

DBSEH

HALF-TERMLY JOURNAL

ENJOY • ASPIRE • ACHIEVE

MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Welcome to Issue 2 of the *Half-Termly Journal*, where we continue to unpack our strategic priorities and update you about the innovations that have taken place over the last half term.

With the weather cooling we have wasted no time in getting our students moving outside, in the interests of their physical wellbeing, with a highly engaging range of events to inspire members of our whole school community. Read our article from Ms Donovan to find out what this has looked like for our students from 3 to 18 years old.

Following on from our Parental Engagement article in the last issue, we have re-branded this strategic headline to become more ubiquitous; *Community* is what is so often referred to as setting us apart as a school, and Mr Potts' article perfectly exemplifies why this is the case.

Lying at the heart of all the decisions we make are our students' best interests. Read on to find out more about how we are enriching their school experience with a broad and exciting range of trips and visits.

Additionally, with our focus on student agency, we are celebrating those students who are leading the way in making an impact on the school community. We hope that these trailblazers inspire more students to follow in their footsteps.

Thank you for your continued support in ensuring that this first full term has been such a success as we re-boot school life, ensuring our students are getting the best possible experiences, and the highest quality of education post-pandemic. I wish you and your family a restful and enjoyable Winter Break and look forward to welcoming you back in 2023!



Sarah Reynolds
Principal



@dubaibritishsch



Dubai British School



@dubaibritishEH

WELLBEING

'Physical activity improves the mental health of students by reducing anxiety, stress, depression and increasing self-esteem. There is strong evidence physical education greatly helps youth self-esteem (2006). Youth who have active habits will enjoy higher levels of physical and mental health, and students will have greater chances of carrying these habits over into adulthood (2006).' O'Connor, 2021



WELLBEING

Supporting and empowering young people to proactively manage their wellbeing is central to our school ethos. Every day there are numerous opportunities for DBSEH students to tend to their mental and physical wellbeing and to develop habits that will serve them well in adult life.

One of our most recent events promoting regular activity is the Dubai Fitness Challenge. Now in its sixth year the Dubai Health Authority's '30 x 30 Challenge' puts forward a simple goal: complete 30 minutes of activity each day for 30 days. The aim is to inspire everyone to create a fitness-focused mindset and seek healthy, active lifestyles.



Dr Suhail Al Rukn, Neurologist and Head of the Stroke Unit at Rashid Hospital, says: "This initiative is like no-other. Seeing community members build a simple but highly effective routine of getting 30 minutes of exercise per day is something I feel grateful towards as a doctor."



Dubai British School Emirates Hills offered an extensive program of challenges and activities throughout the 30 days. We have worked to incorporate the amazing calendar of events around Dubai, including The Race to Dubai Golf, FIFA World Cup and supporting the Arab cross-channel rowing team.

WELLBEING

As part of their wider personal development, our students have learnt about planning for a healthy lifestyle and making time for activities to improve their physical, emotional and social health.

The culmination of this term's wellbeing, fitness and PE efforts was our Secondary Sports Day held on 30th November at the Dubai Police Academy, which was a wonderful celebration of our sporting excellence and an opportunity to come together as a community to work as House teams.



Sara Donovan
Director of PE & Sport



STUDENT AGENCY

'Students purposefully initiate and lead activities...their social contributions have positive effects on the wider community'.

*'Outstanding' criterion,
United Arab Emirates School Inspection Framework*

STUDENT AGENCY

A hallmark of excellence recognised by the Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau, the authentic undertaking of initiatives by students for the benefit of others, is a growing feature of our student body that very few other schools can proclaim.



As part of their Eco Leader roles last year, Clara and Ekaterina (now Year 7) took part in a competition to design a sustainable product. Their dog blankets made from recycled t-shirts saw them win 500dhs for the school, which they reinvested this term having noticed the number of disposable coffee cups being utilised at the canteen. With an estimated 4000 cups being thrown away per month the students approached a company to design a DBSEH-branded, reusable coffee cup for staff to purchase, to support us in being more sustainable. Now, with a growing entrepreneurial spirit, these young leaders are working with the canteen to agree a discounted coffee price for staff who bring their cups to be reused.



As you may have read in our weekly notices, Bohan in Year 12 has initiated her own project to ensure our community learns more about Chinese New Year, a highlight in the calendar of her home culture. She approached the school for financial and logistical support and has coordinated the efforts of our Chinese students and families to design a celebratory event for students, staff and parents to learn and enjoy in January 2023.

STUDENT AGENCY

Ozan, Yasmina, Layla and Mia (Year 4, Year 7 and Year 12 students) seized the opportunity to apply the skills they have been learning as part of the ASDAN curriculum, by designing, producing and selling greetings cards at our recent PTA Car Boot Sale. Sales were so positive that they are extending their range from general greetings to a festive focus for the upcoming winter break. Proceeds from the sales will be reinvested by the students as they see fit, to further support their entrepreneurial learning.

Leader of the Events Committee, Angus in Year 13's *raison d'être* is to raise funds for the Year 13 Grad Ball. This has seen him lead and coordinate events for the committee, including an enormously popular Friday afternoon ice-lolly sale to help our students skip into the weekend with a smile on their faces. Other events he has spearheaded have been a face-painting service for students on our Spooky Dress -Up Day and numerous bake sales throughout the term. We hope that his significant efforts prove fruitful for the end of year graduate celebrations.



Sarah Reynolds
Principal

OPPORTUNITY

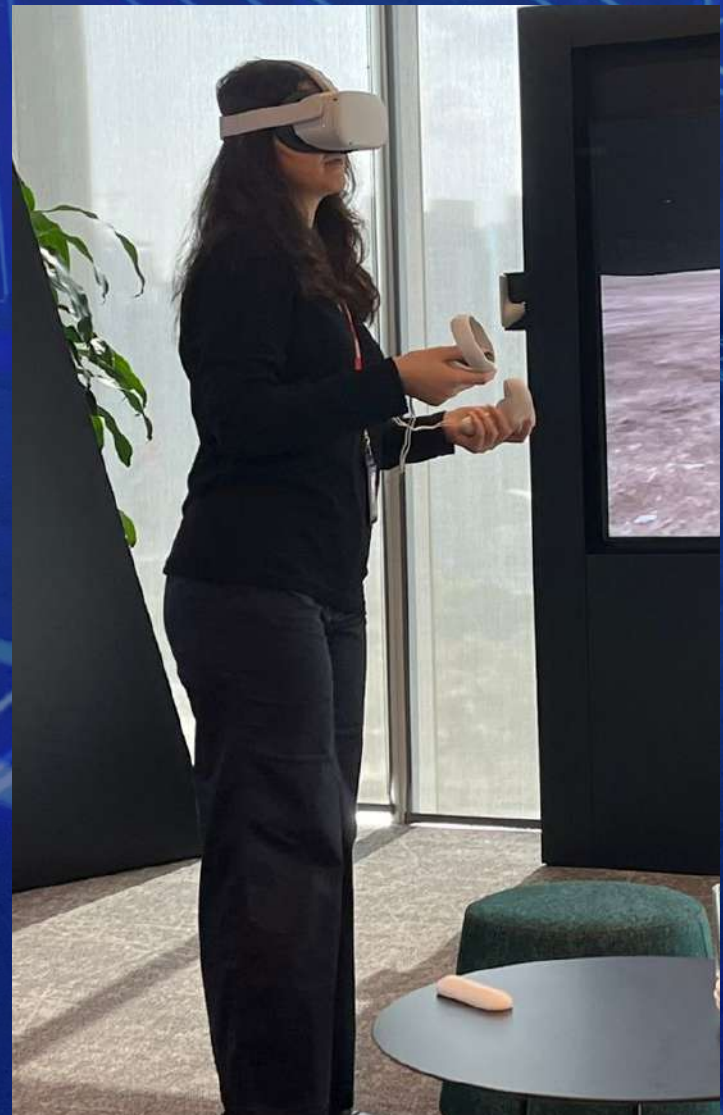
Experiential learning opportunities outside the classroom offer our students a range of contextualised 'hands on' experiences that are invaluable in deepening understanding, developing self-confidence and honing essential life skills.



Across the school, from FS1 to Year 13, a wealth of trips have taken place this half term, promoting and celebrating learning without walls. From a picnic in Barsha Park to high ropes in Hatta, a walking tour in old Dubai to experiencing life inside a rainforest at Green Planet, from investigating forces in roller coasters at Motiongate to role-playing 'real life' experiences in Kidzania, the change of environment and carefully planned activities have inspired and motivated our students (and teachers) to experience new things, be creative, take risks and think outside the box.



These themes continued with a variety of curriculum enriching trips and events for Secondary students including Sail GP, Innovation Lab at HSBC, Red Arrows Engineering at Herriot-Watt University, PICO Kids STEAM event, BSME Art and Photography competitions, and end of term bonding at places such as Ferrari World, Warner Bros. World and YAS Waterworld in Abu Dhabi.



OPPORTUNITY



After a three-year hiatus, the Year 6 children also embarked on their first school residential to Hatta. New friendships were forged and fostered over high rope challenges and snorkeling escapades, and the sense of independence and adventure further developed self-esteem, resilience, risk-taking and self-confidence.

Above all, long-lasting memories have been made and we look forward to many more being created next term and beyond!



Georgia Lavery
Head of Primary

INCLUSION

This half term, we are putting a spotlight on a key skill that is fundamental to a student's ability to learn, but often taken for granted: Communication.

Communication is a life skill that allows us to make meaningful connections with those around us. For this reason, it is vitally important to ensure that we model this both at school and home, especially in the early years. With this in mind, we would like to share some home activities.

USEFUL WEBSITES

<https://www.expressable.com/learning-center/tips-and-resources/15-speech-therapy-strategies-for-parents-to-use-at-home>

<https://speechandlanguageathome.com/sign-up>



Early Years (3-6 years)

- ‘What’s Wrong’ pictures. You can achieve this by cutting out familiar pictures of objects and sticking them behind/on top/under each other, for example an elephant sitting on an apple. Ask your child what is wrong and how to ‘fix it’.
- Odd one out game. Gather some objects from around the house, putting three objects out at a time, for example, apple, orange, spoon. Two of the objects fall into a similar or same category as each other, which you want your child to articulate, for example, “Apple and orange are fruits.” Adult modelling here can help extend language further by responding with “Yes that is correct, the spoon is the odd one because the other two are fruits.”
- Play games such as ‘Yes or No.’ Ask questions such as, "Are you Marty?" and "Can a pig fly?" Have your child make up questions and try to fool you.



Jacqueline Baxter
Head of Inclusion



COMMUNITY

‘Community’ is a word that never fails to pepper conversations on the topic of what sets DBSEH apart from other schools. Nestled within a vibrant residential milieu, our location, intimate campus, eager students, supportive parents, proactive PTA and passionate teachers create fertile ground indeed for a flourishing learning environment.

But a well-appointed habitat alone is not enough. It is the bonds nurtured through shared experiences and common values which build the trust, respect and cooperation required to form something as special as a community.

At DBSEH this term we have seen a wonderful array of collaborations and celebrations which serve to knit the fabric of our community together as we continue to relish our post-pandemic freedoms.



Our PTA car boot sale hosted over 50 vendors and hundreds of customers keen to strike deals on preloved items and hand-crafted wares, engaging with parents, students and members of the Springs and Meadows community.

Our medical team also launched the first in a series of pediatric basic first aid training for parents. Keep an eye out on the weekly notices to find out when the next session takes place.

Our academic team hosted a Diwali meal for support staff, the unsung heroes of the school, to support a special celebration marked by many of the team and their families back at home.



COMMUNITY

An opportunity to join our wider DBS partners came in the form of the DBSJP Community Football Tournament in which teams of parents, school staff and other Taaleem colleagues competed in what is hoped to be the inaugural event of an annual tournament series.

As the end of term draws close and winter festivities begin, we are delighted to welcome the PTA back through our doors as they host *Secret Santa*, a calendar highlight for some of our youngest students. And, for older students or parents who would like to get in on the festive action we have our annual *Giving Tree* in the foyer. An opportunity for us to give back to our community, this year to Hope Amel, supporting less fortunate families in Dubai this season – perhaps one of the most poignant examples of community we might hope to see.



DBS Alumni 10 year reunion

David Potts
Head of Secondary



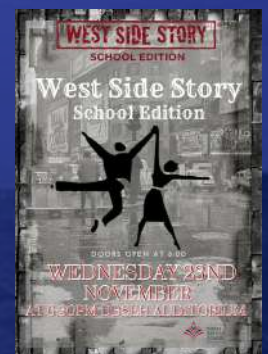
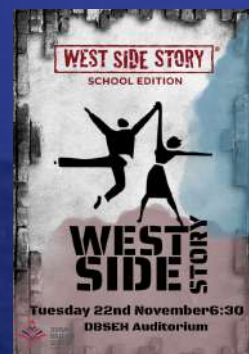
COMMUNITY



West Side Story – Our School Production

On the 22nd and 23rd November sell-out crowds were delighted by the talent and passion of our theatrical performers as showcased by our production of Westside Story. With moments of comedy brilliance, thrilling action and heart-rending tragedy, each underscored by wonderfully performed musical pieces, our students left their audiences invigorated and wanting more!

Huge thanks to all students and staff, cast and crew, who worked so hard to create such a special event, one which will provide so many happy memories for years to come and inspire younger students to continue DBSEH's strong and vibrant theatrical tradition.



EXCELLENCE

A culture of excellence pervades so much of life at DBSEH including academic excellence, sporting excellence and cultural excellence in the arts, that choosing where to focus is challenging. Our recent GCSE certificate presentation evening however gives us an excellent place to start!



This summer, in the first set of public examinations in 3 years, our students achieved an impressive set of GCSE and BTEC results with 26 students, 35% of the cohort, achieving the Outstanding Learner criteria by gaining five or more results at Grade 8 or 9.

Anna Dodson

Special mentions must go to Anna and Minseo, now in Year 12, for achieving the maximum possible of ten Grade 9s each at GCSE, with students Claudia and Ayah the next top achievers in the school, securing nine Grade 9s and a Grade 8 each.

Making headlines on a global scale, Michael has been recently announced as Silver Award winner for his BTEC IT work in Years 10 and 11. This award is open to all students studying BTECs globally with only a handful of students achieving this prestigious award worldwide. Similarly, Is-Haaq attained the highest score in the Middle East in his GCSE Geography examinations.



EXCELLENCE

Moving on to our recent Year 13 cohort, amongst an impressive haul of A Level and BTEC results for our now-graduated students, Jasmine and Christina excelled by attaining three A*'s and one A grade each, and Aarnav also gained three A*'s at A Level. Michael and Aaliyah also attained three starred distinctions (D*'s) each in their BTEC results.

An impressive 30% of our Year 13 cohort attained three As or A*'s at A Level or three Distinctions or D* at BTEC, also meeting the criteria of Outstanding Learner.



Our graduates gained places at prestigious destinations such as the University of Oxford, the London School of Economics, and Imperial College London with 47% of UK applicants taking up a place at a Russell Group university. Most impressively, a massive 94% of our most recent graduates secured places at their first-choice university, proving that our post-16 provision supports students in following the path that they are most passionate to pursue.



Sheridan Teasel
Deputy Head of Secondary

DBSEH

HALF-TERMLY JOURNAL

ENJOY • ASPIRE • ACHIEVE