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Parents Association News

It has been a busy couple of weeks for the Parents Association but rewarding.

At the school athletics carnival we held a sausage sizzle, Pizza and cake stall. We were overwhelmed with donations of cakes and snacks. It was a fantastic day and pleasing to see so many parents in our community participating. I would like to thank the many parents who donated to the Bake stall. There was a wonderful variety.

A day like that takes many volunteers to be a success. The smiling faces in the stall worked hard and hopefully enjoyed their time. Salam our Vice President, Karen Dixon, Ban Khazel, Cathie Goldsborough, Hediah Kadous gave their time freely to support the day also to our BBQ chefs Brendan Cross and Daryn Howell. A great job! We raised **1797dhs.** A fantastic effort for our first fund raising event.

At the ELC Athletics day, the following Sunday, we raised **370dhs.** Once again thank you to Brendan Cross, Adrian Burke and Salam for their hard work. It was more popular than we expected.

I would also like to thank Jodi Lamshed- VISS Canteen Manager for all her help and support on both days, it made life a lot easier for us and it was appreciated.

A Thank you also to Muhammad Ikram Khan and Clean-co staff for all their help and assistance on these days as well as the many times we call on them for help. All

funds raised by the PA are managed by the Association.

The Funds are placed in a locked vault. At a meeting, later in the year, suggestions will be made as to where we could best spend the funds for the students' benefit. We will vote on a proposal and a recommendation will then be made.

Many of you would have received from your students, VISS Read -A Thon envelopes. This is a Parent Association initiative working with Mr. Brett, VISS Library manager. ALL funds raised will be used to purchase books and library resources for ALL students to use. The Read -a -Thon has two objectives, one obviously to raise funds but more importantly to get students excited about reading. Reading is a wonderful way to learn and explore. There is such a wonderful variety of books to read now that even as adults we too can learn from these stories whether fiction, fantasy, fact or educational. I would like to thank Mr. Brett -Library Manager for all his help and support in this worthy event.

In the coming weeks, there are a couple significant days in the UAE calendar we would like to acknowledge. Firstly **International Women's Day** celebrated on March 8th and **Mother's Day** celebrated on March 21st.

I have been fortunate to be involved in the meetings with the SRC and school captains for these events. They are working hard to make some memorable days for the school community. International Women's day will be held at the school on March 8th.

The students are putting together an informative assembly to celebrate and

acknowledge the importance of women and the significance of this day.

They are working hard to demonstrate how pioneering women of the last century have allowed many women, the opportunities we have today. The IWD theme for 2010 is "Equal rights, equal opportunities, Progress for all...." I would like to thank Ms. Chris Paytner, the school captains and the SRC for inviting me into their meetings and commend them on their commitment to their role in the SRC and their school.

Mother's day will be celebrated with a morning tea at school for mums to share with their children. This will be a joint invitation from the Parent Association, the SRC and Mr. Gordon Pratt. There will be more information on this soon.

If anyone has some free time and would like to volunteer in the Junior school canteen for 1 or 2 hrs per week, please let me know. It is very busy the days it is open and some help would be much appreciated. Your kids would probably love it too. If you can help please contact me or Jodi Lamshed on 06 5771999

Salam is planning some Adult cooking classes to be held in the school. We are finalizing details and Salam will send some information out to you shortly

We will have a meeting at some stage before the end of term, and a coffee morning. It is important in all our community building efforts we do not forget the importance of a nice chat with other people from VISS where we can all get to know each other little better and enjoy some laughter.

As always if you would like to speak to me in regards to any matters please feel free to contact me at parents@viss.ae or 06 5771999.

Julie Howell
President, Parents Association

From the Principal's Desk

Making a point for Parents

At the Victoria International School of Sharjah we have a small, but active group of parents who are working hard to improve opportunities for their children, our students. Led by Julie Howell they are constantly looking for ways in which they can engage other parents and teachers in the broader community aspects of education.

Julie and her supportive group of parents have been responsible for organising a number of events at VISS and supporting many others, most recently food and drinks at our athletic sports meeting.

Currently Julie is organising and coordinating a read-a-thon for students from KG2 to Grade 10. Details of the activity will have been sent home already and hopefully your children are participating. This activity will enable us to raise some additional funds to purchase more books for our library, which will obviously benefit all students at VISS.



If you have any questions in regard to this activity or equally if you have any time that you can assist Julie with the administration of the read-a-thon, then please contact her directly at:

howelldj6@bigpond.com



We are all much appreciative of the work undertaken by Julie and her team and look forward to a positive outcome from this most recent event.

Mother's Day

Mother's Day in the UAE is celebrated much like other such occasions in other countries. It is a time for celebration and appreciation of the enormous work undertaken by our mothers in the home, at work and in the community generally.

At VISS we want to recognise and celebrate the contribution that mothers have made to the development of their children, families and our society. On Sunday, 21st March there will be a special morning tea, organised by the Parents Association, in recognition of this significant occasion, at which we will have an opportunity to meet and walk through our newly, about to be opened, Community Centre.

All mothers are invited to attend - please check you newsletter in a couple of weeks for all the details.

Gordon Pratt
Executive Principal

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Junior School News

Sleeping for Better Learning

School kids need a lot of sleep. Probably more than you think. Sleep is the time when their bodies grow, their cells repair and when illness is fought. Children who sleep well are better learners and are better behaved. Recent research shows that they are less likely to be overweight and that they are less affected by coughs and colds. Other research shows that sleep clears their memory of useless facts, stores important ones and frees up the memory for new information. That's the key to learning and it happens when they're asleep!

There is a hormone called melatonin produced in the pineal gland in our brain that makes us sleepy and then helps us fall to sleep. Research shows that this hormone is stimulated by things like the onset of night and the reduction of visual stimuli. In the modern age we suppress this hormone with brightly lit homes and large TV screens with bright flickering images. We're tired but we're not sleepy, so we stay up.

A school age child needs ten to twelve hours sleep. If they're waking up at 7am to get ready for school they should be in bed asleep at 7pm to 9pm each night. So how do you get that to happen?

Firstly you have to schedule a specific bedtime and work backwards from there. From the moment kids arrive home from school there's lots to do. As a suggestion, a parent might allow some playtime or TV time for when

their child arrives home from school. Followed by homework, mealtime and lastly bathing. Then there needs to be some quiet time with dimmed lights and no TV or computer games. For younger children this could be reading time with a soft lamp in a darkened room with no other distractions for the 30 minutes prior to sleep. Over a period of about three weeks they will gradually train themselves to produce melatonin at this time and sleep should come easily.

You also need to avoid sugary, artificially coloured foods for a few hours before bedtime. Some preservatives have a stimulating effect on some children and you need to identify what food additives you're feeding them if sleep doesn't come easily.

Getting them into bed and sleeping is one thing, getting them to stay asleep is another. There are many things that can disturb a child's sleep and they need to be addressed if you want a well rested child. Sleep occurs in cycles of about 45 minutes. Each cycle takes the sleeper through 5 stages of sleep, from barely asleep down to deep sleep and then back up to R.E.M. or dream sleep. It's during the deep sleep that the body produces Human Growth Hormone for growth and cell repair. Sleepers disturbed by breathing difficulties or discomfort will spend less time in the deep sleep stage and this is where long term fatigue may originate, and poorer study results can follow.

Posted on Myschool.com.au

Jan Senior
Principal Junior School

ELC News

Parents as Partners in the E.L.C Sports Day

"Ready, Steady, Go" - This is how our day started on the 15th of February VISS on Monday. Parents, children and teachers were observed carrying chairs, hats and drinks onto the VISS sports field to participate in the ELC Sports Day. The early morning start was a challenge with morning dew settled on the grass making the ground a little wet, however, the children were very keen to get the day underway.

The Sports Day commenced with the KG1 and KG2 students participating in seven sporting activities including throwing, jumping, running and relay running races. The highlight of the day was the Early Learning students having their very first experience of sports fun on the big oval. Mums and dads were spotted "having a go". It was a sight to see, with the teachers demonstrating the skills needed to be involved in the activities. Thank you to the wonderful families for joining us in the educational journey and understanding the importance of physical activity for the well being of your children.



This event was also complemented by the great involvement of the Parents Association with volunteer parents and friends who provided the famous barbecued "Sausage Sizzler" and refreshments for the sport-exhausted students.

Finally, participation certificates were awarded to all students to acknowledge their efforts for doing a "Good Job".

Dhuha Al-Feel
KG1A Teacher

Learning through discovery and exploration

'I took my KG2 E's to Miss Valda's Art Studio. This was their first real Art experience in an Art room and they loved it. The art piece by Gustav Klimt, in Miss Valda's room, really won them over. It never ceases to amaze me what delights children of that very young age. We thoroughly enjoyed the entire showcase of the Art room setting. We are now inspired and eager to add some new ideas to our Art workshop back at ELC. Many thanks Miss Valda.'

Zahida Khan
KG2E Teacher



Senior School News

On Saturday the 13th of February, Amir and I went to University of Wollongong in Dubai to represent our school's mathematical skills in the first mathematics competition ever held in the UAE, called Mathalone. There were 34 teams to represent Universities and high schools from all over the UAE. Mathalone consisted of two rounds; first round was 30 multiple choice questions and we were given 3 minutes to answer each question (a total of 90 minutes). The top ten teams from the first round would compete in round two. Unfortunately Amir and I finished 11th so we could not compete in round two. However, we managed to answer more questions than some of the Universities' teams which as Mr. Patrick mentioned was an outstanding effort on our part.

We weren't what you would call confident in the beginning (me in particular) and seeing all the other contestants from universities (who looked more like teachers than students) did not help. However, after reading the first few questions and being able to answer some of them, we were more positive.

Overall it was a great experience and hopefully we will compete in Mathalone again next year and this time having more experience we will be more successful.

Neda Ghaedi
GR 11 A Student



Senior School Key Dates:

- *Interim Reports distributed to Senior School students – Mar 11
- *Study day (No classes Grade 11 and 12) – May 23
- *SS Exams (Grade 11 and 12) – May 24 -27
- *Unit 3 Physics / Accounting Exam – Jun 8
- *Unit 3 Chemistry Exam – Jun 9
- *GAT Exam for all students studying a Unit 3 subject (No Grade 13 classes) – Jun 10

Dates for Your Diary

- *Monday March 1st - Monday June 21st - After School VISS Sports Clubs
- *Wednesday Monday March 3rd - Australian Ambassador's visit to VISS
- *Monday March 8th - International Women's Days
- *Thursday March 11th - IGEC Australian Road Show at VISS 4:30 pm
- *Thursday February 28th - Thursday March 25th - VISS Parent Association Readathon
- *Sunday March 21st - UAE Mothers Day
- *Thursday March 25th - Junior School Assembly
- *Friday April 2nd - Saturday April 10th - School holiday
- *Sunday April 11th - School resumes.
- *Tuesday April 20th - WS Celebration of Learning
- *Sunday April 25th - Start of Term 4