



LEARNING WELL, ENJOYING LIFE, EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS

SCHOOL CONSULTATIVE GROUP MEETING HELD ON 24 January 2012 AT GHARAFFAH CAMPUS

Present: Jeannette Verspui (JV), Elize Rudolph (ER), John Todd (JT), Pauline Markey (PM), Donna Brackstone-Drake (DB), Liz Holloway (LH), Nicky Taylor (NT) and Arvin Nairn (AN).

Minutes taken by: Ingy Shaker

Jeannette opened the meeting at 5.30 PM

1. Opening of the meeting. Minutes of 6th December, 2011: [.]

- JV: Special welcome to Arvin Nairn.
- Action Point: A new appointment for the SCG members to visit Rayyan School and to meet with the Head of School to be organised once a new member is elected.

2 Arabic improvement plan:

- AN: Send an Action Plan for Arabic and Islamic Studies 2011/2012. AN explains this action plan.

Emphasis on the commitment of the Arabic department to wish to engage in dialogue to continually offer enhanced teaching and learning experiences for all students at CISD, whether native or non-native speakers and whether Early Years, Primary or Secondary students. Meets with Enaam El Taweel (Arabic Coordinator) each week to look at individual items within the Arabic Action Plan 2011-12 and to discuss incidental issues related to the continued development of teaching and learning of Arabic in school.

Progress made to date

- To continue to raise the profile of Arabic by greetings in assemblies and other events, Celebration of Qatar National day, Arabic assemblies at both campuses, Arabic “key” distributed to parents with commonly used Arabic words and phrases, intention to offer additional opportunities to meet with Arabic staff to discuss pupil progress and to hold curriculum meeting for parents, opportunities to have educational visits linked to the IPC and IMYC, displays in campuses to celebrate key festivals, CISD pupils participating in Holy Quran competition open to large number of schools (May 2011 – CISD pupil won);
- Arabic comes under the umbrella of Languages Curriculum Committee and as such, developments across all subjects are raised and facilitated by Christa Sterk as a member of the SLT;

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- Continual focus on providing new and relevant resources – books, artefacts, games and software to support learning experiences, Arabic Book fair in Feb 2012 expected, annual budget provided. Recognition that some Arabic publishers use the American grade system which can make it appear that students are using texts books behind their chronological age, which is not the case.
- Staff development – all Arabic staff certificated by Supreme Education Council to deliver new curriculum, networking opportunities, Qatar Read Society course on differentiation, Looking for Learning visits from senior staff identify targets for improvement, in-house workshops on teaching and learning, peer observations to observe good practice;
- Curriculum
 - yearly overview with discrete units identified for each half term
 - Primary – each half term a module is sent home with Arabic and English outline of content – these are in the process of being reviewed for correct grammatical use of English
 - Secondary – weekly learning targets sent home
 - Assessments undertaken at the end of each unit
 - Feedback and marking – use of stickers/ smiley faces/ praise. Limited written comments currently due to language issue. Immediate verbal feedback preferred.
 - Reports to parents – unit descriptors are being reviewed to show continuity and progression
 - Native and non-native speakers separated wherever possible across the year groups to reduce the range of abilities in each class. Most classes/ year groups have timetabled lessons at the same time to facilitate this. Currently being evaluated and reviewed again.
 - Native language students will have a teaching style relevant to first language delivery, whereas students for whom Arabic is a second language, will use strategies appropriate for second language learning
 - Emphasis on spoken language for early learning and use of vocabulary in context e.g. dialogue about hailing a taxi
 - Regular reinforcement of basic learning in each session – to say/ write the date/ greetings/ recap of colours, numbers etc wherever appropriate and utilise cross curricular opportunities
 - Handwriting practice incorporated into daily leaning activities

AN: We will continue to look at these and other issues in order to continue to improve both the learning of our students and also the way in which Arabic teaching and learning is perceived by all members of the school community.

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Questions from the parents about Arabic at Compass.

- **Are the native and non-native speakers split into groups for their lessons? At both campuses?**
 - Yes, this is done in primary whenever there is more than one class. In many primary year groups, all three teachers (at Gharaffa) or two teachers (at Madinat Khalifa) are teaching at the same time, although for timetable reasons this is not possible in Year 6 at Madinat.
- **Is there a different style of teaching the native and non-native speakers?**
 - Yes, the first language teaching is different to the second language teaching.
- **Once the children have learnt their topic e.g. fruit or vegetables do they then put it into a conversation to understand it better?**
 - Yes, there was a conversation held last week about how to deal with the taxi and usage of an Arabic vocabulary. As well as using the I like and don't like in saying what do they prefer from fruits and vegetables.
- **Some parents are under the impression that the text books are 1 year to 2 years behind what they should be using. Is this the case?**
 - This is due to the book being written for American Grades which are 1 year behind our UK Years. So Grade 1 = Year 2, etc.
- **What type of text books are our children using?**
 - They are using books approved by the SEC and the Native speakers' books are a more intensive.
- **Nicky Taylor has spoken to Pauline regarding an Arabic work shop/information morning, when could this take place and could it also be done on both campuses so nobody misses out?**
 - Workshop will be held in Term 3
 - JV: is impressed about Compass Progress in Arabic teaching and thought that having Arvin to explain to them was a really good idea.

3. Marietjie Engelbrecht has left. New member at Madinat Khalifa is needed. Marietjie Engelbrecht already left to Dubai. JT and JV will organise a new election for a SCG parent member at Madinat Khalifa and therefore will postpone the social event.
Action Point: JT and JV will send out letter to announce the vacancy.

4. Head of School's report about recent school developments. Questions about this report?

- Head of Schools Report – questions regarding Dutch Provision were sent in a separate email.
- John apologised for not consulting the SCG on this matter.
- JT explained the reasons behind changing the provision – learning more productive/effective.
- JT: Christa at Gharaffa and Fred Van der Beek at Madinat are the main Dutch teachers, plus Jelena van Otten. Year 6 will still be available at Madinat Khalifa. We will not admit anymore Dutch students in Primary at Madinat Khalifa unless we get a sudden increase in

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Dutch number of students. We offer Primary Dutch at Gharaffa and Secondary Dutch at Madinat.

- JT: we will continue to review the situation and make changes as necessary as the numbers vary over the next few years.

5. **From Parent Representatives:**

A. Secondary School trips, when? Where? The ideal situation about notification, planning all in school holidays? Or some trips in school weeks? (JV)

JT: Papers for Ski trip and Nepal Trips have been sent out. All other school trips papers are ready but we're still waiting for approvals.

JV: school needs to speak clearly to parents about approvals and the detailed health and safety protocols that are followed.

B. Traffic at both Campuses (ER).

PM: we've put the buses all in one lane and the other lane is for waiting cars. So we have two lanes now.

JT: Hiring a policeman won't be efficient. There is a governmental survey about school traffic safety in Doha. This may help.

PM: Security guards are helping and doing a great job.

JT: a ramp at M.K. was provided by the municipality and that helped a lot.

Action Point: Letter to be sent about the directions that parents should follow.

C. More use of class parents to send out relevant information for short term notices or reminders (NT).

JT: we've launched the online Parent Portal and we have an SMS sending system that will be launched next month or in March.

Class mums will send out a mail to remind parents to sign up for the parent portal.

Communication boards. JT/PM: two boards are ordered and will be placed at both campuses.

The meeting closed at 7:00 pm.

Next meeting: March 6th, 2012 Madinat Khalifa Campus at 5:30pm.

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