

## From the Principal



### Welcome Back to His Highness

On behalf of the entire VISS community I offer our heartfelt greetings to His Highness Dr Sheikh Sultan bin Mohammed Al Qasimi, Supreme Council member and Ruler

of Sharjah, and express our profound delight on his recovery and safe return home from his recent trip abroad. We offer our prayers for his good health, continued great wisdom and safe keeping as our Ruler and steward in our journey together towards progress and prosperity.

### Having the right attitude

One of the much used sayings from coaches or managers, in any sport or enterprise, is to ask their players or workers to give 100%? so that the team or business can improve.

But what does this mean? How can we give 100%. For me, it starts with our attitude. How do we approach each day? Do we look forward to it, or dread it? What is our attitude to our studies, our job, our family, each other? When it is not 100% it affects others. There is nothing more frustrating than working with someone who does not try very hard.

If we want to improve at anything, we need to start with the right attitude. We need to be prepared to make an effort, work hard, be positive, and finally to persevere when things become difficult.

How do I know it is about attitude? By using mathematics! If we substitute each letter of the English alphabet for a

number using the following sequence, A=1, B=2, C=3, D=4 etc. then add the individual letters of words we find that:

$$H+A+R+D+W+O+R+K = 8+1+18+4+23+15+18+11 = 98\%$$

$$K+N+O+W+L+E+D+G+E = 11+14+15+23+12+5+4+7+5 = 96\%$$

$$L+O+V+E = 12+15+22+5 = 54\%$$

$$L+U+C+K = 12+21+3+11 = 47\%$$

$$M+O+N+E+Y = 13+15+14+5+25 = 72\%$$

$$L+E+A+D+E+R+S+H+H+P = 12+5+1+4+5+18+19+9+16 = 97\%$$

$$\text{But...ATTITUDE} = 1+20+20+9+20+21+4+5 = 100\%$$

The other way, of course, is through experience – we know when we spend time with others, how much more we enjoy being with people who have the right attitude. We know when we employ staff, that we will look for those who have the right attitude, even if they don't have the most skill or the best qualification.

Semester reports will be sent home on 7 February, and this is a good time to discuss with your children their attitude to their school work and their friends. When our attitude is right, things certainly become 100%.

### Being on time

One way we can all show the right attitude is by being on time to school. Too many children are currently arriving late. Not only does this leave children disorganized for the day, it also encourages an attitude that school does not matter.

I strongly encourage parents to ensure their children arrive at school on time each day.

### Principal's PA

I have advertised for a new Personal Assistant. Anyone interested in applying should visit the school website, [www.viss.ae](http://www.viss.ae) and click on Job Opportunities.

### Open Morning

The school will be holding an Open Morning on Monday 6 February from 9.00 am – 12 noon. This is especially for parents who are considering sending their children to the school. As word of mouth is the best form of advertising, I encourage parents to invite their friends to visit the school on our Open Morning.

There will be tours of the school and presentations from the Heads of School and me.

### University Hospital Sharjah

Attached to the newsletter email are some brochure concerning the new University Hospital. Having visited the facility, it is absolutely state-of-the art.

### VISS is on Facebook

VISS now has page of Facebook. It will be updated regularly to keep parent informed about event at school.



Dr Rod welcoming the principal and staff from Al Khan School to VISS

**Dr Roderick Crouch**  
Principal



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## From the Secondary School



### **Congratulations to our class of 2011 on their fantastic VCE results.**

Congratulations to our graduating class of 2011 on their wonderful end of year Results in the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE). The VCE is a world class Secondary School qualification and for all of our students to perform so well is testament both to the quality of the courses we provide, but also to the excellence and dedication of the students and teachers at VISS.

There were some exceptional results across a number of subject areas with many students achieving A and A+ grades in their examinations.

Of particular note was the fact that of the four students sitting the English examination, Rhea Bhagat and Cathleen Howell both achieved an A+ and Amro Salih achieved an A+ for his English as a Second Language paper.

There were also some very pleasing results from our Grade 12 students who sat Grade 13 examinations in certain subjects with many achieving A grades and Maryam Soomro who achieved an A+ for her Japanese examination. Over two-thirds of all of our final subject results came out well above the Victorian average, reflecting the hard work and quality of our students. Furthermore, all of our graduating students have achieved university offers to high ranking Australian universities and I look forward to confirming all of these placements in our next newsletter.

On another note, our Outdoor Education program continues to go from strength to strength. Our ever eager Grade 6 students went out on a day camp to Eco-adventures last Thursday. Although they did not stay overnight, this camp was certainly a great opportunity for this group to experience what Outdoor Education is like and to undoubtedly experience the fantastic challenges and opportunities for personal growth that these experiences provide. Our Grade 8 and 9 students will be going on their two night, three day camp in the coming weeks and we look forward to reporting back from this wonderful event. As we have said in the past Outdoor Education is a central element of a child's learning and forms an important part of our whole educational model.

In the sporting arena, our senior basketball team who has been competing in the 3SM School's competition at Wasl Club had mixed fortunes over the weekend.

On Friday they had an emphatic win over Bradenton School by 50 points, but unfortunately they fell short of making the finals, losing by 4 points to Dubai College in the Saturday game. Nevertheless, congratulations to the whole squad for their efforts during this tournament, and we hope to build on this success in our upcoming fixtures this term.

As the end of the first semester quickly approaches, teachers are now busy preparing reports that will be sent home to parents in the first week of February. These will be followed by parent teacher meetings during the week of the 12th of February.

These meetings are a chance for parents, students and teachers to reflect on the report comments and levels, to discuss

progress so far this year and to talk through recommendations for improvement. As I have often said, good learning occurs when a partnership between parents, teachers and students occurs, and these meetings are a great opportunity to continue the positive discussions about each of our student's learning.

As usual, there is always a lot going on in and outside of the classroom at VISS and the coming term promises to be as busy and full as ever.

**Dean Pyrah**  
*Head of School - Secondary*

## School Photographs

The annual school photos will be held next week beginning Sunday 22 January. Please ensure your child wears full school uniform on these days. Both individual and class photos will be taken. The schedule is as follows;

- **Sunday 22 and Monday 23 January all Junior School.**
- **Tuesday 24 and Wednesday 25 January all Early Learning Centre.**
- **Thursday 26 and Sunday 29 January all Middle and Senior School/ Sporting teams, House and School captains and SRC.**
- **Special family photos will be held at School on Saturday the 28 January at the Early Learning Centre (gate 4) from 11am to 1 pm.**

**James Bradley**  
*Deputy Head of Junior School*



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### Sharjah Social Empowerment Foundation at VISS

Grade 7 Islamic students worked very hard to raise funds as part of their charity project to sponsor an orphan. After contacting Sharjah Social Empowerment Foundation they began to think of creative ways in which funds could be raised for this cause.

Students came up with ideas such as washing teacher's cars, re-selling old books and toys, organizing soccer/ basketball games and a variety of treat-stalls in order to make money.



Students have shown a wonderful team spirit and were well organized. They have demonstrated that working together for a good cause can develop and support, in a practical way, many of the lessons learned in class. The representative of Sharjah Social Empowerment Foundation visited the school and Grade 7 students handed him the money to sponsor an orphan for a half year.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everybody who supported Grade 7 in their project.

**Mr Khalid**  
*Head of Islamic Studies*



### Grade 6 Eco-venture Trip

On Thursday 12 January Grade 6 students visited Eco-venture desert camp just past Al Dhaid. The day was a very valuable learning experience for students to give them an insight into the unique diversity and natural beauty of the United Arab Emirates.

The excursion was an important element of our inquiry topic "Our Earth, our future...What are we going to do about it?" It provided an opportunity to participate in authentic environmental science activities.

The Eco-venture philosophy is, "Learning experiences outside the classroom are often the most memorable, helping young people to make sense of the world around them, and integrate new experiences and understandings into all aspects of their formal and informal learning.

By realising education does not only happen within the classroom, young people start on the journey of life-long learning".





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The Grade 6 teachers were impressed with the students level of engagement at the field studies Centre.

Throughout breaks during the day students were cooperating well setting up mini cricket, volleyball and skipping games. We would like to thank the staff at Ecoventure for a well organized and educationally worthwhile excursion and for making VISS feel so welcome.



The Grade 6 students participated in seven different activity rotations throughout the day. These included:

- Classification of organisms.
- Data logging of rodent and lizard burrows.
- Observing the human influence on the desert biome in the UAE.
- Looking at the anatomy of animals and plants closely using microscopes.
- Discussing the adaptations of desert animals.
- Planting an indigenous tree.
- Identifying animal tracks in the sand.

**Ms Jaclyn**  
**Grade 6 Teacher**





## Junior School

### What's happening in the Junior School?

We were delighted to see lots of happy smiling faces when the students returned to school after the break. With this beautiful weather, they are enjoying their outdoor play times. As the weather is cooler in the morning, many students need jumpers/jackets. They are required to wear the navy blue VISS jacket / jumper with the VISS logo. This item of clothing can be purchased at the Uniform Shop, Gate 1. Please ensure you name your child's clothing clearly. We have a large number of 'almost new' clothing with no names, in our lost property. Please check outside the Junior School Office if your child has lost an item.



It is a busy term ahead. Grade 4 and 5 will be involved in swimming lessons during Physical Education classes after the VISS Athletic Sports on the 8th February. Please ensure all school clothing, towel and bathers are clearly named so the students can identify them in the change rooms.

In the week beginning January 15, Junior School students will be involved in a Dental Health Program, organized by our medical team.



Other dates to be aware of in January are:

**January 16 and January 23 - Grade 3 Excursions to Sharjah Wildlife Park and Sharjah Aquarium January 19 – Grade 5 will host Assembly in the Theatre.**

**January 22 and 23 - Junior school students will be involved in school photographs. Please ensure that your child is in full school uniform these days. This includes navy or school hair ties and head bands, white socks or tights for girls, navy socks for boys and black leather shoes.**

**January 26- junior School Clubs will commence.**



## Music in the Junior School

### Grade 4 and 5 JS Music Classes

I am excited to share how our Grade 4 and Grade 5 VISS Junior School Music program is developing this year.

Our classroom music program is orientated towards playing, creating and appreciating music. Children are learning to play musical pieces on our tuned classroom percussion instruments. They are also creating their own melodies.

We are exploring music from other cultures and nations, learning about their dances, culture and songs.

This term we sang, danced and played Polka songs from Austria and Germany. Children are learning the manners associated with music performance. This includes how we show respect and our appreciation to performers.



This year we are introducing a musical production to Grade 4 and 5 children. This exciting project is part of our Junior School Performing Art Faculty. We chose the Musical "Scheherazade", a play based on the story "1001 Arabian Nights". This is a stage Music and Drama production which will involve all of our Grade 4 and 5 students. This musical production is scheduled for 2 and 3 May 2012.



### VISS Music Academy

Many of our Junior School students are involved in VISS Music Academy. They are learning to play violin, guitar and piano, experiencing the joy that making music can bring to them. There are more than 60 students involved in this program across the school. We are looking forward to hearing them performing soon.

The VISS Choir made their outstanding debut this year at the UAE Day Whole School Assembly. There are many new choir members this year, they are having great time while learning to sing new songs and how to perform together.

The Music Department is rapidly growing place which offers our students many opportunities for regular performances.

**Mrs Amina Garcevic**  
Director of Music

### Regular Arabic with Ms Samaher



We read Arabic stories to learn new vocabulary and improve our comprehension.



We work on independent learning tasks in Arabic.



The puppet theatre helps us to practise speaking in Arabic and makes us laugh.



We support each other by working in cooperative learning groups.



As you can see, we are engaged with our learning and love Arabic classes.



Our teachers plan a variety of interesting activities in Arabic.



## Early Learning Centre

### KG1 News

Our focused learning topic for this term is Nursery Rhymes. Learning Nursery Rhymes will provide your children opportunities to further develop their communication skills. They will begin to develop an understanding of rhyme and rhythm while enjoying a variety of Nursery Rhyme books and videos. They will develop their listening skills and have the chance to expand their imagination.



### Nursery Rhymes

- Humpty Dumpty
- Mary had a little lamb
- Hickory, Dickory Dock
- Incy, Wincy Spider
- Baa, baa, black sheep
- Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star



They will learn numeracy concepts such as shapes and counting. Children will increase their physical and creative development while getting involved in different activities such as manipulating materials and objects, using tools and equipment and playing games related to the rhymes.



We will use Nursery Rhymes to teach students new vocabulary words and a variety of concepts linked to the various rhymes such as, the difference between cooked and raw eggs -Humpty Dumpty, the properties of wool -Mary had a Little Lamb and other concepts about money, time and evaporation.



### Dates for Your Diary

**January 22/2012 until 24/2012**  
Grade 8 students camp to Dibba—Oman

**January 24/2012 until 26/2012**  
Grade 9 students camp to Dibba—Oman

**January 31/2012**  
End of Semester 1

**February 6/2012**  
Open Day ( 9.00 - 12.00 )

**February 7/2012**  
Reports to go Home  
February 8/2012

**February 8/2012**  
Athletics Day



Our students will have an opportunity to act and sing the rhymes they have learnt in class on stage during our assemblies at the Performing Arts Centre. We hope you will join us at assemblies this term as we present to you many Nursery Rhyme performances.