them in break times, I am very pleased that students can communicate easily in their second language.

Nobody should underestimate the importance of being able to understand and speak English. Statistical research can be notoriously unreliable, but it appears as if around 50-60% of internet sites are in English. With all the information the web holds, that is an extraordinary number. It is estimated that there are around 1.5 billion English speakers in the world, which is around 20%, although interestingly less than 1% are native speakers. This shows how many people around the world are learning English, and why it is important. Most international or multinational companies conduct the majority of their business in English. The internet will help you study, and once you have completed your studies, it will help you find work, and we all need to work. So keep working on your English!

Congratulations to all of you who have won a prize here today. And congratulations to all of you here who have done your best but not quite managed to win a prize, because you have succeeded as well. I can see some of you thinking, 'how can that be?' As long as everyone has tried their best, it does not matter if you come first, eight or eightieth. When I was younger, for a while I competed in some athletics, purely for fun. I once finished a decathlon in 22nd place out of 27<sup>th</sup>. It does not sound good, but I achieved the best points total I had ever scored. Did I win the event? No. Did I fail? I don't think so. I did the best I could and it just so happened there were others better than me. Sometimes, that is how life goes.

Generally humans are quick to criticise, and slower to praise, but we all like to know that our work is appreciated, so I will take the opportunity to thank all the staff here for their hard work during the year.

The introduction song to Phineas and Ferb says,

*'There's 104 days of summer vacation  
And school comes along just to end it  
So the annual problem for our generation  
Is finding a good way to spend it'*

You will get a lot of days for your summer holiday. I hope you find a good way of using your time, having plenty of fun and with useful activities to do. If any of you need some homework, just let me know...

I wish everyone a great summer holiday, a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to everyone.