



KinderWorld the essence of Singaporean education

Developed as one of the world's most notable hubs for trade, finance, and education, Singapore – through the state-of-the-art performance of KinderWorld International Group – has demonstrated its prestige in Vietnam and beyond. **Hoang Dan** reports.

Singapore has achieved much success in education over the past two decades. Putting aside political stability and social security, the Singapore government places great emphasis on a visionary education policy, a substantial education budget, and a spirit of excellence that motivates constant improvement.

Driven by values such as meritocracy and integrity, Singapore has developed into one of the world's most notable hubs for trade, finance, and education; it has been ranked as one of the top five most competitive economies in the world for several years by the latest Global Competitiveness Report published by the Lausanne Institute of Management in Switzerland.

The Programme for International Student Assessment, a prestigious test sponsored by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development to rank the knowledge and skill level of 15-year-old students from around the world, has seen Singapore top the list for many years.

Singapore's primary 4 and secondary year 8 students continue to perform well in mathematics and science by international standards, according to the latest results from the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study 2019, a study by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement.

Specifically, Singapore students continue to demonstrate a strong mastery of numeracy and scientific literacy and use reasoning skills to solve complex mathematics and Science problems.

Guided by its philosophy of "Eastern Values, Western Education, Global Citizens", KinderWorld International Group has been able to take advantage of the world's increasing internationalisation. With its headquarters in Singapore, a country with strong international ties, connections, and networking, KinderWorld has developed various educational partnerships across the globe.

From its inception as a single childcare centre in 1986 in Singapore, KinderWorld has gone on to

expand into Vietnam for the last 21 years, establishing 15 international schools from kindergarten to high school. It has become the largest owner-operator of a foreign-invested education enterprise with a school presence in eight cities in Vietnam, laying a solid foundation for a deep-rooted education company.

Over the years, KinderWorld has consistently produced students, ranked top in Vietnam and in the world for the Cambridge International Examinations, at both the IGCSE and the Cambridge AS/A Levels.

Last month, KinderWorld was one of the inaugural winners for Singapore's Best Managed Companies, organised by Deloitte. Chairman of KinderWorld International Group Ricky Tan said, "Winning the inaugural award is a testament to our business model, operational excellence, staff development, and commitment towards sustainability. Despite the global uncertainties in the business environment, we remain confident of our journey ahead and look forward to identifying more business opportunities in the near future."

Human capital development

KinderWorld Vietnam JSC has also won a lot of awards and recognitions when it comes to human capital. Last November, KinderWorld Vietnam was awarded the Large Enterprise Winner at the ASEAN Business Awards in skills development, presented by the ASEAN Business Advisory Council. This award honours the company's significant contribution to human capital development in the country and the region.

Singapore International School (SIS) ensures that students have the opportunity to develop character and a wide range of soft skills which includes perseverance, resilience, self-confidence, and teamwork by including outdoor experiential learning in the curriculum. These courses are professionally organised and delivered by Outward Bound Vietnam (OBV) in consultation with SIS to ensure students are well prepared as future global citizens.

Outward Bound, founded in 1941, is an international indepen-



KinderWorld chairman Ricky Tan (right) and CEO of Deloitte Singapore Cheung Pui Yuen at the Best Managed Companies ceremony in Singapore last month



Singapore International School students carrying out a STEM environmental project

dent outdoor education organisation with presence in 35 countries. OBV established its first base camp in Quy Nhon and obtained its full license in 2019. It conducts outdoor experiential education, team-building exercises, discovery learning, and other educational services to local youths, corporate groups and the community at large.

As part of KinderWorld's through-train educational pathway, Pegasus International College was established to provide quality education beyond High School. It offers Vietnamese, ASEAN, and international pathways and qualifications in hospitality, tourism and culinary arts, business and commerce, and English language programmes.

Pegasus offers 3-tiered qualifications which are aligned to national requirements – Vietnam National Qualification Framework, the Common ASEAN Tourism Curriculum, and the transnational Australia Qualification Framework, which articulates undergraduate programmes with internationally recognised universities.

Since 2011, Pegasus has enrolled over 22,500 students, with them coming from various countries like the US, Bangladesh, South Korea, Laos, Malaysia, and Nepal for its Australian 2-year Advanced Diploma

programme and other occupational training courses. Pegasus' position as a premium provider of quality hospitality training is also demonstrated through key strategic partnerships with various 4 and 5-star hotels and resorts across Vietnam.

KinderWorld places strong emphasis on staff training and development. Staff are given opportunities for professional development through various training courses, seminars and programmes. This contributes to the overall capacity building of staff to enable them to excel in their various job functions.

Sustainable commitments

As a socially responsible enterprise, KinderWorld regards its contribution to the whole community as one of the fundamentals in its education investment journey. Over the years in Vietnam, the company has brought positive impact to thousands of beneficiaries in the community through education and its corporate social responsibility commitments.

SIS students are also encouraged to organise their own activities to support environmental causes. In 2019, the "Bin it" recycling project by Year 7 International was short-listed from almost 300 entries in the Global Social Leaders Global Goals Competition and has been

awarded a Commendation in the category of Impact.

In the long term, KinderWorld expects to incorporate the three pillars of sustainable development – environmental responsibility, social responsibility, and governance into every aspect of its strategies and operations.

The company is pursuing LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design), a US standard for its buildings and infrastructure. This will be applicable to all new buildings and existing campuses will be upgraded progressively. KinderWorld believes that sustainability is fundamental in its operation as well as part of its DNA.

Moving forward, in designing new schools, KinderWorld incorporates elements of sustainability and green architecture. These schools are built to maximise outdoor, green space for students and they are designed to introduce airflow naturally to reduce air-conditioned areas. Other elements include recycled rainwater, high-efficiency electrical equipment, and school buildings orientated at angles to minimise energy consumption and environmentally-friendly building materials. This will provide a sustainable, world-class 21st-century education facility for all students. ■