



## Keeping in Touch

Ref. No. KIT 006 – 27Feb24

On behalf of the Principal and CEO, Srivalsan Murugan

27 February 2024

“All dreams are within reach. All you have to do is keep moving towards them.” – Viola Davis

Dear Parent,

We have stepped into the promising embrace of 2024 and we extend our warmest wishes for a year filled with joy, growth, and abundant opportunities for your families. With the dawn of a new year comes the anticipation of fresh beginnings, renewed aspirations, and the excitement of uncharted learning adventures. In this edition of Keeping In Touch, we are thrilled to share with you the happening at our school since the last edition.

**Awards and Accolades:** The pursuit of excellence knows no bounds and it brings immense pleasure to announce the distinguished achievements of our students. Samford Sebin of grade 10F, secured the prestigious *Sharjah Excellence Award for Distinguished Student*, showcasing excellence in academics, talents, innovation, and social responsibility. Additionally, Adithya Anush of grade 9E received the esteemed *Hamdan Award for Distinguished Student* in the Academic Category, a true testament to his excellence in academics and extra-curricular activities. Congratulations to both for their unwavering dedication and commitment to the journey of excellence.

**Sports Arena:** Through unwavering commitment and spirited endeavors, our students have achieved remarkable feats in various sporting arenas. Geon Jibi, a dynamo in grade 9, made waves at the 34th South Zone Aquatic Championship 2023, representing Kerala, by securing 4 Bronze and 2 Silver medals. His triumph continued at the Speedo competition at Hamdan Sports Complex, clinching 3 silver medals in 100m and 200m backstroke, 200m freestyle, and an impressive silver in 400m freestyle. Geon also achieved gold in the 50m freestyle and 50m backstroke, along with a silver in the 50m butterfly at The Millennium School Swimming Gala in the under-16 category.

Our junior athletics team consisting of 16 athletes participated in the 2nd Sundeep Batavia Inter School Athletic Meet 2023 held at Delhi Private School, Sharjah, and brought home many medals in various categories.

**Under-13 Category:** Numan Ahamed of 7B bagged gold medals for 80M and 80M Hurdles. He was also awarded the Individual Champion title in the U-13 Boys category. Affan Aboobacker of 7G was placed 5<sup>th</sup> in the shot-put. Our U-13 boys' team did exceptionally well as they won the gold medal in the 4x80M relay.

**Under-11 Category:** A silver medal was won by Aman Vijith of 5H in the 80M Hurdles, whilst Hanok Mathew bagged the gold medal in the shot-put.

**Under-9 Category:** Sayyad Affan from Grade 3A won the silver medal in the 50M hurdles and our U9 boys' team won the bronze medal in the 4x50M relay.

Zeeshan Backer of 9G demonstrated stellar performance in the Boys Badminton Singles and Doubles finals with Hariharan Sundarapandian of grade 10H at the Gems Legacy Cup Season 8, showcasing unmatched skill and teamwork. Zeeshan further excelled at the Universal and Nurture UAE Badminton Gold Junior Championship 2023, securing 2nd place in U15 Doubles and reaching the Semi-finals in Singles. Aayush Kamath of 8D won the runner-up certificate and medal in the under-14 boys' singles badminton tournament in Badminton Blitz 2024 organised by Westford Sports Internal Badminton Tournament.

The U-13 team of GEMS Our Own English High School Sharjah boys for clinching victory in the Gems Legacy Cup Inter School Football Tournament 2023-24 - Season 8.

OOB emerged victorious in the Sharjah Emirates DP World ILT20 U19, securing a thrilling win against IHS Dubai. In addition, our cricket prowess shone in the Skyline U19 Cricket Champions, with Karan Dhiman earning the well-deserved title of Man of the Match. Heartfelt congratulations to our outstanding players for their remarkable achievements on the cricket field.

**Mathematical Brilliance:** In the realm of numbers and equations, our school has consistently thrived, fostering a culture of mathematical brilliance and intellectual achievement. Adding to our mathematical accomplishments, our students excelled in the League of Logic Competition organized by Ei, where Ayaan Ayoosh (5B) and Shreyas Shankar(9G) clinched the Gold Medal and Kayden Dsouza (6I) and Haaris Ahmad (6F) secured the Bronze Medal, further reinforcing our commitment to nurturing logical thinking and problem-solving skills.

**Art and Literature:** Dedicated to nurturing imagination and communication skills, our school has achieved remarkable milestones in the enchanting realms of art, writing, and public speaking. Saad Mustafa from 11A exhibited exceptional talent and dedication by securing third place in the Arabic poem recitation competition at GEMS Modern Academy, showcasing his prowess in the linguistic arts. At the MSS National Day Celebration competitions, our students showcased their versatile skills with Nabhya Kunal Sharma (6D) securing second place in the Public Speaking Competition, and Kayden Dsouza winning second place in the Mono-acting competition. In the realm of languages, Abdullah Zameel (6G), Kevin Ciju (7G) & Bilal Biju (8H) secured the 2nd prize in The Art of French Cuisine and Sarang Varma (8H) & Advait Biju (8H) won the 2nd prize for Malayalam at Lingua Espléndida 2023. Furthermore, our students from Junior Middle and Senior Middle claimed the second position at the Science A cappella Song Competition, highlighting their excellence in scientific and musical fusion. Our commitment to storytelling was underscored by the VoFG Children's Story Writing Workshop conducted by Ms. Loise Arabis and Ms. Shama Noman. This workshop aimed to equip our budding storytellers with essential skills to excel in the art of storytelling. In the visual arts domain, Shiva Srinivasan (11B) and Ashwin S.K. (8B) emerged as winners in the Generation Global 'The World at Your Fingertips' Photo Contest, showcasing their photographic prowess and visual storytelling skills. Our talented student, Mohammed Zaahir Jaleel, from 10H, clinched 3rd place in the 15-17-year category at the Oxford University Press Story Writing Competition 2024 by Emirates Literature Foundation. His story, 'A Horizon of Hope,' is now published in this year's compilation, 'Beginnings,' a testament to the literary brilliance we strive for at OOB. In the Ministry of Education's sixth edition of "Masterpieces 2023," spotlighting gifted students in arts, OOB's Sreehari Nair (10F) represented India among 60 participants, excelling and qualifying for the prestigious 2024 Masterpieces Summer Camp—an exciting journey indeed. Abdullah Nasir of 8G and Talha Mustafa of 6F showcased their excellence by securing 3rd place (Category 5) and 2nd place (Category 4), respectively, at the WSS Inter School Quran and Hadeeth Competition. Shrivardhan Sanil of 8E won the runner-up prize at the Scope competition, in the Green Canvas junior category, which was held online. Sarang Varma of 8H received a Certificate of Appreciation for bagging the 2nd prize at the Public Speech contest, at the MSS UAE Fest 2023.

**Innovation and Sustainability:** Our school takes immense pride in a diverse array of accomplishments, ranging from impactful community service initiatives to cutting-edge innovative projects, highlighting the multifaceted talents and achievements of our students. In a noteworthy feat, 75 students from our school participated across 17 categories in the 7th edition of the GEMS Global Innovation Challenge (GIC), securing 2 gold, 6 silver, and 1 bronze. These young minds directed their focus toward developing groundbreaking innovations that contribute to achieving the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. The gold winners have earned the privilege to attend a one-day Boot Camp conducted by industry experts, showcasing their commitment to pushing the boundaries of innovation. As part of

SCOPE 23, hosted by GEMS Legacy School Dubai, in the Green Shorts (Sub-Junior) segment, the team comprising Mohammad Sadiq (5G), Ayan Saleel (5H), and Hrishabh Sudheesh (5G) clinched the First Runners-Up position, exemplifying our students' excellence in diverse arenas. Innovation and creativity were further exemplified as Kayden D'souza (6I) and Annirudh Ganesh (5G) claimed first place at ASPAM's Inno Green-Camelback to Cadillac 2023-24 competition, a testament to their inventive prowess. Amarnath Sreevalsan (8E), Aditya Anush (9E), Aditya Rajesh (9G) and Hamad Baig (7F) participated in the Global COP28 simulation at the Conference of Youth organized by UNICEF, Save the Children & Youngo at Expo City Dubai. Anish Jena of 8C participated in the Clean UAE campaign organized by the Emirates Environment Group (EEG) under the patronage of the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment. Hamad Aamir Baig of 7F clinched first place in "The Big Green Lesson Environmental Sustainability Quizzes" held by the United Arab Emirates, Ministry of Education as part of the training session for COP28 Net Zero Heroes. Aditya Rajesh (9G), Hamad Aamir Baig (7F), Adithya Anush (9E) & Amarnath Sreevalsan (8E) were felicitated as Net Zero Heroes, championing the cause of a more climate-conscious world by Mr. Eltayeb Adam, UNICEF Gulf's representative in the presence of H.E. Dr. Amna Al Dahak (MOE).

**Quizzing:** Showcasing intellectual prowess, Ashwin Aneesh Babu (6C) alongside Amarnath Sreevalsan (8E), Adithya Anush (9E), and Gokul Prasath (7B) secured the First Runners-Up position in the Emirates National Inter-School India Quiz Competition.

#### **On-Campus Activities:**

Within our vibrant school community, in-house activities serve as catalysts for shaping well-rounded individuals beyond the classroom. On 13 December 2023, we captivated the audience with yet another successful edition of our **Annual School Concert 'Eye' conic-** a fitting tribute to the obstacles faced by the visually challenged and their tenacity, grit, perseverance, and persistence to overcome them.

Highlighting our commitment to intellectual discourse, our school recently hosted the Third Edition of the **Madam Mariamma Varkey Commemorative Debate for Teachers**. Twenty eloquent orators from 10 GEMS Education schools engaged in an intellectual duel, armed with diverse perspectives, challenging the status quo. Expertly moderated by Dr. Sangeeth Ibrahim, Senior Director and Head of the Financial Academy at the Department of Finance, Government of Abu Dhabi, the event featured distinguished judges, including Ms. Annie Mathew, Principal of Little Flower School, Dubai, Ms. Nasreen Abdullah, Special Correspondent at Khaleej Times, and Mr. Shreya Onkar, an alumnus of OOB currently studying law.

**Sports Spectacular:** The **Middle School** held its sports day on January 31st with over 700 students participating, themed 'Bila Hudood' (without limit). Mr Basil Hameed, UAE National Cricket player was the chief guest for the day. The 'A Safari for a Greener Tomorrow' theme made the **Kindergarten Sports Day** a huge success. The young participants, comprising children from KG 1 and KG 2, showcased an impressive display of 'Kalari, Karate, and Gymnastics.' The event featured an exciting blend of drill, Zumba, and Aerobics, demonstrating remarkable coordination and precision.

**Arabic Week** celebrations featured diverse activities, including story-reading sessions, a parade, and show-and-tell sessions.

**Milestone moment:** Our Grade 12 students enjoyed a memorable overnight camp on November 23, 2023, filled with camaraderie, learning, and fun, reflecting the theme "**Friendship for Life**." The enchanting evening of February 1, 2024, saw us bid a heartfelt adieu to the distinguished Class of '24 at the **Grade 12 Farewell - Erebos'24**, organized by the Class of '25, showcasing meticulous planning and thoughtful execution. On February 5, we celebrated the culmination of the academic journey with the graduation ceremony, graced by the presence of the proud parents of our Grade 12 students.

The **Parent Advisory Council** meeting on January 6th saw dynamic discussions with parent representatives actively voicing opinions, fostering a vibrant and engaging session.

**In Conversation with:** Our school had the privilege to interact with Mr. Basavraj Umrani, a mathematics maestro, whose excellence transforms calculations into a mesmerizing art form. His indomitable spirit displays that true victories unfold only through perseverance. Let's live to inspire before we expire – a melody that resonates with his soul. The interactive session with Mr. Anand Raj Anand, Editor of Friday magazine, allowed students to explore the dynamic world of media and journalism, leaving a lasting impression.

The Spelling Bee Competition '**WordSmith**', an electrifying event orchestrated by the English Department, was a resounding triumph! This exhilarating competition engaged students across all grades in a captivating battle of spellings.

**Brain Battle:** Knowledge and learning indisputably has no barriers and it is this unrestrained pursuit that inexorably surges on through the Look Who Answering initiative which straddles KG 2 & Grades 1-12. The year-long programme which aims at igniting the spark of curiosity amongst the student community witnessed the grand finale of the various Quiz pots, which was truly a culmination of the battle of the minds vying for the title of the Look Who's Answering Champion.

Congratulations to the LWA Champions of the year 2023-2024!

Group I (Grades 1 & 2) -Shaurya Menghani- 1E , Group II (grades 3 & 4)- Roshin Rajesh Chilamban- 4 C, Group III (Grades 5 & 6)- Ashwin Aneesh Babu - 6 C, Group IV (Grades 7 & 8)- Umair Uddin Muhammad- 8 A, Group V (Grades 9 & 10 ) -Adithya Anush - 9 E , Group VI (Grades 11 & 12) -Manav Pandey-11 D

Our school implicitly believes that **Care, Optimism, Resilience, and Empathy**(CORE) form the basis of the wellbeing edifice of the institution. The commitment of the school towards wellbeing resonates in the participation of the **Wellbeing Award** for Schools, a prestigious recognition offered by Optimus Education which is aligned with the school's vision to create a nurturing and supportive environment that nurtures an enabling environment for each individual associated with the institution.

Our school is a participant in the **Health Promoting School**(HPS)initiative. The venture aims at promoting health and wellbeing amongst all stakeholders thus augmenting wellness in the community.

**The Family First** movement was successfully launched on 8th February, in a wonderful event at GEMS World Academy – Dubai, which was graced by the presence of His Highness Sheikh Nahyan Bin Mubarak Al Nahyan, and other esteemed guests at GEMS World Academy – Dubai. Please find the video that captures the highlights of the launch – [FF\\_EVENT\\_0209\\_LONG\\_SUBS.mp4](#)

Family First has been conceived as a movement of love and care that is already gathering momentum and will continue to grow through your support and thrive through collective action.

**Hag Al Laila:**The Arabic Department organized a vibrant Hag Al Laila celebration on February 22nd, 2024, immersing the staff in the rich cultural heritage of the UAE and the broader Arab world. The event aimed to enhance staff well-being, cultivate cultural pride, bolster linguistic skills, and deepen understanding of Arab culture. Overall, it was a colorful event featuring traditional music, dance, food, and more.

**Professional Development:** On 11 February 2024, our staff and the Counsellor attended an interschool workshop organized by the Emirates National School, Sharjah which focused on contemporary challenges affecting societal mental health. As the keynote speaker, Mr. Srivalsan Murugan, Principal & CEO, delved into the changing dynamics of family structures and the general influence of technology on upbringing, emphasizing the role of teachers in addressing these challenges and instilling positive values in students.

School Counsellor, Ms. Sandhya Nair, and Middle School Supervisor (grades 7 & 8), Mr. Shane J Alliew attended a workshop titled 'Nurturing Giftedness through Ei's ASSET Talent Search Programme', held at Movenpick Hotel, Bur Dubai.

**CBSE Conference:** The Principal attended the CBSE Gulf Sahodaya Annual Conference at Colombo from 7th to 10th Feb. The theme of the conference was 'VISIONARY LEADERSHIP IN TIMES OF CHANGE'. The Principal had the opportunity to interact with high-ranking officials of the CBSE and discuss the changes in curriculum vis-a-vis implementation of the New Education Policy.

**As a Panelist:** The Principal was invited by MASTERS' UNION, Gurugram, Haryana for Intersect 2.0 on 17th Feb. He was a Panel Speaker on the topic 'New Age Universities in India – Global Appeal?' along with other distinguished educators.

As we embark on the rich tapestry of educational opportunities ahead and with a promise to Keep in touch, we invite you to join us in instilling a love for learning in our students. We are active on Twitter @OOB\_GEMS and Facebook at

<https://www.facebook.com/GEMSOurOwnBoys/>. Do follow us there for regular updates.

Please note that we are also on Instagram now, with the handle, @gems\_oob. By following us on social media and sharing our news, you reprise yourself as a brand ambassador for us.

Let's together embark on a year of exploration, discovery, and knowledge acquisition that transcends the boundaries of the classroom. Thank you for your continued trust and partnership as we navigate this exciting journey together.



**Faizal Kandy**  
**Head of Senior School**