



EMIRATES  
HILLS

# Secondary School Newsletter

Sunday 3rd November

# Head of Secondary Message

What a fantastic few weeks it's been at our school! We recently hosted an inspiring Careers Day, where parents and members of our community took time out of their busy schedules to share insights from their diverse careers with our students. It was a tremendous opportunity for our young people to learn directly from professionals across various fields, and we are so grateful to everyone who participated.

We're also thrilled to announce that our school has ranked in the top three globally for sustainability and action! This incredible achievement highlights our students' dedication to environmental initiatives and the impact they're making beyond our school walls. In recognition of this achievement, the Director General of KHDA paid us a visit, sharing words of encouragement and pride in our school's work toward a sustainable future.

There's been so much happening recently! From student achievements to exciting events, there's something for everyone in this issue. Read on to catch up on all the latest news and highlights from our vibrant school community.

*Michelle Puxty*  
*Head of Secondary*



# Key Diary Dates



Monday 4th November

## **Y7-13 Parent Teacher Consultations (online)**

We look forward to discussing your child's progress in our first of two PTC events

(No school for Secondary School Students)



Thursday 7th November

## **Study in Australia and GCC Coffee Morning**

Please join us from 7.45 - 9am, in the Canteen Extension, to discuss study pathways with our Career and College Counselling Team



Monday 11th November

## **Y7-13 Parent Teacher Consultations (Face to Face)**

We look forward to discussing your child's progress with you in school.

(No school for Secondary School Students)





# TEACHING AND LEARNING

## Renda Kayali

Lead Practitioner - Head of Teaching and Learning

As a passionate educator with over a decade of experience, I lead the Teaching and Learning team at Dubai International Academy with one mission: to empower both teachers and students. Guided by a commitment to excellence, I champion responsive teaching and foster a culture of lifelong learning. I believe in helping others step outside their comfort zones, continuously striving for growth, and unlocking their full potential. My goal is to inspire an environment where everyone feels equipped to innovate, reflect, and make meaningful strides in education



Meet the Team  
Back row (left to right): Peter Stoddart, Katherine Beswick, Jessica Mammone, Rohanna Hymers, Amy Cunningham, Andrei Fedenev, Marishka Dsouza. Front row (left to right): Mahua Paul, Izel Joubert, Renda Kayali, Saira J Nazir, and Amanda Luman.

This year, my team is dedicated to advancing responsive teaching practices and empowering educators to create learner-centered classrooms. Here's how we're making an impact:

- **Responsive Teaching Initiatives:**

- Targeted strategies that adapt to students' individual needs.
- Encouraging active engagement, with students taking ownership of their learning.

- **Professional Learning Communities (PLCs):**

- Collaborative, job-embedded learning environments.
- Whole-school and individualized PD approaches tailored to teacher growth.

- **Learning Hives for Personalized Support:**

- Providing focused coaching aligned with each teacher's interests.
- Expanding teaching techniques and promoting reflective practice.

- **Action Research for Continuous Improvement:**

- Teachers identify key areas for growth, set targets, and implement solutions.
- Evidence-based reflection and peer feedback to track and measure success.

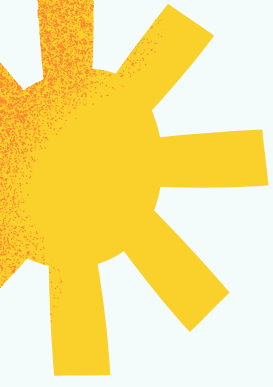
- **Empowering Teachers with Self-Evaluation and Goal-Setting:**

- Self-evaluation forms to set clear, actionable goals.
- Fostering shared best practices across subjects, creating a cohesive learning community.

- **Cultivating a Growth-Oriented School Culture:**

- Core values of excellence, creativity, and accountability guide our efforts.
- Embracing feedback, diversity, and fresh perspectives to enhance teaching and learning.





Teaching and Learning

# CHAMPION OF STUDENT SUPPORT AND CARE



Parent Feedback Form Link

## October Teacher of the Month:

For October, we are thrilled to spotlight teachers who excel as Champions of Student Support and Care. This month, we invite you to help us recognize those who provide meaningful support and guidance to their students. Please follow the link to share your feedback:



We encourage you to have a conversation with your child, helping them reflect on their learning experiences. Ask them where they felt the most support, care, and guidance from their teacher. Your insights, based on this discussion, will help us acknowledge the teachers who make a lasting impact on our students' well-being and growth.

Thank you for taking the time to share your insights and helping us celebrate the teachers who make a meaningful impact in our students' lives.

**Together**, we're building a supportive and inspiring educational community!

Renda Kayali

# MYP Subject Options

## Year 9 Subject option evening

At the recent Year 9 Subject Options Evening Wednesday 23rd October, parents and students attended an informative session led by our MYP coordinators Ms, Ruba Jeshi to explore the range of subject choices available for Years 10 and 11. The session provided a comprehensive overview of each subject, detailing the curriculum structure, key learning objectives, and the pathway each subject offers toward various career aspirations. The session was followed by coordinator also highlighted core MYP graduation requirements, such as the Personal Project, Interdisciplinary learning, and Service as Action, emphasizing how each contributes to the holistic development of our students. This guidance will support students in making informed decisions that align with their academic strengths, personal interests, and future career goal



Following the session, students and parents had the opportunity to visit a Subjects Expo, where they explored various subject stalls to gather more specific information. Teachers and Heads of Departments were available at each stall to answer questions, provide insights, and showcase sample work, allowing students to gain a deeper understanding of each subject's expectations and content. This interactive experience helped families make well-informed decisions about subject choices, ensuring alignment with each student's interests, strengths, and potential career pathways.





# Subject Options

On the evening of Tuesday 22nd October, parents and students attended an informative session led by our Post-16 academic team to discuss the range of subject choices and pathways available for Years 12 and 13.

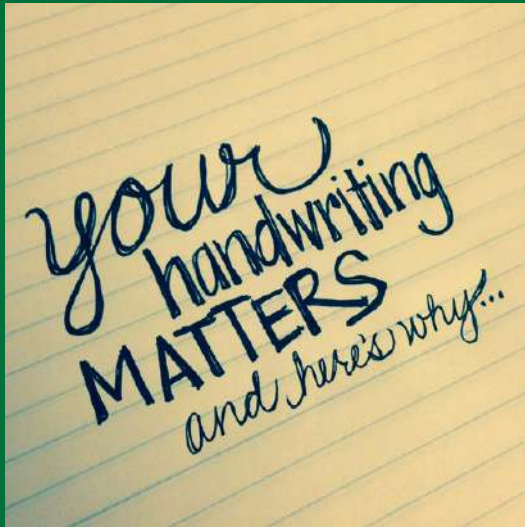
The session provided a comprehensive overview of the curriculum structure and the core graduation requirements, such as the Extended Essay, Tok, and CAS for DP in addition to the Reflective Project and BTEC elements for CP emphasizing how each contributes to the holistic development of our students.



Following the session, students and parents had the opportunity to visit a Subjects Expo, where they explored various subject stalls to gather more specific information from our expert teachers. This interactive experience helped families make well-informed decisions about future subject choices in alignment with each student's interests, strengths, and potential career pathways.



# The English Department are in proud association with: The handwriting club



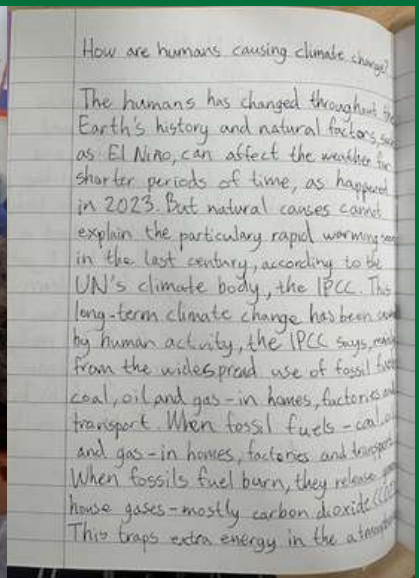
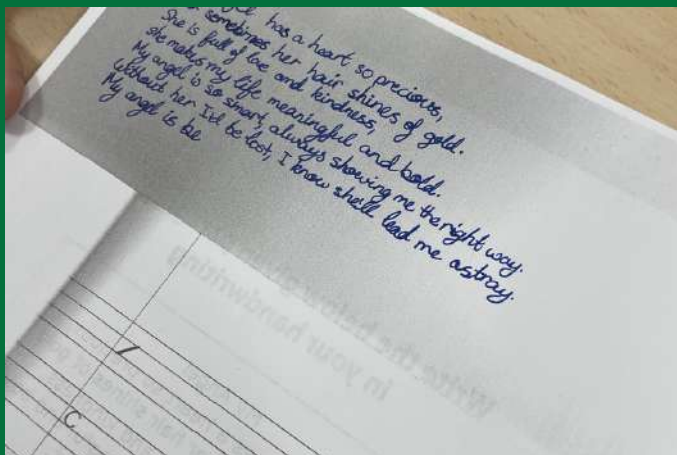
Has your classroom teacher ever commented on your child's handwriting skills? Have you ever taken a peek at your child's class notebook? Did your child lose marks in assessments due to the legibility? Are you worried that with so much use of technology today that your child has forgotten how to put pen to paper?!

Well, fear not...The handwriting club is here!

What a tremendous start we have had with this club since Term 1 CCAs began. Our Year 11 student, Shyon Sables, commendably initiated this idea. With the help of our supervisor, Ms Krishna Priya, our English A and Language B teacher, have culminated an inviting, learning and practising environment for students. With guided activities, refinement in fine motor skills, and supportive resources, this CCA has definitely been a hit! Students have been making great progress, and having fun at the same time!

It's not too late to join!  
Every Thursday after school

If interested, please contact  
[KrishnaP@diadubai.com](mailto:KrishnaP@diadubai.com)



Activity	Description/Example
1 Doodle Names	Students design their names using creative lettering styles and doodles.
2 Handwriting Relay	Write a sentence word by word in teams as fast and neatly as possible. Example: "The future is now."
3 Quote Art	Write and decorate a favorite quote. Example: "Believe in yourself."
4 Lettering Challenges	Practice a specific style of handwriting, such as cursive or calligraphy. Example: Write the alphabet in calligraphy.
5 Handwritten Storytelling	Write a short story by hand on a trending topic. Example: A story about AI in the future.
6 Pen Pal Letters	Write letters to a classmate or friend. Example: A letter describing their favorite movie.
7 Journaling	Keep a handwritten journal for a week. Example: Write daily entries about their school life.
8 Inspirational Quotes	Copy and decorate motivational quotes. Example: "Dream big, work hard."
9 Comic Strips	Create a comic strip with handwritten dialogue. Example: A comic about a superhero.
10 Handwriting Bingo	Create a bingo card with different handwriting tasks. Example: Write a sentence in cursive, block letters, etc.
11 Recipe Writing	Write out a favorite recipe by hand. Example: A recipe for chocolate chip cookies.
12 Postcard Creation	Design and write a postcard. Example: A postcard from their dream vacation spot.
13 Caption a Meme	Handwrite captions for popular memes. Example: A caption for the "Distracted Boyfriend" meme.
14 Handwritten Poetry	Write and illustrate a poem. Example: A haiku about nature.
15 Mind Mapping	Create a mind map on a topic of interest. Example: Mind map on social media trends.
16 Music Lyrics	Write out favorite song lyrics by hand. Example: Lyrics from their favorite band.
17 Instagram Captions	Handwrite creative captions for Instagram posts. Example: A caption for a sunset photo.
18 Handwriting Practice Apps	Use apps that simulate handwriting on tablets. Example: Practicing on Goodnotes.
19 Movie Quotes	Write and decorate quotes from favorite movies. Example: "May the Force be with you."



**Creative,  
Collaborative,  
Compassionate**

# The English Department proudly presents...



## The launch of the 'Real Men Read' Campaign!...

...to ignite a passion for reading among our male students. This holistic initiative aims to cultivate a thriving reading culture that empowers young men to discover the transformative power of literacy.

Initiatives currently in progress...

- Inspirational posters of male teacher reading habits at DIA.
- Student interviews and campaign videos.
- Student ambassadors to support reading clubs.
- Primary and Secondary School mentoring collaboration.
- Parental engagement – older male figure influences on younger males
- Social Media Campaign – check updates, follow **#diaeh\_english**

*"If we encounter a man of rare intellect, we should ask him what books he reads." –*

*Ralph Waldo Emerson*

Interested in getting involved? please contact **[Naginac@diadubai.com](mailto:Naginac@diadubai.com)** or **[Mahaz@diadubai.com](mailto:Mahaz@diadubai.com)**



# Unlocking Careers: BTEC Students' Vocational Journey at Al Habtoor Hilton



On the 4th of October, Year 12 CP/BTEC students embarked on an enriching vocational trip to the Al Habtoor Hilton Hotel, Dubai. This visit was designed to complement their coursework for the BTEC International Business Unit on Recruitment, Training, and Development, providing them with real-world insights into the processes and practices that shape the hospitality industry. The day was filled with valuable learning, engaging discussions, and interactive sessions with industry professionals.

The students were warmly welcomed by Mr. Charbel, Head of Learning and Development at Habtoor properties. Their visit began with a refreshing spread of coffee and snacks, setting a relaxed yet professional tone for the day. Following this, the group gathered for an informative presentation led by Mr. Ziwa Htun, the Director of Training and Development.



Talent Acquisition Process	
1. Job Analysis	2. Job Description & Specification
3. Recruitment Planning	4. Sourcing & Advertising
5. Selection Process	6. Offer & Acceptance
7. Onboarding & Training	8. Performance Management

Activity	Time
Registration & Welcome	09:00 AM
Breakfast	09:30 AM
Introduction to the Hotel	10:00 AM
Overview of the Hotel's History & Culture	10:30 AM
Introduction to the HR Department	11:00 AM
Overview of the Recruitment Process	11:30 AM
Overview of the Training & Development Process	12:00 PM
Lunch	12:30 PM
Overview of the Performance Management Process	01:00 PM
Overview of the Employee Engagement Process	01:30 PM
Overview of the Exit Interview Process	02:00 PM
Overview of the HRIS System	02:30 PM
Overview of the HR Policies & Procedures	03:00 PM
Overview of the HR Metrics & KPIs	03:30 PM
Overview of the HR Future Outlook	04:00 PM
Overview of the HR Team	04:30 PM
Overview of the HR Contact Information	05:00 PM

Mr. Htun's presentation was a fascinating corporate journey through the history of recruitment, training, and development over the last 21 years. He shared insights into how these processes have evolved, emphasizing the importance of adapting recruitment strategies to match the dynamic nature of the hospitality industry. A key focus of his presentation was on the nuances of talent acquisition and need for upholding ethical practices in recruitment, aligning with international labor standards set by the International Labour Organization (ILO).



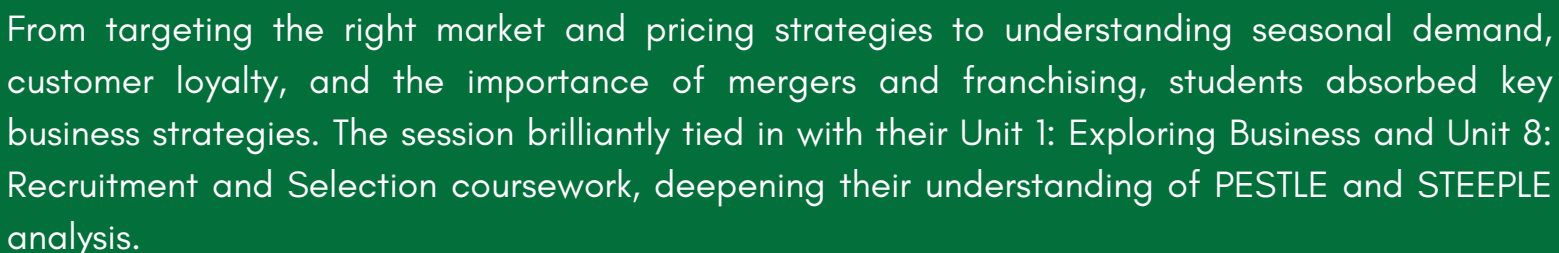
Mr. Charbel provided an engaging and humorous session on the learning journey of newly recruited employees highlighting the core ethos of Hilton brand, stressing how essential it is for new recruits to integrate these values into their work. He also spoke about Pulse checks. He introduced the students to the learning platforms available to Hilton employees.

The final highlight of the day was a tour of the hotel properties led by Mr. Mohammad Aamir from the HR team. He provided the students with a detailed overview of how the various departments within the hotel function in perfect harmony. The trip concluded with a lavish buffet lunch, where students eagerly shared their new appreciation for the intricate processes that keep a hotel like the Al Habtoor Hilton running smoothly.

We are grateful to the Habtoor group for extending their support and hospitality!



John Dewey said, "The interaction of knowledge and skills with experience is key to learning," and our BTEC Level 3 International Business students lived this out in style! They had the privilege of diving into the world of luxury hospitality at Habtoor Grand Hotel, with invaluable insights from directors across HR, Housekeeping, Finance, and Sales. The students explored the behind-the-scenes magic that makes the hotel a success—learning how independent and interdependent operations work together from targeting the right market and pricing strategies to understanding seasonal demand, customer loyalty, and the importance of mergers and franchising, students absorbed key business strategies. The session brilliantly tied in with their Unit 1: Exploring Business and Unit 8: Recruitment and Selection coursework, deepening their understanding of PESTLE and STEEPLE analysis.



In the end the students got the privilege to visit the entire facility to get more in-depth insight on the business day to day functions the tour ended up with a lavish lunch and lots of memories.





# UN DAY

**DIAMUN 2025 proudly commemorates the 79th United Nations Day, celebrating nearly eight decades of global cooperation, peace-building, and shared progress. On this special day, we honor the UN's mission to foster a more just, equitable, and sustainable world for all, recognizing its critical role in addressing pressing global challenges. The ceremony not only highlights the achievements of the United Nations but also inspires us to actively uphold its values. From promoting human rights to tackling climate action, this day reminds us of our collective responsibility to shape a brighter, more inclusive future.**





# WELLBEING CORNER

## HALF-TERM 2

### LEAD UP TO WINTER BREAK

Dear Students and Parents,

With MR assessments on the horizon for Post-16 students, and Year 11 in the New Year, now is the perfect time to focus on goal-setting and developing effective study strategies. Some planning and commitment today can make a tremendous difference as we prepare for a successful assessment period. Let's dive into some simple steps to set meaningful goals and build study habits that will set everyone up for success.

#### **Importance of Setting Goals and Taking Actionable Steps:**

Setting realistic, achievable goals is one of the best ways to stay motivated and make steady progress. Start by identifying what you hope to achieve in each subject. Instead of simply aiming to "do well," try to set specific, measurable SMART goals, like improving a test score by a certain percentage or understanding a challenging concept better. Once you've set a goal, break it down into smaller, manageable steps. For example, if your goal is to master a particular chapter in math, break it down into daily tasks: review formulas on Monday, complete practice questions on Tuesday, and so forth. With these bite-sized goals, the larger objective becomes less intimidating and more achievable.

#### **Study Techniques for Different Subjects:**

Every subject requires a unique approach, so using the right study techniques is essential. For vocabulary-heavy subjects like languages, flashcards or digital tools like Quizlet can help reinforce terms and meanings through repetition. For subjects like science or math, where practice and problem-solving are critical, work through as many practice questions as possible—reviewing not only the answers but the methods behind them. Summarizing key points in your own words can also be incredibly helpful, especially in subjects that require conceptual understanding, like history or biology. Remember, studying is not just about reading over notes; it's about actively engaging with the material in a way that strengthens your understanding.

#### **Staying Organized with a Study Schedule:**

Organization can be your best friend during exam preparation. Start by creating a study schedule that spreads out your workload over the upcoming weeks, setting aside specific times for each subject. A good rule of thumb is to study a little bit each day rather than trying to "cram" everything in the night before. Consistency helps with retention and reduces stress. Make sure to schedule in breaks as well. A balanced approach is key to keeping both focus and motivation strong.

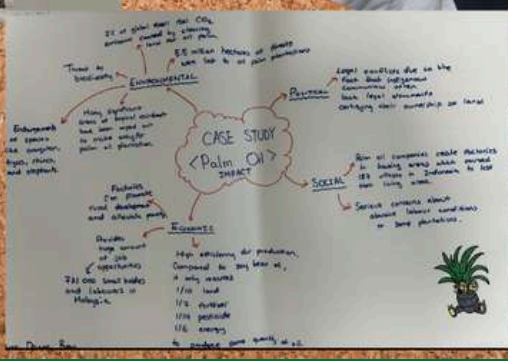
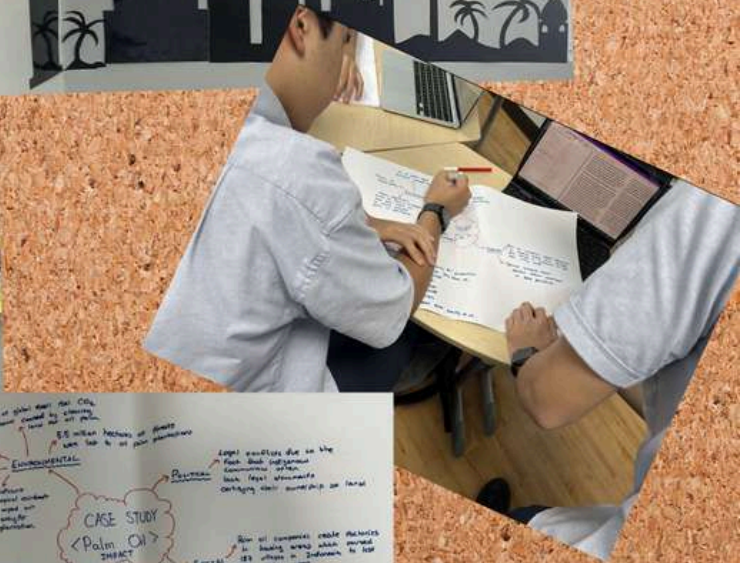
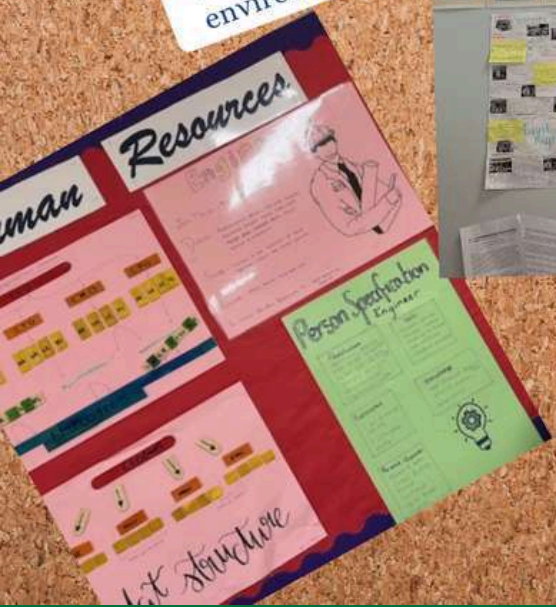




# Individuals and Societies

At MYP I&S students are learning to:

- appreciate human and environmental commonalities and diversity and understand the interactions and interdependence between individuals, societies and the environment,
- identify and develop concern for the well-being of human communities and the responsible citizens of local and global communities,
- develop inquiry skills that lead towards conceptual understandings of the relationships between individuals, societies and the environments.







# Individuals and societies

DP I&S subjects are aimed to:

- Encourage the systemic and critical study of: human experience and behaviour; physical, economic and social environments; the history and development of social and cultural institutions.
- Develop in the student the capacity to identify, to analyse critically and to evaluate theories, concepts and arguments about the nature and activities of the individual and society.
- Enable the student to collect, describe and analyse data used in studies of society, to test hypotheses and interpret complex data and source material

Monday, 9th September



**Venezuela**  
**Venezuela's Opposition Candidate Flees to Spain in Post-Election Crisis**

Spain granted asylum to Edmundo González Urrutia, a candidate in Venezuela's July election that the United States says won the most votes, but whom Venezuelan authorities had threatened to arrest.



**USA**  
**Trump Promises 100 Percent Tariff for Countries That Turn Away From Dollar**

Former President Donald Trump said that if elected, he would impose the hike on countries that "leave the dollar." For months, he has discussed with advisors ways to penalize allies or adversaries who seek bilateral trade in non-dollar currencies. Bloomberg reported. (Bloomberg)



**India & UAE**  
**India, UAE to Review Trade Deal Over Metals Import Surge**

Envoys from the countries are about to reassess their 2022 bilateral economic agreement after India raised concerns over a rise in precious metal imports from the United Arab Emirates (UAE)



**Sudan**  
**Sudan's Foreign Ministry Rejects UN Proposal of Peacekeeping Force**

The foreign ministry is aligned with Sudan's army in the country's civil war against a paramilitary force and said that UN recommendations of an international force in the country would be fuelling a "war for the enemies of Sudan."



# UAE national Flag Day



At Dubai International Academy Emirates Hills, we proudly celebrated UAE National Flag Day by raising the UAE flag at 11 a.m., joined by our Emirati and Arabic students. Flag Day symbolizes national unity, pride, and the UAE's rich heritage and bright future. It's a time for us to come together to honor the nation's values and achievements. We are proud of the UAE and to be part of this special celebration!





# DIRECTOR GENERAL OF KHDA



H.E. Aisha Abdulla Miran



***Celebrating our  
Diverse Community***



# ADHD Unconference

**Non-uniform day:  
Wear Orange to spread the  
awareness**

**COME JOIN THE CONVERSATION WITH  
PEOPLE FROM THE DIA COMMUNITY  
TALKING ABOUT THEIR ADHD AND HOW  
THEY EMBRACE THEIR NEURODIVERSITY**

**THURSDAY 14/11  
LUNCH  
QUAD**





DUBAI INTERNATIONAL  
ACADEMY - EXCLUSIVE  
EVENT

7:00  
PM

Nov 15th  
2024

100dhs per  
ticket

20% OFF on Food & Beverages and Wild Wadi Retail Outlets

PADIA

Initiative

7:00-10:00 PM



**Wild Wadi Waterpark**

Next to Burj Al Arab, Jumeirah



# STUDY SKILLS SESSION- YEAR 10



Year 10 students participated in an engaging study skills session that highlighted various routines to enhance effective study practices. During this session, they had the chance to explore different evidence-based study techniques and reflect on which methods work best for them.



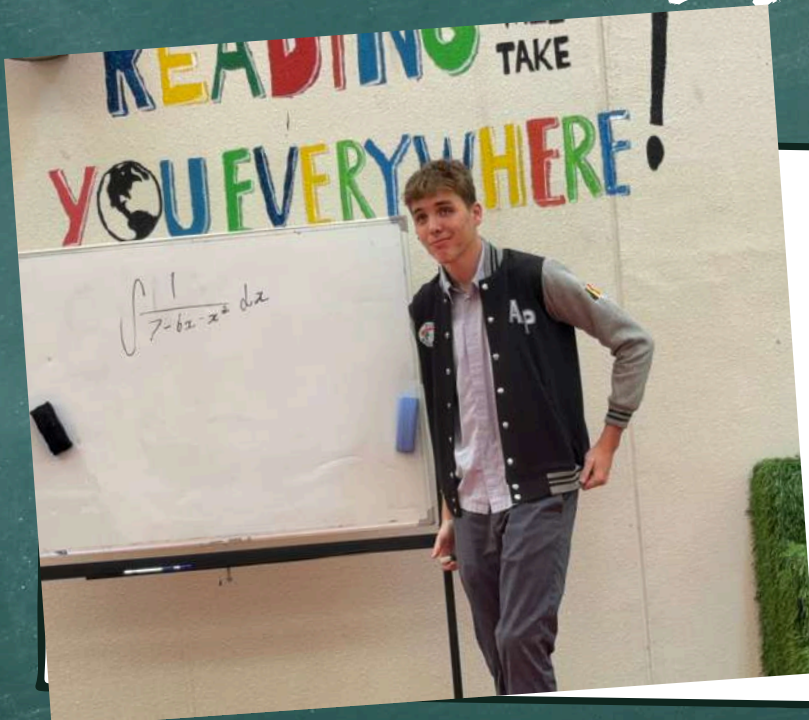
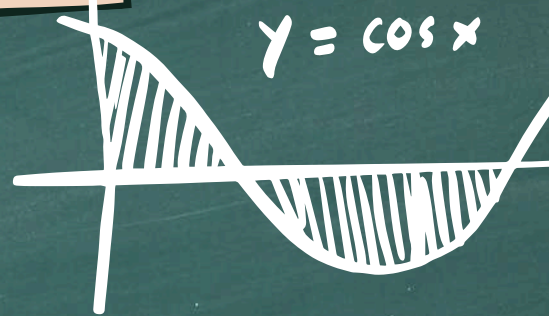
# Integration Bee



Winners: Alia, Maria,  
Ruhan, and Isaac



$$y = \cos x$$



## Amaury Patesson

This talented young mathematician created the entire event, including the wonderful award shaped in an integral sign.





SchoolsCompared.com presents The Top Schools Award for...

Best International Baccalaureate Curriculum School in the UAE 2023 - 2024

**DUBAI INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY**  
EMIRATES HILLS

# WINNER

Best

# INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE CURRICULUM

## SCHOOL IN THE UAE 2023-24



Johnathan Westley  
Managing Editor

James Mullen  
Co-Founder

David Westley  
Co-Founder

Awarded by the Editorial Board of **SchoolsCompared** and the **Top Schools Awards** Independent Judging Panel for consistently outstanding feedback from parents and teachers, school-wide innovation, whole child development and outstanding contribution to the quality and standards of education for children in the UAE 2023.



School Principal  
Hitesh Bhagat  
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Secondary School Senior Leadership

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Deputy Head Pastoral Colin Leacy colinl@diadubai.com	Assistant Head Pastoral Daniel Murphy danielm@diadubai.com	Assistant Head Years 7 - 11 Nemanja Dordevic nemanjad@diadubai.com	Assistant Head Years 12 - 13 Gerhard Van Der Wal gerhardv@diadubai.com

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HoY 8 Shannon Mehan shannonm@diadubai.com	Assistant HoY 9 Jennifer Agacy jennifers@diadubai.com	Assistant HoY 10 Jamie O'Sullivan Jamieo@diadubai.com	HoY 12 Naveen Tyagi naveent@diadubai.com	

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EMIRATES  
HILLS



**Dream - Inspire - Achieve**