



### From the Principal's Desk

## Newsletter

Issue # 18

23rd June 2016

This Week's Newsletter:

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Dates to diarise

New student Orientation Day 25 August.

School opens for all students 28 August.



Dear Parents,

Our Global Outreach team set off for Ethiopia this weekend. A group of our Secondary students will be working with a Primary School there, helping to improve the water supply infrastructure to the school and its local community. I spent some time with them on Thursday as they were doing their last minute gear check and was impressed by how purposeful and well prepared they were. They are sure to meet people who may be poorer in dollar terms, but have a great deal to give in other ways such as hospitality, kindness and generosity of spirit.

As an IB school, this is international mindedness and service learning in action. The students will be learning about people and cultures very different from their own and doing something material to make a positive difference. They are sure to receive as much as they give and to return the richer for it. Their expedition has been planned and will be run by World Challenge, a very well respected student service learning and adventure travel agency. Ms. Jade Cunningham is the teacher in charge and will keep us updated.

During the holidays our libraries will undergo a complete refurbishment with new furniture and fittings. Reading, research and libraries are at the heart of a school and education and Taaleem is committed to ensuring that our schools have learning spaces that are inspiring and welcoming. There will be more seating spaces and inviting layouts to encourage students to come in during their break and free time, pick up a book and read. In addition the new sports changing rooms block will be completed – a much needed facility to serve our growing sports programme.

This will be the last newsletter of the year and I hope that you will be able to spend some quality family time together, relaxing, having fun and enjoying one another's company. The staff and leadership of the school are hard at work preparing for the start of next year so that it gets off to a smooth and purposeful start. Thank you for your support of our school and partnering with in your child's education this year. It is both a great pleasure and great responsibility to have your children in our care, one which we enjoy.

Mr Andrew Wood





## Secondary School News



**Mr Neil Bunting**  
**Head of Secondary**

Great football teams are built on a blend of experience and youth. The same applies in forming a highly successful staff team for the school. The current Spanish, German and French teams combine hundreds of years of experience alongside fresh energetic talent. In piecing together a highly-functioning staff team for next year we are looking to retain staff who have an understanding of the history and tradition of GCS, and have worked with our student for a number of years, along with bringing in fresh blood and new ideas.

As a football team needs an old head controlling things in the middle of the park, our school needs an equivalent of Andres Iniesta (Spain and Barcelona), passing on their wisdom and experience. Iniesta has played for Barcelona for twelve years and knows thoroughly the history of the club. In a similar way, we need to retain staff, families and students, who have stood by GCS through thick and thin. We also need young teachers lighting up the scene with fresh ideas that inject excitement into the classroom and who our students can relate to.

As school leaders we need to put trust in their energy as the manager did in Marcus Rashford. Rashford is eighteen years old, and no one had heard of him a year ago, now he is a regular for Manchester United and is part of the England world cup squad, terrifying defences with his trickery and raw pace.

Young teachers can be positive role models for students and inspire them through the example they set. PE teachers, for example, are often younger members of staff involved in team sports and physical activities outside of school. We have many members of staff like this who encourage our students to realise their dreams.

Alongside replacements for exiting staff, there are new positions being created every year as the school grows. We are adding an additional geography and IT teacher and more staff in PE, which is a hugely important of our school program.

All of us at GCS wish you a wonderful summer. Travel well and we look forward to seeing you all at the school gate on August 28<sup>th</sup>.

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## Secondary School News

### **BIOGRAPHY – NEW STAFF JOINING US IN SECONDARY**

#### **Dianne Vella Diploma Program Coordinator**



Dianne has had an extensive career as an educator teaching in both traditional and non-traditional settings. Of Maltese heritage, Dianne was born and raised in Melbourne (Australia). She has completed a Bachelor of Science Education degree through the University of Melbourne and a Bachelor of Science Degree through James Cook University, majoring in Marine Biology and Zoology. Dianne has held numerous roles of responsibility in schools including Deputy Head, Head of Department and Grade Head. She has also worked as the National Education Officer for a marine education program in Australia. Dianne also holds a Master of Education Degree majoring in International Education. Dianne joins GCS as the Diploma Program coordinator with numerous years of experience in the role in both Dubai and Australian schools. Dianne is excited about returning to the UAE, her interests include travelling (having been to over 50 countries to date), learning about new cultures and fitness.

#### **Head of Technology Integration Shahid Hussain**



Shahid Hussain gained his LLB combined honours degree in Computer Science & Law at Keele University. He went on to complete his PGCE at St Martin's College in IT Education and has over 13 years teaching and leadership experience in Computing, e-Learning, e-Safety and Technology integration. Shahid began his teaching journey at HBEC, Greater Manchester and moved onto the Chelsea Academy, London; where he integrated the new British Computing Curriculum. As an advocate for lifelong learning he has completed a PCERT in Leadership Management at MMU and is an Oracle certified SQL trainer. He has completed masters units in Computing education at Kings College London. He was also a STEM co-ordinator for the Royal Academy of Engineering and helped push the STEM agenda in central and west London. Having worked at 2 outstanding schools he gained international experience as a senior leader for a private school within the UAE and has led conferences on innovation for ADEC. He looks forward to bringing his passion and experience for technology to continue raising the drive for technology integration at GCS.

#### **Head of Science Tahra Nadeem**



Tahra Nadeem is a science professional who has gained UK qualifications in BSc. Biology (Science) Teacher Education degree with Qualified Teacher Status. Further postgraduate studies were gained in Mentoring of Science and new teachers. She has many years of experience in the UK school systems, American school and internationally which has led her to gain a deeper insight into the challenges of varied educational philosophies. Tahra has extensive experience coordinating school wide inspections for the Abu Dhabi Education Council. Tahra has been a key member of the team for the Middle States Accreditation Team, which allowed the school to gain accreditation from Middle States. Tahra has substantial experience mentoring university students through work based placements and has worked with the university to enhance her mentoring skills. Tahra has led many workshops ranging from teacher training to assessment.





## Secondary School News



### **Head of English Judith Shannon**

Judith studied English Literature (BA) and subsequently qualified as a teacher (PGCE) in 1998 from Queen's University, Belfast in her native Northern Ireland before two years teaching in Westminster in London. Her first experience in international education was in The British School of Muscat in Oman, followed by experiences in lovely schools in Peru, Switzerland and, most recently, the beautiful city of Prague in The Czech Republic. She returned to teach in Northern Ireland for a period and to study for an MA in English followed by an MEd in Educational Studies. She is an examiner for Cambridge IGCSE and for the IB. Judith enjoys travelling, music, theatre and photography. She looks forward to experiencing all that Dubai has to offer with her seven year old son.



### **French Teacher Nicolas Folio**

Since Mr. Folio earned his dual teaching accreditation from the *Université de Provence* in France and University College of St Martin in the United Kingdom in 1998 he has taught in a wide variety of institutions and schools to a great range of learners – from very young Primary students to adults. He started his career training teachers of French in the north-east of Nigeria where he ran a French language centre. He then moved back to England for a short while to teach Modern Foreign Languages in a comprehensive school before heading to Oman where he taught French to young adults. He followed his wife Beryl to the Seychelles where he taught a range of primary school subjects in a French school. Between 2006 and 2012 he worked in two different British curriculum schools in Egypt. Since he moved to the UAE in 2012 Mr. Folio has worked in an IB school in Dubai and in an Australian curriculum school in Sharjah. He has developed his knowledge of the Diploma Programme since he started teaching French Ab Initio in 2015. Mr. Folio looks forward to joining GCS next year where he will working closely and passionately with his future colleagues of the Languages Department. He is married with four children. His interests include travelling and playing chess.





## Secondary School News

### Music Teacher Morris Brooker



Morris Brooker is a National Board Certified Teacher in Music Education and has a Bachelor Degree in Music from Palm Beach Atlantic University and a Masters Degree from Buffalo State University in 2016 and the Certificate of International Teacher Leadership with the Teachers Training Center. Chuck's diverse teaching experience spans Kindergarten to University and encompasses general music, band, orchestra and choral music as well as private and small group instruction. A veteran IB MYP and DP music teacher of 19 years, including 3 International Schools within Saudi Arabia and China, he has assumed leadership roles in the areas of school accreditation, curriculum development and implementation, budgeting and inventory, as well as IB Regional Workshop Leader. He has organized and hosted music festivals for middle and high school music students in both the United States and Saudi Arabia.

Prior to teaching, Chuck performed exclusively as a professional musician, working as Trombonist with the Palm Beach Opera Orchestra, Walt Disney World at MGM Studios, EPCOT Center and the Magic Kingdom in Florida.

Chuck and his wife Lindsey are from Florida in the USA, and are the parents of three amazing children Jacob 9, Madelyn 13, and Matthew 23 who is in college, and our loving dog, Penny. Chuck's interests outside of school are Scuba diving, cycling, basketball and traveling.

### Chemistry Teacher Thomas Mbulika



Rashid Mbulika graduated from Kenyatta University, Nairobi-Kenya in 1988 with a Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) degree majoring in Chemistry. He has since taught Chemistry for well over 25 years in a number of schools in Kenya, Bahrain and the UAE. He has taught Chemistry at IB DP for 12 years and IB MYP for six years. He was the head of science faculty in three of the schools.

Mr Mbulika also doubles as an IB DP Chemistry Examiner, IB MYP Moderator, IBEN Workshop Leader and Site visitor (Authorisation/Evaluation). He served as the eAssessment External Advisor for Chemistry in the lead up to MYP eAssessments following the advent of the 'MYP- The next chapter' curriculum changes. Mr Mbulika has four children. His interests include travelling and playing chess.





## Secondary School News

### **IB Secondary Librarian Christine Malinowski**



Ms. Malinowski earned her bachelor's degree in Liberal Arts from St. John's College in Annapolis, Maryland. She then obtained her teaching certification, grades K-6, and her Master's in Library and Information Science/School Library Media from Catholic University of America in 2005. Prior to moving to the UAE in August 2011, she was a school library media specialist for Fairfax County Public Schools in Alexandria, VA.

An avid reader herself, she is passionate about sharing good books with young people and helping spread literacy throughout the world. In her spare time, she likes traveling, cooking, and spending time with her small dog, Trixie.

### **Business and IT Teacher Sinead Griffin**



Ms. Griffin completed her Bachelor of Business Studies (BBS) at the University of Limerick, Ireland in 2013. Upon completion she continued her education at the same university and earned her Professional Diploma of Education the following year. Due to her interest in travel, Ms. Griffin decided to look abroad for work opportunities and moved to the Western Region in Abu Dhabi where she taught Business and Economics for two years.

Ms. Griffin has a keen interest in sport, particularly Gaelic Football and her presence was felt in the Western Region where she was a founding member and club treasurer of Ruwais Gaels GAA.

### **Art Teacher Emma Holmes**



Ms. Holmes earned her B.A in Fashion Studies from Derby University and her PGCE from Manchester Metropolitan University where she is currently completing her MA in Education via distance learning. She started her teaching career in the UK where she taught Art & Design, Design & Technology and Photography.

She previously worked for a number of years as a Fashion Designer before changing career paths to teaching. In her spare time she is passionate about traveling, foreign culture and health & fitness and is a keen marathon runner.



## Secondary School News

### German Teacher Aksiniia Smirnova

Mrs. Smirnova graduated from the State Pedagogical University of Russia, St. Petersburg in 1992 where she was given the qualification of the Secondary School Teacher of German and English languages. She also got the qualification of a tourist guide in her native city that she practiced in Association of International Friendship, Saint Petersburg, for the first 3 years after graduation from the University.



During the following 2 years she worked as assistant translator (German – Russian) at JV “Lenkozhwest”, Saint Petersburg, Russia, and interpreter (German – Russian) at “Taiga-Tour” helping to organize and conduct hunting in Russia.

The birth of her first child in 1997 interrupted Aksinia's professional activity., after 5 years of maternity leave she decided to engage in teaching again. First she taught German to adults and teenagers at Liden & Denz, Swiss Language School Saint Petersburg, Russia. After the second maternity leave Aksinia started to work as a secondary school teacher. During the last 4 years, since 2012, she has been working as a German teacher at Secondary School No.371 in Saint-Petersburg.

Ms Smirnova is excited to start at GCS in order to apply her knowledge and experiences and enhance them. Her interests outside of school include yoga, interior design and travelling.

### Science Teacher Dr Gareth Moss

Dr Moss received his degree in Microbiology (Natural sciences) from Trinity College Dublin in 2004 and spent the next year working as a medical scientist in the Irish Blood Transfusion Services. After that, he returned to university and completed his PhD in 2008. Next, he worked in a pharmaceutical diagnostics company, before becoming a teacher of science and biology in 2010 in Dublin, Ireland.

For the last four years he has been teaching in Beijing, China and enjoys helping students with extra-curricular science pursuits. After meeting the staff and seeing the school he is very much looking forward to joining the Greenfield Community. Outside of teaching, he enjoys playing badminton at a competitive level – representing his school's international dept in several competitions in Beijing – and is an enthusiastic rugby player. He plays at tighthead prop and have also done some rugby coaching for men's and women's teams.

## Secondary School News

### First IBCP Student gains Degree

Alina Bushinskya was the very first IBCP student at GCS. She started the course in September 2011 and completed in June 2013, gaining a Double Distinction in her BTEC Business course and grades 4 & 6 in her IB Diploma subjects in Design Technology & Visual Art. Since leaving GCS she has been studying at the Emirates Aviation University, firstly completing a BTEC HND (Higher National Diploma) in June 2015 with Distinction and in June 2016 she completed her Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration also at Emirates Aviation University.

This is an amazing achievement for Alina who will now continue her studies as she starts a Master's programme at Wollongong University in Dubai. We wish her well and congratulate our very first IBCP student. To date some 36 students have graduated from the IB Career-related Programme since 2013, with 31 gaining places at Universities around the world and 5 students gaining employment.

For more information about the IBCP and where it can take your child, please contact Mr. Mike Worth, IBCP Coordinator on [mworth@gcschool.ae](mailto:mworth@gcschool.ae)





## Secondary School News

### Grade 11 Ethiopia World Challenge 2016

As you read this article, we will have been in Ethiopia for one week and completed the Project phase of our Expedition! Over the past few months the 8 students have been working hard to raise funds to provide materials and labour for the building of a new water station at Addis Model School as well as footballs, skipping ropes and educational materials. This would not have been possible without the support of the whole school community.

Thank you for all the contributions you have made towards World Challenge events; the dress down day alone raised in excess of 6,000 AED!! A special mention to Laurie Neil, Leyya Abdul Gaffar, Stefanie Isabell Czech, Johanna Kraus and the Prom Committee who all gave up their own time and effort to raise money for the World Challenge Team. Without your efforts we would not be able to make such a big difference to the Addis Model School community.

While we are away, I'll be sure to take plenty pictures so we can share our adventure of a lifetime with you in August.

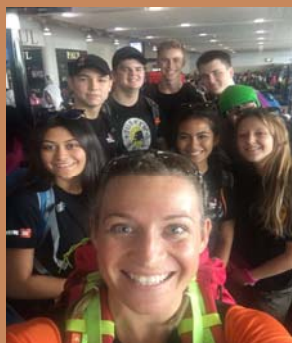
Ms Jade Cunningham  
PE Department



### Ramadan DU Initiative

Ms Ingrid Pretorius and Ms Theresa Cormican took part in the "Du Ramadan Volunteer" initiative last week where 12, 000 boxes were packed for needy families in the area. They worked tirelessly with other volunteers to pack boxes full of essential supplies which were distributed to families in Dubai . "We wanted to inspire and encourage the students of GCS so that they can see their teachers are also doing volunteer work like their CAS to help others less fortunate" quoted Ms Pretorius.

Well Done for taking part in this worthwhile initiative you are an inspiration to the students!



## Secondary School News

### GCS ACADEMIC OLYMPIAD

This week, GCS is holding its first ever Academic Olympiad. Since Sunday, students have been competing in several events sponsored by different subjects. A big highlight of the Olympiad is the grade-level wide quiz bee during Periods 2 and 3, wherein contestants, in groups of 4, undergo an easy, medium and difficult round of questions from Humanities, English, Math and Science. The groups who make it to the difficult round vie for the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> place. Trophies and individual certificates are given to all winners. Based on this year's Academic Olympiad theme of "Achieving Excellence Through Diversity", students participated in poetry writing (different languages) and poster-making during Period 1. It is pleasing to see that some students did well in poetry writing in French and German. To show off their skills in rhetoric, students also participated in chorale reading and creative public speaking during Period 4.

The awarding ceremony is held daily. The schedule of the competitions per grade level is as follows:

June 19 – Grade 6  
 June 20 – Grade 7  
 June 21 – Grade 8  
 June 22 – Grade 9  
 June 23 – Grade 10

As the competition is still well underway, we will be compiling the list of winners and they will be recognized again during the next assembly.



## GREENFIELD COMMUNITY SCHOOL

### Academic Olympiad

Theme:

"Achieving  
EXCELLENCE  
through  
DIVERSITY"



19-23 June 2016, GCS Auditorium

## Secondary School News

### Learner Profile caring through the German book



This book is an exciting detective-story set in the Ruhrvalley in Western Germany. It involves a young gang called The Crocodiles and their summer adventures. In the beginning, we witness a 'test of courage' which everyone who wants to be a member of the gang has to accomplish. Later the Crocodiles help the police to catch a group of burglars using their cleverness and bravery.

One of the main characters in the story is Kurt, a paraplegic boy, a wheelchair user, who is new to the area and who wants to make contact with others his own age. One day he meets Hannes from the Crocodiles and eventually becomes a member of the gang himself. Not all of the group's members are keen on bringing a **disabled** boy into their gang. However, due to Kurt's cleverness and wit, he is **accepted**. Eventually, the boys and the one girl member, Maria, become good friends and appreciate one another.

### Disability

In Germany, children with disabilities often attend specialised schools (called Sonderschulen) which offer special support according to their needs. The downside of this, is that it can be harder for disabled young people to integrate with others their own age without disabilities.

An integrated school system, on the other hand, where all kids attend the same school with the same curriculum, seems favourable to many. The integrated schools and kindergartens are increasingly popular.

As **GCS** is an inclusive school where children with some kind of disabilities can attend regular lessons, this book can raise awareness about how difficult it is to be a child with disability and how we can help them to integrate in the school community and feel happy. This also about the **IB Learner Profile CARING**.

To understand how a child in a **wheelchair** feels, the students make a tour through the school by using a **wheelchair** and try to get to different destinations without other's help.

Anna Davidoff-Eckert  
German Teacher



## Primary School News

### Mr Gary Mallon Head of Primary



Dear Parents,

Wishing you all a truly wonderful Ramadan Kareem. I hope that the Holy Month provides you all with the chance to spend additional time with friends and family. Please find below an overview of our new Primary School staff arriving in August 2016. We trust that you will give them a warm GCS welcome.

#### Amy Cojocar

As an educator I believe I have many jobs: to inspire, to engage, to facilitate, to support, to challenge and to care. It is my job to meet the differing needs of all of my students using a variety of teaching strategies as well as differentiated instruction. My students' experience meaningful and purposeful learning that applies to their lives. I believe this can be accomplished through the use of authentic hands-on activities, investigations, cooperative learning, an integrated curriculum and technology whenever possible. I develop many inspiring learning experiences to capture the imaginations of my students. I am a motivated individual and will continuously seek out new ways to enhance the learning of my students. Amy is originally from Canada and joins GCS having previously worked in Canada, Australia and most recently in Abu Dhabi. Amy has 7 years of teaching experience.

#### Helen Hatch

I am extremely passionate about my job as well as being hard working and highly motivated. I plan and teach creative and stimulating lessons which engage the children and have allowed for good and outstanding progress of all children within my class. I have extensive experience teaching children with Special Educational Needs, these children have always made great progress whilst in my class. As I strongly believe in a broad and balanced curriculum for all children, I have organised and been involved in many sporting and creative opportunities ranging from School Productions, Rugby and Netball tournaments and 3 day residential trips. Helen originates from the UK and is currently the Head of Maths at a large Primary School in the North of England. She joins GCS with 6 years of teaching experience.

#### Ruth Dinmore

I am currently the Phase 1 Leader at my current school and am passionate about the development of children's literacy through a creative curriculum. One of my other key roles has been the Literacy Coordinator through which I have specialised in facilitating differentiated teaching of reading and phonics teaching across my phase. Music is also a real passion of mine and I have worked as the conductor for the KG choir with over 50 students whilst aiming to increase the profile of music across the whole school. I earned my Masters of Education from the University of Cambridge in 2012 researching children's perspectives of themselves as readers and writers. I am incredibly excited to be joining Greenfield Community School this summer. Ruth is currently working as the KG / Year 1 Co-ordinator at an established Primary School in the South of England. She has a Masters of Education in *General Primary* and has 6 years of teaching experience.





## Primary School News



### Ricardo Gordon

I am a South African national, currently living and working in Dubai. My passion for the Arts and passion for understanding people at a deeper level, inclined me to study and complete a degree in Music and Psychology, culminating in a BA Music Degree in 2002. During, and subsequent to completing this degree, I travelled extensively as a volunteer, mostly performing and working with youth groups in over four continents. As a music specialist, I have had the honour of working for and with some of the most renowned organizations in Creative Arts Education in South Africa and abroad. Latter experience, along with my degree, launched me into the position of Drama teacher at my current school in Dubai in 2007. I later became the school's Music teacher and Head of the Creative Arts Department writing, producing and directing whole school productions. Some of my work was featured in the 2013 Festival of Literature. Ricardo is currently working at Emirates International School, Meadows in Dubai and will join GCS as Head of Music in the Primary School. He has 9 years of teaching experience.

### Maria Margossian

I am originally from the USA but have been working in Dubai since 2008, having previously worked in Lebanon. A key part of my job is to work with colleagues to set challenging targets for raising achievements among students with SEN. I always encourage all members of staff to recognize and fulfil their responsibilities to students with SEN and take ownership of additional provision and the progress students make in their teaching group. I also utilize comparative data, prior attainment data, and general ability data to set targets for my students. Likewise I always look to build a positive and effective relationship with parents, communicating and consulting as necessary. I am looking forward to providing training opportunities for learning support assistants and teachers to learn about SEN and work with other colleagues to deliver training on specific intervention programs.

Maria spent some time working in GCS during Term 1 & 2 with one of our students in Primary. Prior to that she was working at GEMS Wellington Academy in Dubai where she was the specialist link teacher between the SEN and EAL departments. She comes to us with 13 years of teaching experience and a *Masters in Special Education*.

### Learning Assistants

We will also be welcoming several new Learning Assistants who will play a crucial role in supporting our students and teaching staff. In no particular order I would like to extend a very warm GCS welcome to:

**Luisa Holder (KG)**  
**Anum Sami ( KG2 )**  
**Abi Pauls ( Grade 1)**  
**Pauline Moreno ( Grade 4 )**  
**Samir Dridi ( Arabic B )**  
**Leon McKenna ( EAL )**





## Primary School News



I would like to place on record my sincere thanks to the following members of the Primary GCS team who will sadly be departing come the end of the academic year next week. Each one has in their own special way, made a wonderful contribution to the school community and they leave with our best wishes for their future endeavours.

**Louise Allen** – Louise is a stalwart of the Taaleem organisation, having previously worked at TCG Green Community, and more recently over several years at GCS. She has been a cornerstone of a very effective KG team and has put in many a long dedicated hour during and after school. As well as her primary role as a teacher in KG, Louise has also been prominent in developing an evolving early year's curriculum; this year she has been proactive in taking the lead in developing the *Child Development Programme* and *Early Years Milestones* and incorporating these new forms of assessment into early years. Louise has also been heavily involved in assisting our Admissions department with assessing new students and those of you with daughters who are part of the Brownies and Girl Guide movement will appreciate the commitment and effort she has put in after school hours over the course of several years. Louise leaves us, but not Taaleem, as she will return to TCG Green Community to take on a new challenge as the Assistant Head of Early Years. This role will involve a lot of on-going liaison with GCS so we are sure to see her around over the coming academic year and beyond.

**Teena Gupta** – Teena is almost part of the furniture here at GCS and will be leaving us after 7 years of dedicated service. During her time with us she has formed part of a very united and stable Grade 4 team and has seen hundreds over students enter and exit her classroom doors, leaving all the better for having been taught by her. Teena is a keen advocate of the IB philosophy and has contributed to curriculum enrichment during her time here. She most recently held the post of Science Coordinator until last year and also provided a lot of input into environmental initiatives. She will also be fondly remembered for the hours of effort that she put in to co-running the Primary drama productions. Often going above and beyond with rehearsals Teena's love for the arts and the opportunities she provided for our budding actors & actresses will be sorely missed. Teena leaves GCS to spend some much needed quality time with her children as well as some possible future studying.

**Ceanlia Vermeulen** – Ceanlia leaves GCS after 4 years of committed service to the SEN department. Her affable nature and sheer desire for the children in her care to succeed will also stand out for me. Ceanlia did a wonderful job at removing barriers to learning for those children who worked alongside her. Any parents who have been involved in the SEN department will understand what I mean when I say that Ceanlia was meticulous in nature and left no stone unturned in her quest to seek the best learning opportunities for the children in her care. Ceanlia leaves us to take up a new challenge at a school in Abu Dhabi.



## Primary School News

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**Ashleigh Doyle** – What can I say about Ashleigh as I will quite frankly run out of superlatives? It feels like only yesterday that I went to meet and greet Ashleigh at Terminal 3 as she arrived on a long flight from Australia to begin her first overseas adventure back in the summer of 2013. She has accomplished so much for our students and set the bar so high in terms of our music, arts and drama provision at GCS. Ashleigh has been so much more than an outstanding Music teacher and Head of Music in Primary that I honestly don't want to attempt to name all that she has been involved in for fear of missing something out. I would however like to highlight her contributions towards the Primary drama productions; Winter Concerts; the GCS has Talent events, National and International Days as well as her behind the scenes sound technician work on all the many assemblies we have had enjoyed. Any whole school event had Ashleigh involved prominently somewhere and I could always rest assured that everything would turn out fine if I knew she was involved ( though never underestimating her contribution ). She formed a dynamic partnership with her secondary colleague Anne Marie Conlon and together these two wonderful music teachers are leaving an unforgettable legacy behind them. There will be many a student that pursues a lifelong interest in music and the arts due to the inspiration of Ms Doyle! Ashleigh will be taking up a new challenge as Head of Music at the well renowned IB school, International School of Düsseldorf in Germany.

**Angela Murdoch** – Angela joined GCS 3 years ago, originally working as part of the Grade 1 team and more recently as a Grade 3 Homeroom teacher. Angela has always shown a wonderful commitment to the students in her care and has also contributed positively to curriculum development, particularly in the area of mathematics. She will be leaving GCS to return to take up a post at a school in her native New Zealand. We sincerely wish her all the best.

**Taghrid Moussli** – Taghrid only joined GCS in September 2015 and her children have enjoyed their time with us. She has contributed positively to the Islamic department during her time here but come the end of the current academic year she will be taking up a new challenge at another school in Dubai. She leaves with our best wishes.

**Learning Assistants** – I would also like to note the fantastic contributions of several of our Learning Assistants who will also be moving on to pastures new. Maya Sleiman and Feda Hannonna have been mainstays of the KG support team for several years now and will be sorely missed. Maya (who recently gave birth to her second child) has been appointed as a teacher at a local school in Dubai. I wish her all the best in her new professional challenge. Feda meanwhile is returning home to her native Palestine with her family after 10 years in Dubai. Safe travels Feda. Likewise I would like to say thank you and goodbye to one of our Arabic B Learning Assistants, Reem Othman, who has been with us for the last three years. Reem is due to get engaged very soon so we wish her all the best in this new chapter of her life. Finally I would like to wish Francesca Hooper (daughter of Neil and Sharon Hooper) all the very best as she returns to the UK at a time when supporting her parents is absolutely crucial. I sincerely wish the Hooper family all the very best.

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## Primary School News

### Student Council

The Student Council this year has played an important part in ensuring that student voice is heard. They will leave a legacy of events and ideas which will be continued by the incoming students. This new council will be tasked with ensuring that these initiatives continue to benefit all of the students in the Primary School whilst coming up with projects of their own.

I would like to say a big thank you to Lubna Khawaja and the GCP for helping to support and guide the Student Council this year. Their help with guidance and resourcing has been essential in making sure the students themselves have been able to lead from the front. From 'Pink Day', 'Green Day' & 'Movember' the events have been well organised with a plan of action from all involved. The Greenfield Gardens have been of significant success and the baton in this area will now be passed on to the incoming leaders to see what ideas they have for passing on the gardens to each homeroom.

### Election Update

Over the past few weeks we have had a vast number of students express their interest and campaign to be on the Student Council for the new academic year. The Grade 2 and 3 students are still campaigning and will be announced before the end of the academic year. I am delighted though to announce that the senior positions have been decided from the group of Grade 4 students putting their names forward. The Grade 4 students had to campaign in front of their homeroom peers before presenting their final ideas in front of Mr Plunkett, Mr Mallon, Mrs Khawaja and Mrs Shadbolt. This itself could have been a daunting experience but every student did themselves proud and came up with innovative ideas of how the Student Council could move forward. My message to those students who were unfortunate not to be elected would be to never give up, this can't be more evident than through our incoming Student Council President Macarena Alvarez who has campaigned without success for the past few years. Dedication and never giving up has seen her rewarded with a seat at the Student Council Table for next year. Congratulations to Macarena and to all newly elected members and a big thank you to Lara Botha and her team for the great work conducted this year. I look forward to the student voice being heard even louder next year.

### Senior Student Council Primary 2016-2017

Position	Name
President	Macarena Alvarez
Vice President	Eric Boris Herve Neron-Bancel
Secretary	Neha Adusumilli
Treasurer	Louisa Marie Cook

Mr Jamie Plunkett  
Deputy Head of Primary





## Primary School News



One of the overwhelming attributes that we hear about Greenfield is that it is a happy school, which is something that we are very proud of. But is happiness actually more than just a feeling and does it have any educational merit? Well, a recent book called *'The Happiness Track: How to apply the science of happiness to accelerate your success'* by Emma Seppala suggests that happiness is a much more essential attribute to learning that we give it credit for.

Dr. Seppala is the director of science at Stamford University's Centre for Compassion and Altruism Research and Education and outlines some strong research-backed points to highlight that happiness amongst children in school is much more important to student learning than we give it credit for "as it forms the very foundation of deep, meaningful learning". Dr. Seppala goes on to say that "Happy kids show up at school more able to learn because they tend to sleep better and may have healthier immune systems. Happy kids learn faster and think more creatively. Happy kids tend to be more resilient in the face of failures. Happy kids have stronger relationships and make new friends more easily".

The book also suggests that although as parents we say we want our children to be happy at school, in actual fact, we put academic success, specifically grades, above the children's well-being in terms of priority. "We may *tell* kids that we want them to be happy, and that we care about their learning more than we care about their grades, but when we model the myths of success in our own lives, they know the truth. Perpetuating these myths, whether through our words or actions, undermines the very happiness and learning we claim to value."

So as we head towards the summer break and are away from school but still very much involved in learning, try to stop and reflect about how much more enjoyable learning can be without the constant pressure of success. A few key points to look out for are:

**Live for the moment** - encourage children to enjoy what they are doing at the time, rather than always trying to move them onto the next step, whether that be more difficult, more challenging or the next stage.

**Model resilience** - it's OK to not be able to master something straight away, and this shouldn't be seen as a weakness. Talk about how you have overcome challenges, model healthy resilience, and help children find respite from the pressures of achievement.

**Manage your energy** - life for children today is fast-paced with high intensity, and while there's nothing wrong with excitement and fun, children need to know how to balance excitement with the ability to calm down and function effectively under control rather than simply switching off when life isn't on full throttle.

**Do nothing** - taking time off to disconnect and relax helps promote children's creativity and insights. Current research shows that CEO's value creativity higher than any other trait in the incoming workforce.

**Be kind to yourself** - while it's good to be reflective and strive for improvement, too much self-criticism can backfire leaving students anxious, afraid of failure and less likely to learn from mistakes.

## Primary School News



**Be kind to others** - Research shows that people who are supportive and compassionate towards others are more successful. Fortunately, Dr. Seppala points out that, "Children are naturally compassionate and kind; we simply need to protect these traits."

Happiness in the classroom, just as much as in the home, should not be in short supply, and as parents, teachers and administrators, we must be mindful of the fact that any responsibility for the absence of happiness should lie at our feet. So while we all take a break from school, remember that learning always continues, and that this should be undertaken with as much joy as possible.

For the full article on Dr. Seppala's work go to:

[http://well.blogs.nytimes.com/2016/03/09/happiness-in-the-classroom/?\\_r=2](http://well.blogs.nytimes.com/2016/03/09/happiness-in-the-classroom/?_r=2)

Jill Shadbolt  
PYP coordinator



# GCP Updates

Brought to you by the Greenfield Community Parents Committee



## Important Reminders!



### Lost and Found Sales

Last Chance Table is currently outside. Take this opportunity to redeem any of your lost belongings before they are donated to charity.

Sales on Thursday, 25<sup>th</sup> of August  
On Orientation Day

And on Tuesday, 13<sup>th</sup> of September  
Located in the GCP room (CS 23),  
Secondary Building, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor (Above  
the MYP Library)

Further sales will take place every 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Tuesday of the Month.

### Orientation Day

Thursday, 25<sup>th</sup> of August

Open to new GCS Families

Sunday, 28<sup>th</sup> of August

First Day of School for ALL Students

Join us next year for Coffee Mornings and opportunities to volunteer! Email us at [GCP4GCS@gmail.com](mailto:GCP4GCS@gmail.com)

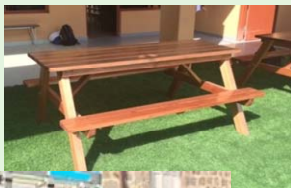
Also follow us on Facebook by joining The Greenfield Community Parents Group.

## 2015-2016 Marks A Year of Amazing GCP Achievements!

WHETHER IT'S THE PRIMARY OR THE SECONDARY SCHOOLS, OUR LIST OF ACHIEVEMENTS COULDN'T HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE WITHOUT THE PASSION AND SUPPORT OF OUR WONDERFUL PARENTS, STUDENTS, AND GCS STAFF!

The GCP Committee was in full swing this past school year! The level of coordination and communication between our parents and school worked wonderfully together and we were able to accomplish so much! Of course, there is a pending "to do list" for the next school year, but what we have all managed to bring to our school by working together definitely deserves some awesome recognition!

Let's begin with our GCP biggest event of the year, the **2016 International Day!** Every year it seems to only get better! This school year's International Day raised a whopping 41,000AED! The distribution of this money went towards the Tanzania and Ethiopia Projects, our Primary and Secondary Student Councils, the International Day Expenses, as well as, six brand new Picnic Benches for the Primary area.



## Primary Achievements!

This year marked a start to great improvements in the PYP thanks to the active participation of our PYP Class Representatives.

Based on parental feedbacks, the **Home Learning Policy** was amended. With support of our Class Reps, school projects such as the **Garden Project** and **Up Cycling Project** took place. More carpeted seating areas were arranged for classrooms. Next term, more cafeteria eating space will be allotted. Managebac will be introduced in the Fall of 2016 to provide more efficiency regarding assignments, assessments and more!



**Staff Appreciation Day** was a day we parents and students had the opportunity to truly show our thanks to our dedicated GCS staff. Sponsored gifts, beauty treatments and homemade food, were well received with great smiles! Generous appreciation gift cards were also provided for each and every staff member with funds raised by our parents.

"**Live Your Dream**" Column was started this year in our very own newsletter where we would highlight an amazing success story of adults and students living their dreams while being part of our GCS community!

**The National Day Celebration** was made possible by the enthusiasm of our parents and staff. And thanks to our generous sponsors, the outdoor portable shades were well utilized that day!

Also, with your continued support **the parking area** can be kept congestion free and safe for our children!

## Secondary Achievements!

Our MYP representative was working on your feedback, as well, and with the cooperation of our GCS team, managed to provide us with great news! Now the GCS has an appointed **University Advisor** to help our students successfully plan the next phase of their academic career! **The Fork in the Road meetings** are now opened to lower grade levels to give our students an early start! **The Parents Handbook** is being reviewed for improvements. And **Parent Teacher Conferences** are being addressed to work better for our Secondary parents. **More achievements are underway for next year!**

## Sports Achievements!

Your voices were heard and the Sports representative has been working with our PE Department to bring you these wonderful achievements! **The Sports Day format** was made more challenging and fun for the students this year. More "active" ECA's were made available due to high demand of our GCS students. More training for **Swimming Squads** were provided. New **GCS Swim Caps** have been generously sponsored by **Coega Sunwear!** And professional **documentation of roles and expectations** of our parent swimming volunteers is now in place.