



Primary Buzz

The Power of Community

DESS Primary Oud Metha Newsletter
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The Power of Community



As another vibrant and eventful term comes to a close, it is a perfect time to reflect on all that we have achieved together as a school community. From learning in the classroom to adventures beyond our gates, the children have embraced every opportunity to grow, discover and connect.

One of the many highlights has been the incredible range of experiences our children have enjoyed. From thrilling educational trips to action-packed residencials, they have extended their learning by gaining new perspectives outside school and creating lifelong memories.

Our Year 2 production of *The Lonely Beast* was among the standout moments, showcasing the confidence, creativity and talent of our young performers. Seeing them shine on stage was a true joy.

A particularly special milestone this term was our first-ever Ramadan Joy event. This celebration brought the DESS Primary Oud Metha community together in a spirit of reflection, generosity and togetherness. It was heartwarming to see families, staff and children unite around the values that make our school such a special place. As we progress through the holy month of Ramadan, we wish all those observing a time of peace, reflection and blessings. Ramadan Mubarak to you and your families.

At the heart of everything we do is our strong sense of community, and none of our achievements would be possible without the tireless support of our wonderful parents. Whether through volunteering, attending events or supporting learning at home, your dedication helps make our school the thriving, nurturing environment that it is. We are truly grateful for your commitment.

As we look ahead to a well-earned break, I encourage everyone to take time to rest, recharge, and enjoy special moments with loved ones. We look forward to another exciting term ahead, filled with opportunities for our children to inspire, explore and invent.

Wishing you all a peaceful and joyful holiday.

Tony Clarkson
Head of School

DESS Shine at the 2025 BSME Games

After months of training and preparation, the much-anticipated BSME Games weekend finally arrived, and our talented squad was more than ready to make its mark.

Hosted by Safa Community School, this year's event brought together 16 schools competing across six sports in a thrilling three-day competition, reminiscent of a mini-Olympics. Points were awarded for each sport, culminating in the overall standings announced at the Gala Dinner on the final day.

Day 1 – Athletics

The Games got off to a flying start with some outstanding performances from our Year 6 athletes. The boys finished an impressive second overall, while the girls secured seventh place. On the track, the boys dominated, taking gold in the 75m, 150m, 300m, and 4x75m relay, along with silver in the 150m. Their success continued in the field events with gold in the high jump and silver in the shot put. The girls also made their mark, earning bronze in the 75m and silver in both the shot put and javelin. A fantastic effort from all our athletes.



Day 2 – Basketball

Our basketball team had been training relentlessly for months, arriving at the tournament full of confidence after countless early morning sessions and extra practices. Facing tough opposition in the group stages against El Alsson Cairo, Cranleigh College Abu Dhabi, and Deira International School, the boys finished second in their pool to secure a place in the quarter-finals.

A thrilling win over the hosts, Safa Community School, saw them advance to the semi-finals against Cranleigh School. Despite a determined effort, they fell just short, losing 8-6 in a fiercely contested match. Regrouping for the third-place playoff, the boys delivered a superb performance to defeat JPS and secure bronze medals. A huge achievement and well deserved after months of dedication. A special thanks to Coach Ty for his hard work in preparing the team.

Girls Football

The Year 6 girls' football team were in sensational form throughout the tournament, showing skill, determination, and teamwork in every match. From the opening game, their

high-pressing style of play put opponents under constant pressure, allowing them to dominate possession and take control. Their well-organised defence and clinical finishing produced a series of commanding victories, conceding only a handful of goals along the way.

Their outstanding performances saw them crowned champions at the end of the tournament, a remarkable achievement for a truly talented and hardworking team.



Swimming

On Saturday afternoon, after a gruelling day of boys' basketball and girls' football, our talented swimmers had to summon every last ounce of energy for the BSME Games Swimming Event.

With 15 other schools competing, results were difficult to gauge in real-time, but it was clear that we were performing at the highest level. Many of our swimmers placed in the top five for their events, with Kenza, Ruth, Charlie, and Dillon all earning individual medals. The girls' relay teams also added to the medal haul with gold and bronze finishes.

We narrowly missed out on an overall third-place finish by just a few points, but it was a performance to be proud of. A special mention goes to Year 5 swimmer Kenza, who was named MVP Swimmer of the Event after finishing well ahead of the competition in her individual races and playing a key role in the relay successes.

Day 3 – Netball

The Under-11 netball team displayed fantastic skill and teamwork throughout the tournament. After progressing through a challenging group, they qualified for the knockout stages, where they fought hard in fiercely contested matches. Finishing in fourth place overall, they showed just how much progress they have made over the past year. A superb effort from all involved.



Boys Football

The final day of competition saw the our football team deliver some superb performances. Topping their group in the pool stages, they played some of their best football of the season. A 2-0 victory over Kings Dubai in the quarter-finals was a particular highlight, but as the tournament wore on, fatigue started to take its toll.

In the semi-final, they faced an outstanding JPS side, who would go on to win the tournament, before narrowly missing out on third place in a tight match against Safa Community School. Despite the disappointment, finishing fourth in such a strong competition was a great achievement.



Final Results

Girls Football – 1st Place (Gold Medal)
Boys Athletics – 2nd Place (Silver Medal)
Basketball – 3rd Place (Bronze Medal)
Swimming – 4th Place
Netball – 4th Place
Boys Football – 4th Place
Girls Athletics – 7th Place

Overall Standings – 3rd Place

After an incredible weekend of sport, we finished in third place overall, earning bronze medals in a field of 16 highly competitive schools. The children created unforgettable memories, representing DESS with determination, skill, and sportsmanship throughout.

A huge congratulations to every athlete who took part. We could not be prouder of their efforts. What an incredible achievement!





Celebrating the Spirit of Ramadan

The successful Ramadan Joy programme, a collaborative initiative between the Islamic Department and our dedicated parent community, provided a rich educational experience focused on the values of Ramadan. Children took part in interactive workshops and reflective discussions, deepening their understanding of generosity, patience, and gratitude.

This experiential learning approach encouraged both spiritual and personal growth while strengthening the sense of togetherness within our school. The programme's emphasis on culturally relevant, faith-based education highlights its importance in supporting the holistic development of our children.

We are committed to building on this foundation, ensuring Ramadan Joy continues to offer meaningful learning experiences and nurture a strong sense of unity. A heartfelt thank you to all parents and the Islamic Department for their invaluable contributions in making this initiative such a success.



The Unsung Heroes of DESS

Our incredible site staff team is the backbone of the school community, working tirelessly behind the scenes to ensure every child, family and staff member experiences a welcoming, safe and inspiring environment every single day.

Under the dedicated leadership of Grenville, our site team exemplifies professionalism, teamwork and a tireless commitment to excellence. Whether it's maintaining impeccable cleanliness, ensuring our facilities are safe and well-kept or responding swiftly to any challenge, they take immense pride in their work. Their contributions keep the school running smoothly, often going above and beyond to support staff and children in ways that truly make a difference.

From the moment our gates open in the morning, they are there with a warm smile, ensuring a smooth and safe start to the day. Long before the first lesson begins and long after the last bell rings, they are working behind the scenes, keeping our school clean, organised and ready for learning.

But their impact goes far beyond the daily routine. Their dedication is on full display



during our biggest celebrations, transforming the school for the Cultural Fair, spreading joy through decorations during Ramadan, and ensuring every event runs seamlessly. While their efforts may sometimes go unnoticed, their presence is felt in every corner of the school.

We are immensely grateful for their hard work, kindness and commitment. They are more than just a team; they are family.

So, the next time you see a member of our site staff, take a moment to say thank you. They truly are the unsung heroes of our community!



Year 2 Brings *The Lonely Beast* to Life in a Magical Stage Production

This term, Year 2 took to the stage in a spectacular retelling of *The Lonely Beast*, a production that captivated audiences of all ages. From our children and staff to proud parents, the performances were met with warmth and enthusiasm, making it a true community celebration.

The journey began at the start of Term 2 when the children were introduced to *The Lonely Beast* by Chris Judge. Inspired by the story and its charming main character, Year 2 worked together with their teachers to adapt the book into a stage production, bringing their own creativity and ideas to the script. As part of their IEL learning, they took on key roles in designing and crafting costumes, props, and dialogue, showing a remarkable level of independence, teamwork, and maturity.



Over the course of four live performances, audiences were treated to a visual spectacle filled with dazzling costumes, vibrant sets, and colourful props. As the Beast set off on his quest to find his own community, he encountered a host of lively characters, from moonlit fireflies and feathery owls to talking turtles, business professionals, yoga instructors, and celebrities. The children brought each scene to life through enthusiastic dancing, expressive storytelling, and beautifully performed songs, using music that resonated with young and old alike.



The final song, performed as a full year group, was a particularly moving moment, leaving many in the audience teary-eyed. As the final note faded, parents rose to their feet in a standing ovation, the rapturous applause a testament to the children's incredible achievements.

At its heart, *The Lonely Beast* is a story about the importance of friendship and belonging, values that sit at the core of everything we believe in. Seeing our Year 2 children collaborate, perform, and shine with confidence was a truly special moment. It was a production that not only showcased their learning but also reinforced the strength and spirit of our school community.

We could not be prouder of them.



House Spirit at DESS

Growing Together as a School

Our House system is more than just friendly competition; it sits at the heart of our school community. From the moment children and staff join Jaguars, Leopards, Lynx or Panthers, they become part of a House family; a bond that stays with them throughout their journey with us. House points can be earned in countless ways, celebrating not only what children achieve but also who they are, in and beyond the classroom. Whether through sporting success, academic excellence, artistic expression or acts of kindness, every contribution matters. But the true spirit of House runs deeper. It unites us, fostering friendships across year groups, encouraging collaboration and strengthening our school-wide community. More than just a system, House is who we are; one school, growing and thriving together.

Being part of a House brings valuable leadership opportunities, encouraging teamwork, responsibility and school-wide engagement. Our dedicated House Leaders, spanning different age groups, take on active roles in House meetings, organise and officiate competitions and champion House initiatives. While House pride is on full display at Sports Days and Swim Galas, its impact extends far beyond, offering meaningful ways for children to connect, support and celebrate one another.

Innovation & Inspiration: House Spirit in Action

This year, Year 6 children have been introduced to an online portal, allowing them to track achievements and monitor their House's success in real time. Meanwhile, older House Leaders now play an active role in supporting KS1 children, helping them collect points and manage competition entries. Participation in House competitions remains incredibly high, often with hundreds of entries submitted across different initiatives. Most recently, our House Leaders led a school-wide campaign on responsible device use, challenging students to design engaging displays to educate their peers.

In addition, we've been working with a professional artist to bring our House mascots to life! Designed by our children, shortlisted by our House Leaders and refined through a collaborative process, we are proud to introduce:

JJ the Jaguar – Designed by Laila (6 Yellow)

Le-Lo the Leopard – Designed by Hannah (4 Red)

Pax the Panther – Designed by Arwa (3 Green), Ffion (6 Blue), Arya (6 Blue), Ricky (6 Yellow)

Lucky the Lynx – Designed by Alisha (6 Blue) and Conor (3 Yellow)

We can't wait to see these mascots featured across the school and classrooms as a wonderful addition to our House identity!



Looking Ahead: Exciting Times for Our Houses

With the Easter break approaching, we're eagerly awaiting the results of our Wildlife & Nature Photography Competition, a celebration of our 'Exploring' IEI topic, where students showcase their connection to the world around them.

Meanwhile, our House Leaders are busy planning an exciting House Day for Term 3. This school-wide event will bring children of all ages together in STEM-based challenges, encouraging collaboration, problem-solving and teamwork. It promises to be an unforgettable experience, strengthening the bonds between House members and year groups.

While our House system continues to evolve, one thing remains constant; the incredible sense of belonging it creates. At DESS Primary Oud Metha, we are fortunate to have a community within a community, where every child is supported, valued and encouraged to thrive. House spirit is alive and stronger than ever!

DESS do the DASSA Rugby Double!

Our rugby community united to celebrate one of the most remarkable season finales in recent years.

After battling through an incredibly tough round of DASSA matches, both the Year 5A and Year 6A teams finished at the top of their groups, securing their place in their respective finals.



Champions of Dubai: Year 5's Stunning Victory

With the lush grass of our DESS Primary Oud Metha pitches as the stage, the Year 5s faced Arcadia and JESS Jumeirah in a thrilling three-way final. Displaying flair, poise and some scintillating rugby, we powered through two wins, claiming the title of Dubai champions. A wonderful season for a truly determined group of players!



Year 6 Get Their Redemption

For the Year 6 team, this was more than just a final, it was the last chance to settle an old score. Their opponents, SAFA Community School, were a powerhouse team that we had come close to beating in recent years but never quite conquered. The most painful near miss? The Dubai College 10s final just weeks ago, when SAFA snatched victory with a last-minute try. But this time, we were not going to let history repeat itself!

A tense first half saw both teams locked in battle, with few chances and a narrow lead for us at the break. Then, in the second half, the boys in red came out firing on all cylinders. With quick ball from the contact area and precision passing to our speedsters on the wings, we went over for a flurry of tries, securing a fantastic, hard-fought victory. Our resilience, determination and never-give-up attitude were nothing short of inspiring.



A Season to Remember

To be crowned Dubai champions in BOTH Year 5 and Year 6 is an incredible achievement, one that very few schools can claim. We could not be more proud of these teams and everything they have achieved this year.

Even more exciting? The future of DESS Primary Oud Metha rugby is looking stronger than ever. The number of boys and girls taking up the sport in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 continues to grow, and it's been fantastic to see so much enthusiasm for the game.

One thing is certain; when these players move on to secondary school, they'll be more than ready to take their rugby to the next level. What a season!

The Inaugural DESS Primary Oud Metha Online Safety Summit

Safeguarding is at the heart of everything we do at DESS Primary Oud Metha. As children grow up in an increasingly connected world, it is essential to equip them with the knowledge and confidence to navigate the digital space safely. That is why we were proud to host our first DESS Primary Oud Metha Online Safety Summit, bringing together Digital Leaders from schools across Dubai for an inspiring and interactive morning dedicated to championing online safety.

Aligning with this year's Safer Internet Day 2025 theme, "Too Good to Be True? Protecting Yourself and Others from Online Scams", the summit focused on proactive leadership, collaboration and digital responsibility. Our

young Digital Leaders took centre stage, engaging with their peers, learning from experts and developing the skills to educate and support others in staying safe online. Ahead of the summit, all KS1 and KS2 children explored online safety topics in their Computing lessons, and our Digital Leaders led a whole-school assembly, reinforcing key messages about safe digital habits.

The event featured a range of interactive activities designed to deepen children's understanding of online safety. They explored key messages such as Tell a Trusted Adult and the importance of safeguarding personal information. A highlight of the day was the interactive quiz, where children tested their

knowledge and discussed real-world scenarios. Kabir, from Year 3, shared, "The quiz was so much fun! If we got a question wrong, it was okay, we didn't feel bad as we tried our best and also learned some new things."

We were also honoured to welcome Barry Cummings from Beat the CyberBully, who spoke to our parents about raising digitally savvy children before leading a thought-provoking discussion with the children. Aydin, from Year 4, reflected, "I really enjoyed listening to Barry. He was fun and gave us great details. He knew his stuff about current issues, and he had time for everyone."

Adding to the excitement, our DESS College Sixth Form Digital Leaders, led by Mr Ebrahim Rawat, Head of ICT and Computer Science / Director of Digital Learning and Innovation, hosted a digital escape room challenge, testing children's understanding of phishing, scam emails and online deception. Eliza, from Year 3, said, "I loved working with the DESS College kids the most! Even though the challenge was tricky, it was exciting!" This collaboration between Primary and College students strengthened mentorship and digital awareness.



Another creative highlight was the Content Creator activity, where children designed online safety messages through videos, posters and infographics. These resources were shared within their schools, ensuring the knowledge spread beyond the summit.

One of the most rewarding aspects of the event was the collaboration between schools, bringing children together with a shared mission to make the digital world a safer place. The summit provided a platform for sharing experiences, building connections and strengthening the role of Digital Leaders.

We extend a huge thank you to all the participating schools and to our own dedicated staff, whose time, energy and enthusiasm made this event such a success. We are immensely proud of our Digital Leaders for setting a brilliant example and making online safety a priority.

With such a fantastic first summit behind us, we look forward to next year's event, which will be even more engaging with our brand new DESS Primary Academic City joining the initiative. Together, we are building a generation of confident, responsible and digitally aware children who will lead the way in creating a safer online world.



Disconnect to Reconnect

Residential Adventures



From Whitewater Rafts to Campfires

We believe in the power of stepping outside the classroom to create meaningful memories and lifelong lessons. This term, our Year 4 and Year 5 children embarked on unforgettable adventures that encouraged personal growth, teamwork and exploration. These experiences gave them the chance to disconnect from the hustle and bustle of daily life in the classroom and reconnect with nature, their peers and themselves.

Year 5 – Al Ain Adventure: A Splash of Excitement



This year's Year 5 residential trip was nothing short of thrilling. The adventure took us to Al Ain Adventure, the Middle East's first man-made whitewater rafting, kayaking and surfing facility. With water sports at the heart of the experience, the children jumped straight into action, taking on whitewater rafting, kayaking, tubing and even raft building.

The trip was about more than just getting wet. It was an opportunity to push boundaries, build teamwork and gain confidence in the water. Stepping

out of their comfort zones, the children embraced each challenge with enthusiasm and determination. From navigating rough waters to collaborating with their peers, every moment was an opportunity for growth.

As the sun set each day, the fun continued with evenings spent at the Mercure Hotel on Jebel Hafeet, where the children could reflect on their adventures and strengthen friendships in a relaxed setting.



Year 4 – Hatta Fort Hotel

For Year 4, the adventure was just as exciting but with a different kind of magic. Nestled in the scenic beauty of the Hatta mountains, the Hatta Fort Hotel provided the perfect backdrop for a trip focused on independence, self-reliance and fun.



This residential experience is designed to prepare Year 4s for the challenges ahead in Upper Key Stage 2, helping them build confidence, develop problem-solving skills and create lasting memories with friends. From orienteering challenges and racing down the slip and slide to mastering the art of lighting a fire, every activity was carefully planned to encourage growth and resilience.

One of the highlights of the trip was gathering around the campfire, toasting marshmallows, singing songs and sharing laughter. It was an experience filled with excitement, joy and the perfect mix of adventure, learning and self-discovery.

Disconnect to Reconnect

Both trips were a reminder of the importance of getting outdoors, stepping away from screens, and discovering new aspects of ourselves and the world around us. Whether navigating rapids or tackling outdoor challenges, our Year 4 and Year 5 children returned with strengthened friendships, enhanced self-confidence and a greater appreciation for adventure.

Until next year!

Nurturing a Love for Reading



In an age of digital entertainment, children are reading for pleasure less than ever before. The rise of streaming services, social media and on-demand content has reduced the time spent with books, while busy schedules filled with extracurricular activities, sports and additional tuition leave little room for quiet reading.

Yet the benefits of reading remain undeniable. Unlike screen time, which has been shown to shorten attention spans,

regular reading strengthens focus and concentration across all areas of learning. It also develops empathy, critical thinking and a deeper understanding of the world. Research consistently links reading for pleasure in early years to academic success, not just in English but in subjects such as Maths and Science.

Here at DESS Primary Oud Metha, we recognise the importance of fostering a love for books. Our Find Fifteen initiative encourages children and parents to carve out fifteen minutes a day to read together. Reading aloud strengthens fluency and comprehension while creating valuable moments for discussion and vocabulary building. Whether a child is taking their first steps in FS2 or reading fluently in Year 6, this shared experience remains just as important.

The joy of reading was on full display during our recent World Book Day celebrations. Children and staff arrived dressed as their favourite characters, took part in quizzes and competitions, and designed their own dream books. A whole-school assembly brought everyone together to celebrate the magic of storytelling, with teachers and students engaging in interactive House activities. At the sound of the reading alarm, a hush fell across the school as every child and adult paused to read for ten minutes.



Perhaps the most heartwarming moment of the day came in our reading village, where children sat together in pairs, completely absorbed in each other's stories.

In a world of distractions, this simple pleasure remains one of the most powerful ways to learn, connect and grow.



Looking Ahead to a Term of Celebration and Discovery

The final term of the year is set to be a memorable one, packed with exciting events and unforgettable moments.

Right now, an exhilarating Environmental Studies trip to Cyprus is underway, while back at school, the calendar is filling up with House Swim Galas and a STEM-themed House Day. Whether it's the joyful energy of the Summer Concert or the charming FS & KS1 musical showcases, there will be plenty of opportunities to celebrate talent and creativity.

With Half-Term and Eid al-Adha offering a well-earned mid-term break, children will return refreshed and ready for even more highlights. The Achievement Awards will shine a spotlight on dedication and accomplishments, while the Year 6 production of Matilda promises to be an unmissable theatrical experience.

As we look ahead, the excitement doesn't stop here. Next term's curriculum theme; INSPIRE or INVENT, will challenge our children to think like innovators and changemakers. What will you create? How will you make a difference? We can't wait to find out.



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