



From the Principal — *The Power of Community*



Community is a key component of our life at VISS. Each of us belongs to many communities – be they of religion, nationality, family, sport or expatriates. One of those communities is of course our school community. Over the last few weeks,

especially having met the representatives of the Parents Association, I have both seen and heard about a number of wonderful demonstrations of the importance and power of a good school community. As a community, we have shared values and ideals, but what does *community* really mean? For me, community operates at various levels.

Firstly, we are a community of learners. As a community of learners, we believe that learning (or education) can improve who we are and what we do. We also believe that we never stop learning. This means we need to develop the skills of lifelong learning and understand that there is something we can learn from everyone. This is why we value not just the importance of English and Arabic literacy, numeracy and science, but equally our ability to acquire knowledge and apply it. Thinking is integral to learning. I was delighted to hear from a university recently that our graduates from last year were considered some of their best prepared students.

Finally, we are a community of people committed to the education of our boys

and girls. The wonderful African proverb says this very well, *'it takes a whole village to raise a child'*. In working together, at school and home, we maximise the opportunities and outcomes for each child. Being a community of people also shows in the way we work together for the better of all, in the way we treat each other, in the way we support those less fortunate and in the way we speak and act, through displaying compassion, tolerance, care, and concern.

As a community we are strongest when we put our talents to use for others rather than ourselves. In other words, it is about being the best for the world rather than just the best in the world.

Asking Questions

As parents we should always encourage our children to ask questions, especially when they are not sure. Children sometimes do not ask questions because they feel embarrassed or don't want to let their friends know that they don't know! Sometimes they don't ask because they don't know who to ask. This can happen to us as parents as well. We don't ask because we don't know who to ask or we feel embarrassed asking a question. Sometimes we don't ask because we know it will take a long time to get an answer. This can happen when calling some companies – the moment the phone is answered automatically, you are put on hold, transferred from one department to another, or find yourself constantly pressing menu buttons and getting nowhere.

At some schools, it can be a bit like this – both daunting and challenging to find the right information. To assist parents, we have placed three inquiry flowcharts on our website – one for ELC, one for Junior School and one for Secondary School. These are attached at the end of the news-

letter. They provide information about the best person to contact, depending on the issue. In most instances, it is usually the class or home room teacher. We have also placed on the website separate information books for each school and in these you will find a range of contact numbers and email addresses. All this information can be accessed at www.viss.ae and clicking on VISS Newsletters/Notices.

I trust parents find these guides and booklets helpful.

Parent Teacher Interviews

It has been lovely to see and meet so many parents at our recent Parent Information evenings, the final one is tomorrow for KG2 parents.

Soon we will be holding Parent Teacher interview sessions. These will be held during the week of 16-20 October. Exact details will be in the next newsletter.

School Dates

At the request of the ministry we have adjusted our school calendar this year. We have retained the same number of teaching days in the year, and I strongly encourage families to ensure their children attend each day.

The new school dates are as follows:

- ◆ **Term 1** – Sunday 4 September – Thursday 15 December 2011
- ◆ **The school will close for Eid al Adha** from 6–10 November 2011
- ◆ **Term 2** – Sunday 8 January – Thursday 29 March 2012
- ◆ **Term 3** – Sunday 8 April – Thursday 28 June 2012

Dr Roderick Crouch
Principal



From the Head of Secondary School



It has been a fantastic start to the year in the Secondary School at VISS. Our numbers have increased significantly this year at all grades and we are even looking to add an extra Yr 8 and an extra Yr 10 class to cope

with the increased students. There is an exciting buzz around the school and an air of expectation amongst students and staff for the opportunities that lie ahead this year. A big welcome to all of the new families who have joined the school this year, I am sure you will find VISS a welcoming, caring and nurturing school that has your child's educational and personal growth at the centre of everything we do.

Last week we held our first official assembly for the year where we were fortunate to welcome our new school Principal Dr Rod Crouch, who talked about leadership to our Secondary School students. Dr Rod reaffirmed our commitment at VISS to holistic education highlighting the fact that we are educating more than just the mind but we are also developing dynamic, caring global citizens who will be the leaders of the future. The assembly was also an opportunity to introduce our new Student Representative Council. Representatives were chosen through a process that included nominations, speeches and voting. We look forward to seeing the passionate innovative leadership that these young people can contribute to the school. Congratulations to the following students who make up the 2011-12 VISS Student Representative Council:

Grade 6 -
Nabeal Haikal & Mera Soruji

Grade 7-
Faud Samji & Sara Atbaei
Grade 8-
Abdulla Elhamarna & Tia Scott
Grade 9-
Rabeea Soomro & Yusaf Motara
Grade 10-
Alyina Ahmed and Vuk Garcevic
Grade 11-
Jacques Du Plessis
Grade 12-
Shahin Ghaedi, Gawar
Mohammed Yusuf Ghazanfar

These students join a strong team of House Captains and School Captains in making up our Secondary School student leadership team and we thank them all for being so ready to give up their time and efforts to serve the school community.

There are a lot of key events to watch out for in the coming weeks and months at VISS. Our information evening tonight and our first round of Parent Teacher meetings in mid October are two very important dates for your diaries. We will also be running some informal workshops and coffee mornings focusing on curriculum, behaviour and adolescent issues, in the near future. Of particular importance will be the information session on the International Baccalaureate program that will, in particular, interest our Yr 10 and 11 parents, but may also be of interest to all of our parents in the Secondary School.

We are committed to making the communication between our families and the school the very best we can. As I have said in the past, schools are partnerships and we all need to work together to maximize the opportunities for our students. I look forward to meeting with all of our parents and families over the course of the year if I have not already done so.

Dean Pyrah
Head of Secondary School

Parents Association News

The Parents Association aims to represent and unite parents, staff and families of VISS through social and school activities to enjoy your years at VISS. One of the advantages of an International school is that we have many cultures and beliefs that enable us and our children to have a global prospective on life. As an Association, we act in support of the school by coordinating a range of events held throughout the academic year. The key factor in making VISS not only a good school but a great school is its school community and parents and families who participate and can make that difference.

For newcomers to VISS, The Parents Association is a great way to meet new friends in a social, relaxing atmosphere. We meet for Morning Tea and Coffee every first Monday of every month in Senior Room 8 (upper level) (Gate 1). Please join us on October 3, 2011 at 10:30 a.m.

I encourage you to participate where you can in the various school events and activities. Every person's contribution makes a difference. There are so many wonderful activities and school functions which the teachers and staff work so diligently and we encourage your involvement in the Parents Association to engage in one of the most appealing aspects of VISS life, its school community.

We welcome you and your ideas with an open heart and look forward to sharing with you the satisfaction, fun and enjoyment of our school spirit.

Donna, Eva and Safiyya
Parents Association

The Australian Maths Challenge

Every year, the Australian Mathematics Trust, part of the Australian Government's Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research, holds a Mathematics Challenge for Young Australians. Last year our students did well in this challenge, and we are proud to congratulate some of our students who have received certificates for the competition. Many students participated and all received awards towards the end of last year to congratulate them on having a go. However, the following students received awards from the Trust at this year's first assembly.

In the Primary Division:

- Zoe Ingram
Certificate of Proficiency
- Ahmad AlFuqaha
Certificate of Proficiency
- Maysoon Fares
Certificate of Proficiency
- Masah Mardini
Certificate of Proficiency
- Tejasva Saboo
Certificate of Proficiency
- Eyad Shadid
Certificate of Proficiency

In the Junior Division:

- Ahmed Abdulkadir
Certificate of Participation
- Yusuf Motara
Certificate of Participation
- Rouzbeh Majidi Gerdeh
Certificate of Participation
- Emmalee Gouldsbrough
Certificate of Credit
- Shania Scott
Certificate of Credit

In the Intermediate Division:

- Ahmed Al Moosawi
Certificate of Participation
- Sina Maghami Nick
Certificate of Credit
- Tuahaa Soomro
Certificate of Distinction

The Maths Team congratulates all students who entered, especially those receiving these certificates. We encourage all students to take part in the next competition, to be held towards the end of this academic year. Many thanks to Mr Patrick for organising.

Hediah Kadous

Early Learning Centre News

It was wonderful to see all our students excitedly walk through the doors of the Early Learning Centre to begin the 2011/2012 academic year. It is so rewarding when they greet me each day with a smiling, "Good morning Ms Mary." The children have settled in to their class routines smoothly. It is a credit to the parents who escort their child to the class, give them a kiss and a hug and leave immediately.

This year at VISS, we have been very happy to open our first Nursery program for 2 year olds. Miss Julia and her team of class assistants have done a marvelous job planning and organizing the Nursery learning environment. We look forward to this Nursery becoming a permanent fixture in the ELC.

The Victorian Framework sets the highest expectations for every child.

It identifies five Early Years Learning and Development Outcomes for all children:

- Children have a strong sense of identity
- Children are connected with and contribute to their world
- Children have a strong sense of well-being
- Children are confident and involved learners
- Children are effective communicators.



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The ELC team is looking forward to an exciting year of learning that comprises achieving all of the aforementioned outcomes. We welcome parents as partners in this learning environment as our vision is to

always maintain a collaborative learning environment – where child, parent and teacher work together in the process of learning.



I greatly appreciate all feedback from our parents as we step out on this journey of learning together. We look forward to a successful year together!



Mary Azer
Director, Early Learning Centre



Dates for Your Diary

- **September 26**
KG 1 Parent Information Evening
Time: 06:45pm
Venue: Early Learning Centre
- **September 27**
Secondary Parent Information Evening
Time: 06:45pm
Venue: Performing Arts Centre
- **September 28**
KG 2 Parent Information Evening
Time: 06:45pm
Venue: Early Learning Centre
- **October 5**
World Teachers Day

Thoughts about *'Imagination and Dreams'* presentation by visiting author **Walid Taher**

There was a great treat for Grades Three and Four students at VISS on Monday 14th September.

Mr Walid Taher, author/illustrator and winner this year's prestigious Etisalat Award for Arabic Children's Literature, read his new, award winning book, *Ahlam Al Hayawanat* to these students in our Junior School Library. This award was launched in 2009 by UAEB-BY President Sheikha Bodour bint Sultan Al Qasimi, with the support of Etisalat. It is shared by the author, Walid and Egypt-based publisher of the book, *Dar El Shorouk*. This reading was made possible by the UAE Board on Books for Young People (UAEBBY).

On Wednesday we went to the back of the library. We saw a real Author. We were surprised. The author's name was Walid. He read us his story. At the end of the story, two of us stood up and said "thank you". We were lucky to have Walid come to our school.

Raihaana, Luly, Mohammed S and Reham - Grade 4A



Music Academy News

Dear Parents

VISS Music Academy had a great start last week. News about the VISS Music Academy, and our new and exciting instrumental music program received immense attention and produced a great response from entire VISS community. This program will provide endless opportunities for all our students to actively participate in VISS Music Ensembles, performing opportunities and the joy of making music.

If you are looking to enrol your child into the Music Academy Program, Semester 1 Tuition, please do so by the end of the September.

Instrumental Music Lessons will start next week.

I will contact parents of students enrolled in a Semester 1, via email by the end of the week to confirm your child's lesson time and date.

For all inquiries regarding VISS Music Academy please contact:
Ms Amina Garcevic
Director of Music
garcevic.amina@viss.ae

"Experience the joy that comes through playing music"



VISS After School Activities and Sports Squads

AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

After School Activities (ASA) are, in general, conducted after 4.30pm. All ASA's require a fee to participate. Participation is voluntary.

Karate

Every Sunday and Tuesday at 6.00pm in the Sports Centre Gym
AED 250.00/month plus uniform and belts.

Ballet

Every Sunday
Ring *Turning Pointe* on 800 32623 for information and enrolments.

Cricket

Every Saturday morning at 9.00am
Conducted by ICC GCA Coaches
Information is available from the school offices or ring ICC GCA
04 4481377 or at www.iccgca.com

Football

- The Program

Day	Session 4.45 – 6.00pm	Session 6.00 – 7.15pm
Sunday	S1 Gr 3 , 4, 5 Students	S2 Grade 6+
Monday	M1 ELC: Gr 1 and 2	M2 GIRLS ONLY Gr 3, 4, 5
Tuesday	T1 Junior Gr 3 , 4, 5 Students	T2 Grade 6+
Wednesday	W1 ELC: Gr 1 and 2	W2 Gr 3, 4, 5, 6, 7

- Fees
AED 450.00 for one session per week through to the December vacation, or,
AED 800.00 for two session's per week, or, if available
AED 1000.00 for three session's per week through to the December vacation.
See Mr Les or Mr Montusser at the Sports Office to enrol.

Swimming

To join a 'Learn to Swim' group, contact Miss Lauren at the VISS Swimming Pool at 4.30pm Sunday, Monday or Tuesday.
Enrolment details, times, costs etc will be available from Miss Lauren.

VISS SPORTS SQUADS

- Squads are training groups for VISS Interschool Sports Teams
- All squad members must have written permission from a parent
- There is no charge to be in a VISS Squad
- Players must arrange their own transport home after training.

Football Squads

- Football squads are training groups for the VISS Interschool teams.

Training	
Date	Time
Sunday	3.15 – 4.30pm Boys Under 11 years at 1 September 2011
Monday	3.15 – 4.30pm Boys Under 13 and under 15 years at 1 September 2011
Tuesday	3.15 – 4.30pm Boys Under 18 years at 1 September 2011
Wednesday	3.15 – 4.30pm All girls

* Training will be cancelled on those nights when the field is required. Notice will be given,

*Football Squads are limited to a maximum of 18 players. Squads will be regularly amended and changes announced on the first day of each month.

Swimming Squads

See Miss Lauren at the swimming pool at 3.15pm on Mondays if you wish to join a squad.

Squad members must be good swimmers able to compete in interschool competitions.

Squad training is held on most school days at 3.15pm.

Les Rauert
Facilities Manager



Inquiry Flowchart - Early Learning Centre (ELC)

Inquiry	Who to ask?
New Enrolments	Director ELC Admin Assistant ELC Registrar
Re-enrolments	Registrar
Nursery	Classroom teacher Director ELC
Parent Association activities	PA President/Representative
Absence, including appointments	Admin Assistant ELC
Extended leave during term	Director ELC
My child's academic progress (curriculum matters)	Classroom teacher Director ELC
The curriculum	Classroom teacher Director ELC
My child's behaviour	Classroom teacher KG1 Coordinator/KG2 Coordinator Director ELC
School behavioural expectations/student care program	Classroom teacher Director ELC
Private music lessons	Director of Music
ELC Procedures	Director ELC
Whole School Policies	Principal's Office
Concerns regarding staff behaviour/teaching standards	Director ELC Principal
School growth and strategic plans	Principal
After school care in the ELC (up to 3.00 pm)	Director ELC
After School activities	Facilities manager/After School Activities Coordinator

Victoria International School of Sharjah – Early Learning Centre

Direct Tel. Number: 00971 65993191 – Email: elc.school@viss.ae



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Inquiry Flowchart - Primary School

Inquiry	Who to ask?
New Enrolments	Admin Assistant Junior School, Head of Junior School, Registrar
Re-enrolments	Registrar
Parent Association activities	Parents Association President/Representative
Absence, including appointments	Classroom teacher, Admin Assistant Junior School
Extended leave during term	Head of Junior School, Principal
My child's academic progress (curriculum matters)	Classroom teacher, Grade Team leader, Curriculum Coordinator, Head of Junior School
The curriculum generally	Class/Home room teacher, Curriculum Coordinator Head of Junior School
My child's behaviour	Class/Home room teacher, Grade Team leader Deputy Head of Junior School, Head of Junior School
School behavioral expectations/student care program	Class/Home room teacher, Grade Team Leader Deputy Head of Junior School, Head of Junior School
PE/Sport Grade 6-13	Class/Home Teacher, Head of PE
Private music lessons	Director of Music
Junior School Procedures	Deputy Head of Junior School, Head of Junior School
Whole School Policies	Principal's Office
Concerns regarding College Policy and Procedures	Head of School, Principal
Concerns regarding staff behavior/teaching standards	Head of School, Principal
School growth and strategic plans	Principal
After School activity program	Facilities manager/After School Activities Coordinator

Victoria International School of Sharjah – Primary School

Direct Tel. Number: 00971 65993161 – Email: junior.school@viss.ae



Inquiry Flowchart - Secondary School

Inquiry	Who to ask?
New Enrolments	Office manager - Secondary school, Head of Secondary School, Registrar
Re-enrolments	Registrar
Parent Association activities	Parent Association President/representative
Absence, including appointments	Class/Home Room teacher Admin Assistant Secondary School.
Extended leave during term	Deputy Head of School, Head of School Principal
My child's academic progress (curriculum matters)	Class/Home room teacher, Year Level leader Faculty Head, Deputy Head/Head of Secondary School
The curriculum generally	Faculty Head, Curriculum Coordinator Head of Secondary School
My child's behaviour	Class/Home room teacher, Year Level Leader Deputy Head of Secondary School
School behavioral expectations/student care program	Class/Home room teacher, Year Level Leader Deputy Head of Secondary School, Head of Secondary School
PE/Sport Grade 6-13	PE Department
Private music lessons	Director of Music
Secondary School Procedures	Head of School
Whole School Policies	Principal's Office
Concerns regarding College Policy and Procedures	Head of School, Principal's Office
Concerns regarding staff behavior/teaching standards	Head of school, Principal
School growth and strategic plans	Principal
After School activity program	Facilities Manager/After School Activities Coordinator

Victoria International School of Sharjah – secondary School

Direct Tel. Number: 00971 65993131 – Email: sec.school@viss.ae