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## For Parent Interest

The Victoria International School of Sharjah recognises the importance of parent involvement in supporting improved relationships, improved student learning and in the development of the broader school community.

With this in mind and in response to interest shown earlier this year the School seeks to form a VISS Parents and Friends Group. It is hoped that the Parent and Friends Group will provide an avenue for interested parents to be involved in the School and also provide welcoming support for new families into the VISS community. Involvement in the group will mean an ongoing commitment to meetings and organising activities to support the School and its community.

I would like to invite you to join us at the first meeting for morning tea on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> June at 11.00am in the Junior School Staffroom. To assist in catering arrangements please advise the School of your intention to attend by contacting Sami on 06 577 1999 by Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> May.

Thank you

**Craig Lamshed on behalf of the VISS Principal Team**

## School Canteen

### A Taste of Vegetarianism



This week's feature meal is something for the vegetarians; a char grilled vegetable ciabatta with grilled red and green capsicum, onion, egg plant, cheese and a hint of herbs on brown ciabatta bread.

Fresh Fruit packs and our NEW Vegetable pack (cheese, carrot, cucumber, cherry tomato and dry biscuits) are only available in the Middle and Senior Schools. Please note those students are also able to order their lunch as per normal.

#### Junior School news

On the 14<sup>th</sup> of May the Junior School had a special food day. The special food for the day was spiral pasta with Bolognese sauce. We had a wonderful response from the Junior School students, some of the student comments were "it was delicious", "better than mum makes" and "this was the best day of the week". A big thank-you to the helpers, Julie and Lisa. The Junior School Canteen is operating on an order only basis,

student must have their order in the day before.

#### Middle/Senior School next special food day

On the 4<sup>th</sup> of June the middle/senior school will be having a special food day. The special food day will be lasagna and a water/juice at the cost of 10 Dhs.

**Jodi Lamshed**  
Canteen Manager

### Dates for Your Diary

**\*Tuesday to Thursday May 26<sup>th</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup> -**

NAPLAN-student assessment.

**\*Thursday June 18<sup>th</sup> -**

Celebration of Learning - Junior

**\*Last Second to Third Week of June -**

\*Students' Reports to be handed out .

**\*Reduced School Times - 31<sup>st</sup> May**

8:10 am - 2:15 pm

## From the Principal

### \*School Times in June

Starting on Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> May the School will commence its summer timetable schedule. Class time will not be reduced but recess and lunch breaks will be shortened so students are not over exposed to the normal excessive heat. Students will remain in air conditioned comfort of the buildings, or in shaded areas outside on occasions should they choose.

The school day will commence as normal at 8:10 am, recess will be from 10:20 am till 10:35 am while the lunch break will run from 12:35 pm till 12:55 pm.

The school day will end at 2:15 pm and buses accordingly will also run 40 minutes earlier. Students in the ELC will continue their normal times.

### \*Ramadan Times

When School resumes for the 2009/2010 school year the above commencing and break times will also be worked, however there will be one less period per day. During those weeks the school day will end at 1:35 pm.

### Newsletter on Website

Each fortnight as the School Newsletter is produced and distributed, it is also being posted on the School's website. Go to [www.viss.ae](http://www.viss.ae) and then click on Newsletter to view the current and past copies of the School's

Newsletter.

### \*Parent Participation

V.I.S.S. values the participation of parents and has regularly conducted information sessions and interviews. Some months ago the School hosted a very well attended morning tea for parents to meet one another.

The School is now embarking on a process to formalize a Parents and Friends Group. An introductory morning tea and meeting will be held on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> June. Please see the details elsewhere in the Newsletter.

**Rob Blachford**  
Foundation Principal  
Victoria International School of Sharjah

### Principal Changes

The Victoria International School of Sharjah will have new leadership in the 2009/2010 school year.

Dr. Amr Abdel-Hamid, Special Advisor to His Highness the Ruler of Sharjah on Higher Education and Chair of the VISS Interim Board, is working with the Victorian Department of Education to appoint a new Executive Principal for the School.

The new Executive Principal will replace Foundation Principal, Rob Blachford, who has announced his departure from VISS.

When Mr. Blachford commenced work to establish this School early in

2007 the role as "development director" was planned to be for 2 or 3 years. The title Foundation Principal has been used for the position. The plan was always to get the School running and then pass it over to a Principal and his/her team to see the School through to full implementation. At the end of this term Mr. Blachford will have completed 2 ½ years in working to establish the school.

Mr. Blachford is contemplating his "second retirement" with perhaps more time for family and other interests back in Australia. However he is currently considering some other opportunities before returning to a consulting role in Australia. He and his wife Janine are looking forward to a relaxing holiday in July.

There are still many things to happen to get VISS at a full and desirable level of operation and performance as a Victorian model school. The work achieved to get the School up and running in the past two years has been most significant and there is much to celebrate.

Mr Rob thanks all staff and parents for their support and friendship



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### Junior School News

#### Grade 5 Investigating Shadows

In Grade 5, we have been doing many experiments and this week we have started learning about shadows. We know that light goes in a straight line and how shadows are formed, but this time we are doing an experiment to figure out how thick and long shadows are during the day. Here is what we did:

First, we set up our materials at the diamond. Next, we got a compass to measure which way North was and we put the paper facing North. We placed a pencil in the middle of a large piece paper with Blue Tac and we measured the length of the shadow every hour to see how long the shadow will get as the Earth spins on its axis. Just like a sun dial.

After nearly 4 hours, we got our results and we figured out that in the morning the shadow of the pencil was long and about right on lunchtime it was short. At the end of the school day it was long again. The other groups had different answers but we all tried our best. "I wish to do more experiments like this again."

Agustin Biancardi  
Grade 5R Student



### Middle School News

#### Just the Beginning ...

Exam week is over for the Grade 10 students but the learning continues.

Exams are one form of assessment used to determine the students' knowledge, skills and application against learning outcomes. Assessment is defined as "the ongoing process of gathering, analysing and reflecting on evidence to make informed and consistent judgments to improve future student learning." Exams are key assessment items of students in the Victorian Certificate of Education and many University courses.

On a base level the Grade 10 students will achieve a mark for their exam and it would be easy to think that the learning is complete; however the learning is only just beginning. To continue learning and achieve greater success the students should not rest on their laurels, they should speak with their teachers and determine their strengths and areas for improvement in preparing for and sitting an exam.

Preparing for an exam starts in the first lesson; not the night before or on the morning of the exam, but rather in the way that the knowledge is learned, how the skills are applied and the ability to apply these in different situations.

"Knowing is not enough; we must apply. Willing is not enough we must do." – Goethe  
The exams are over but the learning continues...

Chris Paynter  
Leading Teacher

"Guard well your spare moments. They are like uncut diamonds. Discard them and their value will never be known. Improve them and they will become the brightest gems in a useful life."

Ralph Waldo Emerson

### Feature Teacher

Patrick Rafferty



Patrick Rafferty was recruited from Sacre Coeur a P-12 school in Melbourne's eastern suburbs.

He was born in Melbourne, the middle child of 7. He went to boarding school at age 11 and, while he didn't know it at the time, this began a life of travel away from home. Since then he has traveled the world visiting many countries including the UAE. This has been his first visit to Sharjah and his first real opportunity to experience the people and culture of the UAE.

As a teacher he has lived all over Victoria in a variety of school settings. He has taught many different subjects including Music, Computers, Physical Education, Commerce, History and Science. His favorite subject is Mathematics and he hopes to spend most of his time at VISS sharing his passion and secrets of Mathematics with his students. Patrick is married with 2 children, Jessica who will be 3 in March and Andrew who will be 1 in June. He is happy to be a part of the VISS community and is looking forward to continuing to share his love for learning with all his students.