



LEARNING WELL, ENJOYING LIFE, EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS

June 2011

Focussing on Improving Learning

Our school has a three year School Improvement Plan that is drawn up through a rigorous termly self evaluation based on qualitative and quantitative data. The plan is reviewed by the School leadership Team, the Director of Education and Learning Management at the WCL Group and the school staff. This year, the School Consultative Group have also been heavily involved in the process and have helped to give valuable input from different angles and give feedback from the wider school community.

The School Improvement Plan focuses on *improving learning*. We often ask the question: *How does it affect the learning?* and evaluate actions, plans, trips, etc in this light. We strive to ensure that everything the school plans to do has a positive effect on student learning and helps in achieving our Mission Statement of 'Learning Well, Enjoying Life, Exceeding Expectations'.

In this section of the newsletter, I want to share with you some of the achievements we have made over the last year along with the effect they have had on student learning.

Primary School:

- Our main focus has been on assessment that helps us to better understand a student's individual needs. By exploring different forms of assessment, teachers have reached a better understanding of how to differentiate work—that is to set individualised programmes that more effectively meet the needs of individuals or groups of students.
- Teachers have worked together on a process we call levelling and moderation. This involves marking and comparing samples of student learning to ensure that we all have similar standards and that expectations are uniformly high across year groups.
- We collect a wide range of data from standardised tests, but most importantly from continuous assessment done by teachers. A lot of time has been spent reviewing this data to ensure that students are making the right level of progress and that they are set challenging but attainable targets.
- We have been trialling a programme called 'The Big Write' in a number of classes and the aim is to improve writing and make it more exciting. The programme will be rolled out to all primary classes from September based on the results we have seen. Ros Wilson who wrote the programme came out to train our staff in term 2. We are also looking at how we can use this innovative programme in our Dutch lessons
- A great deal of time has been spent reviewing our Arabic programme and bringing it into line with the Supreme Education Council (SEC) standards. The SEC have praised the work done by our teachers. We have also worked with the teachers to help them improve learning in Arabic.

Compass International School Doha

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Secondary School:

- With the change in Campus, new staff joining and the growth of the school, our first priority was to create a shared understanding of the school's ethos and ensure that staff shared the same expectations about student learning.
- Assessment of learning based on English National Curriculum sub levels has been a main focus of much of the secondary professional development. By gaining a better understanding of where students are through targeted assessment, we can help to guide them individually through to the next level of learning and set challenging targets that help them to take personal responsibility for their learning.
- A new model of reporting has been used this year that aims to give better feedback to parents and students. We will continue to review this based on experience and feedback.
- A more formal assessment week was introduced to give students the experience of the examination system that they will face in Year 11. We have some very useful constructive feedback from parents about how to improve the process as well as positive comments that this has been introduced.
- Many teachers have participated in face to face or online training courses to help them prepare for delivering the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) or International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP) courses. A greater understanding of the syllabuses and teaching methodologies will help them to offer learning programmes that are specifically tailored to the needs of student examination courses.

School Leadership and Administration:

- We know that it is important to ensure that good practice is continued in our school, even when teachers or other key staff move on. We have ensured that staff at different levels have been given leadership opportunities and sent on specific courses to ensure that we have strong succession planning in place to cope with different contingencies and ensure that learning continues to improve even if staff change.
- A new online parent portal has been trialled in the secondary school and we have had some positive feedback from parents. This enables parents to ensure that administrative data is current and allows school and parents to communicate more effectively. The system will be rolled out across the school from September 2011.
- In line with new policies from the SEC, the school has ensured that all our teachers have been registered under the new QORLA Teacher Registration system. The school has also recently been inspected by the SEC under the new policy of Qatar National Standards for Accreditation (QNSA). Both these policies have been made mandatory for private schools.
- We do think that it is important for the school to receive an external accreditation of its standards and in February, we were visited by the Council of International Schools. We were given membership of CIS and next year will move forward with the next stage of the accreditation process. The CIS accreditation is widely regarded as the international gold standard.
- A comprehensive review of our Health and Safety processes has been completed and staff training has been carried out in first aid and risk assessment processes. We have also reviewed our emergency planning in the light of the unrest across the Middle East.

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- Our internal budgeting processes have been reviewed and updated to ensure that resources are focussed on areas identified for improvement in the School Improvement Plan. We have also tried to give middle leaders more freedom to decide how the budget is allocated, but also put in place processes to ensure better accountability.

I hope that this gives you a helpful snapshot of some of the things we have been doing to improve learning for both students and teachers across our school.

John Todd
Head of School

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