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## Witness the birth of new leaders on March 27

Tuesday, March 18, 2014

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## Safe harbor for students

Apple Lam

Tuesday, March 18, 2014

A swimming pool, running track and even telescopes are not rarities in the world of private schools. But The Harbour School in Kennedy Town seeks to differentiate itself by purchasing a US\$40,000 (HK\$312,000) sail boat from California to help students learn marine science in a hands-on way.

The school's 200 students are spread out over three campuses, with each student paying HK\$128,750 per year.

Managing director Jadis Blurton plans to expand the school, which runs from Grades One to Eight, and open classes through to Grade 12.

This will require securing new premises big enough to house all the students in one place, but she will begin by opening a Grade Nine class in the next year or two.

As the school's name suggests, marine science is a central theme which is interspersed in the science and social studies curriculum - such as units on the ocean or famous explorers.

The boat, which will arrive in the SAR early next month, is designed to support and strengthen existing marine science classes.

"We will use it as an outdoor classroom where kids can learn science. But I think it's also possible to study history and literature on the boat," Blurton said.

Planned extracurricular activities include a sailing club, weekly trips over the summer, or weekend trips during the school year for Grade Three and above.

"It's much more motivational to be on a boat. It's hard to understand the history of Hong Kong if you haven't been on a boat, seen and heard the sails go up, or had the wind blowing on your face. It offers a deeper level of understanding," Blurton said.

Having seen photos of the magnificent white sail boat, Grade Six pupil Brandon Huang Zixuan joked: "I want to live on it. It looks like a floating hotel."

The school has already secured two



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The school has already secured two spaces, one in Aberdeen and another in Sai Kung, to dock the boat.



Every time the students go out to sea, there will be two teachers, a full-time marine educator and a skipper on board.

The boat will also be available for rent by other schools, provided that they use the school's crew.

Eleven students will be embarking on a six-day sailing trip in Burma next month.

In preparation, they will spend about a month studying the cultural anthropological, life and physical science perspectives of sailing in teams of threes and fours.

Grade Six student Maya Greenberg shares a piece of trivia about a Burmese ethnic minority group whose village they will be visiting on the trip.

"When they are in a boat, they put their hands underwater and write words in places where it's quite deep. The water is so clean that you can actually see all the way down," Greenberg said.

Another student who will be going on the trip is Grade Seven student Russell Aylsworth, with three years of sailing experience outside of school.

"Our physical sciences team learned that it's best if the center of gravity is at the bottom of the boat instead of the top, because the boat would turn upside down. It can only sail upwind in special types of angles."

An adventurous day out at sea may serve as a spacious classroom for a student's mind after all.

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