



Dear Parents,

I hope this newsletter finds you well and I apologise from the start for such a long letter, however please read to the end as we have much to share.

The start of the academic year seems to have flown by and it is hard to believe that we are nearly at the midterm break. Even with the break, we will still continue to work, completing the **GL assessments in Maths, English and Science** that are being conducted over the next 3 weeks. These results are part of the external moderated assessments that help guide our school and individual students progress and attainment over time. This, along with the internal assessments we conduct, help us **see the whole student**, not just relying on one assessment that can never truly tell us the whole picture of the child and his or her potential academic, social and emotional journey.

This term you will note we have not run our regular **Parent Volunteer or Ambassador Programme**. Normally the Parent Volunteers and Ambassadors would complete a one-hour workshop (2 year valid course) provided by the school (Child Protection, Fire, Lockdown and Health and Safety). Parent Volunteers and by default Parent Ambassadors once completing the training are able to work within the school with students at school, on excursions or the like. The Parent Ambassador is your voice and they are giving of their time freely. They are there to help provide guidance in particular when new parents arrive in the year group, are advocates for the school at all times and feed your concerns or feedback to CIPA, who talk directly to the Senior Leadership Team. The large majority of the time, concerns and feedback run via the class teacher, then the Head of Year or Department and then onto the Senior Leadership Team. If you are unsure of your Parent Ambassador please do not hesitate to contact Ms Pooja, the school's Parent Relations Executive, who will provide the contact details.

This academic year, these workshops have been **postponed** due to the *new normal* that we find ourselves in! However, Inshallah, at the beginning of next term we will be able to start this up again. Also note that in Week 2 every term we also run an IT on boarding for all new and existing parents, so always look out for this. We recently completed training with over 100 parents participating in the webinar.

So, some things will remain inconvenient. Someone will likely tell you the wrong information at least once and there will be procedures you don't like. However, **the priority** for all of us is keeping our **school community as safe as possible at all times**. We understand that this will cause challenges, but it is the only way to protect each other. The school and all staff have strictly followed the health and safety guidelines from the KHDA and DHA to ensure that we can re-open safely.

So, I urge you, please keep your masks on, hands to yourself and social distancing at all times and please teach your children these simple things. Don't think this virus has left us. We need to live with it, but living with it means we have to be vigilant about how we conduct ourselves...all the time.

At the beginning of the year, I want to remind you of **Our School Purpose** as outlined in the Netflix series, on the **school website**. Please take some time to review our purpose as this is your purpose as well and was largely developed by you, the school community.



Our Values

RESPECT | EMPATHY | HONESTY | RESPONSIBILITY | PERSEVERANCE

Our Vision

At CIS we strive for excellence in all that we do; through aspirational expectations and highly effective feedback

Our Mission

At CIS it is our mission to create students who are emotionally resilient, flexible and inspired to reach their unique potential. We aim to inspire students to be independent thinkers that will make an active and positive contribution to society, creating a more peaceful world.

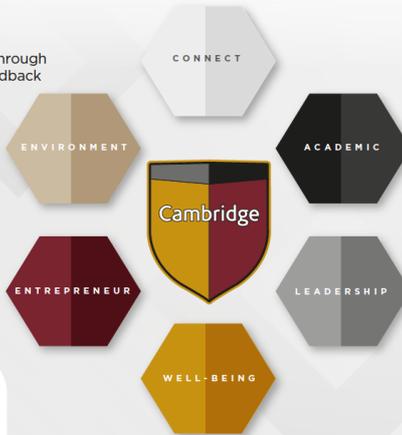
Corporate Social Responsibility



CIS interacts ethically with the whole business ecosystem ensuring sustainable procurement

CIS respects human rights, commits to health, safety and well-being of all its staff, students, parents and wider community

CIS intends to mitigate climate change and limit the school environmental impact on society



SPiRiT

Common vision, true dialogue, Corporate Social Responsibility

VALUES

Expectations, common values, customer & staff satisfaction

CAPABILITY

Imagination, Innovation, abilities, knowledge, procedures, training, performance, service

BEHAVIOUR

How we treat each other, what people talk about, our reactions and interactions

ENVIRONMENT

Physical surroundings, buildings, potential customers and partners

Everyone has the right to...

Everyone has the right to learn

Everyone has the right to be treated with respect

Everyone has the right to learn and play in a safe environment

This academic year promises to offer **further opportunities** for us to explore ways in which we can innovate our practice to optimise learning for all our students as we embark on the **High Performance Learning World Class School Award**. As mentioned we are focusing now and into the future, on 'High Performance Learning' (HPL). HPL focuses on two main areas. How we behave to learning (VAA's - Values, Attitudes and Attributes) and how we think about learning (ACP's – Advanced Cognitive Performance). Both the VAA's and ACP's interact with one another and are clearly defined for students.

<p>High Performance Learning</p> <p>Advanced Cognitive Performance Characteristics</p> <p>HOW TO THINK</p> <p>Values, Attitudes and Attributes</p> <p>HOW TO BEHAVE</p>	<p>VAA's (How to Behave):</p> <p>Empathetic - Collaborative, Concerned for society, Confident</p> <p>Hardworking - Practice, Perseverance, Resilience</p> <p>Agile - Enquiring, Creative and enterprising, Open-minded, Risk-taking</p>	<p>ACP Characteristics (How to think):</p> <p>Creating - Intellectual playfulness, Flexible thinking, Fluent thinking, Originality, Evolutionary or revolutionary thinking</p> <p>Meta-thinking - Meta-cognition, Self-regulation, Strategy planning, Intellectual confidence</p> <p>Linking - Connection finding, Generalisation, Imagination, 'Big picture' thinking, Seeing alternative perspectives, Abstraction</p> <p>Analysing - Critical or logical thinking, Precision, Complex and multi-step problem solving</p> <p>Realising - Automaticity, Speed and accuracy</p>
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Schools already in our network that have achieved World Class Status include GEMS Royal Dubai School, Jumeirah College, GEMS Jumeirah Primary School & GEMS Wellington International School.

Those Schools in GEMS that are on the road with us for the next 2 years include GEMS Cambridge International School Abu Dhabi, The Cambridge High School Abu Dhabi, GEMS Wellington Academy-AI Khail, GEMS Founders School - Al Mizhar and GEMS Founders School – Dubai.

This is a **landmark time** as we completed last year the iFoundation Programme, an introduction to HPL that we are already seeing the **academic results**, as you will see further in this bulletin. I am **extremely excited with the progress we have made**, not only last year but over the last 4 years. I have always said that we should accept when we go in the wrong direction and acknowledge and make adjustments, yet we also must celebrate success.

Further celebration is recognising our record-breaking results, with students achieving amazing A and AS Level results this year. As you can see below, **the 4 year trend is impressive** and worth celebrating.

CIS Value Add _ Four Years Trend						
		Summer June 2017	Summer June 2018	Summer June 2019	Summer June 2020	Value Add (VA) 2020
A Level	A*	9.33%	13.27%	14%	21%	(+) 7%
A Level	A*-A	25.4%	32.0%	33%	43%	(+) 10
A Level	A*-B	46.1%	53.4%	54%	67%	(+) 13
A Level	A*-C	73.8%	76.2%	78%	91%	(+) 13
A Level	A*-E	99.1%	98.0%	98%	99%	(+) 1%
		Summer June 2017	Summer June 2018	Summer June 2019	Summer June 2020	Value Add (VA) 2020
IGCSE	A*	22.60%	22.40%	18%	25%	(+) 7%
IGCSE	A*-A	41.4%	45.0%	43%	47%	(+) 4%
IGCSE	A*-B	60.4%	66.4%	71%	72%	(+) 1%
IGCSE	A*-C	79.3%	82.6%	87%	90%	(+)3%
IGCSE	A*-E	94.7%	95.5%	96%	99%	(+) 3%
IGCSE	A*-G	99.2%	99.2%	99%	100%	(+) 1%

We continue to keep our students in what is called a **Flow State**, where they are challenged yet are still able to achieve. This is our job to keep them in this state.

Never satisfied with the status quo, this year we have **embarked on another journey** applying for the **International Schools Well-Being award and the International Schools SEND Inclusion award**. Both awards are extremely difficult to achieve and the purpose of informing you about these awards is to ensure as a team we all are aiming for the same goal and that we achieve this award and make our journey remarkable. It helps us target key areas of school improvement and demonstrate our outstanding provision to the KHDA and key stakeholders.

This whole-school award leads schools through a process of self-evaluation, action planning and evidence collection before verification and accreditation. The awards have a focus on 'impact and outcomes' for pupils so that schools can demonstrate specific and wider impacts of Well-Being and SEND policies and interventions.

The SENDIA Award;

This award helps schools deliver high-quality education for pupils with SEND. Compliant with the SEND Code of Practice, the award framework focuses on removing barriers to learning through early identification, inclusive teaching and leadership. It will also allow us to evaluate impact to improve classroom practice and pupil outcomes. It will also provide a framework for recognising outstanding SEND provision and help our school establish strengths and areas of improvement in our SEND provision and target areas of development.

With this award, we will:

- Identify SEN - use the graduated approach of 'Assess, Plan, Do Review' to successfully identify and work with pupils with SEND
- Compliance - demonstrate that our provision complies with the SEND Code of Practice and other key legislation
- Leadership - create strong and effective leadership and management of SEND provision
- Professional development - commit to high-quality, on-going training, coaching and mentoring for all staff across the school
- Pupil and parental engagement- involve pupils and parents in decisions about SEND provision and support
- Pupil outcomes - ensure effective everyday teaching and learning for SEND pupils across the school

The Well-Being Award;

There is a multitude of comprehensive objectives to achieve within the Wellbeing Award. The award focuses on ensuring effective practice and provision is in place that promotes the emotional wellbeing and mental health of both staff and pupils. The focus of the award is on changing the long-term culture of a school, and embedding an ethos where mental health is regarded as the responsibility of all.

With this award, we will:

- Promote mental health as part of every day school life
- Improve the emotional wellbeing of their staff and pupils
- Ensure mental health problems are identified early and appropriate support provided
- Offer provision and interventions that matches the needs of its pupils and staff
- Raise awareness of the importance of mental health awareness
- Capture the views of parents, pupils and teachers on mental health issues

This time is historical, not only as a world, but also as a school. This week ends the relationship with CIS Al Garhoud, as the campus is now officially closed, and a new chapter of the Cambridge International School Dubai continues at an enhanced campus at Al Twar. It is with mixed emotions that we say farewell, yet also say hello to a new future.

In the last 2 weeks we have also **welcomed back 650 students** to face to face learning. Again we have continued to adjust our on campus programme, in particular the entry and exit of the building that we now have fine-tuned. Now I ask parents to help remembering that our focus at all times is the health and safety of all our children. **The most dangerous aspect of our egress is actually parents**. Parents driving on the road who, for saving one minute, will park illegally, pick up on the Zebra crossing or u-turn in the middle of the street. It does not matter which way you come into 15th Street (in front of the school) as you exit to Damascus Street will always be the same. Just drive around the block please - **an extra minute may save a life**. As systems begin to return to the new normal later in the year, this will become more of a safety concern without parent support.

As mentioned earlier we will be **running tours** for you in the near future. These will be run at present on a Wednesday afternoon in groups of no more than 10. This is clearly for health and safety regulations, and working alongside the number of contractors we have here most evenings and weekends. Look out for your invite.

I now leave you for this week. Be safe, be generous, be forgiving.

“Take some time out to leave thank you notes for friends or family, hold a door open for someone or just randomly show an act of kindness.”

Sincerely,



Lachlan MacKinnon
CEO/Principal

Fortune Favours the Brave