



“Time is not measured by the passing of years but by what one does, what one feels, and what one achieves.” (Jawaharlal Nehru)

December 2009

Dear Parents,

As we draw to the close of another year Nehru's words perhaps best sum up what has once again been a very busy term at Dubai College. The events at the start of term and the KHDA inspection seem but a distant memory as so much has been packed into the last four months. The College having achieved its best ever examination results last summer, the students have been spurred on to live up to this achievement. Reading their reports – don't forget to ask for the report when they get home on Thursday - it is clear that, be it in the classroom, on stage, on the sports field or trekking across the hills of Mauritius, DC students have been active, active, active!

In addition boys and girls have been participating in events around the world – swimming, sailing, karting to name but a few. Squads of DC pupils have provided invaluable support at two major golf tournaments in recent weeks. For those taking part the experience has been invaluable and in many cases they have borne responsibilities which go well beyond their young years.

A large group of Year 11 students travelled to Mauritius to complete the Silver Duke of Edinburgh Award; Year 13 Drama students took a 'fairytale' production on tour to Bedales School in the UK and visited primary schools in Hampshire in the process; other students went on an eight-production visit to London's West End. Musicians have performed in school, but have also entertained guests at various functions around Dubai in recent weeks. Such is the quality of DC drama that the examination board Edexcel is now using the work of DC students for training purposes. Meanwhile Year 13 students competed in the 'F1 in Schools' World Championship in London, meeting amongst others former F1 world champion Lewis Hamilton.

Rugby, soccer, basketball, netball teams, cricket XIs and swimming squads have competed aggressively in various matches, tournaments and galas, successfully in many cases, bearing disappointments in others. Some of the details are listed below.

Swimming: winners of the three main galas – Nancy Crosser, ASD, League.

Soccer: Leagues - U14 Girls champions; U15A, U15B, U19 Boys champions, U13 runners up.

The U14 girls', U13 boys' and U19 boys' teams were undefeated in their respective leagues.

Onion Bag tournaments - U13 winners, U19 runners up.

Basketball: Leagues: Senior Girls champions, Senior Boys runners up.

Rugby: BSAK 10s tournament - U12, U16 and U18 winners.

DC7s tournament - U12 and U13 winners; U14, U15 and U16 runners up.

Although the school netball and cricket leagues have not yet got underway, in both sports teams have enjoyed successes. In particular the Desert Cats (senior girls' netball teams) have continued to be competitive in the Ladies Netball League.

We have hosted visiting teams from Doha College and Harrow School – I blame the latter for the torrential rain of recent days although it was a welcome respite from the heat – while earlier in the term we were entertained by the girls of Moira House School on the Dubai-leg of their Asian tour. As ever your support of these many events has been much appreciated.

The House Music Competition once again revealed how deep the well of musical talent is in the school. The competition drew to a close on Tuesday evening with the Finalists' Concert. Congratulations should go to all who participated and in particular to the winners:

Junior Winner - Bianca Pereira (8GJ)

Intermediate Winner - Emily Collinson (9RG)

Senior Winner - Tara Mehrabanzad (13LA)

The winner of the Overall competition was Tara Mehrabanzad.

Support of various charities has been an ever-present characteristic of the children's lives at school, led by the school's new Charities Committee. This is a group consisting of students and staff that now coordinate all of the College's charitable activities and have taken up their responsibilities with considerable energy. The organisations helped have ranged from our traditional support of Medecins Sans Frontieres and Helping Hands to Breast Friends (Pink Day), Gulf for Good (an orphanage in Cuba), sponsoring children at the Al Noor and Dubai Centres for Special Needs, 'A Bucket of Water for Africa', the Terry Fox Run, and a charity supporting street children in Afghanistan. Well over 30,000 Dirhams has been raised. This term has also seen a revival of Young Enterprise with a plethora of calendars, tea towels, cookery books and other items on offer to eager bargain hunters. The students' creativity has proved impressive.

In all cases the boys and girls have been tremendous ambassadors for Dubai College. I am sure that they will continue to be so in 2010 as there are exciting opportunities for students to participate in a range of activities. One of the big events of next term will be the school production of 'Evita' which will take place in the auditorium from 9th to 11th March.

Year 13 students have been busy submitting applications for university places to institutions around the world. A number have travelled to the UK for interviews and a significant number of offers have already been received. However, the competition for places grows ever more intense, particularly in the current economic climate where institutions are forced to cut back on the number of places, and so the process can be a long, drawn-out one for some.

I attach a copy of the term dates for the academic year 2010-2011. BSME schools in Dubai have discussed at length the term dates and endeavoured to achieve a common set of dates. It will not be a perfect match between all schools, but it is probably closer than it has been in the past. As ever the dates of religious holidays are subject to change, but you are probably aware that the Eid Al Fitr holiday marking the end of Ramadan will occur in early September. As a consequence it has been decided that the academic year should start immediately after this holiday on or about 13th September 2010. For the present the term dates should be treated as provisional. They are subject to confirmation by the KHDA.

You may be interested to hear that Dubai College has been admitted to international membership of the HMC (Headmasters' and Headmistresses' Conference). The HMC brings together the leading independent schools in the UK along with additional members drawn from overseas. It seeks to exemplify excellence in education, to promote the discussion of national and international educational issues and to influence national policy and public opinion with regard to the independent sector and educational developments in general.

Just as the end of term sees some students leaving, so too three members of staff will be leaving Dubai College. All three – Mrs. Payne (PE), Ms. Paterson (French) and Mrs. Macdonald (History) – have been covering for colleagues who have been on maternity leave and who have or will now be returning to full time work. The thanks of the whole College community go to them for their teaching and support during the last two terms and they all leave with our best wishes for the future.

Finally, I should like to take this opportunity to remind you that the first day of the Spring Term will be Monday 4th January 2010. Otherwise I should like to extend my best wishes for the season and to wish you all a Happy New Year

Yours sincerely,

Carlo Ferrario
Headmaster