



Headteacher's Newsletter – December 2023

Quotes of the month

*'All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players;
They have their exits and their entrances,
And one man in his time plays many parts'*

As You Like It – William Shakespeare

“L'appréciation est une chose merveilleuse: elle fait que ce qui est excellent chez les autres nous appartient aussi.”

Voltaire

This month, we are bidding farewell to our Principal, Mr McMurray, who arrived at our school in 2022 having left his position as CEO at an international school in Myanmar where he led a school community of 800 students through an army coup. Originally, beginning as a teacher of English in the UK, Mr McMurray has enjoyed a varied career which has included an array of responsibilities and positions ranging from coaching football to leading Shakespearean drama productions. Prior to his headship of the Falcon School in Nicosia in the 90s, he led a middle school for the gifted and talented in Berkley, California, gaining an award from Johns Hopkins University in recognition of 'a unique contribution to the teaching of highly talented youth'. After departing from Nicosia in 1996, Mr McMurray became Director of the American International School, Abu Dhabi, UAE where he led the establishment of a new IB, American curriculum. In the early 2000s, he moved back to Europe and was Director of the International School of Basel, Switzerland which was funded by the pharmaceutical industry. He was hired to organise the moving of its thirteen rented locations scattered around the city into a new 50-million-dollar purpose-built campus. Having completed a period as Director of Operations for the establishment and design of Academies in Hyderabad and Maputo, Mr McMurray headed the Aga Khan Academy in Mombasa, Kenya and then moved on to Thailand as Head of St Andrews Bangkok.



Mr McMurray's presence and his positive and constructive approach to life in our school will be very much missed. Although he has stated he is moving into retirement, do not be surprised if he decides to offer his services once again in another international location! This would be typical of the man whose entire life has been dedicated to making a difference to the lives of young people.

We thank Mr McMurray for his contributions as Principal of our school and the wisdom of his experience in education and wish him well on the next stage of his life although we very much hope he will visit us again soon!

Good luck, Mr McMurray!

Open Evening – A great success for all!



On the evening of December 13th, we were delighted to welcome visitors to our school. The intent was to showcase our ethos and the outstanding educational provision that we provide to our students. The event was well attended and the feedback from both parents and their children was overwhelmingly positive. Well done to all members of our community for the success of the event. In particular, much appreciation to Ms Christina Kkolou, our Registrar, for her organisation of the evening along with staff and students who all made such important contributions.



Athina, our Deputy Head Girl addresses parents and children on her experiences as an entrant to the school in Year 7



Head Boy, Harry, takes the audience through his academic and personal journey as a Junior and Senior School student



Mr Philippou with students at the welcome table for the Greek Department



Issue 2 of the Greek Department Magazine – ‘Taleskopio’- on its way!



Parents exploring our Art department



A friendly welcome from our Inclusions Department!

Child Protection and Child Safeguarding – Keeping students informed

All students (bar Year 11 who will be informed in the new year) have attended a Safeguarding assembly during which they were informed about how the school works to ensure all students are safeguarded from abuse (physical, verbal, emotional and neglect). Students are expected to know who to turn to if they are concerned about their own or a friend's wellbeing/safety. They were assured that all disclosures are treated in confidence and that action will be taken to protect any student from actual or potential abuse. This includes child safeguarding at home and online as well as in school. As a result of these assemblies, our students now feel a good deal more comfortable in reporting any worries and what these concerns may be, whether they are related to child on child abuse, victimization or other causes for concern such as eating disorders, online bullying or gaslighting.

Health and Safety

The School has been taking steps regarding safe entry to and exit from the school site for students and staff. We have built a new pathway from the bus drop off and a crossing point along with a pathway that allows safe access to the back of the main building beside the Business Faculty rooms. We have also placed signage to remind students in particular regarding safe access and have reminded students in Form periods about these arrangements. We have also been pressing Latsia for a crossing guard to be available in the mornings and at the end of the school day to facilitate safe crossing of the main road outside the school. This has been coupled with a request to attend organised training for some of our own staff to be legally licenced to act as crossing guards. This has, unfortunately taken longer than anticipated. We are, however, in constant touch with the authorities to address our requests speedily. Many thanks to our Health and Safety Officer, Mr Kiliaras, for his efforts in this regard.

ECO Committee news



Well done, Eco volunteers!

The Eco Committee recently organised a thrift event at the JS Christmas bazaar on the 1st of December. Clothes, toys – all in good condition and clean – were on sale at their stall hoping to promote sustainability and up-cycling. Funds collected will be put towards the solar tree initiative in our school, and any clothes/toys remaining will be donated to charity.

Arts Days of Christmas



The Art Faculty organised a number of activities for the days leading up to the end of term. These included Art activities on the terraced area outside the social staff room, as well as a musical sing-along in the Hall. Some of our orchestra students visited the Irida Foundation, in collaboration with the BWB Club, spreading some Christmas cheer. The Arts captains organised a charity bake sale during breaks. Photography and film competitions invited submissions from students with the results to be announced on the last day of term. Staff and students also enjoyed Christmas special drama productions! Many thanks to Ms Booton and her Faculty for organising all events.



Advent Calendar – Day 1

During the festive season, our school consistently works to engage with local communities and this year was no exception with our choir and orchestra performing at the Christmas Village in Kalopanayiotis, and in collaboration with the BWB (Buddies Without Borders) Club, visited Irida Foundation, a multidisciplinary therapy centre for severely disabled young people. Our SS students spread festive joy to patients with a live performance of Christmas Songs. In addition, proceeds were donated which had been raised by the BWB Club. It was a wholesome experience for our students and well-received by the centre's patients, who also joined in the singing and music-making in their music room! Many thanks to Ms Filippou for leading on these outstanding events for the community.



SS Musicians raise Christmas cheer at Kalopanayiotis



'Irida' visit a resounding success

Year 8 Multipliers in action

On Friday, December 15th, all Year 8 students visited the science laboratories at the University of Nicosia as part of the European Multipliers project they are completing in collaboration with the University of Cyprus. This is an ongoing initiative that nurtures collaboration between our school and institutions of higher education with a view to also bring science to life for our KS3 students.

SENCON Inaugural Event

Empowering the Voters of Tomorrow

The Junior and Senior School is organizing the first Senior School Conference, SENCON 2024, themed "Empowering the Voters of Tomorrow". This one-day conference will take place on February 24th at the Senior School Campus in Latsia, Nicosia.

The conference will be debate-based and will address elections and voting in light of the two upcoming elections in June 2024, the local municipal and the European parliamentary elections. Active citizen participation among younger generations is a highly critical and important issue and misinformation and lack of awareness in electoral processes has been contributing in increasing abstention percentages locally and internationally. The aim of the conference is to raise awareness on the voting process, highlighting the importance of participating in democratic processes.

Sports School Introduction for Year 6s

We were delighted to welcomed Year 6 (and possible future footballing stars!) to a football training session led by our Head Coach, Mr. Charalambides, at the GSP stadium. The Year 6 students all enjoyed a busy day as our aspiring players got a taste of what it's like to train at the Senior Sports School. With such talent on display, we're excited about the bright future ahead! Well done to all, especially Mr Charalambides for his coaching leadership and Ms Parpotta for arranging and liaising with the JS for the success of the day.



Year 6 acquire a taste of the experience of the stadium press room!



Dark, dramatic clouds, but a bright future!



A slight chance of rain...

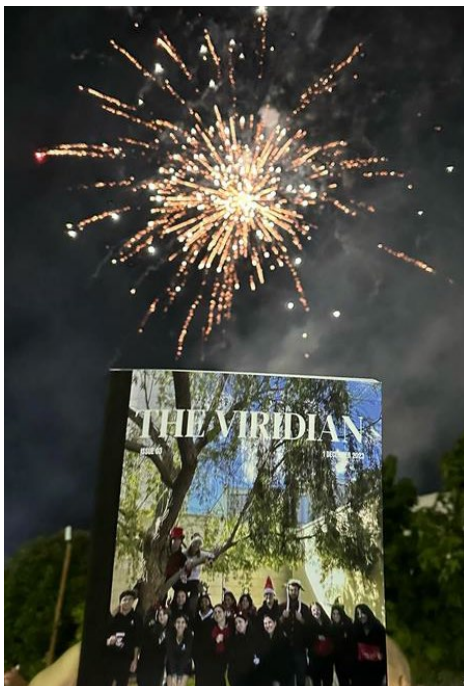
SS Dancers support for Euro24 U17



Dancing queens

We are proud to inform you that dancers from our school were selected to participate in the Euro 2024 U17 video clip, hosted this year in Cyprus. Well done to Harriet Economidou Y12, Stephanie Pandela Y12, Andriana Kotsonis Y6, Rahil Hasikou Y6, and their teacher, Ms Stella Parpotta, Director of Sports. We very much look forward to seeing the finished product!

Student Newsletter going strong!



We are delighted to see the latest issue of **The Viridian** making its appearance. This is a student led production. All articles and graphics are in the hands of a very capable team of SS students who have dedicated time and energy in publishing an outstanding magazine that has the hallmarks of a very professional job. Well done to all, and to their supervising teacher, Mr Alexis Antoniou. If you haven't purchased a copy yet, there may still be a few available!

Awards Galore!

The season for celebrating success has been upon us and we have enjoyed a good deal of recognition of the achievements of our students. On the evening of December 7th, we honoured a large number of our SS students for their successes in public exams or internal assessments as well as significant progress and effort. Over 130 awards were made on a sparkling evening attended by proud parents and other family members. Unfortunately, our keynote speaker, the Minister of Education, had been called away overseas at the last minute, but speeches from the Organiser, Ms O'Riordan, the Chair, Mr Tasos Ziziros and the Headteacher more than compensated. Outstanding musical contributions from Oscar Emmanuel (Year 13) and Alexa Michael (Year 10) also added a very special veneer of distinction to the event! Well done to our awardees and huge thanks to Deputy Head, Ms Eithne O'Riordan for leading her team in the planning and organisation of the evening.

A number of our students were also formally recognised for their extraordinary achievements in Pearson and Cambridge exams this month. As recorded in a previous newsletter the following attended an event on December 14th run by Pearson Edexcel Exams along with students from schools all over Cyprus:

The Junior School and Senior School (91467)		
Emily Kyriakides	Highest Mark in Cyprus	Pearson Edexcel GCSE Drama
Olivia Iacovou	Highest Mark in Cyprus	Pearson Edexcel International GCSE History
Olivia Iacovou	Highest Mark in Europe	Pearson Edexcel International GCSE German
Selina Elia	Highest Mark in Europe	Pearson Edexcel International GCSE French
Eleni Franchessa Kyriacou	Highest Mark in the World	Pearson Edexcel International Advanced Level Chemistry
Haiqing Lu	Highest Mark in the World	Pearson Edexcel International Advanced Level Chemistry
Haiqing Lu	Highest Mark in the World	Pearson Edexcel International Advanced Level Mathematics

A proud moment for our school!



In addition, let us also recall from last month's newsletter the achievements of two of our students in Cambridge International Exams who also organised an event: Outstanding Learner Awards on the evening of December 13th: Olivia Iacovou: Top in Cyprus for Cambridge IGCSE Literature in English and Penelope Artemis: Top in Cyprus for Cambridge International AS Level Literature in English.

Student Council Initiative

Help refugees in need!

All donations will go to Generation4Change.
Please donate any the following if you can!
Place of collection: Opposite social stuff room.

Blankets &
Duvets

Jackets

Hoodies &
Tracksuits

Winter socks,
gloves,
beanies

Sizes Medium
& above (both
for men and
women)

Also for
children ages
0-3 only

Senior School Student Council

Student Council reps have been active once again in their drive to support causes and those less fortunate.

A Day at the Museum for Year 7!



Our Year7 students recently visited the Cyprus Museum to learn more about the ancient history of Cyprus and how to investigate history through artefacts. Thank you, Mr Aristodemou for this organising this opportunity for our students.

BREAKING NEWS

We are thrilled to report that the Senior School will be hosting the event: **Days of EYP Cyprus 2024** in April. This national *European Youth Parliament* conference is completely student led and organised. The EYP Cyprus is a non-profit, non-partisan and non-governmental organisation that aims to bring together young people from across the island with a focus on independent thinking, intercultural exchange and personal initiative. Around 120 young people are expected to participate in this event supported by 30 volunteer student organisers.

Message from EYP Cyprus Student Organizers:

Having met for the first time through Days of EYP Cyprus we know firsthand the unique bonds and lasting friendship one can gain through this experience. That's why it's important to us to create a people-oriented session with a safe environment to cultivate new connections and bring people together free of judgement. We want Days of EYP Cyprus 2024 to be a fun and unforgettable experience for all, bringing youth from all over Cyprus together and promoting unity. We believe that open discussion is important to the personal growth of our participants, and the evolving of our society as a whole. Thus, we want to ensure the conference's 120 participants have the chance to engage in

relevant stimulating conversations which tackle current affairs during these turbulent times where open discussion is vital. For the volunteers of the session, we want to offer an experience where they can both grow as individuals and develop their skills to aid them both in their EYP journeys, and their futures. Our overall aim is a conference that brings people together and promotes unity, by introducing them to the EYP community, and hopefully inspiring them to strengthen their voice regarding European issues. We wholeheartedly believe that empowering the youth and developing their confidence in expressing themselves is essential to moving forward as a collective, and we believe our conference will play a part in this.

Victoria Papadopoulou and Anna-Myria Oxyinos – Head Organisers of the Days of EYP Cyprus 2024

A Kind Reminder:

As the weather has (relatively speaking!) become a little chillier, students have been requesting they be allowed to wear the School sweatpants. Permission has been given for this, but do note, only *School sweatpants* are permitted. In addition, all other items of clothing must be official school uniform. We pride ourselves for being members of the school and the lion is symbolic of our school community ethos of respect and care. Please make sure your child is appropriately dressed before leaving the house in the mornings to avoid unnecessary disruption! If items need to be purchased from *Classmates*, please make use of the Christmas break to be sure your child returns to school in January properly dressed.

In addition, we have been implementing our new mobile phone policy this term. I would like to kindly request that parents avoid calling/messaging their child while they are at school/in class. If you wish to contact them *urgently*, it is best to call Reception who will be more than happy to relay your message. We wish to avoid messages (or calls) on student mobiles during lesson time as well as in breaks where there are still restrictions on the use of phones.

Many thanks to the SSPGA for their kind offer to decorate our school for the Christmas season. Their efforts have made a huge difference and brought to the school a much more festive feel!

Finally, I would like to wish you and your families a lovely Christmas break and a happy new year! We look forward to the Spring term which undoubtedly will be filled with much activity both academic and otherwise!

Yiannis Georgiou

Senior School Headteacher

