

My Wei Lun

...by John Wong 1996-1997 graduate

SKH Wei Lun Primary School is situated in Discovery Bay on Lantau Island. From the name, you will not notice any difference between other primary schools in Hong Kong. Some may think it is only a place where you will sit and learn for six years before moving on to the next stage as a secondary school student. But from my personal experience as a Wei Lun student, I call this place home.

During my three years at Wei Lun, there wasn't any complex teaching equipment, there was no library, lots of empty rooms and the activities might not be as rich as they are now. But to me, Wei Lun was truly a school of **L**ush opportunities.

We all felt like one big family because things were simple. The school was small, with less staff compared to now. That meant there were more parent volunteers who got involved. As a result, the relationship between the staff and parents got closer. A positive staff and parent relationship created more activities for the students, with lots of excursions and lots of sharing. There used to be a vegetable garden which was situated at the current staff office, which is directly opposite to the undercover area and next to the basketball playground. Many of our parents used the garden to grow vegetables. The youth scout group used the garden for their activities as well. So life was healthy for both body and soul at Wei Lun school. When I left Wei Lun, I felt I had become an examination machine, not the real me.

During my days at Wei Lun, you knew everyone, from the top to the bottom of the school. Because Wei Lun is in Discovery Bay, you always met staff and students outside the school, especially at the resident's club and restaurants. You got to hang around both in and out of the school and build relationships with staff and students.

This is one of the reasons why Wei Lun is so **U**nique.

In those early days at Wei Lun there were only 4 grades. I was in the 4th grade which had only one class. In the class there were only 25 students, that's 25 students in the whole grade! To me, that's something extraordinary and of course wonderful. Why? One reason, is the distinct advantage in finding a good secondary school. In other primary schools, exam results are compared with many classes, but for us there was only one class. That meant if you had the best exam results in your class, you were the best student in the whole grade. For other schools, a whole grade meant more than 100 students, for us just 25 students.

I want to explain further why Wei Lun gave me such wonderful memories. It is because the staff at Wei Lun are really a staff of **E**xcellence. I know we all work for a living, but the staff at Wei Lun are not only teaching machines, like a lot of teachers outside. Wei Lun teachers really helped us to grow mentally, physically and spiritually. Happiness is very important to children. It is a key for them to open themselves up and learn, which in turn creates many interests. If children are not happy at school, going to school is like going to a place of torture. Recently, I came across some kids from other schools. When they came out of their campus after school, some of them said, "I want to die." I was very surprised because they were only around 10-12 years

old. Whenever I visit Wei Lun, kids are running around laughing and joking. Even during lunchtime, when students are preparing to eat in the classrooms, I see them praying, some peeking and laughing softly. When I think of those moments, I can't stop smiling to myself. Teachers at Wei Lun take time to talk to the students like their mums and dads would. They help them to understand right from wrong and not just impose disciplinary actions and then leave the students on their own. This is also what I call **N**utrition for a student's growth.

Students felt like they were looked after by two groups of parents - home parents and school parents. For me, Mr Kwan, the first Principal, the teachers, Ms. Chu, Ms. Tsui, Ms. Leung, Ms. Li, Ms. Kwong and the janitors, Sing Gor and Ying Tse felt more like relatives than school staff. What's precious is that they had space in their hearts to remember who you were. I forgot to mention that the staff at Wei Lun had something very rare when compared to schools outside - it was their genuine smiles and laughter, which from my point of view, is the core of a happy, healthy bond between staff, students and their parents.

I can guarantee, when you leave Wei Lun and start your secondary school life, it feels like a different world. When I started my secondary school life, I only competed with other students to get better results. I don't call that life! Teachers hardly knew who you were, unless you went all the way to the top of the class. For friends, apart from your classmates you met during school activities, you felt like you didn't really exist. Recently, I met my secondary school teacher at an MTR station. I looked him in the eyes when he sat across from me. I wanted to say hi to him but he just took a glimpse at me and continued to read his newspaper. On the other hand, about a month ago, I saw Ms. Kwong at a traffic light with her friends. When she saw me she was surprised and called out my name before saying a big hi. So you see, teachers at Wei Lun are so different from teachers elsewhere because you really get to know them. The relationships we developed together were **I**nvaluable. It was all because they were willing to know you more than just a student.

Nowadays, whenever I visit Wei Lun and see the light blue building with two staircases that look like large pencils, loads of images and special moments flash across my mind. The memories of my Wei Lun school life deepen, when I walk up the stairs and stand at the entrance of the school hall - the smell of the wooden floors and the look of the stage. I could write a book if I told you all of my stories from Wei Lun.

Let's start again from the entrance of Wei Lun school. There is one thing I can assure you, especially the graduate students. When you return you will meet the janitors who are the front line ambassadors of this school. Why? They are so **W**arm and welcoming. I have never come across such sweet people at other schools. Maybe, some of you are lucky enough to find such people, but the janitors at Wei Lun are priceless. Every time you hear their voices at the entrance calling your name, their smiles and voices bring you back to the time when you studied at Wei Lun. For me, that was over ten years ago.

I can tell you that the warmth I felt could not be fully understood until I finished my secondary education. When you visit Wei Lun and hear them calling your name again, you feel just as if you were still studying there. If you walk further into the school you

will meet the teachers working in the classrooms and staff office. Especially the enthusiastic Ms. Tsui and Ms. Chu whose unchanged smiles and laughter make you smile from the bottom of your heart. As you stroll around the school watching the children learning and playing, just as you did before, the memories will hit you like a wave.

During these moments, you feel like you are one of the children again, because of all the familiar faces and warm relationships you have developed when growing up at Wei Lun. In summary, my feelings towards Wei Lun school can be described in the six letters below.

W – Warmth (親切)

E – Excellence (傑出)

I – Invaluable (無價)

L – Lush (豐富)

U – Unique (獨一無二)

N – Nutritious (滋養)

