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Hayatona

Our Life

Volume 1 Issue 9

'Providing An Exceptional Quality Education'

1 February 2018

From Our Head of School



GIS: Functionally Outstanding

"Every successful individual knows that his or her achievement depends on a community of persons working together" – Paul Ryan
Our community collaboration and engagement is the aspect I most highly value and wish to continue to foster at GIS. We value the voice of all community members and understand that in order to succeed, as a school and for our students, we need to work in partnership between home and school.

We are a wonderfully international community and celebrate all countries and cultures that are woven together to form the fabric that is GIS. Each individual makes a significant difference to how we operate. We have a wonderful opportunity coming up to celebrate this at our International Day, which I would ask all of you to come and support.

Recently our school was reviewed by the independent school review agency, Schools Compared. They took a very in-depth look at our school, interviewed many people and visited the site for an extended period. As a result, I believe they have shared a very balanced review... <https://schoolscompared.com/all-through/gems-international-school-al-khail-dubai-hills-review/>

With comments like "functionally outstanding" and "we do believe this is a really impressive school", coupled with ratings of A- and B+, we are extremely well placed. Our ratings mirror those of other KHDA rated 'Outstanding' schools in Dubai, which is certainly something to celebrate.

The highlight of the review, for me, was this; "Perhaps most importantly, at GEMS International School Al Khail, the children are truly happy, and teachers committed to them. This shows." I think it accurately reflects all we do, in partnership with parents, for the heart of our school, our students.

In continuing to value your voice I would ask that you please take the time to complete the KHDA survey, it is vital we receive feedback from you and show the KHDA the high levels of parent engagement we have and value at GIS.

I have a parent coffee meeting coming up next week on Sunday, 4 February at 8:30am, at the DP Lounge and intend to share some of the areas of success and development at that time. I hope to see many of you at that time.

Yours in Education,
Glen Radojkovich
Head of School/CEO
[@GRadojkovich](https://twitter.com/GRadojkovich)

GIS UPDATES

WHOLE SCHOOL

Calendar icon FEB

Coffee Morning
Come and join us for a coffee chat, where Mr. Radojkovich will share some school-wide news and updates with you. All are welcome.
Sunday, 4th February at 8:30am with Mr. Glen Radojkovich - Head of School.
DP Lounge, 3rd Floor, Secondary Building (Phase 2)

A Coffee Morning with Glen Radojkovich
Sunday, 4 February
8:30am at DP Lounge

Term Break
11 February - 15 February

KHDA Review
19 February - 22 February

Access Control Doors OPEN at 7:30am

Quick Links
[See our Facebook page here](#)
[PH7 Menu click here](#)

INSIDE

Teacher of the Month
Click here and choose your teacher of the month


GIS Jr. Karting Team enter the ESKC p4


Grade 5B Taking Action p5


Week Without Walls p6

Dear GIS Parents,

I am writing today asking for your help regarding next year. As you know we must plan far in advance in order to offer the best IB programme we can for our students, hiring the proper teachers. All of our school reviews to date have gone very well and so next year we will be adding the 12th grade.

While it may seem early, I am writing to inform that the re-enrolment process for September 2018 academic year is now open.

We are pleased to share that there will be a 15% discount in fees for a third child, 25% discount for a fourth child and 50% for a fifth child for the academic year 2018/19.

All parents are required to pay a deposit of 10 % of the annual school fee per child (please see the fee schedule below) in order to secure your child's place at GEMS International School for the academic year 2018 – 2019. This re-enrolment fee will be due by 22nd March.

Important points to note about the re-enrolment fee:

- The re-enrolment process applies to all parents wishing their child/children to return to GEMS International School in September 2018. This process applies to all students including company paid accounts. Parents who normally have their school fees

covered directly by their employer will need to make this payment themselves, and then seek reimbursement from their employer.

- This deposit is fully deductible against the first term fees.

- This deposit is fully refundable should your circumstances change, and

- Your family relocates outside Dubai
- Grade 10 students who have paid to secure their place for Sept 2018 and do not acquire the predicted grades to proceed with the full IB Diploma are also able to request a refund of the re-enrolment fee. A letter from the DP Coordinator will be required for the refund.

- If you do not complete the re-enrolment process before 22nd March, the system will automatically generate a Transfer Certificate request and places will be offered to incoming students.

- If you are not re-enrolling for September 2018, this process still needs to be completed. The re-enrolment process will prompt a Transfer Certificate to be generated as part of your leaving documents.

- GEMS Staff will require their employee number in order to complete the re-enrolment process

You will be able to re-enroll your child by logging into Oasis (<https://oasis.gemse-ducation.com/General/Home.aspx>) and completing the re-enrolment process. This will provide you the opportunity to pay online with a credit card or you are welcome

to pay at the school accounts office. For instructions, please see attached. The deposit can only be accepted by the Accounts Department once your re-enrolment process is complete on Oasis.

By re-enrolling your child, you agree that the terms and conditions communicated in your Parent School Contract shall continue to apply.

Grade Level			
KG1	4,900	Grade 6	6400
KG 2	4,900	Grade 7	6400
Grade 1	5,300	Grade 8	6400
Grade 2	5,300	Grade 9	6,800
Grade 3	5,300	Grade 10	6,800
Grade 4	5,300	Grade 11	7,200
Grade 5	6400	Grade 12	7,200

If you require any further details regarding the re-enrolment or have any questions regarding the process, please contact our Registration Office or PRE.

Many thanks for your assistance in completing the above process.

Yours sincerely,


 Principal / CEO

Cathy Hayes

Deputy Head of School



Semester 2 has just begun and at this mid-point of the year, having already achieved so much, we are setting high expectations for ourselves and excited for what we can accomplish together as a community over the coming months.

 @cathyhayesedu As some of you may already know, we have officially received our Knowledge Human and Development Authority (KHDA) notification and the inspectors will be in school from Monday, 19 February – Thursday, 22 February inclusive. As a community, we always plan to build on our successes and strive for excellence and it is with this mindset, we will approach the inspection. We are confident that as a school, in partnership with you, we continue to move in a positive direction and certain, this is what the inspectors will identify also.

Of course, we need your help to achieve this. As part of the process, KHDA has requested that three surveys are completed before their arrival, one by our teachers, one for secondary students and finally one for you, the parents. Please find the [link](#) here for the parent survey. This is the first impression the inspection team will have of the school, as they will all access the responses before they arrive so it is important that they have a large sample to accurately reflect our wonderful community. We value and appreciate you taking the time to complete this. Alternatively, there are iPads set up in reception where you can also complete the process.

Our second round of MAP testing has now been completed across the school. This data is imperative for us as a school both at an individual and school wide level. Using these reports, teachers are able to specifically identify students' strengths and areas of growth to personalize their learning experiences. As a school, we can analyze the data to help support us in making school wide decisions around curriculum adaptation, management of resources and areas of support for example. These results are also used as a measure when looking at progress and attainment. As such, we need to ensure that the data is precise. Should teachers and/or students feel that they have not done as well as they could have due to reasons such as stress, fatigue, scheduling issues or illness, students are given the opportunity to demonstrate their ability accurately. You will all have received your child's MAP report home and once the whole school analysis is complete, we will share the results with the community as we have done previously.

Finally, a health and safety announcement, regarding the newly installed access control system. Please do read the notice carefully and take note of the timings. This process will start on Sunday, 4 February and we thank you in advance for your patience as we monitor the system over the coming weeks to ensure it meets the needs of the community.

Have a great weekend and hope to see you all at International Day next week.

International Day



It's that time of year again, International Day is here and we can't wait. Join us on Thursday, 8 February from 10:00am – 3:00pm where you can join in with the day's festivities. See nationalities of our school being represented at the student flag parade, visit our country stalls hosted by parents and students representing all things to do with their culture and heritage and make sure you don't miss our Cultural Performance show in the outdoor amphitheater.

Please find below the day's schedule.

International Day Schedule

8:00am – 8:15am: TBC Cultural Performance in Reception
8:30am – 9:15am: Students in class
9:15am – 9:45am: Snack and break time
10:00am – 11:00am: Flag parade
11:00am – 12:00pm: KG visit to the country stalls
12:00pm – 1:00pm: Grade 1 & 2 visit to the country stalls
1:00pm – 3:00pm: Grade 3 & above visit to the country stalls

Cultural Performances

Time: 1:00pm – 2:00pm
Location: Outdoor Amphitheater

Signing out students

If you would like to take your child from class, you are requested to sign them out with the Home Room teacher as per the school policy. We ask that if this is the case, you do so only after 12PM.

Raquel Nahas

Assistant Head of Primary and Head of Arabic



[@raquelnahas](#)

Akhbarouna

Living in the Middle East, you will quickly find out that Arabic has many forms and dialects. This is one reason that makes the language so special.

Arabic, listed as the fifth most spoken language in the world, can be classified into three forms: Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), Classical Arabic, and Colloquial Arabic. MSA is the form that is taught at GIS as it is adopted in the majority of academic settings. There are 19 official Arabic speaking countries, of which, have their own unique colloquial Arabic that is distinctive of the region. As a result, the majority of children, despite learning MSA at school, grow up speaking the colloquial dialect that is linked to their home country.

As an international school, we highlight our commonalities and celebrate our uniqueness, and what better way to do this than through the Arabic Language. With International Day around the corner, I encourage you to visit all Arab Country booths to celebrate the culture as well as the unique dialects for each region.

أخبارنا

إن اللغة العربية لديها العديد من اللهجات، ويظهر ذلك في لغة الناطقين بها في الشرق الأوسط، مما يجعلها لغة مميزة جداً.

ويمكن تصنيف اللغة العربية، التي تعتبر خامس لغة منطوقة في العالم، إلى ثلاثة أشكال هي: اللغة الكلاسيكية العربية، العامية العربية واللغة القياسية الحديثة.

اللغة القياسية الحديثة هي النموذج الذي يتم اعتماده في غالبية الأوساط الأكاديمية، وهناك تسعة عشر دولة لغتها الرسمية هي اللغة العربية.

على الرغم من تعلم الأطفال للغة العربية القياسية الحديثة (الفصحى) في المدرسة فإنهم عندما يكبرون يتحدثون اللهجة العامية التي ترتبط ببلدنا.

لذلك تركز المدارس الدولية في احتفالاتها على تسليط الضوء على القواسم المشتركة للحفاظ على الحضارة العربية المنتشرة فيها ليُشاهدوا تفردنا.

Angelika Kuster

Curriculum Coordinator K-12



[@kusterangelika](#)

One of the unique features of an IB school is the mandate to develop an understanding of the concept of 'international mindedness'. Schools all over the world are expected to develop their own understanding and definition of the concept, considering their specific setting and context. At the beginning of this academic year, faculty at GIS have explored, discussed and brainstormed possible definitions and agreed upon the following:

International Mindedness: Recognizing and being open-minded to our similarities and differences while understanding how our experiences and exposure to different cultures impact our personal perceptions of the world.

How do we bring those lofty words to life? How does this impact student learning and their experiences in the classroom? Teachers plan for relevant learning experiences that help students form a better understanding of different cultures, histories and perspectives throughout the curriculum. Examples include 'Migration' in Grade

International Mindedness in GIS

Four, 'Cultural Identity' in Grade Six or the 'Creation of national identities in the post-Ottoman period' in Grade Nine. Students are not only studying distant countries and civilizations but have ample opportunities to explore the local culture and environment through the U.A.E. Social Studies and Moral Education curricula.

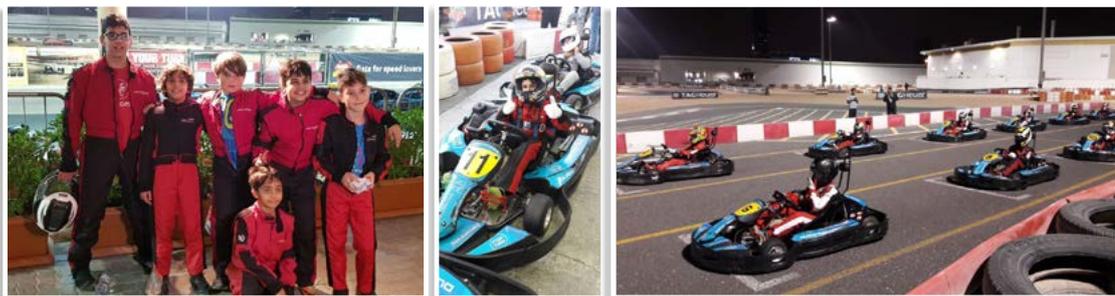
Nurturing students growing embodiment of the IB Learner Profile attributes as a true expression of international mindedness, developing their critical thinking skills to uncover bias, different beliefs and perspectives. Action in the PYP, Service as Action in the MYP and CAS in the DP are central to the programs and help our students to develop empathy and becoming responsible global citizens.

Communication is essential to build understanding. At GIS, we value different languages and students' mother tongues, we want to foster multilingualism, enabling students to communicate in a variety of ways, including the learning new languages as well as maintaining their mother tongue.

A celebration of all of the above is coming up next week: International Day. I hope you will join us and help us celebrate the diverse nature of our international community.

Emirates School Karting Championship (ESKC)

By, Nathan Pope 5B



The junior racing team had their first try participating in the Emirates School Karting Championship. We had two teams representing GIS. At first when we arrived we felt nervous because we had never driven on that track before, but we were fortunate to have some time to practice on

the new track which made us feel confident and ready. This race was at the Kartdrome on Sunday, 28 January 2018. We didn't come in the top ten but our team worked well as a group and we are proud of that. It was a very exciting opportunity to race against other teams and schools. Our next race is on Sunday, 11 February 2018. We would like to invite all the GIS community to come support the Jaguars Racing Team.

Team Members: Saeed Alzarouni, Alex Hansen, Nikolas Hansen, Jad Hijazeen, Qais Hijazeen and Nathan Pope



Fab 5 Athletics

By Matilda De Grazia and Jasper Girven (Grade 3E)

On Wednesday, 24th of January 2018 athletes from Grades 2 and 3 competed in the Fab 5 Athletics competition at the North London Collegiate School. Fab 5 means that there are five students from each grade competing in one running and one field event, finishing with a full team relay. Some of the field events included javelin, shot put, high jump and triple jump. The running events were the 50m sprint, 150m, 250m, 500m and the 1km mini marathon. GIS worked hard as a team and won many events. Some highlights include Jad leaping like a salmon to win the triple jump, Yasseen running like Usain Bolt to win the sprint, Erica launching the javelin further than the rest, Robyn storming ahead to win the 1km race and Saisha catapulting the shot put to win gold. After showing great determination, courage and enthusiasm, GIS came away with the gold medal!

If you would like the chance to take part in future athletic events please come to our athletics ECA on Tuesday mornings and Thursdays after school.

Grade 2 Athletes : Ali, Jad, Adam, Tommaso, Robyn, Saisha, Petra, Sofie.
 Grade 3 Athletes: Jasper, Yasseen, Alwy, Jacob, Alex, Matilda, Khadeja, Erica and Joudy.



Access Control System

In an effort to continue to improve our safety procedures, we have installed an access control system leading into the main school building. During morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up there will be set times at which these doors will open and close. At all other times, the doors will remain locked and can only be opened by a staff access card. Please click [here](#) to see the locations of all access control entrances. The opening times are as follows:

Morning: 7:30 AM – 8:45 AM
 Afternoon: 3:15 PM – 4:00 PM on all days except Tuesday
 Tuesday: 1:15 PM – 2:15 PM

In the event of a fire or similar emergency, all doors will release automatically. For any reason should this not occur, there is also a manual switch which can be used to release them. We appreciate your cooperation.

Canteen Updates

From 18 February PH7 will offer a brand new menu in the canteen. Throughout each week students will be able to enjoy tasty options including pasta, pizza and jacket potatoes for lunch.

Light bite options will also be available after school. The new menus will be shared with you once finalized.

School leadership in partnership with GISPA continue to work closely with PH7 to ensure feedback from students and parents is shared and addressed accordingly.

Should you have any feedback regarding PH7, please contact our PRE, Yelena Doncaster at pre_gis@gemedu.com



Leigh Girven
 Head of Primary



[@LeighGirven](#)

This week we started Semester Two which will run for the rest of the academic year. We have also put in place a new Semester Two schedule due to new enrollments and increased numbers in specialist classes. I hope you have all managed to readjust your morning routines for any changes to PE lesson days! If your child has a new Arabic or Islamic teacher they should have brought home a letter introducing the new teacher with their relevant contact details in case you wish to contact them.

Winter MAP reports and end of Semester Reports have been sent home this week. We hope you liked the new report format and the new additions such as ECA information, attendance information and Approaches to Learning formally referred to as transdisciplinary skills. The combination of both these reports will give you an accurate picture of how your child has progressed academically and socially for the first half of this academic year. We hope that all parents will have made appointment with your child's teacher for Parent Teacher Conferences today (Thursday). This is an opportunity for you to discuss both reports and set goals for your child for the remainder of the year. Please remember that following the conferences, our teachers are always willing to discuss any concerns of questions you may have. Often a 15min appointment is not long enough so please do not hesitate to ask the teachers for a follow up meeting if you feel it necessary.

The Social Awareness Club of 5B Taking Action

As our world becomes increasingly connected, we have a greater opportunity for being more aware of the social issues that our local and global community face. In The Social Awareness Club of 5B, we aim to inquire into these very issues and seek to take action in order to make a difference for those in need.

Currently, students are working on the logistics of their first school blood drive that will be held on February 28th. The students have also partnered with a local charitable organization called Dar Al Ber in order to bring a clothing donation bin to the school. During meetings, students also diligently seek volunteering opportunities for themselves and others. In doing this, students are learning to be aware of a world in need. They grow in confidence, commitment and empathy as they work to serve and volunteer.



We are always looking for more volunteering opportunities. If you are aware of any, please contact us at j.lucero_gis@gemsedu.com.

Bonjour

By James Devlin

We are delighted to offer French to Grades 4 & 5 this year. I have spent the last two years teaching French and Spanish in MYP. Ms. Marcella de Diego and I are extremely excited to be able to help start the French program this year.

Learning languages is such a vital tool in our quest to become global citizens in today's ever-changing world. My passion to teach languages comes from having amazing experiences as a young student learning Spanish.

We will be learning how to communicate in French and under-

stand vocabulary across a variety of topics, such as giving opinions on hobbies, school subjects and talking about our family. A vital part of the learning has to be the opportunity for fun and being active; Jacques a dit (Simon Says) is something that I have always found to be a very popular activity. We will also introduce students to a range of internet resources to help reinforce their learning; e.g. Quizlet and Duolingo.

I hope that this year will be a very productive and enjoyable one for everybody.
 À Bientôt

[@GIS_Gems](#)

PYP Choirs

This year, GIS has introduced two new PYP Choirs lead by Ms. Anastasia (Grades 1-2) and Ms. Caroline (Grades 3-5). In December, both choirs put on multiple performances at events such as the PYP Winter Concerts, Winterfest, and a special morning reception performance on the last day of school leading up to Winter vacation.



Ms. Caroline's Treble Choir was also invited to a public performance at Little GEMS International School's Family Festive Fun Fair to share their talent with younger children and families within our GEMS community. In the second half of the year, the PYP Choirs will be preparing for even more exciting performance opportunities. All students Grades 1-5 are welcome to join the choirs which meet as lunchtime and after-school ECAs. Please contact a member of the music team for more information or to sign your child up for one of these ensembles.

**PRIMARY
 EVENTS**



PRIMARY

**Coffee with the
 Head of School**

4 February
 8:30 am at DP Lounge

International Week
 4 - 8 February

**Grade 5 to Grade 6
 Parent Evening -
 Making the Transition**
 6 February
 DP Lounge

International Day
 8 February
 8:00am - 2:00pm

Mid-Term Break
 11 - 15 February

Lee Hole

Head of Secondary



[@LHole81](#)

'What a busy week it's been, I would like to thank all parents for attending the parent teacher meetings this week. I hope that you all had positive feedback and gained useful information to achieving the next steps in your children's development. It's always great to see the school full of parents as well as the students and teachers, we aim to build solid relationships between the two to continue creating a great community.

I am pleased to say the secondary sports day was a great success! I would like to say a big well done for everyone who participated and thank you for the parents who came along to support on the day. Whilst the track and field events took place, all other students participated in tugs of war and hand ball. In the tug of war, the teachers won against the Mambas, Pythons and Dragons... however the students fought back when the Raptors beat the teachers and won over all. We also had some bruised egos from the teacher who lost against the students in the relay race! Congratulations to the Blue Dragons who dominated the proceedings and walked away with the winning cup.

MYP music concert is coming up on the 5th February at 7:00pm. We look forward to seeing you there and hope you can all make it.

Our grade 9 student Tanvi Dhingra won a Dubai-based competition and will have her poem published as a result. We would like to share this beautiful poem.

Abstract Memories Of The Past

When I was 10;
 I saw a person's life flash before my eyes
 and I knew that those were my memories,
 I was too late...

When I was 9;
 I felt the heat of a burning house and I
 knew the smell of burning flesh would be
 remembered,
 I couldn't do anything...

When I was 8;
 I saw a woman kneel down and show me a
 ring and I knew I would say yes,
 I was flying with the stars...

When I was 7;
 I saw an angel come down and I knew I
 was special,
 I was changed...

When I was 6;
 I stood over a dead man's body and I knew
 the blood on my hands wasn't mine,
 I cried...

When I was 5;
 I looked in the mirror and I knew that
 wasn't my face,
 I was filled with a whirlwind of emotions...

When I was 4;
 A woman stepped in front of me and
 took a bullet to the chest and I knew she
 shouldn't have,
 I wasn't her daughter...

When I was 3;
 I saw rivers polluted and forests felled
 and I knew I had to do something,
 I didn't know what to do...

When I was 2;
 I jumped into the sea and talked with the
 fish but I knew my tail wasn't real,
 I didn't believe in the impossible...

When I was 1;
 I saw ashes and fire and bones and I knew
 the world was ending,
 I didn't know the worst was yet to come.

SECONDARY EVENTS



SECONDARY

Innovation Month

1 - 28 February

International Week

4 - 8 February

Coffee with Head of School

4 February
 8:30 am at DP Lounge

MYP Music Concert

5 February
 7:00pm at MPH

International Day

8 February
 8:30am - 2:00pm

Mid-Term Break

11 - 15 February

Stars in the Making



Tanvi Dhingra and Maryam Al Riyami participated in the GEMS Aspiring Music Competition last week. It was an inspirational day, with master classes, meeting new friends and musical performances.



MYP/DP Week Without Walls 2018 Questionnaire

In planning for the 2018 MYP/DP WWW trips, we would like your feedback. [Here](#) is a Google questionnaire where you can offer your opinion on locations and activities.

Although we do not have the dates set for next year's Week Without Walls, but are starting to plan now. We appreciate you taking the time to fill out the questionnaire so that we can plan engaging trips for GIS students.

Should you have any further question please contact Ms. Michelle L. Wright (m.wright_gis@gemedu.com), International WWW Coordinator.



Coffee Morning

Come and join us for a coffee chat, where Mr. Radojkovich will share some school-wide news and updates with you. All are welcome.

Sunday, 4th February at 8:30am
with Mr. Glen Radojkovich - Head of School.

DP Lounge, 3rd Floor, Secondary Building (Phase 2)



International Day

February 8th, 2018

You still have time to sign up to host your country table for our upcoming International Day! Sign up [here](#) and connect with other parents from your country.

Some ideas for what you can include as well as [guidelines for the country tables](#) are available [here](#).

If you need assistance connecting with other parents from your country, you can reach out to the school Parent Relation Executive, Yelena Doncaster, at pre_gis@gemsedu.com

For all other questions regarding the country tables, please contact GISPA at GISPA_gis@gemsedu.com.

Deadline to sign up is Sunday, February 4th, 12pm.



GISPA - GEMS International School Parent Association



gispa_gis@gemsedu.com

@GIS_Gems

