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## **Message from Mr. O' Connor**

Dear Parents and Friends,

Welcome back! January is a time for a new start, fresh energy and updated New Year resolutions. On Monday 8th January, we organised our first 'Academic Review Day' for the Secondary school. The teachers were available for the full day to receive meetings with parents and students. Without doubt, the most effective and beneficial format is to invite the students along to these open conversations. We revised the last term's reports and commented on the next steps for the different students' progress. In the ideal world, all parties are present, both parents, teachers and students. Mr. Sparkman also organised CAT 4 presentations for the Secondary Department on exactly what they are and how they can be interpreted. However, the key to these meetings is participation. The more meetings there are with parents and students, the more we are able to help.

Regarding new teachers here in GVS, we warmly welcomed Mr. Murphy as Head of English to Green Valley at the beginning of the week. Mr. Murphy has a wealth of experience with both the IGCSE and IB Curriculum and will manage the Secondary English Department. On a parallel side, we have also welcomed Mr. Romero as Computer Science teacher for Years 11 and 13 to school.

Certainly, he brings valuable, real life experience to this subject. Lastly, we would like to inform you that Dr. Russo will teach ICT for Years 7 through to 9.

As always at this time of year, we wish you an energetic start to a busy term.

My best wishes,

Mr. James O' Connor

Headmaster and Co-Founder of GVS

## Primary Section

### Dates for your Diary

### Dates for your Diary

- **Week beginning 22<sup>nd</sup> January: Primary Art week**
- **Week beginning 12<sup>th</sup> February: Half-term**
- **Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> February: Primary Friendship/Carnival Day**
- **Week beginning 26<sup>th</sup> February: Primary Science week**
- **Friday 1<sup>st</sup> March: School closed - Holiday**
- **Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> March: Primary Eggshibition of Easter Eggs 2:30 - 3:00 pm**
- **Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> March: Last day of Spring Term**

### Message from Ms. Jan Harvey

Dear families,

Firstly, a very Happy and Healthy New Year to you all. I hope you all had a wonderful Christmas break.

It has been lovely welcoming the children back this week and seeing them all returning to school so happily too.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank you once again for your fantastic support during our Charity Drive. The amount of food and toys were overwhelming. We were able to fill 3 cars full when Yachting Gives Back came to collect everything! Then your added support for the Fun Run and the Christmas Fair was truly amazing! Thank you so much.

I feel this year, was probably our best Christmas Fair yet. The secondary students worked well to produce a variety of activities for the younger students to enjoy, the amazing food provided by our families, organised so brilliantly by the Reps of GVS Families (thank you all so much for that), the beautiful musical items from our students and even a visit from Santa himself! All added up to make a wonderful afternoon. The icing on the cake was the staggering 4605€ raised to help those in

need around the island. It was a great team effort.  
Thank you.

The weather has changed a little since last term and the wind is quite a bit cooler, and whilst we are all toasty warm in the classes, it is very different when we go outside. Please remember to send in a coat for the children to wear during break and especially for lunchtime, as we do continue to eat outside unless it is raining.

Just a few gentle reminders please for the start of the new term:

- All long hair, boy and girls, should be tied up once it reaches shoulder length, please.
- Smart watches and phones are not permitted in the primary school.
- Proper school uniform should be worn at all times, including sensible shoes which give support (Ugg type shoes/boots are not suitable for school). On days of timetabled sports lessons, GVS sports uniform is to be worn.
- On wet days, if your child wears wellington boots to school, please ensure they have their normal shoes to wear in class please.
- Finally, please don't forget to Hi5 the messages on MMe so we can see you have received and read them.

Thank you as always for your continued support, it is greatly appreciated.

Kind regards,

Ms. Jan Harvey

Head of Primary





## Secondary Section

### Message from Mr. Drew Sparkman

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I hope this message finds you well. As Head of Secondary, I am constantly reminded of the integral role that our partnership - the bond between home and school - plays in shaping the personal and academic development of our students. This connection, which is at the heart of education, is not just a sentiment but is also grounded in extensive educational research.

Studies consistently show that when parents and guardians are actively involved in their children's education, the outcomes are overwhelmingly positive. This involvement goes beyond helping with homework or attending parent-teacher conferences. It encompasses understanding their daily experiences, celebrating their achievements,

and being a part of their learning journey. Research from various educational institutions indicates that this involvement can lead to higher academic achievement, better attendance, a deeper understanding of the learning material, and more positive attitudes towards school.

However, this collaboration is not a one-way street. As educators, we strive to create an environment that is welcoming, informative, and engaging for families. We understand that each family is unique, with its own dynamics, and we respect and value the diversity that each brings to our school community. Our goal is to work hand in hand with you, ensuring that we provide the best possible educational experience for your children.

One of the most effective ways for families to collaborate with us is by participating in school-organized events such as our recent Academic Review Day. These events are not just opportunities for us to showcase what is happening at school but are also platforms for meaningful interaction and shared experiences between students, parents, and teachers. As a pledge to increase the bond between home and school to something more than once-a-term invitations and email exchange, I would like to let all of you know that this topic is a top priority, and we are arranging ways to better integrate home into the school as well as to better streamline communication from school to home. Once decisions have been made, I will promptly announce it via our newsletter.

In the meantime, I would like to thank the families who were able to attend our Academic Review Day.

Sincerely,

Mr. Drew Sparkman

Deputy Head of Secondary

### **Message from Mr. David Méndez**

I hope you all had a restful period of time where you enjoyed your loved ones and shared magical moments.

In the days leading up to the Christmas holidays, DP1 students carried out different solidarity activities that will help them with their CAS Project (Creativity, Activity and Service); DP2 students carried out workshops with their teachers in which they worked on the last versions of their work, as in the first weeks of January they must hand in their final versions to be sent to the International Baccalaureate.

This first week of work for DP2 students has been very important, as all of them have had to hand in papers to their teachers for moderation and to be sent to IB for assessment. They are also continuing to work on expanding the curriculum for each subject and preparing for the upcoming official mock exams in February. Many of the DP2 students are immersed in university application processes and are sending documentation or having interviews with universities.

Preparing for the debate involved hours and hours of research, formulating the arguments, finding relevant evidence, writing the speeches both for and against the motion, preparing to answer possible questions from the opposing team, and finally rehearsing the presentation.

DP1 students have started this new year working on their different subjects and expanding their curricular content, as well as writing up their experiences for their CAS Project.

From the International Baccalaureate Coordination Office, my best wishes for the coming year to all the families and the educational community.

An engraved trophy will be presented to the school after Christmas.

Sincerely,

David Méndez Rodríguez

International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme  
Coordinator

### **Message from Mr. Llorenç Mercer**

Sant Antoni 2024

It is bonfire season! And if you are new to the island and its culture, then you should know that as soon as Christmas is finished, we move on to bonfires. The religious background is there, but the activity is nowadays to do with bonfires, grilling, BBQ's and socializing with friends and family. Fire is a very important element in our culture, and often related to the devil, so it is also very common to see demon parades and people dancing under the fire from the torches they are carrying. Demon mask design has evolved greatly in the last few years, and although purists think the trend is moving away from the traditional concept in each Majorcan village, new, more "Lord of the Rings Orc" inspired designs are very popular.

Then there is the music, with very specific musical instruments, and of course, lyrics. These are ancient popular songs, with very basic and monotonous musical structures and very, very naughty Catalan lyrics.

Most of these Sant Antoni bonfires will take place this coming weekend all over Mallorca in most neighborhoods. Of course the big ones are on the eve of Sant Antoni itself, January 17th, with the biggest and most popular celebrations in Sa Pobla, Artà, or Manacor. A special mention should be made for Pollença, and their "Pi de Sant Antoni", which consists of first going to the mountains to collect a 22 meter long pine tree (the longest possible dimensions to navigate through the streets of Pollença, and then plant it in the middle of the street, next to the church, heavily greased up and ready to be climbed by anyone daring to do so). The climb is like nothing you have ever seen, the area turns into some kind of battlefield, with groups getting physical in the struggle to reach the tree first and start climbing. The winner goes down in local history as a hero!

Best regards,

Mr. Llorenç Mercer

Head of School Culture

### GVS Christmas Fair Success

Dear Parents,

This year, was probably our best Christmas Fair yet. The secondary students worked well to produce a variety of activities for the younger students to enjoy, the amazing food provided by our families, organised so brilliantly by the Reps of GVS Families (thank you all so much for that), the beautiful musical performances by our students and even a visit from Santa himself! All added up to make a wonderful afternoon. The icing on the cake was the staggering 4605€ raised to help those in need around the island. It was a great team effort. On behalf of Green Valley we would like to thank you all for your generosity!





## Links to GVS Social Media



Follow us to be updated on our latest news and have fun with what is happening at our school. Click on the icon below to join.



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