



Keeping in Touch - FROM A DISTANCE

On behalf of the Principal and CEO, Srivalsan Murugan

Ref. No. KIT 009-11Jan21

11 January 2021

Dear Parent,

"The secret of change is to focus all of your energy, not on fighting the old, but on building the new." - Author Unknown

A new year is a time when we reflect on our gratitude for the past and our hopes for the future. There's a lot that 2020 has taught us about ourselves, our relationships, our passions and our values. At school, it has challenged staff and students to find a new normal for learning, connected us in new ways and required our 'champions' to champion from afar. From tough times come tough lessons and learning opportunities and we are equipped for it.

In order to prepare our students for the upcoming CBSE Board examinations and to give them a feel of the external assessments, the CASE examination is being conducted onsite for both grades 10 and 12. This examination enables the students to identify their areas of challenges and chalk out a plan of action to strengthen the same. It's such a delight to see the campus brimming with life!

2020 will be remembered for unprecedented changes. Students of grades 4-12 wrote the Green Olympiad examination online in December 2020. It is an annual examination on environment initiated by The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI). Students who registered for Sastra Pratibha, an examination to popularize Science among students of grades 6-11, have taken their first round of online test on Saturday, 9th January. The ASSET, a scientifically designed skill based assessment commences from 21st January and students of grades 3-9 have been busy with the practice test papers set by the faculty members.

28 schools from all over UAE participated in the Hindi Prathiba Sangam Competition hosted by GEMS United Indian School, Abu Dhabi on 9th December, 2020. **Febin Noble** of 9H and **Khush Sheth** of 9J secured the second place in Advertising and third place in Mono Act respectively. Kudos boys!

After an initial lull due to the pandemic, musical and cultural programmes have started taking shape albeit on the virtual platform. It is a great way to build emotional resilience in children by giving them a goal to work for and while they strive towards achieving it, there is an increase in their self-confidence and self-esteem. **Amarnath Sreevalsan** of 5E and **Gaurav Jayaprakash** of 6F won the first place in the theme based Dance and Singing competition respectively, organized by All Kerala College Alumni Forum (AKCAF)-UAE in association with 'Protect Your Mom International'.

Juan Mathew of 8 B won the best position paper award in the Woodlem Summit '20 that was held on the 18th and 19th December. This was the first Model United Nations Conference hosted by Woodlem Park School, Ajman. Well done, Juan!

The stellar performance of our Quiz team comprising of **Anirudha Bhat Nekkare** 12B and **Benson Binoy** 11C earned them the first place at the Modern World Quiz held on 8th December on the virtual platform. The event hosted by GEMS Modern Academy witnessed 37 teams in action, including teams from India. Kudos Champions!

Harshal Bini 11B emerged as one amongst the top ten debaters in a fiercely fought competition with his eighth position in the Modern World Debates hosted by the GEMS Modern Academy.

Grades 4 G & H hosted an assembly on 10th December which beautifully captured the essence of 'The Year Gone By'. It featured a virtual Colloquium on the topic 'Empowering Leaders in a Digital World' where speakers spanning various grades spoke on some pressing issues and their solutions.

Chandan Kurup and **Shubhankar Ghosh** of grade 11 have been selected to participate in the upcoming Al Khaleej National School Virtual Majlis on the theme 'Sustainable Cities and Communities through Generation Z eyes'. The Majlis will take place on 13th January, 2021.

At OOB, a constant focus on teaching and learning is entrenched in the culture of the school. We are a learning community where teachers work together, learn from each other and share best practices on effective teaching and learning thereby maximizing student outcomes. Various in-house training sessions were arranged for the staff from the 12th to 17th December, 2020. The Principal, the Headmistress, members of the leadership team and the Subject Heads were privileged to attend a session on Marzano's High-Yield Instructional Strategies facilitated by our School Advisor from SPEA, Dr.Suleiman Hamdan.

RewirEd Talks, under the aegis of Dubai Cares and Expo 2020 aims to be a catalyst in redefining education to ensure a future that is prosperous, sustainable, innovative and accessible to all. Two rounds of RewirED Talks were held virtually on MS Teams on 14th and 15th December 2020. The panelists presided and discussed on 'Inequities in Education - How do we redeem it?' and 'Kindling the spark in the mind of every student'. The panelists consisted of the Principal and CEO, Mr.Srivalsan Murugan, the Headmistress, Ms.Sindhu P Nair, members of the leadership team, select teachers and Ms.Seema Ganesh, our Inclusion Governor, who's also a member of the Local Advisory Board. The event was yet another milestone in the history of OOB and reiterates the fact that 'Education is everybody's business.'

The school partnered with Aster volunteers in a webinar titled 'Mental Health during the pandemic' under the aegis of Back to School series on 14 December, 2020. The session was facilitated by Dr. Arun Kumar K (MBBS, MD, DNB – Psychiatry) and Dr. Sunil Raj(MBBS, DoH, MD- Paediatrics). Valuable insights by the Principal and CEO, Mr.Srivalsan Murugan, tips and answers to queries posed by the students were efficaciously covered. Truly an enlightening session, which surely has gone a long way to bolster the mental resilience and agility of the participants.

We welcome into our midst Ms.Indhu Elangovadigal who joins us as the School Counsellor. Her rich credentials and wealth of experience shall be immensely beneficial to our students. In case of any assistance, do reach out to her at indhu.e_oob@gemsedu.com.

The Super Sunday tip for this week is to develop a positive self-talk habit. The way you talk to yourself matters! It's important to talk to yourself in a more realistic and compassionate manner. Always strive to have an optimistic, kinder inner dialogue thus building a positive outlook.

As you continue to enjoy 'the coolest winter' rediscovering the UAE's landmarks and reconnecting with nature, we urge you to stay safe and healthy.

For our streamlined updates on the happenings on OOB campus, please check our twitter account @OOB_GEMS, Instagram @gems_oob and our facebook.

<https://www.facebook.com/GEMSOurOwnBoys/>

And as always, many thanks for your continued support. Let's continue to forge ahead to better things ...

Semper Ad Meliora

Warm Wishes,



Priya Sajit
Head of Primary & Kindergarten