



Thursday 06th May

RE: Secondary Update

Dear Parents / Carers

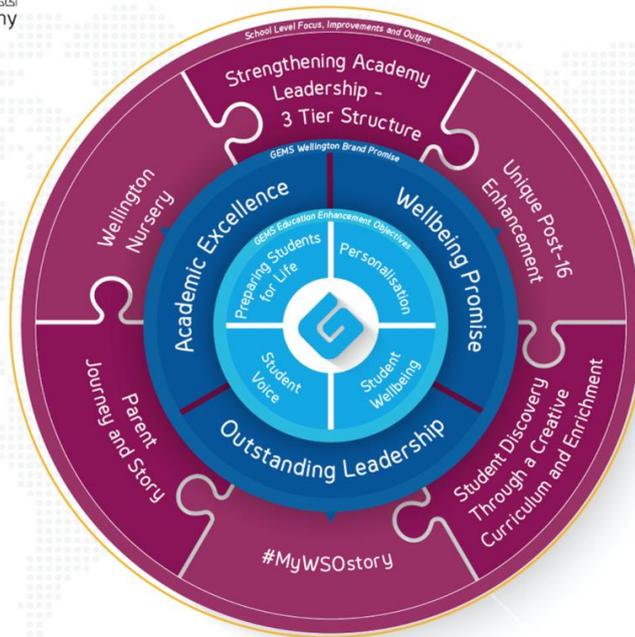
I hope this letter finds you well.

India Situation

Our thoughts and sympathies are extended to staff and community who are impacted by the current situation in India. We know that we have many who are connected to the situation directly or indirectly and we continue to offer support where we can. If we can be of any support to you and your family, please reach out to our Counselling Team who will be only too happy to offer their guidance.

WSO Vision Part 2

Last week we shared with you the graphic for the Wellington Vision and I include it here again for your reference. With the Parent Survey scheduled for May, the focus will be on the four areas near the centre – Preparing Students for Life, Student Voice, Student Wellbeing and Personalisation. Last week I elaborated a little on Student Voice and Student Wellbeing. This week, we would like to share some of our work in relation to the other two quadrants.



Wellington
Vision
2021-2024





Personalisation

The addition of our timetabled “All About Me” is a new initiative this year designed to create time for students to choose how to utilise a block of time. Independence, self-motivation and organisation are key to this time and young people need to be offered the opportunity to develop and practice these skills. Curriculum support material is provided, alongside curated media from different sources as stimulus material for personal learning and there is always home-learning and/or revision to help students plan their time. Staff are in attendance to support at all times. I also would like to highlight our Enrichment Programme – 2 hours on Monday afternoons. A comprehensive network of opportunities to extend, challenge, enjoy and bring smiles to faces of students at all levels. Creative Corner, Word Warriors, Tech Titans, Gaming Garage, Grow Gang, Media Monsters and Math Mania are some of the groupings of activities your children will engage with during the term.

Preparing Students for Life

The UAE Moral curriculum encompasses material for discussion around personal values and interrelationships. From Year 7, students engage in conversations and case studies designed to support the development of their own values and principles for life. At the upper end of the school Key Stage 4 and 5, our dedicated Careers Counsellor offers face to face sessions, online material, university visits and overall guidance as to options for study and living abroad. In the last two years with the disruption to exams, we have designed and delivered ‘Life Skills’ to Year 11-13 students. I also want to shine a light on our IST staff who design and deliver the internationally recognised ASDAN programme, and functional skills in English and Maths to our students of determination. Appropriately designed content and targets for ALL students is essential, no more so than our students with diagnosed needs

Year 11 Communication

Earlier this week, Helen Hurford sent a comprehensive email to parents of Year 11 students covering organisation and opportunities between now and the end of their year. Please access this and read thoroughly. Any questions can be directed to h.hurford_wso@gemsedu.com

Assessment in Term 3 - update

There have been many changes, and communications about those changes, to the external assessments of Year 11 and 13 students this year. The strategy has been to support all of our students academically and emotionally, and in response to the changing situation we have regularly made slight changes to assessment schedules. The final changes and decisions were communicated from the UK government, the IB and the KHDA in April. Parents of Year 11 and Year 13 students have been receiving separate emails about these and you should make sure you have read all of them.

I want to share with you (attached to this letter) the up-to-date assessment schedules for the other year groups in Secondary (Year 7 to 10). As always, there are ongoing in class assessment tasks (CFUs) that are used to assess whether students are achieving curriculum standards, but these schedules highlight where there are additional, larger assessments in different lessons. There is only one period of mock assessment that is intensive and interrupts normal curriculum delivery, and that is for **Year 12 between 16 May and 27 May**. For Year 10, we are going to administer formal mock exams in September 2021 (when they are in



Year 11), and during another period in Term 2 of next academic year. This is to provide the most rigorous and helpful build up to what we anticipate will be a normal, traditional examination period in summer 2022.

For Year 7 to 10, we will also be running the standardised tests in English, Mathematics and Science that are administered every year at this time, the GL **Progress Tests**. These will happen in class from the week beginning 30 May, and the testing period will last for three weeks. A detailed timetable will be shared with your children directly in class and arrangements for remote learners to come in for the tests will be communicated with you over the next two weeks.

Little Mermaid at the QE2

We would like to draw to your attention to an upcoming show featuring WSO Students, Amelia and Rhian Arnott. In conjunction with a UK-based crew, the girls are part of the local talent that bring to you The Little Mermaid. There is a school discount code for your convenience 'SCHOOL10'. Link to booking [here](#).

School Camps Abroad

[Camps International](#) are an organisation WSO have an ongoing relationship with, as the provider of successful school excursions abroad. They have asked us to share this [SURVEY](#) with you, where they are attempting to scope family readiness for such trips. We would appreciate your support in completing this, so we may again add these lifelong memory opportunities back into our students' school experience.

Re-enrolment for 2021/22 Academic Year

Thank you to the significant number of families that have re-enrolled for 2021/22. We are looking forward to continuing the relationships and educational journey with you. Preparations for next year are well underway and we need to be placing students in classes and houses. We can only do this with those that are re-enrolled. We would appreciate your attention to this process. You may receive a phone call soon regarding this matter and if you have any questions please contact s.christiansen_wso@gemsedu.com

For your interest

This week, a [30-minute video](#) from the Harvard Graduate School of Education. The discussion offers some thoughts on the future of education given what we have and are learning from the pandemic. Once again, the value of social & emotional learning (Wellbeing) alongside the academic side of schools.

Entitled *"A discussion on how the pandemic is reshaping education, and how we can move toward a more holistic and relationship-centered model of education, where deeper learning can thrive"*, it case studies

The value of these articles is to both challenge AND affirm our practices at WSO.

As always, I welcome your feedback – about this article or any aspect of your child's experience with us. Please email me on a.kaifong_wso@gemsedu.com

Our thanks again for your ongoing support. Please email me on a.kaifong_wso@gemsedu.com if you have any queries.



Wishing you a safe Spring Break
Sincerely

Andy Kai Fong
Secondary Principal



May	GEMS Parent Survey Part 2 – This will be sent to parents directly from GEMS. Please refer to CEO letter sent earlier this week.
Sunday 09th May	New Parent Community Zoom - Information has been shared directly with Term 3 new starters.
Tuesday 11th Thursday – 13th May	Possible closure due to Eid Al Fitr (end of Ramadan celebration)
WC 16th May	Arabic Culture Week- across Academy
Tuesday - 18th May	Parent Engagement – GCSE Options what to consider?
Wednesday – 19th May	Parent Engagement- IB, A-Level or BTEC – What consider when supporting your child’s Post 16 Pathway
Monday - 24th May	Year 13 Graduation.
Tuesday – 25th May	Parent Engagement - The Importance of Languages