

## High Performance Learning at GFS

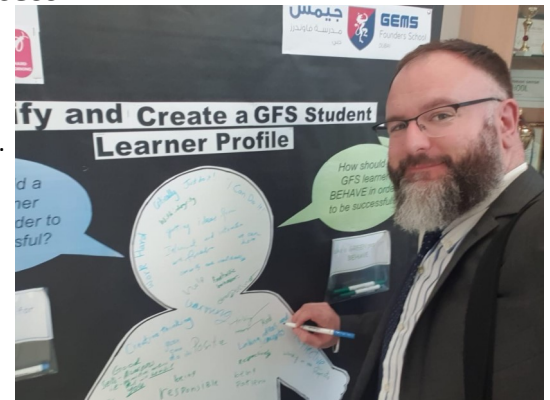


Dear Parents,

Welcome to the March edition of our parent HPL newsletter. This in this third release we take a reflective look back at March and what took place in our community. Despite the enforced closure, we managed to get a very important task started; designing the ideal GFS Learner Profile! As a result of the closures and introduction of distance learning, we also introduced a really important project that has been supporting parents and learners at home capture their learning; 'Just me! Learning from home'. In this edition we share some examples of this with you and invite you to keep on sharing with us so that we continue to celebrate the excellent learning that is taking place beyond the walls of GFS. Also featured is a useful piece for mums and dads about how to make the most of distance learning and cope at home. Lastly we reflect on two very important VAA's and spend some time reflecting on how these can help us all in facing such diverse and challenging times.

### **The GFS Learner Profile: creating our vision for future success**

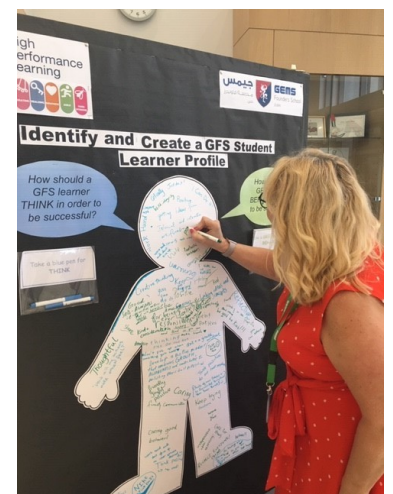
The GFS community spent the last week of February and very beginning of March exploring what we thought was it was that makes our learners so incredible and what behaviours and learning skills we believe our learners should possess. This began with Ms. Florenza creating a GFS learner silhouette and placing it in our main reception area. Parents, teachers, leaders and learners were invited to add to the silhouette,; writing a behaviour or learning habit that the perfect GFS learner should possess in order to be successful in school and beyond. As you can see from our pictures we have made a fantastic start with this project and we want to now invite you, our wonderful parent body, to have your say and give us your thoughts on what you think the GFS learner profile should look like. To add what you believe a behaviour trait and learner habit GFS students need to possess in order to be successful to our board and



have your say in creating the ideal GFS learner profile, simply copy the link below into your browser and complete the simple form;

<https://bit.ly/34s0eH8>

The outcome of this community project will be an agreed set of behaviours and learning habits that will drive everything that we do in school to improve student outcomes in school and in creating bright, successful futures.





## **9 ways to keep your child motivated; an HPL guide for mums and dads!**

School may be closed for now, with all learning bring online but this won't stop us! Suddenly you have been thrust into the role of helping your child engage in distance learning. You have no experience of it and it can be frustrating. It's a big change for them and a big one for you. It may start as fun and as something of a novelty but that is unlikely to last. We are in it for the long haul. Here are 9 simple think points to help you through this time and keep things balanced at home

### **Play up the importance of effort.**

We feel greater satisfaction when we've achieved something than difficult than when we've done something easy. Remind your child how good it feels to strive and achieve, and celebrate their success when they've put in effort.

### **Feed their curiosity.**

If your child has a passion for something – whether that's maths, music or My Little Pony – they'll naturally be motivated to do it, and that can help instil good habits. Be child-led and let them explore their curiosity, even if it seems a bit odd to you.

### **Be curious yourself.**

If we want our children to be motivated to achieve, we need to demonstrate that behaviour ourselves. For example, if you want your child to learn piano, don't just send them to lessons: be involved with their practice, and let them see you playing the piano yourself.

### **Build their self-esteem.**

Rather than saying, "Don't worry, I know you're not very good at spelling," which compounds a lack of self-belief, build your child's self-esteem by saying, "I understand you're finding this difficult, but if we keep working at it, we'll get there."



### Ask the right questions.

You can engender a love of learning in your child by showing genuine interest in what they're doing in their learning. Make time to talk, and instead of asking what your child did, ask them what they learnt and what was interesting. This starts a dialogue, rather than simply getting your child to list what they've done.

### Know when to step back.

It's natural to feel frustrated if your child isn't trying their hardest, but try not to slip into nagging and remonstrating. Sometimes children and teenagers feel highly charged and emotional at these times, they're not in the mood for a rational conversation, so save it until they're in a better frame of mind.

### Celebrate effort rather than achievement.

If your child struggles to motivate themselves, it can be tempting to offer incentives: for example, linking pocket money to good marks. The problem with bribery is that it creates a mentality where children are just looking for what they have to do to "win the game".

### Focus on the future.

If your child is older, especially if they've started secondary school, you can challenge their lack of motivation by highlighting the importance of working hard. They need reminding that the work they're doing now is preparing them for future success, and that it's worth putting in the effort now.

### Support, but don't take over.

Metaphorically holding your child's hand through every piece of work might make them get it done, but it won't increase their self-motivation, so aim to guide and support without taking over. Success comes as a result of practice, and children are most likely to succeed if they choose to practise for themselves.



## Just me! Learning from home #GFSPerseverance #GFSResilience

#Resilience



#Perseverance

So, early in March, everything changed! Schools across Dubai, including GFS, were closed and we all moved to distance learning. This has required us all to adapt our routines, habits and get used to something quite different indeed! As you all know, the GFS teaching community were well prepared for this following the, earlier than planned, Spring Break, and we went into it with open eyes and a vision for success. What has always been at the very heart of GFS is the word 'community'. We strive to support one another, share our successes so others can learn from them and as a result develop a sense of togetherness that you won't find in many other schools. With this in mind, we developed the 'Just me! Learning from home' initiative. Developed so that we can capture the great collaboration of learning that is taking place across all GFS

homes, students and parents have been sending in pictures and descriptions of what learning looks like at home; whether this be completing a musical masterpiece, a fine work of art or creating an essay worthy of Wordsworth. We are celebrating this by sharing it across our social media platforms, so you may have caught glimpses of this in the last few weeks. This initiative is continuing and, in the spirit of HPL, we look towards the VAA (Values attributes and Attitudes) of Hardworking, **#Resilience** and **#Perseverance**. To get involved, click the shared link below, read the 'guidance' page and then send you entry in using the entry form. It could not be simpler! Come on every-

one, join us by opening a window into distance learning in your home and show us how your **#Resilience** and **#Perseverance** are helping you continue to from learn from home, despite the challenges you face..

## Know the lingo, be the lingo!

You may have guessed it already, but our focus in this issue of our HPL newsletter is **#Resilience** and **#Perseverance**. It is in such challenging and difficult times that practising these VAA's become to so important to us all and to our future success. The HPL definitions of these two important behaviours are below as a reminder. Perhaps remember these and reflect on them each day with your children at home so we can all get through the challenge of lockdown and school closure together. We will be sharing more and more examples of this in our next issue and on social media so keep looking out for them and join our journey

**Perseverance** - The ability to keep going and not give up; face obstacles and difficulties; persist in effort; work diligently and work systematically; not be satisfied until high quality, appropriate precision and the desired outcome is achieved.

**Resilience** - This is the ability to overcome setbacks; remain confident, focused, flexible and optimistic; help others to move forward in the face of adversity. Not giving up is key to becoming a high performing learner, which makes this an extremely important characteristic that we want to develop in all of the learners at GFS.



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