

Newsletter

Issue # 16

26th May 2016

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Greenfield Community
School SLT Retreat

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From the Principal's Desk

Mr Andrew Wood

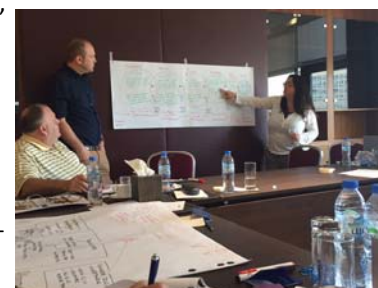
In leadership, as in life, it is important every once in a while to take time to stop and reflect on our core values, how we measure our success and where we are in achieving those goals. Reflection and thinking critically are core IB values and are equally applicable to leaders and teachers as to students. Our Senior Leadership team for 2016 – 17 spent this weekend together on a retreat, as we do every year at this time.

We reviewed our Guiding Statements, our Vision and Mission, questioning whether they are still fit for purpose and how well our actions align to their principles. These fundamental statements should be living documents that are looked at regularly and, where necessary, updated. We believe that whilst the core of our current Vision and Mission is sound, it does not give sufficient expression to the inclusivity of our school and its strong sense of community. We have made some suggested changes and will be consulting with staff, students and a sample of parents to get your input and perspective.

We are firmly committed to improving the quality and the outcomes of teaching and learning for the students. We discussed and defined accurately the distinctions between the definitions of 'Good', 'Very Good' and 'Outstanding' for Progress, Attainment and Teaching and Learning. If we are to raise standards we need to know exactly what we will need to do differently or better to see measurable improvement.

We also dedicated time to planning and a review of the calendar for next year. There are periods when there is a great deal happening and, with all the leadership team involved, we sought, as much as possible to plan carefully to relieve those potential pressure points. With a full academic and extracurricular programme planned and our IB/CIS/NEASC synchronised visit coming up next February it will be a year that requires detailed planning so that, from the students' and parents' points of view, everything runs smoothly.

It was good to welcome Dianne Vella, who will be our new DP coordinator and Shahid Hossein who will be our new Head of Technology Integration to our team. Both are very experienced in their roles and will have a great deal to contribute to our school. It was a full and busy strategic planning process and we all came away inspired for the year ahead. We look forward to sharing our renewed enthusiasm and confirmation of our direction with you at 'The Road Ahead' meeting on 31 May at 6.00pm in the auditorium.

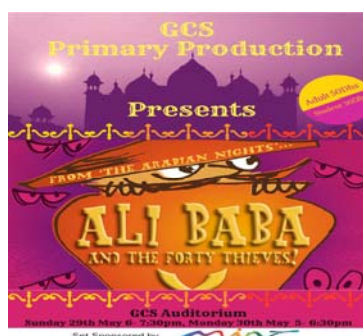


Newsletter

Dates for your Diary

Sunday the 29th 6 -7 pm and Monday the 30th 5 - 6.30pm of May. The PYP production "Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves" tickets now on sale in the Primary and Secondary Reception.

Join us for what is going to be a spectacle of colour and musical sounds!



Monday the 30th of May Taaleem Science Fair this promises to showcase some outstanding talent from the students and will be attended by the Assistant Undersecretary, Ministry of Education UAE. It begins at 9am—1.00 pm. Please RSVP Araja@gcschool.ae if you are able to attend

Tuesday the 31st of May 6pm in the Auditorium A parent information on our vision and planning for the next year entitled "The Road Ahead" with Principal Mr. Andrew Wood.

Tuesday the 31st of May dress down day for students who wish to donate 5dhs to The World Challenge fundraising efforts for the students July trip to Ethiopia.

Tuesday the 31st of May 2.30-3.30pm Canadian University Information Session in the Secondary PD Room.



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The Taaleem Professional Development Day

Sunday was a busy day indeed as GCS hosted the Taaleem Professional Development Day and welcomed its Leaders, Teachers and Teaching Assistants. In partnership with Infinite Learning, The Taaleem Group has brought in 4 speakers from the UK who spoke collectively to over 500 members of staff! Dr Richard Churches and Steve Garnett travelled from the UK and delivered to both the Primary and Secondary sectors, whilst Pam Mundy and Wafa Said delivered, respectively, to EYFS and Arabic staff.

It was an inspiring day for all who attended.



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Talent Quest

On Tuesday evening we got the chance to see the very talented students we have here at GCS in action taking part in the Talent Quest. It was a diverse evening of music and dancing thank you to all the students who took part and to the parents that attended we hope you enjoyed the evening as much as we did!



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Secondary School News

Mr Neil Bunting
Head of Secondary



With Ramadan fast approaching, the final examinations looming, the Grade 12 Valedictory Assembly this week, and Diploma examinations completed, this is indeed a period of reflection on the year and thinking ahead, whether it be for the summer holidays, the next academic year or finalizing plans for university.

The Senior Leadership Team have been reflecting on the academic year 2015-2016 and working on plans for next year. In the secondary school there will be staffing changes next year, there are undoubtedly things to celebrate but also plenty of things we can do better. I certainly don't believe in being complacent and we have made a firm commitment to making 2016-2017 a great year at GCS.

There are firm plans in place for achieving this and we welcome a number of new staff joining the secondary team in areas that needed additional staff or needing strengthening. I am confident that GCS students will reap the benefits of the expert educators coming in.

Our turnover of staff has been low this year, and although in some areas it is the right time for change, there are staff we would like to remain, but it has reached a time in their careers where it is the right time to move on and to take on a new challenge or to return home. We thank all staff who are leaving for their dedication to our school and our students.

I believe strongly that stability is very important in schools and that low turnover is a good thing, but also leaving at the right time is important, and life in international schools is always more transient than in our home countries. We will be sad to see families moving on this year, but recognize adapting to change is important. Next year we will be mixing the secondary classes again, as it is important for students to adapt to being with different groups of students as preparation for university and real life situations. The Grade Level coordinators will be supporting students in the preparation of new class lists. We, of course, welcome new families joining us and we know they will be supported by our welcoming community.

Lastly, on a different note, thank you to parents who have completed the Endicott survey. There is still a window of opportunity if you haven't yet. The survey is extremely important for our preparation for the CIS/NEAC/ IB synchronized visit.

Thank you

Mr Neil Bunting





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Secondary School News

Mr Mike Worth IBCP & BTEC Coordinator

Dear Parents,

The IBCP students at Greenfield Community School have been involved in making an information film which showcases the work of their Service Learning Programme. The film was commissioned by the IB Organisation and will be posted on its main websites and also sent to all IB schools.

Greenfield was chosen because of the innovative nature of its Service Learning Projects which link academic learning in the classroom to practical activities in the local community which focus on service and event management. The event shown in the film is the Omega Dubai Ladies Masters Golf Tournament which is such a prestigious event on the European Ladies Tour and also Dubai sporting calendar.

GCS students worked as marshals at the 4 day event, supervising spectators & guests in key areas of the magnificent Emirates Golf Club. The students developed skills in teamwork, organisation, planning, event management & reflection. The whole event was hailed as a great success and the part played by the IBCP students was recognised by the event organisers, Golf in Dubai and Mr. Boyd Edmondson (Chief Marshal & Course Director).

GCS students were also part of the presentation ceremony to the winner Shen Fang from China in the presence of Her Royal Highness Princess Hiya. Please contact Mr. Mike Worth at GCS for more information of the exciting and innovative course.

Please follow the link to view the film:

<https://vimeo.com/166027343/fe3047a901>

Thank you

Mr Mike Worth





Science Department will be conducting two important events; Group 4 Project for Grade 11 Science students and Taaleem Science Fair for Grades 6-10.

Group 4 Project is a mandatory project where Grade 11 students from all the Sciences get together and run interdisciplinary projects. The project will take place over three days from Monday, 23 May 2016 to 25 May 2016. Group 4 project contributes 10 hours towards IB practical requirements. Grade 11 Science students' parents are encouraged to attend the exhibition in the school auditorium on the 25th May from 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm.

We are pleased to announce that GCS will be hosting the Taaleem Science Fair 2016 which will take place on Monday, 30th May, 2016. We are expecting around 100 young scientists from different Taaleem schools to showcase their projects under various categories of sciences and engineering including Science Working Model, Rube Goldberg Machine and Science Poster based on the theme of "Emirates Mars Mission 2021".

The event aims to encourage students of various age groups to participate and compete in challenging modules in the subjects of sciences and engineering. This event also aims to facilitate and boost social and intellectual interaction between brilliant minds of our generation. It is a great unique opportunity for the students to showcase their talent and achieve their deserved appreciation. We have invited several media outlets to cover the event and are expecting several members of the press to be in attendance.

The objectives of the Science Fair for the students are to;

- 🍎 Provide with a supporting and competitive environment which reinforces their knowledge and critical thinking skills.
- 🍎 Demonstrate their ability to apply the scientific method in real life situations.
- 🍎 Showcase their talent and abilities to perform investigations by experimentation (inquiry-based learning) and analysis
- 🍎 Be given an opportunity for co-curricular science education.
- 🍎 Enhance their social and intellectual interaction.

Parents are invited to visit the Science Fair on May 30th between 9:00 am to 12:00 pm in the school gym and are encouraged to attend the award ceremony between 1:00 pm to 2:15 pm in the school auditorium.

Primary School News



Mr Gary Mallon
Head of Primary

Dear Parents,

I hope that my message finds you well and beginning to look forward to a long and well deserved summer break with your children. As we approach the end of the year I wanted to highlight for you some of the hard work and self-reflection that is currently going on in the background in the Primary School. We are a four programme IB World Continuum School and are immensely proud of this. In order to maintain this quality assurance stamp we will be receiving a visiting team in February 2017 who will look specifically at our programme provision and curriculum from an IB perspective. This will be combined with a synchronized visit from the CIS/NEASC.

Below is an overview of this process so you are more familiar with the terms.

CIS (Council of International Schools) is a membership community that works collaboratively to shape international education through professional services to schools, higher education institutions, and individuals. The CIS community includes more than 660 schools and 475 colleges and universities representing 109 countries.

Founded in 1885, the **New England Association of Schools & Colleges, Inc. (NEASC)**, is a very well established accrediting association whose mission is the establishment and maintenance of high standards for all levels of education, from pre-K to the doctoral level.

The CIS/NEASC accreditation process looks at all aspects of school life and in conjunction with our IB re-authorisation, teaching and learning is at the very heart of it. However the process also involves looking at a wider variety of aspects of school life for example; *Governance & Leadership, Faculty & Support Staff* and *Operational Systems*, all of which have a direct impact on the school community. We should in essence view the accreditation process as the vehicle for school improvement.

I would like to place on record my sincere thanks to Boyd Edmondson (Chair of the School Advisory Board), our staff members, administration / support staff and members of the Student Council who are currently involved working in our section committees that focus on the above aspects of school life at GCS.





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Primary School News

From a parental perspective I would also like to take this opportunity to ask for your assistance and support in providing us with meaningful feedback. As part of our Self-Study for the accreditation visit in February 2017 all stakeholders are asked to fill in an online survey from the Endicott College Research Centre who work closely with the organisations who will be accrediting us.

The surveys are designed for students, parents, faculty and staff and are linked to their stated Accreditation Standards. The survey reviews the school in the following areas:

Academic
Leadership
School Climate
School Environment
Services

If you haven't done so already can you please follow an online link that will have been sent to you at your registered email address with the school. We need as high a response rate as possible from parents and the feedback we receive will be invaluable to help us with our Self-Study. Your help with this is greatly appreciated.

Thank you

Mr Gary Mallon



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Primary School News



Farin Padamsey
Learning Support Coordinator

Dear Parents,

This academic year, one of our school's philosophies was that every teacher should be an EAL or SEN Teacher. It has been a rewarding journey. As a part of the Student Support Team, we've worked with most of our teachers, shared best practice and bounced ideas off one another. This year some of us have met every Tuesday morning where we have reflected on our teaching practice, listened, shared ideas and tried to help each other in areas which we've found difficult.

In one of our many sessions we focused on positive behaviour and how we can encourage that. One of our teachers found this great website which helped many others on how to reinforce positive behaviour in class. The website is *Caught You Coupons, Rewards Coupons for Kids.* "Caught You Coupons, Rewards Coupons For Kids. N.p., 1 Jan. 2007. Web. 23 May 2016. http://www.freeprintablebehaviorcharts.com/caught_you_coupons.htm This is a great website to help parents and teachers to reinforce the behaviorisms we so greatly desire of our IB learners not only at school but most certainly at home and in the community at large.

Another great session was in regards to the importance of letter formation. There is much evidence through various researchers which suggest how letter formations impact reading, writing and mathematics. An Oxford Health NHS Occupational Therapy suggests to start by practicing letter formations which are grouped into families.

Teach letter formation using 'families of letters: e.g. start with the easiest first (long letters): l, t, i, u, j, y. Then go onto the next easiest letters (curly letters): c, a, g, q, o, e, f, s. Then the 'bouncing ball' letters: r, n, m, p, h, b, d. And finally the 'zig zag letters: v, w, x, k, z. Most British schools like to teach lower case letters first, then work on capitals.

One of the many tools we use here at school are Jolly Phonics and Ground, green and sky alphabets!

The 'Ground, green, and sky alphabets is a great way to show the children how some alphabets may touch the sky, all of them will be on the green grass and some may go below to the ground!

Ground, Grass and Sky Alphabet Webpage: <http://sources.sparkleboxres.co.uk/sb3961.pdf>



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Primary School News

Another great session which we have discussed in our Inclusion Champions workshops is Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). This disorder has its relations with the brain and it affects areas of inattention, hyperactivity and/or impulsivity. Please find below some tips on how to best work with children who may have ADHD.

The first is believing in your child! It is imperative that we believe that the child can learn, mature and succeed in his/her own time! Another area is to pick your battles! If your child has done two out of three chores, then be proud that he/she has completed two chores!

Lastly, keep things in perspective and remember that the behaviour is related to the disorder and most of the time it is not intentional. It is very important to praise good behaviour and speak about any consequences if there is undesirable behaviour.

It has been a pleasure to work with such great human beings who have the heart to teach! The hearts that we touch are precious and by caring for all needs we will hopefully make a difference in the lives of our students!

Thank you.

Farin Padamsey
Learning Support Coordinator



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GCP Updates

Brought to you by the Greenfield Community Parents Committee



Important Reminders!

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Lost and Found Sales

Dates and Timings

Wednesday, 25th of May

7:30am to 8:15am

Tuesday, 14th of June

2:00pm to 3:00pm

Tuesday, 21st of June

1:00pm to 2:30pm

Located in the GCP room (CS 23),
Secondary Building, 2nd floor (Above
the MYP Library)

COFFEE MORNING

Thursday, 26th of May

8:00am to 9:00am

Open Question/Answer Session with
Head of Primary Mr. Gary Mallon

PYP PRODUCTION OF

**"ALI BABA AND THE 40
THIEVES"**

Sunday, 29th of May

Monday, 30th of May

Tickets on sale now in the Primary and
Secondary receptions.

Many thanks to Our Parents and

Mint Creative Production

for providing the sets!

Staff Appreciation Day

Thursday, 2nd of June

Special thanks to

Votre Beauty and Wellness Spa

and

Glitter Beauty Salon

For providing free beauty treatments
to all our GCS staff, as well as,

Courtyard Marriott for vamping up our
cafeteria

and Costa Coffee for providing Free
Frescatos for all 200 staff members

Check out our GCP Facebook page to
see how you can help!

Ramadan Schedule

6th of June to 29th of June

School timings will be from 8:30am to
1:30pm

30th of June school closes at

11:15am Secondary, 11:30am Primary

Orientation Day

Thursday, 25th of August

Open to new GCS Families

Sunday, 28th of August

First Day of School for ALL Students

Live Your Dream!

TWO YEARS AGO, SHE ASKED OVER SOCIAL MEDIA IF ANYONE HAD ANY UNWANTED FABRICS TO DONATE, WHAT HAPPENED NEXT IS AMAZING!

Retired and still full of talent, Barbara Evans had an idea. After reading about a 100 year old woman sewing a dress a day and then donating them to those in need in Africa, Barbara knew that this was something she could do too! So, with the help and support of her family, she started her journey in Satwa buying as much fabric as she could carry home and started her Facebook page of "Rags to Riches". Through her page, Barbara reached out to her community and asked for any kind of fabric donations. The response she got was "unbelievable"!

Word got around fast! When Emirates Airlines found out that Barbara was making fleece hoodies out of donated Emirates blankets and sending them off to Syria, Emirates got on board to help too! One month later, Emirates Airlines donated 3,500 blankets towards Barbara's project! Other companies have helped out too, but wish to remain anonymous.

Barbara had no idea her dream could get this big! In just two years, "Rags to Riches" has grown to 17 ladies sewing around the city, as well as, more overseas from the UK, to the USA, and to New Zealand. In the beginning was difficult, but now her creations are finding their way to the children who need them with the help of charities here in Dubai.

However, Barbara is not just keeping her talents to herself. She's recently come back from Turkey, where she and 5 others have shared their skills with 30 Syrian women on how to make blankets, bags and clothes. With that trip being such a success, Barbara's already planning another teaching trip to Nepal to help the ladies there.

Barbara will always remember the Green Community as being the first ones involved in fulfilling her dream. "I will always be grateful to them, and I am sure that they will continue to help!"

Thank you, Barbara, for showing our GCS community that no dream is too small and it can grow to great heights!



Barbara Evans, GCS
Grandparent and her
project "Rags to Riches"

The Endicott Survey, The Stu Williamson Photographers Questionnaire, and The ECA Survey are awaiting your responses. Please take the time to fill them out to better our students' lives here at GCS!

**A Big GCP Thank you
To Mr. Paintsman
and Team
for sponsoring the
wonderful photo
booth that have and
will be used for the
Grade 10 and 12 Proms
and
the Grade 5
"Moving Up Party"!**

Do you have a "Live Your Dream" story you'd like to share about a GCS student, parent or staff member? Email us at GCP4GCS@gmail.com and tell us your story!

You may be featured in our next GCP newsletter.