

LET'S Talk

Julia Gabriel
EDUCATION

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IN CONVERSATION WITH
SHOBANA CHANDRAN

JULIA GABRIEL CENTRE
Open Day, March 2022

CHILTERN HOUSE PRESCHOOL
Open House, March 2022
Mindful Week

Congratulations on your appointment as the company's new Head of Bangsar Centre commencing January 2022. Having formerly served as the Head of CITTA Mall Centre, how is this new tenure going to be different for you this time around taking charge of a centre in times of a pandemic?



In conversation with **Shobana Chandran**

*Head of Bangsar Centre,
Head of Julia Gabriel Centre Programmes*

It's a bigger team to lead - I'm looking forward to working with the teachers and the staff at the centre as well with the children and families who have entrusted us with their children's learning.

Over the last two years, we have faced situations we have never faced before - as a school, as teachers, as parents and as families. This year, with the knowledge and experience we have gained over the last two years, we hope to move forward in providing the best learning experience for our children, the best support for their families, and the best training for all our staff at the centre.

What are some of the lessons you have learned as you lead your team to weather the challenging times throughout the past couple of years?

Everything we go through in life, be it a pandemic, teaches us how to be stronger and wiser. Challenging times may bring discomfort but it also offers ample opportunity to learn and sharpen the skills we have.

Being able to be resilient and flexible were some of the important lessons I have personally learned during the pandemic. But partnership and teamwork have always been the key to any form of success (and to get through any form of challenge). I believe that together, we are able to brave through any storm!



During the pandemic, who or what has been your strongest source of encouragement and inspiration that has spurred you on in spite of the vast unknown in the road ahead?

My family and all the wonderful staff at the centre. My family has always been supportive of my passion in the education industry in spite of the long hours, and their understanding means the world to me.

My work family - my team - on the other hand, are a very resilient bunch, and were always willing to sacrifice their time to learn new things continuously. Their eagerness to give their best to the children truly inspired me to facilitate the changes we had implemented over the past two years. And they are such fast learners, transitioning to online learning at the start of the pandemic with such adept and determination, pouring hours and hours working into the late night to prepare for their lessons, I'm so proud of them all! They have all grown so much!

Fast forward to present day, Malaysia is now moving towards transitioning to the endemic phase after having combated the pandemic for almost two years. How will your centre's Safe Management Measures (COVID-19 health and safety protocol) be impacted in keeping up with the relaxed restrictions nationwide?

I think circumstances are a little different for us considering we are working with the vulnerable group who are mainly yet to be vaccinated. Our stringent Safe Management Measures or our COVID-19 safety and health protocol has been continuously reviewed and updated in line with guidelines from the relevant government authorities, and the medical officers at our district. We believe close communication with the authorities and with all the parents as partners is crucial for us to safeguard the school community and curb the virus' spread.

At present, all of our staff are fully vaccinated and a vast majority of them have already completed their booster doses. We also strongly advocate for children aged 5 and 6 to take and complete their COVID-19 vaccinations under the PICKids national immunisation programme.



You are also serving as the Head of Julia Gabriel Centre Programmes, how has the enrichment arm evolved over the past couple of years and what can prospective families who wish to broaden their children's early years experience through Julia Gabriel Centre's enrichment programmes expect in your second term of 2022?

We have seen and undergone major changes over the past two years as the Julia Gabriel Centre programmes were greatly impacted. The age group of the students enrolled in our Early Learning programmes was a huge contributing factor to the early decline as families were uncertain of how their babies and toddlers could benefit from online playgroup programmes early in the pandemic phase.

However, as we continued to refine and creatively adapted our popular programmes to offer short e-Camps, Virtual Playgroups, accompanied by our Musictime and Storytime live sessions, I think that was when we began to flourish. The learning curve was steep, but the fulfillment we had gained at the end of every successful e-Camp - having watched the children gain the confidence to speak on-screen, to step out of their shells, and learn to work in a team online - was most certainly unrivalled. It was an accomplishment!

Kudos to the team, and my heartfelt gratitude to the families who have supported us ever so fervently during those challenging times!

So for parents who have been hearing a lot about us, and are keen to find out what the hype surrounding us is all about, I would like to invite you to join us in this Term 2 for our host of physical Julia Gabriel Centre programmes now running on every Saturday at our Bangsar centre. Look out for the new change to our fee structure which now offers half-termly payment, and book your trial class today.

What can parents from both Julia Gabriel Centre and Chiltern House Preschool Bangsar expect from the Bangsar team in 2022?

Expect nothing short of a dynamic and highly experienced teaching team that has learned to navigate through challenging times - now wiser and more creative! Rest assured that they definitely would have more to offer when it comes to facilitating your child's learning. We hope to welcome you to our growing community of learners soon!

In the Cover



Open Days are always such an exciting time for the Julia Gabriel Centre team as it brings us the opportunity to meet new families with the shared interest in early childhood education.

In late March, in an Open Day led by Shoby, the Head of Julia Gabriel Centre Programmes, families were introduced to our dramatically different culture through an exciting preview of our programmes, a passionate display of a special Music and Movement session, and a PlayClub Bears drama performance.

We would like to thank everyone for participating ever so zestfully in our Open Day!

Julia Gabriel Centre's Open Day

Q: What are Julia Gabriel Centre programmes currently available in Bangsar centre on **every Saturday**?

This Term 2, you can experience our **PlayClub** Early Learning Programme for toddlers between the ages 18 months to 3 years old. Our **Speech and Drama** programme is also available for the Nursery students, and "**Lets Read and Write**" **Readers and Writers** for the Kindergarten level.

We will be looking to open the rest of the programmes soon.

For those keen to have a first-hand experience of our programmes, we welcome you to **sign up for our trial class**. Please be advised that all trials are chargeable and participants are required to adhere to our stringent Safe Management Measures COVID-19 health and safety protocol to safeguard the school community.

Frequently Asked Questions
during a Chiltern House Preschool Open House.

Q What is Chiltern House’s teaching methodology?

A We employ EduDrama®, Julia Gabriel Education’s unique teaching and learning methodology in our preschool programmes. This is what makes our approach unique: the combination of drama, an extension of play and the supportive components of positive early childhood education.

Q What is your teacher – student ratio in each classroom?

A We observe a small teacher – student ratio of 1:5 and 1:6 for the Nursery levels depending on the size of the classroom, and 1:7 for the Kindergarten levels across all levels. Throughout the pandemic, our classroom layout has been adjusted to ensure that students observe a 1 metre distance between each other.

Q How is Chiltern House ensuring that the school remains a safe space for the students and teachers in this fight against COVID-19?

A Since the start of the pandemic, a dedicated Safe Management Team has been put together to implement the centre’s stringent and continuously updated set of safety and health measures. The school is still practising disinfecting of all areas using the fogging machine, combined with on-ground efforts from our trained and experienced cleaners in the regular cleaning and disinfecting of all frequently used surfaces and areas in the premise.

With the Omicron infection becoming more rampant in recent months, we have since established a close contact identification protocol with close consultation from the district’s health officers. The affected class will be closed for 7 days and will transition to a full-fledged online learning comprising a meticulously planned face-to-face contact time via Zoom with their teachers and a Home Learning Pack containing activities supported by the Seesaw platform.

March 2022

Open House





Mindful Weeks

In Term 1, we highlighted an **Appreciation of Love and Family** at Chiltern House in which the class teachers used sharing time, show & tell sessions, children’s literature and stories, as well as various art & craft ideas to explore the topic with the children. Parents at home were also roped in as partners through a simple home project that they could do with their children to reinforce the topic at home.

We recognize that in our fast-paced world, especially in this current pandemic, we often struggle to be focused and present. One’s wellbeing and embracing positivity are crucial for our children today and for their future. For the last couple of years, we have been working closely with our colleagues in Singapore have been working on Mindful practices as part of our advocacy for positive education and mindfulness.

Term 1:

Appreciation of love and family



Julia Gabriel Centre

www.juliagabriel.com.my

Chiltern House Preschool

www.chilternhouse.com.my

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+6011 1068 8882