



GERONIMO



Kings' School Nad Al Sheba Newsletter
Edition 1

From the Principal's Desk



It is with thanks to Tyrone Viner (Year 2), who won the naming competition at the beginning of term 1, that I welcome you to Edition I of our school publication – Geronimo!

It is our very aspiration for this publication to represent all the traits of our mascot – Geronimo. We want this publication to celebrate the full range of dynamic, innovative and child-centred learning and events that take place in and outside of our school.

Geronimo! is expected to give parents a deeper understanding of life at KSNAS. Therefore, this publication forms part of our communication repertoire. It will be a monthly publication. Every effort will be made to ensure that all aspects of school are reflected throughout the 10 publications in a full academic year.

Our greatest challenge will be selecting the themes and events which will make up each monthly publication. Articles and features will be selected based on our priorities for the academic year, the events and developments in school during that time. We will strive to ensure a balance between parent, student and staff voice.

It is intended to be a 'voice' through prose and pictures which we hope will evolve organically as our flourishing school continues to develop and evolve. We hope that you enjoy reading it and share it with family and friends.

I remain immensely proud to be involved in the school and look forward to your support in our continued pursuit to deliver the best by every child.

Enjoy the read!

Mr. Darren Gale
Principal
Kings' School Nad Al Sheba

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Front Cover Image

Tyrone Viner
Year 2

Who's Afraid of the Small Nice Wolf?



Rebecca Balshaw
Assistant Head Teacher

In Foundation Stage, it is not just the children that have fun in the classroom with their learning but the teachers do too! After all, it wouldn't be fair if that wasn't the case!

We as educators have a duty to provide the highest quality education for all children but we also need to make sure that we continue with our learning. Keeping up to date with best educational practice from all over the world enables us as teachers to continue to enhance our bespoke curriculum in order to ensure all children reach their full potential.

With the above in mind, Foundation Stage 2 children went on a learning journey through the medium of drama this term and here is what happened.

Let's set the scene. You and your colleagues are off for a walk when you stumble across

a very worried policeman shouting down the phone to his colleagues. You don't catch all of the conversation (and are actually battling with your moral conscience about listening into other people's conversations) but you hear enough to become very intrigued. A conversation with your fellow workmates, leads you to decide that curiosity has got the better of you and the best idea would be to follow him as he walks through the forest towards a house.

Just as you are about to follow, the policeman spots you and you notice a wave of relief spread through his face. He greets you like an old friend and says that he has never been happier to see the team of Problem Solvers. Of course! That's it, you are the best people to help out the policeman. After all, there is no company better than solving problems than the one you work for. With no time to lose, back to your office you go and a board meeting is called to discuss the plan of action.

Having reviewed the evidence it is clear that there is a wolf loose. Wanted posters, letters and calls to friends are first on the agenda as well as sending a team to the house to gather more clues. Wolf traps are planned and devised and interviews given and articles written to make others aware of what has happened.

Any adult will probably agree that the above sounds like a very busy working week for any job!

And that is exactly what our FS2 children embarked upon this term. This approach to teaching is termed 'Mantle of the Expert', which enables

children to take on the role of an expert (problem solving) and work for a client (the policeman) on a commission (to find the wolf). Immersing the children in a dramatic context and giving them roles, creates a safe environment where they are free to explore concepts and feelings in an imaginary world, begin able to step out of that world any time they like.

By putting meaning to learning children understand why they have to participate in phonics sessions or sit with their teacher to practise counting.



Within this theme children had opportunities to write for a purpose, design and make, add and halve, converse with their peers, work as a team, take into account the feelings of others... and the list of skills practised continues. And of course, the children had lots of fun!

Oh, and in case you hadn't heard we did receive a letter from the wolf and solved our case. It turns out he was a nice wolf after all and didn't mean to scare Grandma. Applying our concept of Reflection, the big message we learnt was that things are not always as they seem.

CELEBRATIONS



Innovation Week



Open Day



Wake and Shake



Desert Warriors



Kindness Day

CELEBRATIONS



Pink Day



Teddy Bear Picnic



Robot Expo



UAE Flag Day



Book Fair

Assessment – Years 1-6 Life After Levels at Kings' Schools



Hannah Wells
Deputy Head Teacher

Aim: 'to provide valid, reliable and comprehensive information that is used to evaluate students' progress against ...our...curriculum standards and expectations'
DSIB Inspection Framework

At first glance, the so called 'life after levels' agenda presents schools with a whole host of problems and challenges. Schools had well-honed systems and processes in place for the assessment of children against age related expectations. The removal of levels placed schools in an imposed state of flux where a system was removed but not replaced with anything.

With every challenge comes opportunity and at Kings' Schools, we have fully embraced and in fact welcomed the changes in the UK. The removal of levels has presented us with an opportunity to really refine the rigour behind our assessment systems and processes and to ensure that these fully meet the needs of our curriculum especially given the heightened end of year expectations of achievement for each year group. It has also allowed us to re-focus our attention towards the children's **potential** and ensure that we achieve our mantra, 'the best by every child'.

The main pit fall of the old levelling system was that it led to the labelling of children with an alpha-numeric code rather than maintaining a focus on what the child could do and needed to do next in order to make progress. The levelling system also promoted an unhealthy culture where children were simply racing from one sub-level to the next resulting in children acquiring only a breadth of skills at a superficial level. The government had also found inconsistencies in the use of levels both within and across schools in the UK.

The above gives clarity in terms of why the removal of levels is a positive step but how have we ensured that we do not fall into these same pit-falls with our new systems and processes?

The new curriculum requires a complete shift in mind-set and asks us to make judgements based on end of year group expectations rather than on a continuum of learning. It asks us to shift our focus towards **depth** of learning rather than **breadth** – this is a positive move.

'Depth and breadth of understanding were sometimes sacrificed in favour of pace - to move children on to the next level'

Final report of the Commission on Assessment without Levels - September 2015

At Kings' School Nad Al Sheba, we have based our new assessment model on **Bloom's Taxonomy**. This ensures that the children can access the curriculum at a greater depth of understanding wherever they are in their breadth of learning – this means depth and mastery for all at every stage. Teachers are now planning using a series of progressive lesson objectives linked to Bloom's and are beginning to involve the children in articulating what level of depth they are working at.

We are driven by maximising every child's potential to achieve and have used the wealth of data we have to create end of year potential targets (attainment targets) for every child – this makes us data rich as our impact is directly measured by the achievements of the children.

Treat a man as he is and he will remain as he is. Treat a man as he has the potential to become and you make him better than he is.

- Goethe

Highly professional conversations (data meetings) take place between senior leadership and each class teacher every 6 weeks. Class teachers bring current data, evidence and their notes from formative assessments on a range of groups within their class and present their analysis. The focus of these is on tracking children's progress towards their **end of year potential**. We examine the learning and identify needs as well as evaluate the **impact** of what has been put in place already. This rigorous process places high importance on children achieving their maximum potential at our school and give focus and clear next steps both within and across year groups.

In order to meet the heightened raise in expectations, we have been aspirational in our target setting. We hold regular standardisation and moderation meetings because as a school, and indeed as a group of schools, we need to have clarity on what new end of year expectations look like for each year group. We have also mapped out the curriculum so that teachers have more time to focus on providing experiences that give children that sense of awe and wonder.

In summary, our assessment systems and processes promote very focused planning for depth and mastery; they ensure that we are providing **'the best by every child'** and they provide us with detailed analysis and evaluation of current standards and what we need to do next to ensure every child has their learning potential maximised.

We believe that if children take ownership of their own learning and next steps, standards will improve. In the next #StandingOut publication we will explore the power of the Student Led Conference (SLC).

Sports in Term 1



Jill Oliver
Leader of PE and School Sport

Last term, we launched our School Sports Programme with the introduction of Swimming and Football. Both clubs allowed our children to access training and competition to develop a variety of skills and sporting experiences.



Swim Gala

The Swim squad participated in their first home development gala in November. Swimmers competed against children from three other schools enabling them to practice their newly developed swimming skills in a competitive environment. We were extremely proud of all the swimmers especially as many achieved personal bests in their races.



U8-U9 Football Development Festival

With the introduction of the new School AstroTurf in November, we were able to host numerous Football Development Tournaments that enabled our footballers to gain a real sense of competitive football. With over 20 Schools visiting us, our children were proud to be the hosts, welcoming everyone and playing their part in ensuring the games were played in a fair and friendly manner.

Looking ahead at Term 2 What's next for KSNAS Sport?

As we welcome our children and parents in the New Year, we also welcome the addition of new facilities to the school that will further enhance sporting opportunities. The Sports Hall, Netball and Tennis courts are now ready and will provide our children with outstanding facilities to play on. With this, we will soon be introducing Basketball, Netball, Tennis plus many other sports to broaden children's sporting experiences.

We have a busy term ahead in the pool. On 26 January our Swim squad will be travelling to Kings' Dubai to participate in a Y2-6 Swimming Development Gala. We wish all of our swimmers the best of luck. The KSNAS House Swimming Gala will also be taking place this term, providing an exciting opportunity for children to compete against their peers in the pool. In February we will be hosting a second development gala, inviting children from several local schools to compete against each other providing children with an opportunity to once again try and improve their personal best in the water. Finally, KSNAS will be hosting a Kings' Inter School Swimming Gala towards the end of term, we look forward to welcoming Kings' Dubai and Kings' Al Barsha.

The swimming programme is continuing to grow and next term we are pleased to announce the addition of Splash Club for our Foundation Stage swimmers. More details about this club will follow in the near future.

We are introducing Touch Rugby to our Sports Programme this term. Touch, a non-contact version of the popular game Rugby Union, is a fast and exciting game that develops some core fundamental skills, such as hand-eye coordination, speed and agility as well as developing game sense and decision making skills. The club will run every Sunday throughout Term 2 from 3pm until 4pm and will be open to our children in Y2-6. We are also excited to once again play host to other Schools in Dubai who will also be learning the game. Touch Development tournaments will be taking place every Monday to give children the game experience and a chance to practice what they have learnt in the club.

Athletics will be the focus in PE lessons this term. Our Phase 3 children are learning all about track and field events. They are exploring the different Athletic disciplines of running, jumping and throwing, building up to our next House Sports event on 6-7 February. Even our younger children are getting involved, with Foundation and Phase 2 children taking part in a FUNdamental Athletics programme, introducing them to fun games and activities that are a prerequisite for track and field as they get older.

Athletics Club on Tuesdays from 3pm until 4pm will give children even more practice in track and field events, with the opportunity to represent the school in up and coming Athletic Meets. We look forward to taking children to Dubai Sports City Athletics Stadium to compete for the school in numerous events.

We will also be hosting our very own Athletics Championships! The Kings' Olympics event will take place on 22 February and will include Y3-6 children from Kings' Dubai, Kings' Al Barsha, and a selection of other developing schools.

To learn more about Sport at Kings' School Nad Al Sheba, check out our School Sports Website www.kingsnassport.com, which details all upcoming events and fixtures, plus information on clubs and sports available to our children.

We also organise termly sports information meetings. The next one is on Thursday, 12 January, where you can meet the PE team and hear more details about each programme and ask them questions.

For any matter in sport, please contact any of the PE team who will be happy to help:

- Miss Oliver - Leader of PE and Sport - j-oliver@kingsnas.com
- Miss Davis - Athletic Team Coordinator - clairedavis@kingsnas.com
- Mrs Bacon - Swim Team Coordinator - sarahbacon@kingsnas.com

UAE National Day



Rasha Gala Fathy Elsaid
Arabic Leader

29th November was a special day at Kings' School Nad Al Sheba as we were very excited to celebrate the UAE's 45th union ceremony. It was a fantastic celebration of the UAE culture and heritage as children from across the school celebrated the National Day.

Our celebration began earlier in the term when all children from across the school explored, discovered, and learned a lot about the UAE through different activities, projects, poems, stories, songs, and some writing.

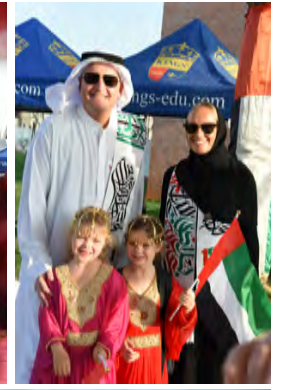
The National Day celebration reflected and celebrated the learning and innovation. There was an exhibition corner for all the projects and work that children had done during that half term.

Our National Day started with a parade, as all our children, teachers and parents came dressed up in the national dress as a part of being a close knit school community.

Our programme was very rich and interesting. We started our day with whole school assembly which began with the National Anthem. Then we enjoyed watching the fashion show which was led by our children and the Emirati dance was fantastic.

In addition to this, all children got a chance to see and interact with the famous animals of the UAE, including the camel and the falcon. They also enjoyed watching a magic show.

Finally the day culminated in a wonderful sharing of friends and family over an Arabic style lunch with a large array of local cuisine and traditional foods at live cooking stations. The decoration and traditional majlis created atmosphere and an entertaining traditional show completed the day perfectly.





Who or What is FONASS?

FONASS stands for Friends of Nad al Sheba School. We are a group of parents who are working to support the school with community based events and to work in partnership with the school and families in building a community.

Our core team consists of:

Co-Chairs - Raghad Mousli and Sahar Taheri

Co-Vice Chairs - Amie Colley and Caroline Richardson-Yeates

Treasurer - Sanji St. Matthew-Daniel

Co-Secretary - Crisild Mullaji and Wendy Prior

What have we done so far?

During Open Morning, we helped Mr. Gale, teachers and students show prospective and current parents around the school and shared with them our own experiences with the school. On Pink day, we helped organise the bake sale and raised over AED 5,000. We organised and led the second hand book sale, which raised AED 1,175 for a Buddy Bench in school. We also ran a small tuck shop at the Swim Gala.

We would like to thank all the parents who helped with the above events, from those who baked and brought in the yummy pink goodies to those who bought the supplies and ran the tuck shop at the Swim Gala, Football Development Festival and other sporting events. We could not do it without the help of all our volunteers.



What are we doing next?

We will be helping the school with the below mentioned events. We encourage all the parents to come along to our next meeting and find out more or help us in anyway that you can.

Family Fun Day - 28th January

You can contact us on fonass.parents@gmail.com. We will announce all meeting dates on the communicator.

Many thanks again to all those who have helped us so far.

Next update will be in February 2017.

- Teamwork and Collaboration*
- Family Fun Day at KSNAS*
- Sports in Term 2*

#Geronimo



"the best by every child"