



Newsletter

Issue #1
30, August 2015

This Week's Newsletter:

* Pg. 1. From the Principal's Desk

* Pg. 3. Secondary School

* Pg. 5. Primary School

From the Principal's Desk

Dear Parents

I hope that you were all able to enjoy some quality family time and to rest and relax during the holidays and that your children have had a fun first day at school.

A warm word of welcome to our new families. Whilst you have been away our facilities team have been hard at work on a number of projects. The auditorium has been completely refurbished with a new stage, seating, sound and lighting. It looks superb and the acoustics are terrific. The main sportsfield has been resurfaced and the gymnasium, too, has been refurbished with a new surface, top quality basketball hoops, acoustic panels and plenty of new equipment. The kindergarten playground has new equipment, sandpit and play surface. Indoors, a paint team has been sprucing up the classrooms and corridors.

Our teaching staff has been back for several weeks, planning and preparing. We have some strong additions to both our leadership team and teaching staff and I am confident that they will make a significant input into the process of taking our school from good to outstanding. Our first priority is to provide your child with a quality education in a happy, nurturing environment. Our curriculum and educational philosophy is solidly International Baccalaureate, and we want the best for our children and from our teaching staff.

You will, I am sure, be familiar with our vision and mission but, after a lengthy and widely consultative strategic planning process we have identified three priorities for the year.

1. CHALLENGE – is every lesson every day challenging for every child?
2. ACCOUNTABILITY – All staff uphold a high level of professionalism to develop a sense of pride in the school by students
3. RIGOUR - Create a curriculum which is rigorous, seamless and which enables students to achieve the best learning outcomes.

You will hear the phrase 'CAR' a good deal this year. We will ask ourselves, 'is your car still on the road? Is your car lost or run out of petrol?'





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Orientation Day Photos



Please do make a priority of attending the 'Back to School' nights on 2nd September at 5.30pm for Secondary and 9th September at 6.30 pm for Primary, both in the auditorium. This will give you the opportunity to meet teachers and the school leadership, and to learn more about the curriculum and how best to support your child's education.

Any school has its rules, routines and policies. Please do take time to read through the revised, updated parent-student handbook which is published on our website. If you have any questions please come and ask one of the staff, Mr. Mallon, Mr. Bunting or myself. I am usually to be found in front of the Primary building each morning if you would like a brief chat. If you would like a longer conversation please contact Alona my PA. Alona will be on leave for the month of September and Nicole Anderson will be in her place.

There can be few schools as internationally diverse as Greenfield with 86 nationalities in our student body and a staff from New Zealand to Norway, Palestine to Pakistan, South Africa to Canada. We have a rich and wide range of experiences of schools, schooling and education. I believe that a good school should be more like a salad than a soup. In a soup all the ingredients are mushed up and end up a grey green uniform, drab colour. In a salad each ingredient retains its colour and flavor, but together they make a delicious meal. The carrots are proudly orange, the lettuce green, and so on. In its Mission Statement the International Baccalaureate seeks 'develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.' Our world is in need of internationally-minded young people who can be bridge-builders and peacemakers. We cannot change the world, but GCS can be a shining example to our community.

Best wishes

Andrew Wood
Greenfield Community School Principal



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inspiring young minds



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Secondary School Head of Secondary: Mr. Neil Bunting

Welcome to the Secondary School

It gives me enormous pleasure as the new Head of Secondary to welcome you to our school.

As a parent I am also delighted my children are joining such a friendly and welcoming school with such a rich mixture of students from all parts of the world.

Although I am the leader of the Secondary School, I am a great believer in the ethos that we work as one school and I am passionate about the values of the International Baccalaureate Program (IB) and the four program IB Continuum.

I am an experienced educator from the UK and I have previously held leadership positions in Indonesia, Oman and Saudi Arabia. As a family we are delighted to be living in Dubai.

I believe in creating opportunity in school for students to develop their leadership skills and to take responsibility. I am told we have wonderful students in the school and that has certainly been my impression so far. We aim as a staff team to develop greater rigour and a passion for learning amongst the students. We hope to see students rising to the challenge this year and being held accountable for their actions and decisions, in line with the school's focus on Car: Challenge, Accountability and rigour. I also believe it is very important to set high standards for yourself and others, to be organized, motivated and for students to be well presented in terms of their uniform, general appearance and haircut. I expect very high standards of discipline from my students and a committed effort to achieve their personal best.

With regard to the secondary school, the immediate date for your diary is the Back to School Night on Wednesday, 2 September in the auditorium at 5:30pm. This will be an occasion for parents to meet and ask questions of all of their children's teachers and the coordinators with regard to the curriculum.





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More information will be forthcoming on the content and start date Extra Curricula Activities Program which will run at 2:30-3:30pm for MYP students Grades 6-10.

I look forward to working with all stakeholders in the school community. I believe together we can all enjoy a rewarding and fruitful year and raise standards in all areas of the school.

Kind regards,

Neil Bunting

Head of Secondary



Primary School

Head of Primary: Mr. Gary Mallon

Dear Parents and Guardians,

It is my hope that this letter finds you well, rested, and ready to return to school for the 2015-16 school year. I wish an extra special welcome to our new families throughout the Primary School. We are sure you will be happy at GCS and will quickly feel part of our school family.

As we embark upon another school year, the staff and I are eager to continue to grow and learn as educators and to help your children develop the skills and attitudes necessary to be successful IB learners and global citizens.

The start of a new school year also enables us to set the tone for learning and behaviour in the school. It is an important time for teachers and children to establish classroom routines and to set expectations of behaviour and working well together.



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Please help us by ensuring your children arrive to school promptly (7:45am at the latest), wearing the correct school uniform and prepared to learn. On the school website (and in the Parent-Student Handbook) you will find more detailed information about timings for the school day including school uniform information and what the children need to bring for swimming and PE. We appreciate that it will take a day or two to get used to going to bed on time and settling back into routine; something that is pivotal to helping the children do their best.

Exciting developments at GCS Primary School this year will include the integration of our Mother Tongue Programme which will complement and further reinforce our Modern Foreign Languages Program which remains a key component of our curriculum. Likewise, our newly elected Student Council are raring to go and are committed to ensuring "Student Voice" becomes more prominent in every aspect of school life. Home-School communication as ever will be crucial and we are positive that the launching of our Grade Level websites (details to follow over the coming weeks) will go a long way to ensuring uniformity and clarity in terms of the sharing of key information, dates and events with our parent community.



An important early date for your diary will be Wednesday 9th September at 6:30pm when we will hold our Back to School Night for parents/guardians of Primary School children. This will provide you with an opportunity to meet the teachers, gain a greater understanding of the curriculum as well as the student expectations for each Grade Level. More detailed information of timings and venues will be provided over the coming days.



Strong links were forged with our parent group (GCP) last year and this is certainly an area that I would like to develop further. We as a Primary School value highly parental support and invite you as parents to become active participants in our learning community. Whether you participate in our Coffee Mornings, Information Workshops or volunteer to help with class projects or on field trips, we welcome your commitment to your child's education.

I wish all our students a successful and enjoyable academic year and look forward to welcoming you to GCS Primary over the coming months.

Best wishes

Gary Mallon

Head of Primary