

Important role of sports

WE believe in nurturing students to be team players and develop their skills through various channels such as sports and extra-curricular activities," says Stephen Kamalanathan, head of sports and extra-curricular activities at Nilai International School (NIS).

Stephen graduated with a physical education degree from Winona University and a management degree from Minnesota University in the United States.

He has more than 15 years of teaching experience that began at Houston Elementary School, US, before returning to Malaysia.

Stephen stresses the importance of sports and extra-curricular activities in developing the character and maximising the potential of each child.

"Many Asian parents are not as enthusiastic as American parents when it comes to sports and extra-curricular activities. In the US, although a parent may be the chief executive officer of a Fortune 500 company, most of them make time to watch their child compete in the Little Kids Baseball league.

"I hope to get more parents to be just as enthusiastic about their children's sports and extra-curricular activities here," he says.

At NIS, Stephen is aided by the campus' sporting amenities. It has a covered swimming pool for the students' compulsory swimming lessons, which are conducted by



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certified coaches.

There are also indoor courts for volleyball, basketball and badminton, and a well-equipped gymnasium as well as an outdoor football pitch and basketball court.

NIS students also benefit from being in close proximity with its sister companies – Nilai University (Nilai U) and Nilai Springs Golf and Country Resort.

Stephen says that plans are

underway to provide training for the niche sport of fencing to NIS students.

Nilai U is a designated "Pusat Sukan Tumpuan – Fencing" (Focused Sports Centre – Fencing) by the Ministry of Education and is well equipped for its purpose.

"We will be working with Nilai U so that our students can gain access to its fencing facilities and proper coaching as we intend

to produce future champions in fencing," says Stephen.

NIS also plans to provide golf lessons where students will be coached at the Nilai Springs Golf and Country Resort by professionals from the Mizuno Golf School.

Situated across from NIS is a privately owned sports complex with bowling alleys and a snooker parlour, where Stephen's students get the opportunity to bow and play snooker.

"In this digital age, many students prefer playing virtual bowling or snooker but I try to get them interested in the real thing. By getting students involved in group and outdoor activities, they will learn valuable lessons in socialising and how to be team players," he says.

"NIS aims to produce academically excellent students who are socially confident. Students who are active in sports will gain better focus and discipline that can translate into their academic pursuits.

"This is why I urge parents to encourage their children's extra-curricular endeavours and also why NIS has spent a great deal equipping the campus with state-of-the-art facilities, both in and outside the classrooms," he says.

Stephen says that students who display higher levels of skills and ability in sports are given extra coaching to prepare them for inter-school meets and possibly

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– Stephen Kamalanathan, head of sports and extra-curricular activities at Nilai International School

for regional tournaments in the future.

Stephen invites parents and kids to visit NIS. He says: "You will be impressed by the facilities that are on par with many premium schools in the country. We are new and still growing. For such competitive fees, parents are really getting a great deal."

NIS is hosting its Open Day on May 24. The campus is located in Putra Nilai and offers the ICGSE syllabus.

■ For more information, call 06-8502 188 or visit www.nis.edu.my