

11th December, 2015

Seasons' Greetings and 'God Jul' from the Head of School

Dear Parents,

Festive lights are glowing around Gothenburg providing colour and warmth to the shorter and darker days! As well as celebrating the season, it also signals that the first school term is drawing to a close.

We have had an eventful first term with some significant national and international incidents causing much reflection. This contrast has made even more pleasing to see our international community coming together in various ways – to help, support and also celebrate.

Perhaps the most prominent expression of our school spirit was shown at the annual Winter Bazaar. The Winter Bazaar is such an important part of our school year. Seeing the vast variety of stalls with selections of goods and foods from all around the world available in one place, illustrated our international community at its very best. In many ways, the Winter Bazaar is a reflection of the world that ISGR wishes for our students to inherit - people coming together and sharing special aspects from our diverse backgrounds! Organising the Winter Bazaar is an immense group effort and a prime example of how the PTA contributes to the ISGR vision.

Another celebration which has special significance in Sweden, is the annual candlelit Lucia procession on 13 December. The Lucia celebration is one of the most notable cultural traditions in Sweden, with distinct origins from the peasant communities of old and symbolic references to darkness and light, cold and warmth. Along with the candles, crowns and choirs the Lucia celebrations also include ginger snaps and sweet, saffron-flavoured buns ('lussekatter') eaten with glögg or coffee.

At ISGR, Lucia celebrations were held for Guldheden campus on Thursday 10th December at Annedal Church (Annedalskyrkan) from 9.00am-9.45am. For Götaberg campus, the Lucia concert was on Friday 11th December at Vasa Church (Vasakyrkan) from 9:15am-9:45am.



Throughout this term, safety and security has been a particularly prominent issue. At ISGR, we have centralised our entrances so that they can be surveyed from the Reception areas. Side and back entrances to the school have been upgraded with alarmed doors. We ask that all parents use the main entrances and report to reception before proceeding through the school. The ISGR leadership group has also reviewed our 'internal alarm' procedure and the activation of our crisis plan in the event that it is needed. We are also creating an information handout for parents visiting the school to learn about our procedures.

Early in the Spring term, we are planning for an information evening to explain our approach to differentiated instruction. One of our school goals is to develop our teaching methods to suit the individual learning styles of students and we look forward to providing more insights into our strategies.

In our national sections of the school, we have received permission from the authorities to increase our level of teaching in English to 50 percent. This development will be implemented over time and enable further opportunities for collaboration between the sections.

Our students have performed well this term and together with their teachers, should be looking forward to a well-deserved break. School reports will be available via Managebac from mid-next week. Please also remember to regularly check the ISGR website for important school information and refer to the online calendars for important dates and details at www.isgr.se/calendar

The last day of school for the term is Friday 18th December and classes resume for the start of term two on Monday 11th January, 2016. We say good-bye and best wishes to some families who are leaving us and we will welcome approximately 20 new students arriving for the Spring term. In total, we will see a small increase in student numbers at ISGR. I would like to thank you again for all the excellent contributions to the School community this term. I wish everyone a happy festive season and we look forward to a prosperous New Year!

Yours faithfully,

Head of School

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