

# THIS WEEK'S NEWS

## Message from Head of School

### IMPORTANT CONTACTS

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**Bus Enquiries:**

Mr Tan (HDT): 9777 4838

Today, the entire GWA staff were presented with the finalised School Strategic Plan 2015-2018. This final document development was a result of significant contributions from a range of stakeholders, most significantly the various programme and curriculum coordinators, as well as the Education Leadership Team. It is the culmination of a draft plan that was developed and shared with the school community in May 2015, from which our new education team have been able to ensure is accurate, refined and purposeful.

The Strategic Plan covers five key sections:

1. The GWA Fundamentals
2. People
3. Product
4. Additional Initiatives
5. Accreditation

In each section there is great direction and purpose, as well as an outline of key deliverables for the coming three years. The plan articulates well our purpose, our aspirations, the plans to obtain these aspirations, and the people involved in driving towards successful execution.

At the coming Parent Engagement Morning, held in the auditorium lobby at 9am Wednesday 13th December, I will be presenting to the broader parent community the overview of the strategic direction of the school, what is currently in place, what is happening next and our aspirations for the future. It will be an opportunity for parents to learn more about the direction of the school and to clarify the involvement of the many programme leaders within our staff.

The Strategic Plan will be reviewed annually and updated accordingly. As such, our current plan covers 2015-2018, next August we will refine and internally publish the 2016-2019 Strategic Plan and so on. By doing it this way we will be encouraged to constantly refresh our vision and pathway to success, responding with greater speed to market dynamics and feedback from ongoing initiatives.

The detailed Strategic Plan will remain an internal staff document, which will continue to be shared and discussed in town hall type scenarios with parents and students. The confidential nature of the expansive execution points of the document require some restriction of publication, which we are certain our school community can appreciate.

We look forward welcoming parents to the Wednesday morning coffee session, as well as utilising future sessions to share the ongoing success, development and goals of GWA (Singapore).

**David Edwards**

Head of Education

[d.edwards@gwa.edu.sg](mailto:d.edwards@gwa.edu.sg)

### CALENDAR UPDATE

**9 December** - Parent

Engagement morning

followed by GWA-PA meeting

**10 December, 6:30pm** - PY

Musical

**18 December** - Last day of

school - 1:30pm dismissal

**21 December to 8 January** -

School holiday

**11 January 2016** - Semester 2

commences

## Message from Principal

School camps enhance our curriculum, provides community and service opportunities, develops team-building skills, as well as confidence and trust. The camps provide safe, nurturing environments where students can test their limits and challenge themselves.

School camps are an important addition to the ongoing school-based teaching and learning. Over the years at GWA, students will be provided a range of camp opportunities in a variety of countries. The goal at all times is to ensure that we provide students with outstanding learning opportunities.

As you are aware, the Grade 6 camp will be at Coolum Beach, Australia. The Grade 7-10 students will be going to Northern Thailand. This week, we held two information evenings for parents with the purpose to provide clarity on the Experiential Learning programme, coordinated by Mr Paul Rimmer. For those who could not attend these information evenings, we will be sending a copy of the presentations to all respective families.

In February 2016, there will be a more detailed meeting for all parents, students and teachers attending the camp. Information regarding these events will be communicated to parents at the start of next semester. In the meantime, if you have any additional questions on the Secondary Years School camps, please do not hesitate to contact Paul Rimmer at [p.rimmer@gwa.edu.sg](mailto:p.rimmer@gwa.edu.sg)

**THAILAND**  
**Ricefields Base Service Excursion**

Expand your horizons through adventure, service, and cultural immersion during GWA's Week 10 (Rural Walk 2016) located in the heart of a rural village in northeast Thailand, the Ricefields Base is a modern oasis amidst traditional Thai life. Surrounded by expansive rice fields with the village temple only steps outside of our gates, you'll have the opportunity to witness life the way it has been for generations. You will feel a strong sense of community here as you bond with your schoolmates and your new Thai friends through team building activities, deep conversations, immersive community service, and of course lots of fun and games!

For more program details and online enrollment, visit [www.bit.ly/gwa-thailand](http://www.bit.ly/gwa-thailand) (password: gwa).

**Trip Dates**  
April 24 - 29, 2016

**Trip Price**  
\$1,275/USD + airfare (estimated \$400/USD)

**School Name**  
GEMS World Academy Singapore

**Teacher Name**  
Mr. Paul Rimmer

For more information or to speak to a Rustic Pathways representative, please contact Britt Hennessy at [Ahemess@rusticpathways.com](mailto:Ahemess@rusticpathways.com).



Neil White- Principal  
[n.white@gwa.edu.sg](mailto:n.white@gwa.edu.sg)

## ECA and Sport Update

GWA was well represented at the swim-run Aquathon held at the French School on Saturday November 28. No less than 25 students toed the line ready to compete in their first race of the season. Many of the divisions had entries greater than 25 students and all races were hotly contested. The Jaguars certainly made their presence felt, with almost half of our team finishing in the top 10 of their respective age categories.

Jack McKeering was first to race in the 8U boys division and earned a well deserved 4th place. His performance set the tone for the day and the success continued in the 10U girls division, when Lupita De Smet crossed the line in first. We did not have to wait long for another Jaguar to step onto the winner's podium when Alicia Soosai smashed her opposition, finishing more than one minute ahead of her closest competitor. Eva Muquet-Vaillant continued the medal haul collecting the silver medal in the girls 14U division.

The Jaguars were also scheduled to roam on home turf in the 11U football tournament on Monday. Unfortunately, they only made it to half time of the first game before the skies opened and brought a halt to proceedings. When the match was stopped the Jaguars led 2 - 1 and were displaying the same impressive form from their earlier outing this season. Our 14U boys team met a similar fate two days later with storms preventing them from taking to the field.

Fingers crossed that the weather is more favourable next Monday when our 11U boys are scheduled for their next round of home game matches. If you would like to see a talented group of young footballers in action, I encourage you to pack your umbrella and head to GWA at 4:30pm on Monday.

**Tony McMullen**  
Activities Coordinator  
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## EY/PY Curriculum Update

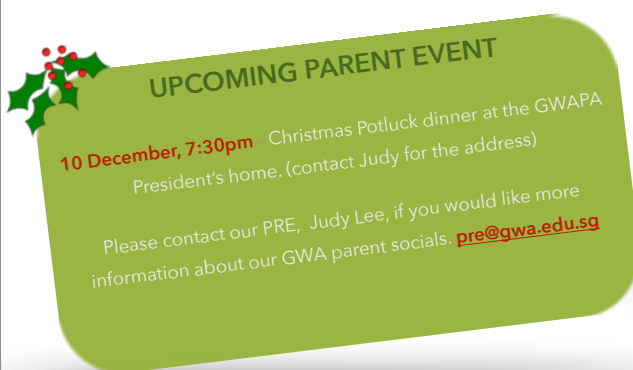
Events that have been happening in the world recently have been a major topic of conversation in the Primary Years classrooms.

We encourage our children to become globally minded and to find out what is happening to others around the world. What our students study in their units of inquiry inspires them to think and take action.

So how can we help children to begin to process what they may hear or see on TV, the internet or at school? Many of our classes watch news items developed by various agencies that have created news appropriate for students. BBC School Report, ABC Behind the News and CNN Student News are all designed for students so they can make sense of what is happening. If you would like to find out more about how you can talk to your child about current events on the news, please visit these news sites with your child.

A recent article from Common Sense Media (<https://www.commonsensemedia.org/blog/explaining-the-news-to-our-kids>) shares ideas and tips for helping children to process events and recommends ways parents can support them with processing this information.

**Olivia Burke** - PYP Coordinator  
[o.burke@gwa.edu.sg](mailto:o.burke@gwa.edu.sg)



## SY Curriculum Update

Our Middle Years Programme (MYP) students have reached the end of the Semester One examination week with success. Students in Grades 6-10 demonstrated clear focus in their approach to these assessments, organising their time effectively and ensuring they were fully prepared for each examination. For some of our students it was their first experience of formal examinations and they have risen to the challenges these present with success.

It is normal for students to feel a whole range of emotions before or after receiving their examination results and how they feel will relate to their expectations and those of the people close to them. It is an ideal time for teachers, students and parents to focus upon the IB learner profile attribute of reflectiveness, in order to underpin learning and personal development. In support of this, as all students receive their examination results they will take time in lessons to discuss and review their performance. This will enable them to identify areas of strength and also consider areas for further development in their work. Semester One reports will be issued via Managebac on Friday December 18th, to provide further feedback and guidance as part of this reflective process.

Congratulations to all students for the dedication and effort which has been displayed in the examinations this week.

If you would like to know more about any aspect of the MYP then do not hesitate to contact me.

**Mark Gardner** - MYP/IGCSE Coordinator  
[m.gardner@gwa.edu.sg](mailto:m.gardner@gwa.edu.sg)