



NEWSLETTER

10 SEPTEMBER 2020



GEMS

أكاديمية جيمس العالمية
World Academy
DUBAI

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO/PRINCIPAL, DR RANA

Dear Parents, Carers and the GEMS World Academy Community,

As we end our second week and first cycle of the two-week timetable, it's been wonderful to have the opportunity to speak to many of the students and parents and carers. We have had six inspections (KHDA, Dubai Municipality and DHA). All have said we are exemplary and demonstrate best practice with zero areas to improve so far and I want to congratulate staff, students and parents/carers as each have said that our practice has been exemplary. We are one of the very few schools in the country to have brought back all students except Grades 8 and 9, and I am determined that we continue with this so that we give as many of our students as possible access to the Academy building. All of the staff here have been very impressed by the maturity of the students as they've had to adapt to the new Covid-19 protocols that we have had to introduce to ensure the safety and wellbeing of everyone. Clearly, wearing facemasks is not ideal in a teaching and learning environment, but nevertheless everyone is adhering to these new regulations with good humour and good will. I've enjoyed visiting lessons and seeing our young people working hard and doing really well despite the current situation. Our staff are working tremendously hard to give all our children first class lessons, and I am very pleased with what I have seen and the feedback I have received from students. We know that these current circumstances are not going to be permanent, but nevertheless it's clear that the whole GWA community is committed to ensuring that we maintain the highest of standards in everything we do whilst demonstrating the IB Learner Profile.

I am a strong believer in consistency and transparency. One thing that I am currently doing is ensuring that the uniform and behaviour policies that I have inherited are adhered to. It is clear that the existing protocols around these things have not been fully implemented for some time. Unfortunately, inconsistent implementation has led to some confusion and unfairness, and of course this is not good practice. I am therefore asking everyone to adhere to the policies going forward so that a unified culture is created rather than one that is fragmented and unclear. I will of course be interested in listening to everyone regarding any changes that they may like to see in the future, but I am not intending to make any significant changes until we have current policies being implemented correctly. As an organisation, we need to embed everything before seeing where things can be made even better. I therefore ask for everyone in the school community to be patient as we move forward with this. Everyone is working very hard to bring this about and I look forward to everyone's support. Just to confirm, mobile phones and

headphones are not permitted anywhere in the Academy building unless under the supervision of a member of staff for academic purposes, or to call parents/carers at the end of the day in reception. Boys in Grade 6 to 10 must wear ties, and shirts must be tucked in. Primary students may wear coloured footwear until December at which point we would ask that they wear black footwear. Secondary students must wear plain black footwear with leather upper material. Girls do not have to tuck in shirts as the cut is better suited to this, they may wear discrete ear studs, bracelets and a chain only, and no makeup. Grade 11 and 12 must wear smart attire which includes a jacket and tie for boys. Smart shoes are required for all Grade 11 and 12.

The pandemic is having an impact on everything we are doing, as I indicated above. But alongside the face masks and all the other things we are doing to keep everyone safe, certain projects that we had hoped to complete by the end of the summer break have unfortunately had to be put on hold temporarily. The Academy building has been under a great revision as the idea is to transform it into a beautiful live art gallery for students, parents/carers and using local artists and student work. The white walls you see now are just a canvas that need to be filled with creativity, vibrancy and colour that of course our very own children will bring to their Academy building, but this has been set aside at the moment as external providers and visitors are not permitted into the building for safety reasons.

It's been two incredibly challenging weeks full of unexpected events. We are sailing in the face of a *perfect storm* and we are in this together, as a GEMS World Academy Family. Not everything has worked as perfectly as we planned, but rest assured that the Senior Leadership Team, our amazing teachers and support staff that are bearing all the challenges, and our wonderful children are the key to our success. I'm so very impressed by the energy, the love, the care and the resilience that I have seen around the Academy building. We are all wanting the same thing for our children, the very best education provision so that they all have the best possible choices for their futures. Together, we can face every challenge and difficulty with great respect, trust and patience for all, we will do this together.



MESSAGE FROM MS MURPHY PRIMARY PRINCIPAL



We have now completed our first two weeks of the 2020-2021 Academy year. I want to thank you all for your wonderful emails, kind words and most importantly entrusting us with the education of your young children. I have appreciated the feedback, pa-

tience and understanding, as we navigate this new Academy year together.

This year has begun as a mystery to so many of us, no one was quite sure what it would look like when we came back from Distance Learning and how the children would adapt. Well, after two weeks of walking the halls, seeing the excitement and pure joy on so many of the students faces, and hearing the exciting stories as they leave the Academy every day, I couldn't be prouder to be the GWA Primary Principal. Our children have shown resilience; they have lived the Learner Profile that we talk about everyday. They are risk-takers, open-minded, thinkers and inquirers. They have come up with new ways to learn and communicate with their peers and teachers.

As Mr. Dean, Mr. Peter and I have walked the halls and visited classrooms these two weeks, we have seen some amazing teaching and learning occurring each day. In Grade 5, students have created a new GWA GENIUS chant and are teaching others and Grade 4 are tuning into 'Who We Are' by creating and sharing special ME boxes. Grade 3 celebrated Literacy Day by writing stories titled 'Embarked'. Grade 2 are learning how to deal with tricky conflicts and creating emoji's to represent the Zones of Regulation. Grade 1 have created their own cool monsters and written about each of them. In KG2, students have been working on counting on and one-to-one correspondence. Our youngest students in Early Childhood have been getting to know one another, drawing their families and interacting with new teachers. What an exciting way to start the year!

I thank those parents who attended my webinars last week and hope to see many of you at our online Back to School Night on September 16 2020.

ENTRY TIMES

From Sunday of next week, all students (primary and secondary) will be able to enter the Academy through their house doors from 7.45am - 8.05am. Cars will be able to drop off inside the front gates from 7.40am.

EXIT TIMES

2:45pm	Grades Pre-K – Grade 3 (all houses)
2:50pm	Secondary Battuta and Zuhr
3:00pm	Secondary Razi and Sina and all of Grade 4 - Grade 5

SANDOOQ AL WATAN MAWHIBATNA PROGRAMME FOR GIFTED EMIRATI STUDENTS

This summer, Sofia enrolled in two Mawhibatna courses offered in partnership with the Johns Hopkins University Center for Talented Youth. She effectively harnessed the opportunities given by the online format of the programme to complete two courses simultaneously. She took the courses **"The Edible World"** about food science and nutrition, and the course **"Astrophysics"** which introduced complex topics in the field. The courses were great opportunities for Sofia to continue learning, even though she was in quarantine.



The programme aims to identify the UAE's most outstanding, gifted local youth and nurture their talents through a variety of specialised world-class programmes that develop their capacities and enable them to reach their full potential.

<https://www.instagram.com/p/CEI204VHaJx/>

MESSAGE FROM MS LOWNDES SECONDARY PRINCIPAL



From the Secondary Principal
It is my pleasure to write my first newsletter greeting as the new Secondary Principal. I greatly appreciate the warm welcome I have had from members of the GWA community and I look forward

to getting to know you all over the coming months.

Firstly, a huge well done to parents, students and teachers for completing the first two weeks of a very challenging return to school. I know everyone has returned to an Academy that looks different, feels different and, with our new system Phoenix, operates differently. I would like to thank everyone for their feedback, patience and understanding as we all adapt to our changed circumstances as a result of COVID-19, as well as overcoming the implementation issues we have had with Phoenix. Huge strides have been made over the last two weeks and I am very proud of the determination and resilience shown by our students and staff at this very challenging time.

The coming months will present continued challenges for us, but please be assured that everyone at GWA will continue to work tirelessly to ensure that our students both learn and thrive.

I thank those parents who attended my webinars last week and hope to see many of you at our Back to School Night on September 22 2020.

THE CHEMISTRY OF THE BEIRUT EXPLOSION ON 04 AUGUST 2020

On 04 August 2020, an explosion occurred in Beirut. Lebanese officials blamed the blast, which killed over 220 people, 6,000+ wounded, and left over 300,000 homeless, on the common fertilizer compound ammonium nitrate (NH_4NO_3). 2,750 metric tons of NH_4NO_3 had been stored at the port since September 2013 after a ship carrying the material was forced to make an unplanned stop in Beirut where it was then abandoned by its owners and crew. Before the explosion, a fire had started in the area, creating a plume of white smoke and some small explosions. When the NH_4NO_3 stores exploded, a white condensation cloud spread out in a sphere from the site, followed by a huge plume of red-orange smoke rising from the hanger. Under normal conditions the NH_4NO_3 is inert and will slowly decompose over time but can explode if it is set off by a fire, especially if poorly stored. When energy is applied to NH_4NO_3 , like from a fire, the molecule is no longer stable. Because NH_4NO_3 contains nitrogen in two different oxidation states, an exothermic reaction occurs between the two nitrogen species: the nitrate acts as an oxidizer, while the ammonium acts as a reducing agent. If the reaction is completely clean, the only products are nitrogen, water, and a little oxygen, but side products like NO_2 are common. All the products are gaseous.

The condensation cloud caused by the blast led some

people on social media to speculate that the explosion was caused by a nuclear device, but these types of clouds can also occur with a large enough conventional explosion in humid air. Immediately behind the shock wave is an area of lower pressure that causes water to condense into microscopic droplets. The differences in pressures on either side of the shockwave can also create optical effects as light bends as it passes through the different air masses. NH_4NO_3 detonations have caused previous industrial accidents, which is why most nations have strict regulations on the proper storage of the chemical. For example, the US Occupational Safety and Health Administration has multiple rules including that warehouses for bulk storage should have adequate ventilation and fire protection. It is also not common for such a large amount of NH_4NO_3 to be stored so close to urban areas.



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By Elissa Haddad & Nicole Spielberg Grade 12 Student

STARTING YOUNG. DEVELOPING A CULTURE OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP

It is never too early to start nurturing an entrepreneurial spirit, and there are various approaches used to foster its development.



The significance and importance of entrepreneurship development is already widely recognised, yet even more so during these unprecedented times. Entrepreneurship is emerging as one of the fastest growing arenas across the globe, thanks to its positive impact on economic growth and employment opportunities.

To view full article please click [link to an article](#).

By Helen Al Uzaizi

Director of Enterprise, Innovation and Social Impact

DTK

GENETICS AND CULTURE IN RACE IDENTITY

**FRIDAY 11 SEPTEMBER
18:40-19:40 (UAE)**

AVA SCOTT
PHD CANDIDATE
THINKING BLACK

Everyone welcome to join via Zoom. Contact Ms Rania Hussein to sign up (r.hussein_gwa@gemsedu.com)

CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR THIS TERM

DATE	EVENT
Monday 14 September	Parent Training - Oasis Classroom
Wednesday 16 September	Primary - Back to school night
Wednesday 16 September	Parent Training - Oasis Classroom
Thursday 17 September	Counselling Parent Event (webinar)
Monday 21 September	International Day of Peace
Tuesday 22 September	Secondary - Back to School Night
Tuesday 22 September	Counselling Parent Event (webinar)
Thursday 01 October	One year until EXPO 2020
Monday 05 October	World Teachers Day
Tuesday 06 October	Science Field trip G11 & G12 (TBD)
Thursday 15 October	World Maths Day
Sunday 18 October - Thursday 22 October	Professional Development Week - No students on campus
Saturday 24 October	UN Day
Thursday 05 November	Q1 reports published
Monday 23 November	Arabic Day (TBD)
Sunday 13 December - Thursday 31 December	Winter Break

COUNSELLING CORNER

Dear GWA Parents and Carers,

On behalf of the Whole School Counselling Department, I would like to welcome you to a new academic year at GEMS World Academy. We would especially like to welcome all new families to our Academy community. The counsellors have enjoyed meeting the students and getting to know them.

As we continue to navigate our way through COVID -19 and all the practical and emotional challenges it presents, we can look at this experience as an opportunity to cultivate and strengthen our resilience. Using obstacles as an opportunity for growth is at the heart of developing our resilience 'muscles'. Our students have continued to impress us with their adaptability, determination and resilience; they continue to progress despite the obvious challenges. We do hope that you are finding opportunities for reflection and achieving a greater sense of comfort and safety.

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce you to the members of the Counselling Department:

Edele Nolan Pre-K-Grade 2

Salima Musa Grade 3 and 5

Kimberly Sharpe Grade 6 and 8

Katrina Spartalis Grade 9 and 10

Magda Kozłowska and Angela Blackmer Grade 11 and 12



UPCOMING VIRTUAL EVENTS

The Whole School Counselling Team will continue to support children and families through this transition back to the Academy. We look forward to assisting you and your family with any social-emotional matters.



We have 2 upcoming virtual counsellor led coffee morning presentations for our parent community on the following topics.

1. PYP – Return to School: Supporting Student Emotional Wellbeing : Tuesday 22 September
2. MYP- How Families Can Successfully Navigate the New Normal - A Family Systems Perspective: Tuesday 27 October

In addition to this, Lighthouse Arabia Centre for Wellbeing have invited our parent community to the following webinars: Parents can access these webinars by clicking on the website link in the event flyers below.

17-Sep-20 10:00 AM *Parenting High Energy Kids During COVID-19* [Event Flyer](#)

22-Sep-20 10:00 AM *Cultivating Healthy Habits* [Event Flyer](#)

CAN YOU BE A MEMBER OF GWAPA?

GEMS World Academy Parent Association (GWAPA) play a vital role in the direction of the provision, and have been invaluable in the transition of the new CEO/Principal over the past nine months. We thank them all whole heartedly.

It is the time now for re-election of the GWAPA Team as per the Constitution. This must be completed by the end of September 2020 so we are inviting parents and carers to engage in this process.

THE ROLE OF GEMS WORLD ACADEMY PARENT ASSOCIATION (GWAPA)

GWAPA works collectively to support the Academy to ensure that all of our students achieve the very best outcomes. The core role of GWAPA is to develop and implement a range of Parent Association initiatives, and to liaise with GWA leaderships teams, staff, parents and student bodies to ensure clear communication between all stakeholders. Its focus should be on supporting achievement of the highest standards, establishing and maintaining high expectations, and promoting outstanding communication.

THE ROLE OF A MEMBER OF GWAPA

As a member of GWAPA, you are not representing individual parents or their concerns, you are helping to ensure that our Academy meets the needs of all students, and enables all students to achieve to the best of their ability. Each [role](#) within GWAPA has its own responsibilities so please do read these carefully to match where your skills and interests lie. Members of GWAPA are elected for a one year term of office.

As a GWAPA member, you will receive a structured induction, be provided with information and guidance on the role and have access to appropriate training. All GWAPA members must agree to and adhere to the Academy's Code of Conduct.

WHAT SKILLS DO I NEED?

You do not need any specific skills or experience to be a GWAPA member. Members do not need to be experts in the field of education, but what they do need is an interest in GWA and in the welfare of the students, as well as the time and willingness to be involved. You must also be confident in communication and reading any documents that will be sent to you as part of the role.

THE ELECTION PROCESS

All parents, carers and guardians of children at the Academy are eligible to stand as candidates, and vote in the election. If you would like to stand, please complete the [Nomination Form](#) by **7:00pm on Thursday 24 September 2020**. If you would like any support completing this form or would like to use a computer at GWA to complete it, please contact Cristina Wyss, Parent Relations Executive (c.wyss_gwa@gemsedu.com). If there are more candidates than vacancies a ballot will be held. Each parent / guardian will have one vote for every GWAPA member vacancy.

Please ensure that when you complete the form, you add your personal statement in support of your nomination as this helps parents / guardians to vote in the event of a ballot.

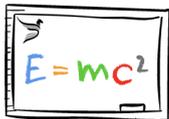


The following roles and responsibilities are attributed to becoming a member of the GWAPA. This is a year long commitment that requires time, energy and a healthy sense of humour. They are both challenging and rewarding, and enable those in role to develop a rich understanding of GWA. It is a wonderful opportunity to participate in, and truly engage with the entire Academy Community. These roles require a clear sense of service and a respect for the role of 'Volunteer'.

The following are the roles that make up the composition of the GWAPA:

1. President
2. Vice President
3. Treasurer
4. Shop Manager - Dragon's Den

5. Secretary—IT & Communications
6. Lower Elementary Representative (Pre-K -Grade 1)
7. Upper Elementary Representative (Grades 2 to 5)
8. MYP Parent Representative (Grades 6 to 10)
9. DP Parent Representative (Grades 11 and 12)
10. Event Coordinator
11. Food Service Representative
12. Shop Assistant—Dragon's Den
13. Volunteers and New Parents Representative
14. Arabic Representative
15. CAS and SA Representative
16. Music, Art and Drama Representative
17. Lost and Found Representative
18. Eco-School Coordinator



PHOENIX Classroom

PARENT INTRODUCTION TO PHOENIX CLASSROOM

GEMS World Academy will be holding sessions for parents over the coming weeks to introduce Phoenix Classroom for parents.

The session details for the upcoming week are:

Monday 14 September 10am—11am Dubai

Topic: GWA Parent Introduction Session - Phoenix Classroom

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://gemseducation.zoom.us/j/93192250007>

Meeting ID: 931 9225 0007

Monday 14 September 4pm – 5pm Dubai

Topic: GWA Parent Introduction Session - Phoenix Classroom

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://gemseducation.zoom.us/j/94779113600>

Meeting ID: 947 7911 3600

Wednesday 16 September 10am – 11am Dubai

Topic: GWA Parent Introduction Session - Phoenix Classroom

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://gemseducation.zoom.us/j/99458846866>

Meeting ID: 994 5884 6866

Wednesday 16 September 4pm – 5pm Dubai

Topic: GWA Parent Introduction Session - Phoenix Classroom

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://gemseducation.zoom.us/j/98188518839>

Meeting ID: 981 8851 8839

For further information or guidance and support please contact :

ITHelpdesk_gwa@gemsedu.com

DR PATIL'S

TIP OF THE WEEK

Cover your cough and sneezes,
stop the spread of germs.



ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE FOR PARENTS

Ms Clark will be offering Beginner Parent EAL classes on Sundays from 11:30am - 2:30pm

For more information please visit [EAL Parent Class](#)

GWA HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

Representative	Member of Staff
Science Technician	Ms Asimah Yaseen
Art Technician	Mr M Tachen Parampath
PE Representative	Ms Fiona Ryan
Design Technician	Mr Kieran Walsh
Primary Representative	Mr Alan Burke
Secondary Representative	Ms. Louise O'Keeffe
School Doctor	Dr Chhavi Patil
Primary Principal (Deputy Lead)	Ms Kristen Murphy
Secondary Principal (Lead)	Ms Luise Lowndes
HR Representative	Ms Aukse Lightbody
SEN	Ms Zoe Winslade
EAL	Ms Angela Clark