



حياتنا *Hayatona* Our Life

Volume 3 Issue 16

Providing An Exceptional Quality Education'

25 April 2019

From Our Head of School



GIS has been making tremendous progress in recent years and as you would be aware, this year had a number of significant achievements.

This year we were selected as one for the Top Ten International Schools in Dubai and shortlisted as a finalist in IB School of Dubai. In addition, from 52 schools within our network, we have been identified as the No.1 school in

MAP Progress Data, in all grades and subjects, No.1 in our Parent Satisfaction Survey and No.1 in the most improvements in KHDA indicators, to name but a few of our many achievements.

As a result of the progress we have made and the excellent reputation we are developing, we were honored to be visited by our Chairman and Founder, Mr Sunny Varkey this Tuesday. Also in attendance were Sir Christopher Stone, Global Head of GEMS Education and Dino Varkey CEO of GEMS.

The visit was a staff centered opportunity to congratulate our faculty for all they have been doing at GIS, while discussing next steps to advance the school, to improve life at school for all stakeholders.

I would like to thank each of you for all your continued support in ensuring a successful year to date, we would not be the school we are without you!

While we celebrated a year of 1sts on Tuesday, we recognized another 1st on Thursday. Our 1st Graduating Class in the IB Diploma. I had breakfast with and addressed our Seniors, as they prepared for their last day of school, in order to take study leave to prep for the IB World Exams. I want to take the time now to give them another "shout out" in this newsletter. "G12

Yours in Education,
Glen Radojkovich
Head of School/CEO
 @GRadojkovich



Student president Selina Madanat presents Chairman Mr. Sunny Varkey with flowers

you are amazing, we are proud of you and know you will work hard to ensure excellence in your exams. We know you've got this. All the very best from our entire school community".



At a Glance

Fire Drill
5 May

Ramadan School Timing
Start Time - 8:30am
End Time - 1:30pm

Week Without Walls Launch
April 30
DP Lounge
6:30 - 7:30 pm

2019 - 2020
GIS School
Calendar

Cathy Hayes

Deputy Head of School



[@cathyhayesedu](https://twitter.com/cathyhayesedu)

As we approach the Holy season of Ramadan, I would like to take this opportunity to share with you some information regarding school routines and general practices during this time, which I hope, will address many of the common questions that arise. It is important that we encourage all members of the GIS community to be aware of the significance of this time and to be appreciative and respectful of our host culture.

For over one billion people throughout the world, Ramadan is a very special time of the year. Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar and during this month, people of the Muslim faith fast from dawn to dusk every day. It is a period of reflection, worship and devotion.

- Ramadan is expected to start on May 6th, this will be officially confirmed by the moon-sighting committee.
- The abbreviated school hours for students during this month are 8:30 AM – 1:30 PM
- Bus service will continue as usual, with a 1:40 pm departure time from school. You will receive formal notification from the bus company about departure and arrival times.
- The primary school timetable will not change, but each les-

son will be shortened.

- There will be a new Ramadan schedule operated in secondary school, teachers will provide this to the students.
- Learning and assessments will continue as normal throughout this time including the Diploma Programme World exams and internal Assessment Week in secondary school.
- The parent café will operate in the primary canteen, however consumption of food or drink in public is prohibited.
- Students in KG – Grade 1 will continue their lunch and snack routine as usual.
- Both the primary and secondary canteens will serve as designated areas for non-fasting students to eat and drink. There will be alternative options for fasting students during lunch and recess.
- Muslim students, staff and parents will have access to prayer rooms.
- All community members including staff, parents and students should be considerate of the dress code during this time.
- Recess and lunch will be shortened with PE activities being limited and low key.
- There will be no internal ECAs during the Holy Month of Ramadan.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at c.hayes_gis@gemsedu.com

Congratulations



We are so happy to share that Yassin El Nemr from Grade 3E won Gold at the Jiu Jitsu World Championships under 38kg category, where he competed against other children of the same weight from around the world.



Aliyy Eloraby from Grade 9 has recently competed in the Egyptian National swimming championships on the 13th and 14th of April 2019. He came away with gold medals in the 50m butterfly; 100m butterfly; 200m butterfly; 200m freestyle and 200m individual medley in the under 15s category.

Aliyy swims with Hamilton aquatics and Al Wasl club here in the UAE and we at GEMS International School could not be prouder of him. He manages the extremely demanding training regime for his swimming alongside his IB studies with incredible maturity and attitude. He is an example to us all of how we can balance our lives and succeed on multiple fronts every day.

School Updates

Important Canteen Update

We are excited to share the news that we will be changing our current canteen provider to 'Slices'.

While PH7 has served us well we believe the services of Slices will add value. We would like to ensure that all your credit is used and all balance payments are cleared before this change takes into effect.

If you would normally top up your child's account, we would recommend to load a smaller balance than usual as we are allowing cash payments from the 1 May onwards, to ensure there are no accounts with credit still remaining at the end of the year. Funds will not be able to be transferred from PH7 to Slices.

We look forward to working with Slices and thank you for your ongoing support.

If you have any question please feel free to contact our PRE Ms. Yelena Spencer at pre_gis@gemsedu.com

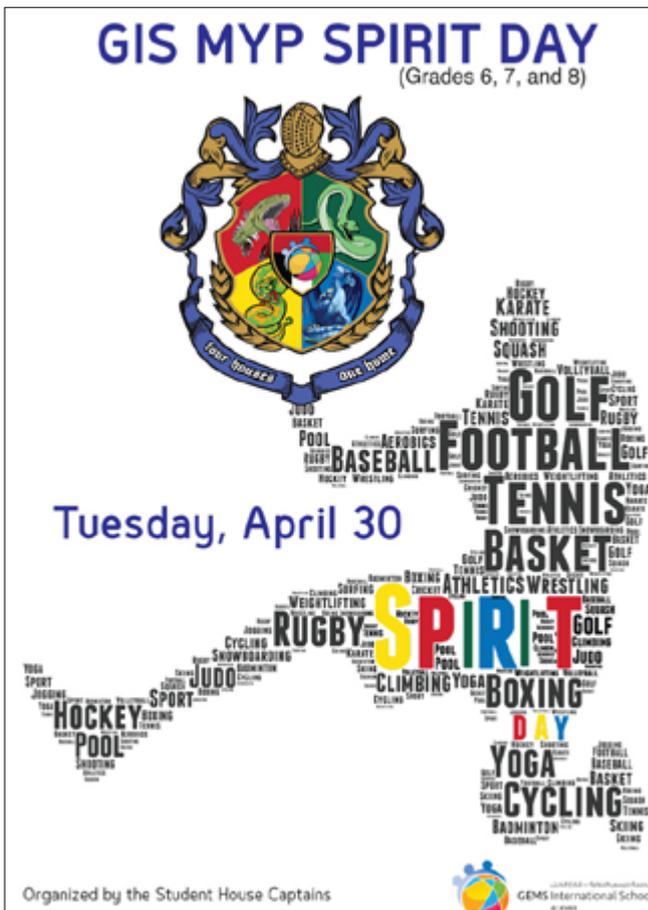


GIS Career Day

The Counseling Department is organizing a Career Day for our Secondary School students on 18 June. This project is based on the standards of the International Model for School Counseling Programs and our aim is to have students, from an early age, start considering the relationship between education and future professional achievements, as well as identifying possible career goals.

We are in the process of finding speakers for this day and are asking for your assistance. Career Day becomes an even more exciting experience for our students when members of their own family speak to our classes. Each speaker will do four presentations of approximately 20 - 30 minutes, to share information about his/her occupation and hold a question and answer period.

If you can assist us by participating in this activity as a guest speaker or know of someone who could, please contact us via email at p.sidey_gis@gemsedu.com / i.pacios_gis@gemsedu.com and we will follow up with more details.



Leigh Girven
Head of Primary



[@LeighGirven](#)

WThis is my first Hayatona entry back after my maternity leave and it is so lovely to be back at GIS and to see all our amazing staff and students. Thank you to all those parents who have asked about Sebastian and sent us best wishes. I am pleased to report that Sebastian is now 8 weeks old and is doing very well. He is growing fast, sleeping well (most of the time!) adored by his brother and sister and we are all enjoying having a baby in the house again.

There has been so much happening in the last two weeks and much to celebrate! Congratulations to our primary swim team who won their DAPSA division championship and have qualified for the Hamadan Competition – placing in as the fourth ranked GEMS school!

It was a pleasure to watch the G4 and G5 theater shows this week – ‘The Magic Finger’ and ‘Charlie and the Chocolate Factory’. What confident and talented students we have here at GIS.

This week we have celebrated Literacy week with a number of fun activities and events to celebrate reading and books. Highlights have been the KG dress up fashion parade, the surprise performance of The Paper Bag Princess and watching our fantastic Arabic teachers perform Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs. As always I am blown away with the creativity that our students and staff displayed in the creation of their World Book Day costumes, especially the Grade Two teachers who came as ‘The Hungry Little Caterpillar’ and of course my leadership colleagues who joined me as characters from the Wizard of Oz.

Swim Gala



We kicked off our 2019 GIS Swim Galas with our wonderful KG students. Pre K, KG1 and KG2 all demonstrated tremendous courage as they entered the Swimming Pool arena to iconic entrance music. After smiling and waving to their proud parents, they focused and got down to business. They rotated around 4 different stations; two of which were in the small pool and two were in the big pool! In the small pool they tackled a grueling, underwater obstacle course with Ms. Peris and Mr. Abid, and showed off their gliding and kicking skills with Mr. Denny. In the big pool they played at the Pirate ship station with Ms. Cristina and Mr. Alan as well as jumping into the big pool with Miss. Michelle. Our absolutely fearless KG students conquered their Swim Gala and were hailed victorious by the Master of Ceremonies, Mr. Ryan.

Grade 1 and Grade 2 students participated in some very exciting and challenging events including an obstacle course station in the

small pool and a jumping and diving station in the big pool. They also demonstrated their caring and responsible attitudes by ‘re-cycling’ the mess (balls, rings and pool toys) in the big pool. Without a doubt, the highlight was the races station where our Grade 1 students raced on the fronts and on their backs across the width of the big pool and our Grade 2 students raced the length of the big pool – that’s 25 meters!

Our Grade, 3, 4 and 5 swimming champions battled in front crawl races and backstroke races for House Points. Showcasing their wonderful swimming technique, our boys and girls tried their very best, not just for themselves but for their Houses. We also had some memorable teacher races at the end which resulted in more house points being gained. Overall, the Winners of Grade 3 Gala were the Red Raptors! The Winners of Grade 4 Gala were the Yellow Pythons! And the Winners of Grade 5 Gala were the Red Raptors!



Primary Important Dates

Grade 5 Exhibition
May 1 and 2
MPH
May 1: 5:30-7:30,
May 2: 9:00-2:30

Week Without Walls Launch
April 30
DP Lounge
6:30 - 7:30 pm

Chess Competition

On Wednesday, 24 April, our primary ECA chess team along with four other schools took part in a chess competition.

Nethan (4F) started the winning off for GIS, cleverly checkmating his opponent's King with his Castle and three Pawns. Mirko (4E) recorded the fastest win of the day with only 11 seconds on the clock. Devwrat (4E) had his opponent in checkmate within a minute during his second game, allowing him to qualify for the quarter finals. Lana (4F) came out victorious in her second game when her Knight caught out her unsuspecting opponent. In their first competitive outing, Ved (4A), Tyler (4B), Fatima (4C) and Rudy (4F) played with style and confidence, showcasing some crafty offensive and defensive plays during their games. Ishaan (4F) astutely trapped his second round partner into checkmate using his Castle and Queen. Congratulations to all.



If students are interested in joining the chess team, please contact Mr. Ronan or Mr. Philip.

Primary Literacy Week

While the P.E. department naturally chose super hero comic characters, congratulations to the Arabic and Islamic teachers who spent Wednesday acting out a version of Snow White in Arabic to audiences all day, a great way to demonstrate literacy across the curriculum. In Art students listened to stories and then responded creatively, the music department made connections between song lyrics and poetry and the impact they have. Literacy week brought even more smiles and laughter to GIS this week, with every student throughout the Primary Phase taking part in a multitude of story and book based activities. Our primary goal of 'Reading for Pleasure' was whole-heartedly embraced by the school community. Each Grade level planned engaging activities such as a Teddy Bear's picnic in Pre K, focusing on rhyme in KG1, designing bookmarks linked to favorite stories, reading in the dark and buddy reading to younger students in the older grades. Poetry was the focus on Sunday and after hearing the story "A Poem in my Pocket" every child was encouraged to write and carry a poem around with them in their own pockets. Grade three students were even storing theirs in their socks!

This year saw the growth of literacy week to all single subject departments too. Every team chose a theme and dressed up as books characters. Ms. Panayota fully enjoying her role as The Queen from Snow on the listener. The Grade Two team won the teacher's costume prize with sixteen members of staff all creatively adorned as elements of "The Hungry caterpillar" story. Thank you to all staff who made World Book Day extra special

for the children by dressing up.

On Monday parents were invited to join Louise, Rose and Joanne in the PYP library for "Breakfast Book Tasting" and we were delighted to fill the tables with parents eager to explore some the books available for them to read aloud to their children at home. Our message is to carry on reading even when your child is an independent reader. It is evident that children of all ages love to sit quietly and listen to a story read by someone else. If you would like more information about signing up for a parent library card then please call in to see Louise in the library.

The Paper-Bag Princess made an appearance for some grades on Tuesday. Ms. Berry, assisted by Mr. Alan, put on an incredible and funny performance of the well-known tale. We celebrated World Book day on Wednesday and we must thank every parent for the efforts you made to support your children, making costumes that linked to some of their favorite book characters. Our younger students had the opportunity to show off their costumes in a catwalk parade and prizes were awarded to every class in the PYP. The week culminated in an exciting inter-house Kahoot quiz for Grades two to five. There were lots of house points available for winning teams and overall winners.

If you are interested in finding out more about the benefits of reading aloud at home and our drive to engage students in reading for pleasure then please check the information boards around the school for further details or email j.cleland_gis@gemsedu.com



G3 students who created their own costumes. Sometimes connections are made to mother tongue texts and some costumes are fully recycled from plastic bags.



Goncalo in KG2 - fully engaged in making his own costume about a favorite book



Sometimes our favorite books are full of information - I love to learn about The Solar System.



Arabic and Islamic teachers performing Snow White on World Book Day



Breakfast Book Tasting - parents browsing for books they can read aloud to their children

Raquel Nahas

Assistant Head of Primary and Head of Arabic



@raquelnahas

different ending.

What an amazing literacy week it has been, especially with students embracing literacy in Arabic as well as English.

Primary students have been reading in class and exploring poetry in Arabic A. All primary students were very excited to watch the Arabic teachers perform the play "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" in Arabic, and then have the opportunity to perform the play themselves.

Secondary Arabic A students participated in a contest where they identified Arabic authors and poets. Arabic B students read different books and then took on the role of the character to act out the story. Students explored Frankenstein in Arabic, completed an in-depth analysis of the story and provided a

We thank all students that participated in GIS Taqra' Bil Arabia, which is now complete. We hope that students have developed a love for reading and continue to read Arabic books in and outside of the school. Winners will be announced in the next Hayatona issue.



يا له من أسبوع مدهش !
كانت تجربة رائعة خاضها طلابنا بحماس في عالم القراءة والكتابة باللغتين العربية والإنجليزية.

في المرحلة الابتدائية قرأ الطلاب الشعر باللغة العربية، يغمروهم الحماس والبهجة وهم يتابعون عرض معلّمي اللغة العربية لمسرحية "سنو وايت والأقزام السبعة"، ليقوم الطلاب بعدها بعرض مواهبهم من خلال أداء فصول المسرحية.

في المرحلة الثانوية شارك الطلاب العرب في مسابقة أدبية حيث تعرّفوا من خلالها على مؤلفين وشعراء عرب. كما تمّ عرض مقطع فيديو يلخص قصة فيلم (فرانكشتاين) باللغة العربية، وأكملوا التحليل المتعمق للقصة بتقديم نهايات مختلفة من وحي خيالهم. أمّا في صفوف الطلبة غير العرب فقد طالع الطلاب بعض القصص في الكتب والمجلات ورسوم الكاريكاتير باللغة العربية، ممّا أتاح لهم فرصة التّعرف إلى تعبيرات لغوية جديدة من خلال القراءة، وأعاد الطلاب سرد القصص مع اقتراح نهايات وسيناريوهات مختلفة، بينما تولّى آخرون تمثيل أدوار بعض شخصيات القصص.

وختاماً، ننتهز الفرصة لنشكر جميع الطلاب الذين شاركوا في مسابقة "جيمس الدولية تقرأ بالعربية"، وسوف يتمّ الإعلان عن أسماء الفائزين في الإصدار القادم من نشرة "حياتنا".

نأمل أن نكون قد وُفّقنا - من خلال هذه الأنشطة - بغرس بذرة حبّ العربية في نفوس أبنائنا الطلبة، ونعاهدكم على تعهّد هذا الغرس الطيّب بالرعاية إلى أن يُؤتي أُكْلَه.

Lee Hole
Head of Secondary



Twitter @LHole81

We enjoyed a wonderful milestone this week in the Secondary School as we sent our first senior class off on study leave for the week prior to their IBDP World Exams beginning next week. In my farewell message them, I thanked them for the role modelling and the inspiration that they have been to our younger students in so many ways. It is never easy to be trailblazers as the path has not been cut for you and whilst they have faced challenges over the past two years, they have done so with pride, maturity and the occasional tear. We have shared their GIS journey with them (for some, this began 5 years ago) and our younger students have looked to them for guidance, advice and the school is a better place on the back of having had these students with us; for that, I will always be grateful.

It has been a delight to check my Twitter feed this week and keep up on all fronts with the activities and celebrations that we can't always experience in person. Friends coming together to celebrate character day in school; swimming, athletics, basketball and rounders success as well as the outcomes of units of work in the different areas of the school are all caught by our teachers and students to be shared with the world. Social media can cause so many problems in a young person's life but it has such wonderful potential when used positively. I encourage everyone to check out the various Twitter handles of school staff and student leaders from GIS; You can also connect by searching for #WeRGIS in twitter or instagram.



Spirit Day (Grades 6 - 8)

Our incredible Student House Captains have been working over the past several months on the development of the MYP Spirit Day and are excited to share its arrival with the community! The Captains have come together to organize different tournaments during the course of the school day on Tuesday, 30 April, which involve students in their various areas of interest. Activities include theater games, knowledge bowl, design, dancing, singing, drawing, and sports offered at the school such as football, basketball, swimming, etc. Students should come dressed in their house color t-shirts and they don't need to bring any school material.

GIS is very proud of its House System, which contributes to instilling in our students a sense of belonging, pride and school engagement. Therefore, a big reason to host such an event is to celebrate our community and have an opportunity to show spirit and sportsmanship. We thank you for your support and wish the best of luck to our Houses on our exciting Spirit Day!



Secondary upcoming events

MYP Spirit Day
Grades 6 - 8
April 30

Week Without Walls Launch
April 30
DP Lounge
6:30 - 7:30 pm

ConnectED Wise Word - Sibling Relationships
May 1
P2 TF 14
8:20 - 9:20 am

Field Trip - Grade 10 & DP Students
May 2
Business Bay
8:15 - 1:30 pm

Kindness Campaign Assembly
May 2
MPH
2:40 - 3:20 pm

DP Internal Assessments - IB DP World Exams
May 3 - 24

Future Medical Stars High School Business Plan Challenge



Hania Ibrahim, Sude Yapici and Muskan Abdulhussein entered the Future Medical Stars High School Business Plan Challenge. They submitted a business plan focused on the healthcare sector, that resolves a social problem and/or makes a positive impact on society and generates revenue and profit.

The Business Plan was selected as a finalist and the girls presented their pitch in front of team of experts in GEMS Modern Academy.



ParOne Artificial Intelligence Robotics Challenge



As you may know GIS are participating in the inaugural #ParOne Artificial Intelligence Robotics Challenge. This is the first challenge of its kind in the world. Students have built a robot and programmed it to use artificial intelligence to detect a golf ball, move towards it and putt it! The robot then actually learns from its mistakes and tries to improve with each shot. It's really amazing technology that the students are privileged to have been able to work with.

Thursday 25th April was Day 1 of the competition. The students got a chance to practice using the robot and present to a panel of judges on how they went about building and programming the robot. Included as part of the project was the team having to explain how they incorporated sustainability, teamwork, tolerance and marketing into the project. Our group of 6 students, Edward Gerstrup, Vinay Krishana Goenka, Juliette Vergeer, Jasmine Chami, Austin Kundukulam and Arnav Sanghi did really well and have set themselves up well for the final day of the competition - Friday 26th April.

You can help!!! Up until the end of tomorrow you should be able to [visit https://p1.kalebr.com/teamgis](https://p1.kalebr.com/teamgis) to vote and like the team page! You can also attend the event on Friday at The Els Club in Sports City between 9am and 3pm, there will be complementary family activities and healthy drinks, food and snacks will be available to buy. It is a gala for all and every person is worth 500 points for our team! We would really appreciate your support!

Kindness Campaign

We are excited to invite our students to participate in this year's Kindness Campaign. Our Student Executive Leadership Team has organized multiple activities and events throughout the month of May, in alignment with the Ramadan period as well as the IB month of the Caring learner profile.

One of the activities we are offering over 4 days during their lunch, is a service learning opportunity developed by the Mawada Project, an organization aimed at creating service learning opportunities and experiences for youth in the UAE.

Their professionals take young people through a journey of self discovery and help them realize the power they have within, to bring change and make a difference in the world. These young learners will be empowered through their program and build the life skills, character and values that they need to become empathic leaders of tomorrow.

In a nutshell, students will learn how to make handmade penguins which will be given as Eid gifts to refugee children, who don't have very much else to play with. In the process, the students will also engage in a reflection and discussion on the global refugee crisis, and the struggles and challenges of being a refugee

child. Through the toys they make, the children will bring joy to the heart of a child and give the gift of play!

The participation in this activity is optional and comes with a 150 AED fee per student. This amount covers the cost of the materials and shipping of the toys. It will be taking place from Monday to Thursday, May 13th to the 16th, during the lunch period. In the next coming week your child will bring home a permission slip should your family decide to partake in this incredible opportunity.

Wishing you all a lovely weekend ahead!



Angelika Kuster Assistant Head of Secondary



Being safe in hot weather

Living in Dubai has many benefits, among them the beautiful autumn, winter and spring time, when we can spend a lot of time outside. However, over the past couple of weeks, it feels like

someone has suddenly turned up the thermostat, with temperatures rising very fast. While not unique, temperatures in Dubai reach heights that are not often witnessed in other climates. With the increasing temperatures we need to be careful that our children and us are safe in the heat and the sunshine. We have number of procedures in place to safeguard our children, including the change of break and play times in the primary, reminding students to

- Stay hydrated throughout the day by drinking water steadily; don't wait until you're thirsty.
- Both children and adults should take frequent breaks in the shade or indoors in an air-conditioned space.
- When possible, one should wear loose fitting, lightly colored and lightweight clothes.
- To cool down, cool showers and baths can be very effective.
- At school, we check the heat index to ensure children are not playing outside when it is not safe. This kind of information is available on the local news and online.
- Exercise is best taken early in the morning.
- Adults should avoid caffeine in large quantities as it causes us to lose fluids more rapidly.



Other news: the traffic to and from school is still being impacted by the road works and the development of Dubai Hills. We appreciate your patience and your understanding in this matter as we know that this has an impact of all the members in our community. Thank you.

Extra Curricular Activities

MyHealth

Sixteen of our most talented students in PE from Grade 5 to 9 were invited to participate in a Sports Development Workshop organized by GEMS Wellington Academy - Silicon Oasis. The different stations encompassed the development of Speed and Power, Champion Mindset, Mobility and Recovery, Fundamental Movements and Fitness Components. Our students did an amazing job at representing our school. Looking forward to the next one.



Athletes in Schools

After a successful term 2 of track & field Athletics at GEMS International School. Athletes In Schools have invited 4 new Team GB athletes over to Dubai to help deliver the coaching at GIS.

In term 3 the athletics club will be concentrating on Javelin, Long jump and hurdles.



And what's more, Athletes In Schools have partnered with ESM to give all students the opportunity to be coached by British Olympic and team GB athletes. They are now running an 8 week FREE athletics club every Monday & Wednesday at GWA to supplement the athletics coaching they deliver on a Tuesday & Thursday morning at GIS (7am). Please Contact Umar for more information: Umar.hameed@athletesinschools.co.uk

Tennis

The U18s competed in the Dubai Tennis junior championships this week. After a narrow defeat in the first meeting, the group played their second group stage and were victorious, winning 4-0. Unfortunately this was in vain as we did not qualify for the 1/4s final stage. A productive afternoon of more matches and coaching followed, before a pulsating final took place. A productive day and a great effort by all involved!

Swimming

The PYP swim squad competed in their final DAPSA league last week, hosted here at GIS. They were going into it undefeated and once again managed to come away with a clear win. Every swimmer who competed gave 100% and definitely made GIS proud. To add to the success of winning their division, the GIS jaguars also qualified for the Hamdan finals taking part next week. This is a huge achievement as only the top 30 schools qualify to go. This is the first time the PYP swim squad has qualified for it. We wish all those competing next week the best of luck!

HOME OF CHESS
EXPAND YOUR HORIZONS
 PLAY CHESS!
 Home of Chess in association with GEMS International School is proud to announce CHESS as ASA for term 3.
 Cost: 585 AED incl. VAT
 Timings: Tuesday 2 - 3 pm
 During Ramadan ASA Timings: 1:45 - 2:45 pm
 Sessions: 1 per week
 Duration: Apr 16 - Jun 18, 2019
 Age Group: Grade 2 - Grade 12
 Max seats: 30
 Registration link: <https://bit.ly/20XK966>
 Co-Ed - 975-52250449
 DELTA ACCREDITED



Pictures are of past trips taken by our students

Launching **WEEK WITHOUT WALLS** 2019

Parent Information Evening
Tuesday, 30 April at 6:30pm, DP Lounge



مدرسة جيمس الدولية - شارع الخيل
GEMS International School
AL KHAIL



GISPA News



Social Morning May 2nd, 8:30 m
Come and join us!

- Teachers appreciation week
- Speaker: Yvonne Hayde (artist & photographer)
"How to manifest your dreams using art."



Scan & Join the GISPA Facebook page

"A Table Talk with Tea"

GISPA hour

**During Ramadan
we will meet on
Thursday at
12:15 to 1:15pm**

**Share a Tea
Support GIS Community
Spend a relaxed moment
with yourself**

Come for "T.T.T. time"