

Newsletter

Issue #4
08, October 2015

This Week's Newsletter:

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From the Principal's Desk

Dear Parents,

Heraclitus, the Greek philosopher, once said that 'you cannot stand in the same river twice.' Things are always changing and we cannot expect them to remain the same. This is as true today as it was many millennia ago, probably more so. Our school is growing, and our challenge is to ensure that it is better than its previous best and that the changes are headed in a positive direction.

This week we hosted a quality assurance team from two organisations: the Council for International Schools and the New England Association of Schools and Colleges. Whilst our regular DSIB and International Baccalaureate reviews are mandatory, these visitors were here by invitation. We want an objective view of our school's strengths and weakness as a starting point to take the school forward. They have undertaken an in-depth view of the school, based on a review of the school's documentation, lesson observations and focussed meetings with students, staff, parents and governors. Accreditation from CIS/NEASC will follow a thorough self-evaluation process that will take 12 – 18 months, we are accredited it will mean that our internal examinations will be recognised for admission to North American universities and colleges.

The visitors were very impressed by the school in general and whilst we await the written report, I am confident that we will receive the endorsement to move on to the next stage of the accreditation process. They were very positive about the school's alignment with its Vision and Mission and the clear commitment to the International Baccalaureate and internationalism. Our students made us proud, speaking with great insight about the strengths of an IB education, how our school is a genuinely warm, welcoming and inclusive place. They expressed gratitude for what the school has done for them. 'In my 17 years of school visits, this is as impressive a group of students as I have ever seen in any school anywhere', was one comment. Our parents expressed that they are active, engaged and feel empowered and valued. There was a recognition of how hard-working the staff is, our united commitment to the principles of an IB education and the breadth of the curriculum. Our SEN, EAL and Mother Tongue programmes were highlighted as features of the school. We are a school that celebrates its diversity and regards its inclusivity as a strength. The Governing Body is sincerely committed to the school and Taaleem's vision and mission, to school improvement and to supporting the school in that journey. They were impressed by our IT provision and systems, Proactive, Managebac and Sisra in particular. There is an atmosphere of support, fairness, trust and respect in the school.



Secondary School News

Mr. Wood Reading to the KG Classes



As with all these reviews there are things upon which we can improve. How best can we align our commitment of being an inclusive school with our desire to raise academic standards measured by our progress and attainment? We need to tighten up on security. Our ECA programme is very good as far as it goes, but our senior students want more sport. We can and should do more in terms of environmental education and community service.

The next step is to hold a whole staff meeting focusing on school improvement and how we can align the requirements of the DSIB, IBO and CIS/NEASC processes to ensure that we have an integrated well-planned school improvement process in place for the next 18 months, one that involves all the stakeholders in our school.

Best wishes

Andrew Wood
Greenfield Community School Principal

Secondary School Head of Secondary: Mr. Neil Bunting

Dear Parents

Why your child needs to do more exercise and participate in sports.

Greenfield's Mission Statement

All decisions in the school amongst the leadership team, school community and staff are based on what is in the interest of student learning and aligned with the GCS Mission and Vision. In our mission we mention: "we dedicate ourselves to inspire our students to achieve their personal best, promote a culture of respect and make purposeful and practical decisions." Exercise and sports in school encourage all of the above mentioned and thus can be considered aligned with our mission.

Exercise and sport is vital for success at school for so many reasons including:

1. Social skills
2. Collaboration
3. Team play
4. Coordination
5. A healthy body is a healthy mind - vital in an age of convenience and travel by car.
6. Sportsmanship and fair play.
7. Following rules and decision making.
8. Sports teams are some of the greatest memories children have from school.
9. Exercise has been proven to have a positive impact on academics and learning.



Secondary School News

Secondary Assembly about Friendship



10. Exercise fits with the IB Mission statement regarding holistic learning and the IB Learner Profile attribute of balanced.

Please take a look at this link for an example of a school initiative for exercise.

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-34422777>

The PE department plays a key role in creating a successful well rounded school. I am delighted to see our students getting more and more involved in different sports representing the school and in ECAs. The recent results in football and the swim squad were very pleasing and great to celebrate in the assembly.

It is also a noticeable positive feature of GCS how our staff get involved in sports and exercise. Our Principal Mr Wood, attends morning fitness sessions along with many staff members. He also engages in rock climbing over the weekends. Mr Mallon participated in a cycling event this weekend, we have staff playing football, rugby, Gaelic football, netball, basketball, diving, running, tennis to name but a few. There is Yoga to end the week.

We encourage all parents to promote a healthy lifestyle with their children and even in the vital studious years of Grade 11 and Grade 12. This helps to create the much needed balance in their hectic academic lives.

Kind regards,

Neil Bunting
Head of Secondary

Deputy Head of secondary: Ms. Sinead Kehoe

Understanding Study Hall at GCS

Study Hall is an after-school compulsory study session that students receive for the following reasons:

1. Missed an assessment deadline (no extensions policy).
2. Student has displayed several instances of having poor approaches to learning (uniform, punctuality, equipment /homework).
3. Students' behaviour has not been in line with our expectations (see Parent Handbook on the school website).

The student is required to stay in school for one hour after school in the supervised Study Hall and either catch up on the work they've not completed or reflect on their behaviour or attitudes. It runs on a Monday and Wednesday from 14.30-15.30 for MYP and 15.30-16.30 for Grades 11-12.

Secondary School News

Secondary Assembly about Friendship



This concept was introduced in the academic year 2012-2013 and has worked well in ensuring challenge, accountability and rigour for students. Although, sometimes seen as a punitive measure, it is a system put in place to ensure your child achieves their personal best, that your child knows that actions or inactions have consequences and that reflection is a key part of self-improvement. We, as a team of teachers, have seen dramatic changes in the students since we've introduced this system and appreciate your support as parents, in helping us help your child.

A recap of what to expect per Grade Level:

Grade 6 and 7

**Students who have accumulated three of the same offence from the above listed offences in a term will receive a Study Hall
In term 2, three of any offence will warrant a Study Hall.**

Grade 8, 9 and 10

Students who have accumulated any three offences in a term will receive a Study Hall.

Grade 11 and 12

Students who have accumulated any two offences in a term will receive a Study Hall.

If you have any queries, please contact your child's Grade Level Coordinator or the Deputy Head of School, Ms Sinead Kehoe at Skehoe@gcschool.ae.

Grade 11 and 12 Uniform at Greenfield Community School

Dear Parents,

This year we, at GCS, are making a committed drive to increase Challenge, Accountability and Rigour at our school. We are continuously improving and striving to improve ourselves to be a school that our students can say they are proud to attend. As you well know, being an IB school is not just about the academic life, as per our mission statement, we dedicate ourselves to inspire our students to achieve their personal best, promote a culture of respect and make purposeful and proactive decisions.

In order to fulfil this mission we have taken a number of steps to promote pride and self-respect among our Grade 11 and Grade 12's. During whole school assemblies, we have our most senior students sitting up on the stage and at the front of the auditorium. They are the role models for the younger students and are now in a position where they are metaphorically and physically looked up to. We have Senior Prefects who play a key leadership role in modelling excellent behaviour and monitoring uniform issues for students in the Middle Years Programme.

To help us on our mission to promote a culture of respect, we would highly appreciate it if you, the parents/guardians could please monitor your child's uniform by making sure they set out for school every morning in the correct attire and that they are well-groomed. They are in the Senior Cycle of school now and this is their preparation for real life. To avoid any confusion, we have included



Secondary School News

Secondary Assembly about Friendship



a clear list of the correct school uniform below including images of examples.

Our uniform can be bought at Zaks in Motor City and we will have a selection of sizes available in school soon for students to try on to ensure that the appropriate size is in stock and available.

Thank you in advance for your kind cooperation. The focus in a school should always be on the teaching and learning and with our students' cooperation regarding the uniform policy, we can ensure that this is where our focus remains.

Girls Uniform		Boys uniform	
White shirt. Navy trousers. Black shoes. Neutral coloured socks. Tidy hair style. Neutral daytime make up.		White shirt. Navy trousers. Black shoes. Neutral coloured socks.	
Yes	No	Yes	No

Sinead Kehoe
Deputy Head of Secondary

MYP Curriculum

Dear Parents

In the blink of an eye, the last month and a half has rushed by and all MYP classes are well into their first units and readying themselves for assessments. In addition, the Grade 10 students are in the Investigation stage of their Personal Projects. As the tenth-graders enter their final year as a student in the IB Middle Years Program at GCS, they are expected to complete a personal project over the course of the year. This project serves as the culminating experience of their journey through the MYP and specifically through Grade 10. Completing the personal project gives the grade 10's the opportunity to apply the skills that they have been developing since the day they



Secondary School News

MYP ECA's



they enrolled at GCS. It also gives them the freedom to choose a project that is personally interesting to them.

With the interim reports being made available at the end of this month I would like to take this opportunity to remind us all of the Approaches to Learning (ATLs) on which the students will also be assessed. The ATLs are a refinement of the MYP Curriculum which has undergone extensive review and constitute a very important part of a student's learning.

Each student is therefore expected to develop in the following five areas of the ATL:

- Communication – in which Communication skills such as the student's ability to use active listening techniques to understand others and to give and receive appropriate feedback.
- Social – in which the student is expected to develop collaboration skills which involve things such as respect for and acceptance of socio-cultural differences and the ability to exercise empathy.
- Self-Management – Involving organizational skills, reflective skills and affective skills which involve things such as demonstrating persistence and perseverance as well as being able to practice focus and concentration to overcome distractions.
- Research- which looks at student's information literacy and media literacy skills.
- Thinking – in which students exercise critical thinking, creative thinking and transfer skills. The latter focusing on the application of their thinking with things such as using their knowledge, understanding and skills across subjects to create products or solutions and making connections between learning gained in different subject areas.

Clearly, each of the ATLs have several more strands or foci, each of which is carefully built into the student's learning journey.

Throughout the MYP we are committed to the IB mandate of making sure that we develop students who are:

- Active learners
- Internationally minded
- Able to empathize with others
- Have the intellect and skills to pursue lives of purpose and meaning.

As a parent and an educator, I can't think of a better approach to holistic learning.

Chris Cooke
MYP Coordinator



Primary School News

KG's can see the world
in colour



Grade 4 Oud Assembly
with Mr Ahmed Ali
(Issam's grandfather
(4LK))



Primary School

Head of Primary: Mr. Gary Mallon



Dear Parents,

In these last few days, we have reached one of the first key milestones of the new academic year given a Preliminary visit from CIS/NEASC. Your children may well have come home talking about how they had visitors in their classrooms, asking them about their learning. We were privileged to have been visited by three experienced people with a wealth of International leadership experience, whose principal goal was to help us begin a cycle of self-evaluation and ensure that our children are receiving the highest quality of learning. The whole experience has been a positive one, and now, we move on the next stage in our accreditation cycle; more details on this will be revealed in the near future.

A lot of hard work has been evident this term in the form of some extensive assessments, as well as the beginning of our first UOI, and not to mention the huge effort that our staff have all put in to ensure the learning environments, both inside and outside the classrooms are colorful and stimulating. Their commitment and dedication is greatly appreciated.

I know that some of you are familiar with the accreditation process (through previous school experiences) but for those of you who aren't, let me take this opportunity to explain this to you in a nutshell.

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.

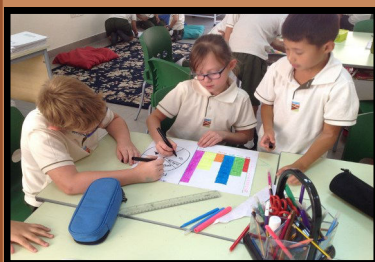
The CIS/NEASC accreditation process looks at all aspects of school life and in conjunction with our IB re-authorisation, **teaching and learning is at the very heart of it**. However, the process also involves looking at a wider variety of aspects of school life for example; *Governance & Leadership, 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 those parents and members of the Student Council who were involved, not only over the last few days, but several months ago when the initial process of planning for the Preliminary visit began. Your input has been highly valued.

taaleem
Inspiring young minds

Primary School News

Homes Reflects Personal Identity



The beginning of the “Journey to Excellence in International Education”.

For those of you interested in learning more about CIS and NEASC the following websites may be of interest.

www.cois.org

www.neasc.org

Gary Mallon
Head of Primary

Grade 1 HEC

In Grade 1HEC, we are learning about how homes reflect personal identity and local culture. We have been learning about different types of houses and how they have developed over time. Raffael Mairhofer built a diorama of a room in his house in Austria. He took action and applied his knowledge. Well done Raffael!

Ms. Hiba El Chammaa
Grade 1 Teacher

Grade 4 TF

This week Grade 4 TF class Language focus was newspaper writing. Students were given newspaper articles to identify features of journalistic writing. They were seen using alliterations to create some catchy headlines.

In Maths, students learnt how to collect data using tally charts and bar graphs. They are doing some interesting surveys in their class and creating different kind of graphs.

Students researched in Unit of inquiry about the history of communication and worked in their groups to create a Timeline of Communication History. Some interesting predictions were made about how communication will evolve in the future.

Grade 4 TF artists went back into time in history to create their cave paintings in the Art lesson.

Tabassum Fatima
Grade 4 Teacher

Primary School News

CDP



Library Time



The Child Development Programme at GCS: Ms Louise Allen

Last Thursday afternoon, 1st October 2015, GCS hosted a workshop in which parents from The Children's Garden Green Community, (TCG) and parents from GCS, came together to learn more about The Child Development Programme. This programme is being implemented Taaleem wide throughout all early year classes (3-6year olds) and it will focus on 3 main areas of development; Movement, Language and Perceptual Thinking.



Through structured activities, which are provided in a pack, teachers are able to assess each student in the 3 areas as described above. Parents are also welcome to purchase the packs to use at home.

The Child Development Programme was designed by Dr Madeleine Portwood, an Educational Psychologist from the UK, and she has over 20 years of experience in this area. She is working in collaboration with Ebdaah, a company based here in Dubai, and along with Taaleem, are implementing the programme this academic year.

For questions regarding the programme, the contact person for GCS is Miss Louise Allen (KG1 Teacher). Please feel free to drop her an email lallen@gcschool.ae

Miss Louise Allen
KG1 Teacher

Library News

I am delighted to inform you that the PYP library started on a high. I am looking forward to library sessions with students where I believe they will develop into enthusiastic readers, principled users of information, and proficient researchers.

Students visit the library weekly for book exchange and they have library lessons every other week. I will be keeping you informed about the developments in our library as the year progresses.

Heads Up!

The Emirates Airline Literature Festival is upon us and we are currently encouraging students to take part by registering for various competitions. Students can take part in short story writing and/or writing poems. To learn more about the Literature Festival click on this link <https://www.emirateslitfest.com/children> .

I would like to announce that the PYP Library will be having an exhibition from 11 October – 30 October. The theme for the Exhibition is “Languages of the World”. We will be having book readings in different languages, displays, and more.

Whole School News

Swimming Gala



Sports News

GCS Swim Squad Sets a New Record: Leonie Volkmann 8A

On Thursday the 1st of October, the MYP Swim Squad took on their first Gala of the 2015/2016 Academic year at Uptown School in Mirdiff. About two weeks before the Gala, Mr Guttormson and Ms Hosking held try outs for the Swim Squad. The best swimmers were asked to compete at this year's Taaleem Gala. We had to compete against Uptown School, Dubai British School and Jumeira Baccalaureate School. To prepare for the Gala, our team had two practice sessions whereby we received much advice from our Hamilton Coach, Ryan. He taught us the correct way to turn and breathe and also the correct swimming technique for each stroke.

Before we went to the Gala, we discussed the rules which defined how we would enter the races. In our age categories we collaborated with each other and made decisions regarding who would swim in the individual races and who would make up the best team for relay events. Whilst deciding, nobody showed bias and we focused on what would be best for the team, rather than thinking about what we wanted to do.

The races which were held on the day were; Individual Medley Relay, 100m Freestyle Relay. Also included in the schedule were the individual races such as; the Breaststroke, Backstroke, Butterfly and Freestyle races. Lastly was the exciting Freestyle Relay event.

Our team competed in all the events and each member of the team tried their best. At the Gala we were provided with medals if we were placed in the top 3. Every member of our team received at least one medal which is an amazing achievement and made the gala even more enjoyable.

When the last race, the freestyle relay ended, everyone was filled with sheer excitement. We couldn't wait to find out who had won this year's Taaleem Swimming Gala. The announcer started by reading out 4th place, then 3rd. At this stage GCS had not been called out and so we waited... Finally it was announced that GCS had taken first place, beating DBS by 20 points. For the first time in GCS MYP history, we had won the Taaleem Gala.

The reason we succeeded wasn't because we were always the fastest swimmers, but because we always tried our best. We always cheered each other on and supported our team no matter their placing. Thank you to those parents who also showed up to cheer our swimmers on! Something which stands out when looking back at the event was that we, as a team, had swimmers swimming strokes that they weren't comfortable with, but they did it to show their support to the team. This positivity and commitment was why we ultimately won; we the GCS Swim Squad are a family.

Leonie Volkmann
Grade 8 student



Greenfield
Community
School



Whole School News

Sports Results

Football

- U16 Boys 2-1 @ Kings Al Barsha
- U16 Girls 4-0 @ Deira International School
- U14 Boys 5-0 v GEMS First Point
- U14 Girls 5-0 v GEMS First Point

Basketball

- U16 Boys 40-10 v Horizon International School



Basketball team



Sports News

Basketball

The under 10 boys played their first match against Nord Anglia school.

The boys were clearly excited and enthusiastic about the match. That excitement possibly spilled over into some positional errors in the first half, with Nord Anglia taking the lead. From the kick off, Nabeel drilled the ball past 4 defenders and slotted the ball in the back of the net to equalize.

With some solid defense from Owen, Nicholas and Brice, in goal, along with some very good skills shown by Eric in midfield, when he came on, all of whom kept GCS in the match.

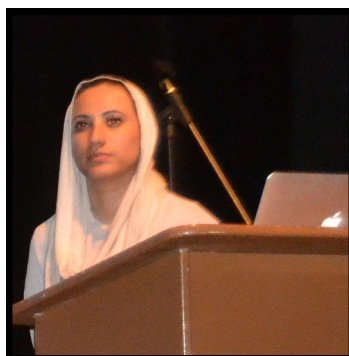
With the addition of Will and Marc during the match, it was a match going for and against GCS.

In the dying minutes, Marc rescued the game for us with a fantastic header. All the hard work of the team was undone by a split second defensive error which allowed Nord Anglia to sneak the win.

The final score was 5-4 to Nord Anglia but it was an exciting match for everyone involved.

Callum Stevens
Head of Physical Education

Cyber Safety



Amun Qureshi
Head of Technology
Integration

Block them

Keep your Password Secure

Be careful about what you put online

Think before you post

Be

Responsible

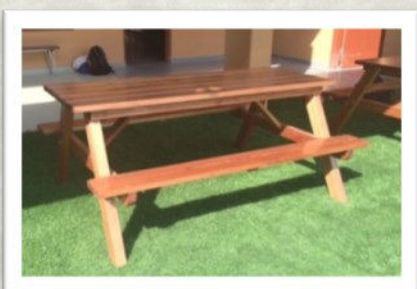
Respectful

Safe

taaleem
inspiring young minds

GCP Updates

Brought to you by the Greenfield Community Parents Committee



This past September 30th, we had our "Happy Healthy Lunchbox" Coffee Morning. The turnout was great and we all received some helpful tips on how to keep our kids happy with healthier food choices at school.

The new Secondary benches are out! International Day 2014 funded 10 new Secondary benches located outside the Secondary Canteen for our children to utilize and enjoy.

We've been very fortunate to have such supportive sponsors in our community! The GCP would like to give a HUGE thank you to **Life Pharmacy, Bissan Dental Center, Peony Flowers and MAX Retail** for supplying our school with lovely outdoor shades at 4000AED each. Check out our Facebook page for special offers from our amazing sponsors that are updated regularly. Currently, we have offers by **Bissan Dental Center, New York Bagels Coffeeshop, VotreSpa, and Splash 'n' Bounce**, just for our GCS families and staff! Becoming a sponsor, is a great way to give your company good exposure and to give back to the community! If you think you may be interested in becoming a GCS sponsor, feel free to contact Hafsa Meshhen at our GCP email address to find out about the many sponsorship packages we offer!

Upcoming Events

12th of October, Monday
"The Fit Mum Workshop"

8am-9am in the PYP Collaboration Room

It's time to **take care of your self** - Learn about foods that can make you **happy, full, satisfied and healthy.**

Ivana Silva our expert nutritionist teaches you how!

13th of October, Tuesday
The GCP Lost and Found Sale
2pm-3pm

Located above the Secondary Library on the 2nd floor, Room C23, buy used uniforms and items at **crazy cheap prices!** The GCP has already purchased a lovely new carpet for the Primary Music Room with the proceeds made from previous sales! Look for our **Lost and Found Sales every 2nd Tuesday of every month.**



Visit us on Facebook by adding yourself to The Greenfield Community Parents Group.

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100009997454845&fref=nf>

Email us at GCP4GCS@gmail.com with any questions or suggestions.

