



EMIRATES  
HILLS

# Secondary School Newsletter



16 September 2022

2022-2023

# Head of Secondary Message



Dear all,

It has been another exciting cycle here at DIA. There have been a number of opportunities to meet as a community including Year group information evenings, Inclusion Coffee afternoon and University information sessions. It has been wonderful to have you, the parents being involved in school and hopefully enjoying these offerings.

There have also been numerous activities outside of the classroom for the students to be involved in. CCAs have started, sports trials, student council elections and the House Spirit day are to name a few.

My Senior team has been heavily involved in the operational and logistical side of school to ensure some of the issues we have been facing, such as transition in school are being resolved. There will be a email update regarding this shortly. We have shared a list of who you should contact regarding different issues at the end of this newsletter.

I wish you a wonderful weekend,

Warmest regards,

Michelle Puxty  
Head of Secondary



# 2022-23 Whole School Priorities

## Opportunity

### University Visits

This week, we have welcomed a number of university visits in school including a university application information event hosted by Ms. Sippy and a team of students. The expectations in terms of academic rigour and how to build an attractive profile for a best-fit institute were shared. This event was attended by more than 200 students from years 11 - 13, including students and parents from other schools.

The universities in attendance this week were Bristol, Imperial College London, Cambridge University, Western, Sheffield, Parson and Calgary. These institutions reiterated the process of student selection and helped our students to better understand the ways in which they can maximize their potential candidacy.



# Next University Visits

*All parents Welcome!*  
*Venue: Secondary School*



University of Virginia  
23 Sept 10:30 am - 11:30 am

Royal Holloway,  
University of London  
23 Sept 10:30 am - 11:30 am



## USEG College Fair

28th Sept

1:25 pm - 2:10 pm

- American University in Cairo
- Arizona State University
- Baylor University
- Central Michigan University
- Colorado State University
- Kent State University
- Purdue University
- Savannah College of Art & Design
- Suffolk University
- University of Cincinnati
- University of Florida
- University of Iowa
- University of Tennessee
- Virginia Tech
- Washington State University
- Wayne State University

# 2022-23 Whole School Priorities

## Wellbeing

### Spirit Day & Student Council Elections



# 2022-23 Whole School Priorities

## Community

### *Inclusion Coffee Afternoon*

We had a great turnout for our inclusion coffee afternoon this week. Thank you to the parents who came and engaged with us on important topics related to inclusion and learning at DIA!



# 2022-23 Whole School Priorities

## Teaching and Learning

This month, students nominated teachers who they felt have been extra-supportive and helpful to the New Students of DIA. Please join us in congratulating the teachers below who received the most votes!

**Patricia Anne De Felice [English]**



**Elena Beuno Medina [Languages]**



**Amanda Luman [Humanities]**



**Insha Arabi [Science]**



**Stephen Cleary [Math]**



**Mohamed Nasr Ali [Arabic]**



**Ruba Jeshi [Technology]**



**Blaine Mackessy [Arts]**




**Joe Sidebottom [PHE]**



# Competitive Sport & PHE

Sport trials and coaching has started on 29 August 2022 and continued this past weeks with trials for Swimming, Basketball (U16 & U19), Cricket, Football and Cross Country. Aquathlon trial is to follow. So far, we have received 482 students signed to trials in for 31 teams for Term 1. DIA Sports Portal: [www.diadubaisport.com](http://www.diadubaisport.com)

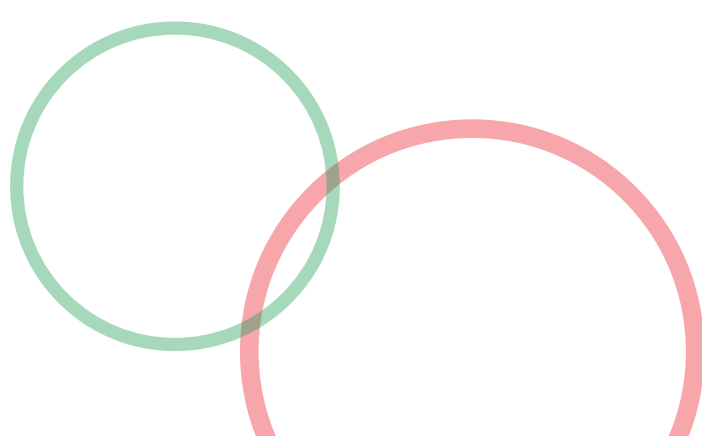


 @diadubaisport  
 @DIA\_Sports  
 @diadubaisport



# Co-Curricular Activities (CCA)

CCAs sign ups have been shared with parents. We offered 63 activities per week, totalling 1260 + opportunities/seats per week for our secondary students. A total of 879 students are currently enrolled in Term 1 CCAs. Once again, our Year 11-13 students, in collaboration with our teachers, will offer a wide range of CCAs in a variety of areas. Student leadership is essential in the programme and the goal to ensure the continuity and excellent provision of Co-Curricular Activities (CCAs) that have been offered at the school for many years.





## Gerhard van der Wal

### Assistant Head (Years 10-13)

I am is a high school teacher from South Africa, and have taught Mathematics in Dubai for the past 8 years. I have a B.Ed with specialization in Mathematics Education, a Masters degree with specialization in Mathematics Education, and also a B.Sc in Mathematics.

I have taught at DIA for the past 8 years, and am a Higher Level Mathematics teacher and have been Mathematics Head of Department for three years (2019-2022). I am excited about my new role and working with your children in in a new capacity.

## Susan McMechan

### Assistant Head (Years 7-9)



Welcome to the new school year! This will be my fourth year now as Academic Head at DIA Emirates Hills and one of my key responsibilities is ensuring all students in Years 7, 8 and 9 have the best opportunities to learn and grow. Whether they are stepping into Emirates Hills for the very first time or returning after many years, I will help your sons and daughters to progress to their new year level as smoothly as possible. This means I work closely with both pastoral and academic teams and I am always here for you and your children, to assist with issues such as expectations for learning and managing their studies.

Other areas in which you may wish to reach out me about are STEM opportunities and reading development. An English specialist by trade and keen sportswoman, I am passionate about teaching literature and the English language and love coaching, or any opportunity to see our boys and girls show their strengths and potential outside the classroom.

Meet the Team

# Key Information

## **World Peace Day**

**Wednesday 21 September**

All students are encouraged to wear white to celebrate World Peace Day.

## **Year 13 University Counselling Coffee Afternoon**

**Thursday 22 September**

**Presentation Hall at 14:30 with Ms. Sippy**

The event will focus on the application process, best fit universities, scholarships, and the visa process.

## **Year 12 & 13 Wellbeing Assembly**

**Friday 23 September**

The assembly will focus on establishing positive study routines, and outline tips and tricks for establishing balance in life and school.

## **PADIA New Parents Coffee Morning**

**Monday 26 September**

**Presentation Hall at 07:45**

New parents are welcome to attend to learn more about our PADIA representatives and meet other parents who are new to DIA..

## **ADHD Awareness Day**

**Friday 30 September**

Students will complete activities in homeroom to raise awareness and understanding.

School Principal  
Hitesh Bhagat  
hiteshb@diadubai.com

# Secondary Communications

## Secondary School Senior Leadership

Head of Secondary  
Michelle Puxty  
michellep@diadubai.com

Deputy Head Years 7 - 11  
Michael Norton  
michaeln@diadubai.com

Deputy Head Year 12 - 13  
Claire Inglis  
clairei@diadubai.com

Director of Sports  
Mihail Kouzev  
mihailk@diadubai.com

Head of Inclusion  
Asha Karam  
ashak@diadubai.com

Assistant Head Pastoral  
Colin Leacy  
colinl@diadubai.com

Assistant Head Years 7 - 9  
Susan McMechan  
susanm@diadubai.com

Assistant Head Years 10 - 13  
Gerhard Van Der Wal  
gerhardv@diadubai.com

## IB Coordinators

MYP Coordinator  
Ruba Jeshi  
rubaj@diadubai.com

DP Coordinator  
Kanchi Das  
kanchid@diadubai.com

CP Coordinator  
Neetu Rathore  
neetur@diadubai.com

## Heads of Year

HoY 7  
Donna Campbell  
donnac@diadubai.com

HoY 8  
Amy Dowling  
amyd@diadubai.com

HoY Year 9  
Stephen Cleary  
stephenc@diadubai.com

HoY 10  
Naveen Tyagi  
naveent@diadubai.com

Assistant HoY 10  
Shannon Meehan  
shannonm@diadubai.com

HoY 11  
John Aboaja  
johna@diadubai.com

Assistant HoY 11  
Jennifer Agacy  
jennifera@diadubai.com

HoY 12  
Dollour Toma  
dollourt@diadubai.com

Assistant HoY 12  
Diarmid Murphy  
diarmidm@diadubai.com

HoY 13  
Daniel Murphy  
danielm@diadubai.com

## Heads of Department

Arabic A  
Reda Al Ashmawey  
redaa@diadubai.com

Arabic B  
Mohamed Nasr Ali  
mohamedn@diadubai.com

Islamic  
Waleed Ahmed  
waleeda@diadubai.com

English MYP  
Maha Zaouil  
mahaz@diadubai.com

English DP  
Nagina Chaudry  
naginac@diadubai.com

Maths MYP  
Asha Kumar  
ashas@diadubai.com

Maths DP  
Vidya Shriram  
vidyas@diadubai.com

Science MYP  
Mona Khreis  
monak@diadubai.com

Science DP  
Declan Alvaro  
declana@diadubai.com

Humanities MYP  
Mahua Paul  
mahuap@diadubai.com

Humanities DP  
Reena Tikku  
reenat@diadubai.com

Language B MYP  
Blanca Gonzales  
blancag@diadubai.com

Language B DP  
Yolaine Siko  
yolaines@diadubai.com

Design MYP  
Somya Jajor  
somyaj@diadubai.com

Design DP  
Faryal Arsalan  
faryala@diadubai.com

Performing Arts  
Blaine Mackessy  
blainem@diadubai.com

Visual Arts  
Veronica Richards  
veronicar@diadubai.com

Media  
Seon Lewis  
seonl@diadubai.com

PHE  
Fiona Turnbull  
fionat@diadubai.com

## Important Contacts

College Counsellor 12-13  
Rachana Sippy  
rachanas@diadubai.com

College Counsellor 7-11  
Stewart Pinkerton  
stewartp@diadubai.com

Attendance Officer  
Evelyn Pakatan  
evelynp@diadubai.com

Secondary Secretary  
Marian Steyn  
marians@diadubai.com

IT Support  
helpdesk@diadubai.com

Accounts Department  
accounts@diadubai.com



EMIRATES  
HILLS

**Dream - Inspire - Achieve**