



From the Principal — **Respect**



“R-E-S-P-E-C-T,
Funny what it means to me...”

It is 40 years since Aretha Franklin sang these words but respect has become an interesting concept these days. No longer can any person or section of society simply expect respect as a result of its position or role. This is certainly the case for politicians in many countries, sadly often for the elderly and also true for many schools and teachers. Yet respect is something we would consider very important - it is hard to argue with the view that children should show adults more respect in the way they address adults.

Yet from where do we learn respect? Is it not from our example as parents and the respect that, as adults, we show each other? I believe that respect is based on two concepts. Firstly that we are not all perfect, but secondly that we seek to do or best we can for the greater good. It is easy to lose respect when people behave poorly or we think decisions are unfair or unjust.

As a school to do the best we can for each student. Similarly as parents, we try to do the best we can for each of our children. Encouraging respect is something we do together. Raising and teaching children are no easy tasks – parenting as we all know is full of challenges and fraught with difficulty, especially in today’s modern world where children are exposed to so many different influences, and our television is full of shows that highlight poor behaviour. Equally, teaching, though deeply rewarding, is a challenging profession. We are blessed at VISS to have the quality of staff that we do. Their professionalism and efforts are greatly appreciated. The involvement of the staff in the wider life of the school stems not just because they enjoy the various activities *per se* but more importantly because they want to provide our students with more opportunities, and know that it helps build better relationships with them. In many schools, this does not occur.

In a school of 60 nationalities, respect becomes even more important, as we are all different. My brief experience is that respect is something that is valued at VISS, but we cannot rest on our laurels. Together we need to encourage our children to show respect by not ‘lashing out’ either physically or verbally when angry, as we know this usually only leads to further conflict. The best way we can do this is through the example we set in the way we manage concerns and conflicts when things do not go the way we expected. It is very important that as adults we set the right example! In the end, it is the mutual respect we show through working together that not only maximises opportunities for the boys and girls, but provides them with examples of how to be the leaders of tomorrow.

Singapore and Australia

Over the last 10 days, I have been in Singapore and Australia. I was in Singapore attending a conference for Principals of schools that teach the International Baccalaureate. This was an excellent conference, full of interesting and challenging speakers. More importantly, it enabled me to form links with other schools across both the Middle East and more broadly. In time, this will lead to further opportunities for our students.

I was in Australia seeking some new staff. As we continue to expand, and with some staff concluding their contracts, we will always need new teachers. I was very pleased with the quality of the applicants and look forward to being able to make appointments in the next few weeks.

Dr Roderick Crouch
Principal

“It is the mutual respect we show through working together that not only maximises opportunities for the boys and girls, but provides them with examples of how to be the leaders of tomorrow”



Personalised learning | Quality teaching | Excellence for all

From the Early Learning Centre



One of the questions I am constantly asked by new parents to the Early Learning Centre (ELC) is, 'what will my child learn at the ELC?'

mal learning in the primary years.

The Framework aims to highlight the importance of:

- Play based learning
- Recognising that all children learn in different ways and at different rates and times
- Families as their child's first teacher.
- Families understand their children better than anyone else
- The teacher, parent, and child as collaborators in the process of learning.

to understand the causes of feelings and the qualities of a friend.

We emphasize that in a classroom we learn and work together as a **learning community**. Children need to learn the basics of social interaction: how to say hello, good morning, answer a question with a sentence and not just a word, use eye contact and the importance of letting a person finish what they say before speaking.



At the ELC, we focus on beginning their journey on mastering the English language as well as social development. We have an integrated approach to teaching and learning that includes: **adult led learning, child directed play and learning** and **guided play and learning**. We encourage children to explore, solve problems, communicate, think, create and construct and use their judgment to support their learning and development. We as teachers facilitate their learning by developing Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) for all our students. Just this week, we at the ELC had the opportunity to collaborate with parents in identifying and setting goals for each individual student, and ensuring we all took on active roles in their learning process.

lies and more importantly how to make friends. It is through **social play** that our

This term, the ELC is investigating the topic of **Ourselves**, for our students learn more about themselves, their families



The Australian Developmental Learning Framework is the cornerstone of what we use at the ELC to achieve the objectives of social development and oral language as well as prepare students for their for-

students have a chance to practise getting along with other children and to learn new skills. We endeavor to ensure all children develop the social skills required

It is evident in the literature that children who actively participate in social play more so than children who do not have greater language skills, increased social skills, empathy, imagination, as well as the ability to infer meaning from speech (Miller, & Almon, 2009). They are more resilient, as well as able to engage in higher order thinking. At the ELC, we endeavor to equip our students with these life-long skills.

Mary Azer
Director, Early Learning Centre



Looking through the Grade 2 window



Throughout Term 1, Grade 2 students have focused on 'Learning to Learn.' In class, the children have been looking at class routines, organisation, behaviour and expectations to achieve excellence in learning as well as good friendships.

The 'Paper Bag People' are now proudly on display in our classrooms. The students have also made a Friendship Garden in each class. Each friendship flower reflects the appreciations we have for each other in the classroom. A few examples of our appreciations were; *saying friendly things, using good manners and inviting us to play.*

The students have also learnt about what switches our brain on and off for learning. Students have been actively participating in 'Brain Gym' which involves simple exercises to help activate the brain and calm each child to ensure they are ready to learn. Students have also found that eating healthy foods is important to switch on our brains for learning at school and home.

Each class has developed a 'Classroom Agreement' that helps them as learners become aware of the role they need to play in order to succeed at school.

Students are exploring the 'You Can Do It' values to help them develop Confidence, Organisation, Resilience, Persistence and the ability to Get Along with others when learning.

Part of this unit is also focusing on developing new friendships and respecting others. To learn more about each other the students made 'Paper Bag People' as part of our Oral Language Program. Each student decorated an envelope with photos and pictures to show how they are unique.

"I learnt that Abdad has a green car."
– Faysal

"I now know that Azza has a horse."
– Manahael

"Now I know Ghanim likes to swim."
– Bashar

Carmen Britnell



Parents Association News

A Parents Association Coffee Morning will be held on Tuesday, November 1st at 10:30 a.m. in Senior School (Gate 1) Room SU8. Please join us for an hour of conversation regarding upcoming school events and to meet new friends and families from the VISS community.

As Jan Senior, Head of the Junior School wrote in the last Newsletter, "as parents, we need to be a role model, encouraging our children to see the positive side of an issue." Being involved in the Parents Group is certainly one way in which you can demonstrate being a positive role model for your children. School and home is a partnership and we all need to support each other to maximize the opportunities for our children. We look forward to seeing you.

Donna Alkasey



Reading together – ESL students visit the Junior School

On Wednesday 12 October, twelve Grade 9 students visited Grade 2D in the Junior school to do a rehearsed reading of some Dr Seuss books. The secondary school students who are studying ESL (English as a second language) focused on their stress and intonation, reading with expression, and presentation skills.

They also learned about rhyme, rhythm and how to read tongue twisters. Although they were very nervous, the students enjoyed the challenge and loved meeting the younger students, who were an enthusiastic audience.



It was great fun for all involved, and we all hope to be able to repeat the experience again later in the year. Thank you to Grade 2D, who were generous listeners, and to the Grade 9 ESL class, who worked hard to improve their reading, and have built their confidence as a result.

Mandy Osborne (teacher of 2D) and Caroline O'Donnell (ESL teacher)

On the 10th day of Zul-Hijjah, the last month of the Islamic calendar, Muslims around the world celebrate this feast of commitment, obedience and self-sacrifice to Allah. This festival is celebrated throughout the Muslim world as a commemoration of Prophet Abraham's willingness to sacrifice everything for God, including the life of his son Ishmael.

Because God spared Ishmael, substituting a sheep in his stead, Muslims commemorate this occasion by slaughtering an animal and distributing its meat among family, friends and the needy as a special act of charity for the occasion. Because of this, many poor Muslims are able to enjoy the unusual luxury of eating meat during the four days of the festival.

They wear their nicest clothing and attend Salat-ul-Eid (Eid Prayer) in the morning. This is followed by a short sermon, after which everyone socializes. Next, people visit each other's homes and partake in festive meals with special dishes, beverages, and desserts. Children receive gifts and sweets on this happy occasion.

In addition, like the pilgrims in Mecca, the Muslims who can afford to do so, offer domestic animals, usually sheep, as a symbol of Ibrahim's sacrifice. The meat is distributed for consumption to family, friends, and to the poor and needy.

Celebrating Eid ul-Adha



The Festival of Sacrifice, Eid-al-adha, immediately follows the Day of Arafat. Although only the pilgrims in Mecca can participate in the Hajj fully, all the other Muslims in the world join with them by celebrating

Eid Al-adha, or "Celebration of Sacrifice."



The Grade 2s were then able to demonstrate their own reading skills and participate in some interesting discussions about the illustrations. This is one of the advantages of learning in a K-13 school, where students can build relationships across age groups and have the opportunity to show leadership.



Khalid Amasy
Senior Islamic leader



Lets go fly a kite

Grade 7B had to make kites for Mr Darren in Wood Tech.

First we had to do three designs and then we started to make our kites. Some of us nearly gave up on the way but we all kept trying. It was a challenging journey but in the end we were all successful. When we were done we went to the field and flew our kites. The kites flew high into the sky and everyone was enjoying it, with smiles on their faces. For some, it was their first time to fly a kite. We were all very proud of our designs.

By Sara 7B



- I was proud of my kite because it flew properly and because I finished it on time. This task showed me that everything is possible if you have persistence.

WALEED 7B

- I realized that if you manage your impulsivity when you are flying your kite then things have a better chance of working out fine. If your kite has a problem and if you stay calm instead of mad then you will be successful and have fun.

FUAD 7B

- I loved flying my kite because just looking up at it was like looking at 7 weeks of hard work: designing, drawing, taping, tying and building - all wrapped into one! In the end the hard work paid off and I was so proud when my kite was flying high in the sky.

SEB 7B



- Everyone enjoyed flying their kite and everyone succeeded by helping each other. Everyone tried something new.

HAYA 7B



- I realized I used striving for accuracy because I always checked it again and I improved my kite. If I didn't use this habit of mind I wouldn't be flying my kite as well as I did.

ZAHER 7B

- I was proud of my kite when I was finished. I learned that I have to be patient to get the kite finished.

TAMER 7B

Junior School News

Last week we were delighted with the numbers of parents at our Parent Teacher Interviews. These meetings and our initial Information Night help establish a positive Parent Teacher partnership between home and school early in the year. This Thursday, from 8.20 am to 10.00 am, we provide an opportunity for Junior School parents to visit the classroom to see the children in their learning environment. The students are excited about this event.

- **Thursday October 27**

8:20am to 10:00 am

Celebration of Learning.

* We look forward to seeing you in the classroom.

- **Wednesday October 26**

Under 11 Interschool Netball at VISS

- **Thursday November 17**

Junior School Assembly

hosted by Grade 2 at 1:40pm

Jan Senior

Head of Junior School

Personalised learning | Quality teaching | Excellence for all

Secondary School News

Grade 13 A students complete academic classes this week, and they commence their exams on November 3rd, this is a stressful time for students sitting their exams we wish them luck and we are confident that their learning at VISS has prepared them very well.

There is a current trend for students to purchase small ball bearing magnets. The items are banned in the Secondary School and are not permitted in school at any time. These toys are very dangerous and have some serious safety concerns.

Parent teacher interviews were very successful and we thank the many families who came to meet to the teachers and discuss your child/children individual performance. If you have any further questions or requirements please contact the Secondary School office.

PARENTS INFORMATION REGARDING BUYING AND SELLING ITEMS AT SCHOOL

Teachers report that they have found students **buying and selling** a number of items while at school. We would like to remind parents that this is **not permitted** while at school or on school grounds. Please discourage students from undertaking these activities as some of the items are **potentially dangerous**.

Important dates for Secondary School

- **October 25 – 27**
Mock Exams for Unit 4 students

- **October 27**
Celebration of Learning –
Grade 6 & 7 - 8:20am—10:20am

- **October 31**
Assembly - SRC

- **November 3—18**
VCE Exams

- **November 4—12**
EID holiday

- **November 21**
Graduation Assembly

- **November 24**
National day celebration

Dean Pyrah
Head of Secondary School

VISS Swimming Fundraiser for Somalia

VISS has scheduled a fundraiser for Somalia to take place during lunchtime on Sunday 30 October. We will be running a swimming competition whereby students will be able to challenge their teachers in a number of events. Students and teachers from Grade 2 to Grade 13 are permitted to compete.

Students who wish to watch the races will be asked to make a donation (minimum 5 dhs). This will be a mixed gender event. If you have any objections to your children attending as spectators, please speak with them and advise them not to attend.

Caroline O'Donnell
Careers Adviser

Grade 6 and 7 Parents...Come and see a class in action!!



We are inviting you to the Grade 6 and 7 area of the school to see a class in action and celebrate the learning of the students.

When: Thursday 27th October 2011
Where: Any Grade 6 or 7 classroom
Time: Between 8.30am and 10.30am

Please feel free to come along and see your children at work.

Dates for Your Diary

- **October 27**
Whole School Celebration of Learning (Whole School Open Day)
- **November 4 – 12**
Eid Al Adha (Holiday)
- **November 21**
Graduation Assembly—Year 13 Students Secondary School
- **November 22 – 23**
Grade 5 Camp— North Star
- **November 24**
National Day Celebration at VISS