



# GERONIMO!



Kings' School Nad Al Sheba Newsletter  
Edition 4 - May 2017

## From the Principal's Desk



How do schools best prepare children for the future? School leaders often talk about preparing students for jobs that have not yet been invented. We frequently hear from Business & Industry that today's graduates have the 'knowledge' yet they are lacking the 'skills' to take their place in the modern world.

Dubai has most certainly grasped this concept. His Highness Sheikh Mohammed is frequently being quoted of a need for a generation of leaders and thinkers. This has filtered down into schools and we see a huge push on the need for Learning Skills and Innovation.

What is innovation? At Kings' School Nad Al Sheba, we are clear about what this means for us and our children. We encourage our children to participate in a wide range of activities and opportunities and encourage them to 'think differently', in essence to think outside of the box. Developing children's enquiry skills as to why and how is a key driver for us.

Children need to develop the ability to think, think deeply, think creatively, think logically and think critically. Successful schools allow and indeed plan for such opportunities in day to day learning.

Through Edition 4 of Geronimo!, it is exciting to see emerging evidence of children 'thinking', responding, reviewing and evaluating.

Whilst the futures for our children remain uncertain and undecided, we must ensure that our children are equipped with the skills and attributes to confidently take their place in the world. Eric Hoffer guides our work at KSNAS, "In a world of change, the learners shall inherit the earth while the learned will find themselves perfectly suited to a world that no longer exists."

Enjoy the read!

**Mr. Gale**  
**Principal**  
**Kings' School Nad Al Sheba**

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## Front Cover Image

A glimpse of the Science Fair at Kings' School Nad Al Sheba

## Steaming Ahead at Kings' School Nad Al Sheba



**Mrs. Wells**  
**Deputy Head Teacher**

**STEAM: S** (Science) **T** (Technology) **E** (Engineering) **A** (Art) **M** (Mathematics)

*“STEAM...the end results are students who take thoughtful risks, engage in experiential learning, persist in problem-solving, embrace collaboration and work through...a...creative process. These are the innovators, educators, leaders and learners of the 21st century!”*

Our children and teachers have had a huge focus on Science this academic year. Back in November, we held an **Innovation Week** that aimed to inspire children’s awe and wonder of the world around them. This further developed and encouraged the desire in our children to build their knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts and how to investigate them.

In January, we focused professional development on the teaching of Science and scientific enquiry alongside Nichola Fisher (of Rockit Science fame) with a view to demonstrating our progress through a **STEAM Week** showcase.

Our rationale for **STEAM Week** was clear; we wanted to:

- develop children’s ‘working scientifically’ skills
- encourage children to make connections between skills and scientific concepts
- through investigation, develop children’s uses of technology, engineering, art and mathematics

Of course the aim of any themed week must be to have an **impact on raising curriculum standards.**

**STEAM Week** at Kings' School Nad Al Sheba has not only been a powerful tool in terms of raising standards in Science but also allowed the children to express their love for the subject creatively and challenged them to think differently. Children in our school love challenge and they love opportunities to explore, to create and to innovate. **STEAM Week** gave them exactly that.

**STEAM** based challenges help develop our children as 21st century learners so that they are ready for the jobs of the future – the ones that we are not aware of yet. Part of **STEAM** is children being able to make connections and links across their learning and the ability to apply these across a number of contexts.

### **STEAM – The Power of Experiential Learning**

During our first **STEAM Week**, the children were set a range of challenges across the year groups. Our youngest children became scientists for the week and focused on building their 'working scientifically' skills. In Phase 2, we wanted to involve the children in a **STEAM** challenge that would really get them thinking about Earth Day. Year 1 and 2 focused on materials as a concept and were challenged with the following questions:

- Which material will better insulate a UAE house to keep it cool?
- Which material will make the best solar oven?

The children had great fun developing an investigation to answer these questions and every adult involved was blown away by the children's ability to articulate their learning using scientific vocabulary. The following quote captures the fundamental importance of educating the children about how to help secure the future of our planet:

*"Education is the foundation for progress. We need to build a global citizenry fluent in the concepts of climate change and aware of its unprecedented threat to our planet. We need to empower everyone with the knowledge to inspire action in defense of environmental protection."*

Phase 3 had the creative license during the week to investigate a question of their choice. Nichola Fisher commented that, "...the reports were some of the best I've seen in... a... Science fair... the children... used the words independent, dependent and control variables really well." It is fantastic to get such positive feedback from a real scientist.

The children across the school finished the week having had real, practical experiences of Science and were able to link their findings back to their understanding of scientific concepts. Having a focus on **STEAM** as a whole allowed the children to connect their learning and to consider how the arts, technology, mathematics as well as engineering could support them in answering their questions.

**STEAM Week #1** at Kings' School Nad Al Sheba was just the start of something very special. We must commit to ensuring that children continue to be presented with these opportunities to hone skills and to make connections. Take a minute to imagine what the children will be able to do next year having spent this academic session getting lots of practical experience and being inspired to ask and answer scientific questions based on their own curiosity.

If you still need convincing, read on to see what the children think:

*“STEAM Week helped me to be better in Science and to make inventions.”*

- Fay, Year 4

*“It was fun, inspiring because it inspires kids to make things when they grow up.”*

- Ali, Year 3

*“It allowed us to work as a team with different people we wouldn't usually collaborate with. Working in a team really helped us to know our strengths and weaknesses. I liked the focus on actual investigations.”*

- Ayanna, Year 4

*“I really enjoyed the focus on Science and how to make a fair test... we got to see what other parts of Science everyone was interested in.”*

- Jamila, Year 6



## #HappyPlant at Kings' School Nad Al Sheba



**Miss Evans**  
Class Teacher, Year 4

This term in Year 4, we are focusing on #HappyPlant. This may ring familiar from when Year 5/6 looked at this earlier in the year.

#HappyPlant is a project run by Kalebr in which focus is on the concept based curriculum and embedding it in an innovative, exciting and engaging way. The idea is that children are developing their ability to code through healthy competition with their peers in order to create a healthy, happy plant.

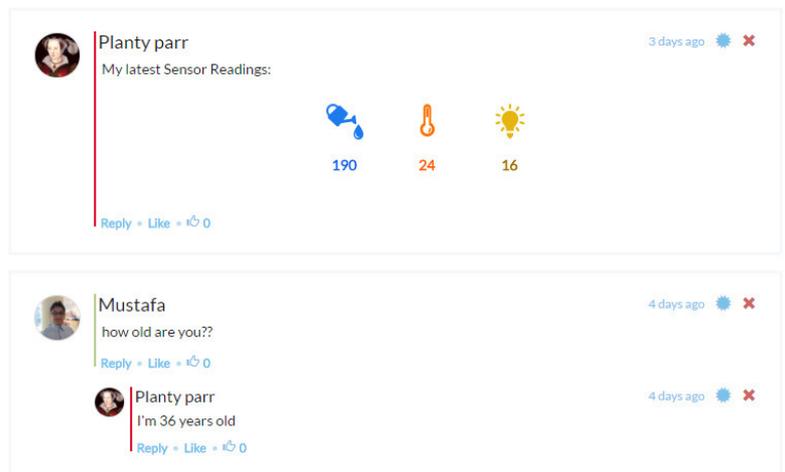
Year 4 begun by coding their plants so that if the plant receives a message it will reply.

They had to think carefully to predict the messages that they thought they would receive in order to code a suitable response.

The next step will involve children coding their plants in order to water them. The plant shows a reading of its moisture and this can be used to decide whether or not it needs to be watered.

The children are trying to link their topics of plants and Tudors by giving their plants the personality of a different wife of Henry VIII. This is giving the class opportunities to think about their wife's personality in more depth and use inference skills to answer the questions that we do not know.

Follow this link to find out more about #Happyplant and what we have been doing in class:  
<http://kalebr.com/blog/the-tudors-meet-happyplant-at-kings-school-nad-al-sheba#.WOzvFpb1uIA.facebook>



## Birthday Blooms



**Mrs. Hopkins**  
Assistant Head Teacher

At Kings' School Nad Al Sheba, we pride ourselves on being a community, with our children at the centre of what we do. We are lucky enough to have a large school garden that is at the heart of the school. Our children have been instrumental in the way the school garden has evolved and developed over the last two terms. The garden has become a place to come together and a fantastic location for events and community gatherings.

The Eco-warriors launched the 'Let's Get Planting' initiative which proved to be an exceptionally exciting project for beautifying our garden and ensuring that it became the space it is now. We received donations of seeds, saplings and flowers which were planted during a community event, making the garden truly ours.



Creating opportunities for our children to connect with nature, looking after our environment and protecting natural resources is an important aspect of our agenda. The experience of seeing seed, soil, water and sun come together to start a plant's life is a lesson in itself, one which is not soon forgotten. Learning to appreciate the wonder and power of nature is the core of an environmental education. By tending to the garden and taking care of their environment, the children see that they are helping nature and taking responsibility for our world.

Following on from this initiative, the Eco-warriors have introduced the 'Birthday Blooms' planting scheme. When children celebrate their birthday, they are invited to plant a sapling or small plant in their house planter in the garden. The planting takes place each week on a Thursday at the beginning or end of the school day so that parents and children can enjoy this experience together.



*Our first Birthday Bloomer - Alfie (FS1) with his mum, Victoria Browne*

A birthday is a special day in everybody's life and is especially exciting for a child. By encouraging parents and children to share a picture of these celebrations with our school community, we are all able to be a part of that day. Please tag our Facebook page (@KingsSchoolNadAlSheba) on and share your pictures with us using the hashtag #BirthdayBlooms, so that we can share your pictures on our school's Facebook page.

## Innovation in Coding Using Raspberry Pi With Year 5/6



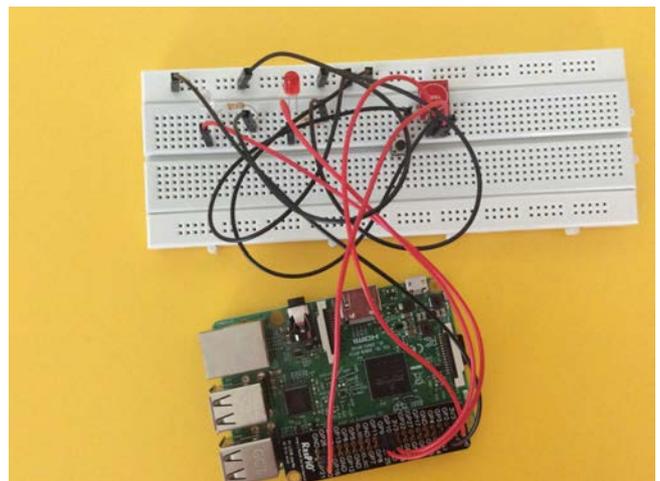
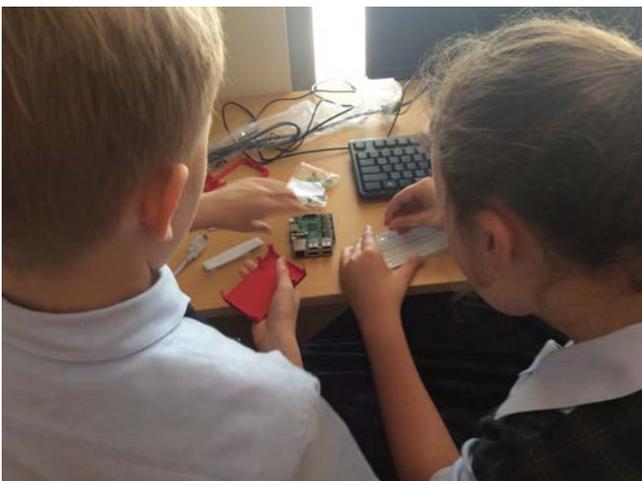
**Mrs. Campbell**  
Digital Coach

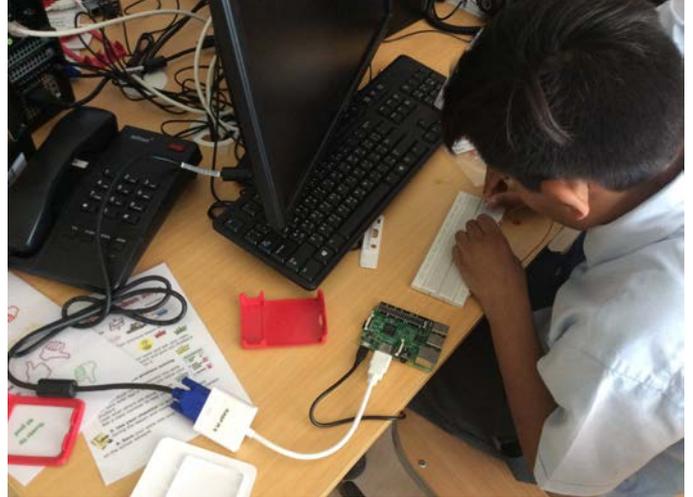
### What is a Raspberry Pi?

A Raspberry Pi is a credit card-sized computer, originally designed for education, inspired by the 1981 BBC Micro. The goal of its creator Eben Upton was to create a low-cost device that would improve programming skills and hardware understanding.

At Kings' School Nad Al Sheba, we want children to use their coding skills to create games and not just consume them. Twenty first century children need to acquire the basic skills of coding from an early age, which is why our children begin to code in Year 1. We seek to cultivate children's enthusiasm for coding at Kings' School Nad Al Sheba. Therefore, we are always looking for new ways in which children can advance their skills in this area of computing.

By combining their science skills with coding, we are using the Raspberry Pi to teach children about programming alongside electronics skills by create codes for light sensors and motors.





Watson Class are using our Raspberry Pi computers with breadboards and sensors to create their own innovative projects. They are using Scratch as a platform to code the Raspberry Pi to make it interact with light sensors and various other components. This type of project is not only fun for the class but it also gives them the experience of working within the realms of science and engineering. Children need to design and create their own circuits, drawing on their logical thinking skills and creativity to complete their task.

There is no limit to children's computing experience at Kings' School Nad Al Sheba. We actively seek to incorporate new technologies and equipment that will enhance their learning experience with innovative projects, such as Raspberry Pi and 3D printing.



As the end of the school year looms into view, 'Friends of Nad Al Sheba School' take the opportunity to review what has gone well during their first year of operation.

FONASS provides much appreciated parent support to the leadership function of the school. The committee is blessed with a competent and enthusiastic Chair in Sahar Taheri, who generously dedicates her time and energy and has helped shape the role for future years.

The Committee and its bank of volunteers provide ongoing planned and ad hoc support for a range of school aims and initiatives:

**Promoting the School** – Parents have been invited to take part in promotional activities, including featuring in school marketing materials and videos. We have also taken part in an interview with the education website *WhichSchoolAdvisor.com*.

**Building the Community** – Parents are encouraged to facilitate community-based services, such as the Organic Vegetable Market and Zumba classes, for everyone to enjoy. We've even taken to the stage to lead an energetic 'Wake and Shake' event!

**Providing Feedback** – Parents have been instrumental in providing constructive opinions to externally provided services, such as Blooms Catering. We have shared our voice during the Inspection process and we continue to be instrumental in Mr. Gale's parent responsive leadership vision.

**Supporting School Departments** – Volunteers organised a Tuck Shop to enhance sporting events and parents have given many hours of their time to the library to help ensure the success of Accelerated Reader (AR) initiative.

**Supporting In-School Productions** – This academic year was packed with opportunities to observe our children in their performing and creative element! Winter Showcases (and the supervision of children chosen to decorate the seasonal trees) and the FS Production burst into life with parent support. Rehearsals, staging and costume design are well underway for the The Lion King Production. So if you fancy lending a hand, do get in touch with us.

**Facilitating Events** – In 2016-17, FONASS lent its support to deliver a packed timetable of events to be proud of. Pink Day (for charity), UAE National Day, Family Fun Day, and the Second Hand Book Sale to raise money for the 'Buddy Bench', were all generously supported by parents. Preparations for IFTAR are currently underway. So do let us know if you'd like to be involved.

Without a doubt, one of the highlight events of the year was International Day. A glorious, colourful, community spirited and educational event that was enjoyed by students, staff, parents and performers alike! Reflecting on what makes events like these a huge success, the committee agrees that there is a magical combination of factors involved:

International Day drew in support from a large percentage of the parent body, keen to demonstrate pride in their native country and share their experiences of home. Tammy, Sarrah, Nisreen and Sahar provided the direction to deliver Mr. Gale's exciting vision for the event. Staff were involved in supporting the day and maximising children's experience and enjoyment. Volunteers generously gave ample of their time, creativity and resources, taking ownership of their contribution to the day. The freedom to express culture, food, traditions and characteristics of different countries led to an unforgettable festival of diversity hosted at the heart of our grounds. This event was a first class example of Kings' School Nad Al Sheba's values and the community spirit that we strive to continuously embody.

Instrumental in so many areas, FONASS help raise the standard of student experience in a myriad ways. Mr. Gale is clear about his ongoing need for a responsive and enthusiastic parent body and is ambitious for FONASS to go from strength to strength in the next academic year.

We take this opportunity to say a huge and heartfelt thank you to everyone who has supported FONASS to date. There is much to achieve in the final term of our school year. So if you have any free hours to offer, do get in touch. Your efforts are so very much appreciated and we look forward to building on our success in 2017-18 school year.

- Wendy Prior  
Co-Secretary, FONASS

Next update will be in June 2017.

- Standing Out Moments

- Lion King Production

- FS Showcase

- Y1 & 2 - Stars in the Eyes

- Arts Week



*"the best by every child"*