

United Nations International Day of Peace at SCIS

On 25 September the students and staff at Shanghai Community International School (SCIS) celebrated the United Nations International Day of Peace. This year, rather than just celebrating for one day, the SCIS Pudong Lower School campus embraced what it means to be globally minded for the entire month of September. Projects were developed to help students be aware of what it means to be internationally minded – embracing all cultures while actively seeking to understand perspectives, values and differences so we are able to appreciate, understand and care about the complexities of what makes us human in order to make a more peaceful world. "International-mindedness isn't something that can be taught in discrete lessons on the odd Friday afternoon, it's a 'frame of mind' and as such needs time to develop," says Steven Mark, Educational Director of the International Primary Curriculum.

To a six-year-old, it may be knowing that the children in his or her classroom have different home countries, and being able to work with each other and being able to respect one another's independence and



individuality. For older students, international learning outcomes might include knowing about the ways in which the lives of people in the countries they have studied affect each other, or being able to identify ways in which people work together for mutual benefit.

Each grade level from EC through Grade 5 displayed their learning projects in a Peace Walk that allowed them to view each other's work and share what they had learned through the projects with friends and family members in attendance. Projects ranged from personalized globes with a heart indicating the students' native country, posters about different cultures around the world, a "community of flags" building blocks, mobiles displaying cultural facts, books and poems about peace, and the allegory of the "long spoon," which focuses on helping others so that everyone's needs can be met.

On the day of the event students, teachers, and members of the school community were encouraged to come in traditional dress from their home countries. An incredible display of country pride and colors during the Parade of Nations opened the event, with students from each country greeting the audience in their native tongue. The celebration continued with a song of peace performed by the Middle School choir and Grades 2-5. The SCIS Lower School Campus celebrated this day by paying tribute to the international and multicultural school community made up of an estimated 30 different nationalities.

The event concluded with an International Food Fair offering special cultural dishes from around the world, prepared and cooked by the parent community. The Food Fair was considered the favorite event for many. The celebration was a true display of the qualities that make SCIS a unique international community, showcasing the diversity, community spirit and continued quest for excellence. It is one example of how SCIS seeks out opportunities to educate a globally minded student body.