

23rd September 2021

Secondary Week Ending 23rd September 2021

Dear Community,

This week has been fun-filled, with lots going on! Students have had many opportunities to get involved in an array of activities and have been encouraged to be more active in their learning. This included the Mustangs sports squad trials, where we saw a record-breaking number of students try-out for a range of sports. Students also had the opportunity to join in the swim gala and get involved in competing, which has been great to see. We have missed seeing our students' enthusiasm over sport! We also began our off-site enrichment activity at the Golf course, and have been looking forward to all Masterclasses starting this week. Furthermore, last Thursday, students were introduced to the leadership opportunities we have on offer, including: Student Council, Department, Eco, Wellbeing, and Sport Leaders. Our student leadership team will be introduced and celebrated at an inauguration event between 25th and 27th October.

You will have seen that we kick-started our themed mornings, with entertainment provided from our very own radio station, and our Arabic, English, Music, Science, and Technology departments throughout the week from 7:20am. Thank you to the wonderful teachers who provided Musical Monday, Techy Tuesday and Whacky Wednesday!



Newsletters (the Weekly Sway)

Please could I encourage you to read our newsletters (the *Weekly Sway*), which are sent to you via GEMS Connect, and soon to be posted on our school website. These contain important information, upcoming events, student success, and other messages from the Heads of Year. We are also excited to be welcoming two new features to these newsletters: Student work on EXPO projects, and student success in Arabic. Please look out for these in future publications. You will have noticed that the curriculum booklets were attached to last week's newsletter. These are really important documents for you to learn about our curriculum and come to know what your son/daughter will study in their subjects throughout each term. Please reach-out to us if you require and more information about your child's subjects. Thank you to those of you who completed the home-learning survey in the newsletter last week; we will use this feedback along with that from the student-survey to inform our home-learning policy going forward.

Uniform update

I'd like to thank you for your ongoing patience. Many students are looking smart in their uniform now, but a gentle reminder that to maintain high standards, students who fail to adhere to the uniform code from next month will only be permitted back to school once desired uniform standards are reached. The school has a strong identity, which we encourage our students to be proud of.

Scholarships

I am excited to announce the increased range of scholarships available to our students! Please head over to our school website to take a look at the scholarships and the application process: <https://www.gemsmetropoleschool-dubai.com/Admissions/Scholarships> We have these scholarships in place to celebrate student achievement and success – they are awarded for the following categories: Quran recitation, Arabic writing, sports, student voice, student leadership, and academics. Good luck to all students applying for a scholarship this year!

Student voice

Our 'Meet the Leader' sessions for students began last week, with Year 7s meeting with Ms. Lohe to discuss some very important topics, such as breaktimes and their wellbeing. This week a selection of Year 8s met with Ms. East – take a look at our social media pages to discover what they discussed.

Student access to remote learning

We now have most students in school, with very few accessing their learning remotely. To ensure there is consistency across the school, teachers have been informed of the following:

- **If a child has been showing symptoms of covid**, they can access virtual lessons whilst they wait for their test result. If the child has covid, they can access their lessons virtually if they feel well enough to do so.
- **If a child has been a close contact of a positive case**, they need to quarantine for 7 days from the date of close-contact. They can access virtual lessons whilst quarantining.
- **If a child is unwell, i.e. vomiting**, then they are sick and so no remote learning will be available. Teachers will upload their lesson materials to GEMS Classroom so the student can catch-up when they are feeling better.
- **If a child has a physical medical issues, i.e. a broken leg**, then a doctor's note (if absence from school is required) should be sent to the LEAD teacher. No remote provision is provided, unless the teacher is online anyway for children who are quarantining. Teachers will upload their lesson materials to GEMS Classroom.
- **If a child is out of the country for a few days**, then the LEAD teacher will require an e-mail from parent as to length of travel and reason. Absence due to travel is not allowed after 3rd October unless you have approval from the KHDA. There will be no remote provision provided unless otherwise agreed by the Headteacher.

If your child has returned to school they cannot suddenly choose to go online. Online learning will only be available until the end of September, after which parents will have to provide an attested DHA medical certificate/KHDA approval. This process has been put in place to support the teachers and students, and to encourage students to be in school.

Upcoming key dates

Tuesday 28 th September	Happy Meet – cancelled – this will be rescheduled and new date communicated
Tuesday 28 th September	Year 11 Information Webinar (virtual) 4pm with Head of Year 11 (see Weekly Sway)
Wednesday 29 th September	Year 7 Information Webinar (virtual) 4pm with Head of Year 7 (see Weekly Sway)
Sunday 3 rd October	6 th Form Enrichment Webinar (virtual) 4pm with Heads of 6 th Form (see Weekly Sway)
Monday 4 th October	Dyslexia Awareness Day – students are invited to wear a red accessory
Monday 4 th October	Year 8 parent-teacher evening (information will be sent to you via the Head of Year 8)
Wednesday 6 th October	Assessment Webinar (virtual) 4pm with the Assistant Headteacher (see Weekly Sway)
Tuesday 12 th October	Year 7 parent-teacher evening (information will be sent to you via the Head of Year 7)

As always, I welcome your feedback - about this letter, or any aspect of your child's experience with us:
d.aschettino_mts@gemsedu.com

I wish you a wonderful weekend!

Kind regards,



Daniella Aschettino
Secondary Headteacher



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